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THIRD WORLD QUARTERLY

Editor-in-chief Altaf Gauhar

Editorial

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| Containing the cyclone challenge | vii |
| Mosque and State in Egypt | xi |

Articles

| | |
|--|------|
| Limiting conflict in the Gulf <i>Robert C Johansen and Michael G Renner</i> | 803 |
| Religion and strategy in the Iraq-Iran war <i>Claudia Wright</i> | 839 |
| The Gulf Cooperation Council: search for security <i>Joseph A Kechichian</i> | 853 |
| The PLO and the Jordan option <i>Naseer Aruri</i> | 882 |
| The Philippine military and civilian control: under Marcos and beyond <i>Carolina G Hernandez</i> | 907 |
| Communism in Rajiv Gandhi's India <i>T J Nossiter</i> | 924 |
| Economic liberalisation and the Indian state <i>Barnett R Rubin</i> | 942 |
| Sudan after Numeiri <i>Peter Woodward</i> | 958 |
| Consolidating civilian Brazil <i>Thomas C Bruneau</i> | 973 |
| Crisis and ethnicity: legitimacy in plural societies <i>David Brown</i> | 988 |
| North-South Monitor | 1009 |
| Book Reviews | 1065 |
| FEATURE REVIEWS | |
| Ideological divisions over South Africa <i>Iain R Smith</i> | 1067 |
| Kampuchean crisis <i>Pao-min Chang</i> | 1070 |
| Recent Publications | 1113 |

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Containing the cyclone challenge

What happens after a 'mediagenic' disaster ends? The Bangladesh cyclone in May 1985 affected 1.5 million people apart from the 10,000 it is estimated to have killed. 'Affected' may understate somewhat the formidable challenges facing a cyclone survivor. After accomplishing the miracle of having survived at all, communities of fishermen and farmers must somehow make a living although the fishing industry is virtually wiped out, fields of paddy and jute lie submerged, homes have been washed away and families destroyed.

At this point the government and relief agencies step in with plans and promises of disaster preparedness and rehabilitation. What is questionable is why, in a country lashed by cyclones about once every five years, disaster preparedness is not already well in place, and why more rather than fewer people are living further and further out at sea? The Bangladesh government justified the vulnerability of the people living on 'chars' (islands which are formed by silt deposits and very easily washed away) by saying that these were shifting formations recently occupied, some of them for no more than five years. But that was not true of all the cyclone-affected areas; some, like Sandwip, are long-established islands 500 years old.

By June 1985, the UN Disaster Relief Organisation was reporting that 'with relief activities continuing the government was now drawing up programmes for the rehabilitation phase in conjunction with donors.' Relief agencies were publicly anxious that the exposed nature of many of the chars and the problem of logistics made relief and rehabilitation very difficult, but, privately, what worried them even more was whether Bangladesh's landholding system would allow any real improvement in the vulnerability of the people who had suffered most. What all these schemes have foundered on to date are not failures of technology or forecasting but the political and economic realities of Bangladesh.

The danger had been anticipated because the country has a good cyclone warning system, with one shortcoming—the people it is meant to alert are too poor to own radios. That is the easy explanation, the other one is far more difficult for the affluent to understand: even people who heard the warnings were reluctant to leave their homes and animals for a cyclone shelter. General Ershad has admitted that for an

effective evacuation the government should have built shelters close to the houses and possessions of the people threatened, and voluntary agencies now acknowledge that they will have to find a way to protect livestock in order to encourage their owners to heed the cyclone alert.

In the aftermath of the cyclone, relief workers who toured some of the worst-hit chars were amazed to find people sitting determinedly near the remains of their home guarding the family's right to share-crop in the area, even though all that surrounded them was utter devastation and the next high-tide was imminent.

Perhaps the best, most moving description of Bangladesh is *A Quiet Violence: View from a Bangladesh Village*, by Betsy Hartmann and James Boyce. 'The poor,' they wrote, 'are caught on an economic treadmill: no matter how hard they run, they keep slipping backwards.' Every step that they are forced to take simply to survive paradoxically brings them closer to utter destitution. The small landholder is forced to sell or mortgage his land to the money-lender, often the same landlord who benefits from government-subsidised fertiliser and credit. The landless can never save enough to buy land. The family's meagre possessions go one by one—a tree cut down, a piece of wedding jewellery sold. With nothing left in the leanest period, the bamboo house may be ripped apart and sold as firewood.

Landlessness in Bangladesh is increasing remorselessly and it was landlessness as much as the severity of the cyclone which devastated so many lives. It is estimated that fewer than 10 per cent of Bangladesh's rural households own more than half of the country's cultivable land, 60 per cent own less than 10 per cent and a third own no cultivable land at all. Disaster planning and rehabilitation is undertaken by agencies which are largely apolitical and it depends for its success on interventions by the government which it may not be prepared to make because its interest and political constituency lie elsewhere. To raise the issue of land reform at any time is explosive; under a military government it is unthinkable. The problem has grown more complex as military rule has seen an increasing allocation of land to military officers, diluting still further the possibility of anything being done about the inequitable land-ownership structure.

Both the government and the Western non-governmental organisations (NGOs), most of whom are based in Dhaka, are burdened by an ignorance of the charlands. The only people who can undertake effective relief programmes are groups such as Najera Kori who have already been working in the area with commitment and are

prepared to stay on. These groups have addressed the fundamental factor in the vulnerability of these people—landlessness. Where they have worked with a foreign group, as Najera Kori have done with the Dutch Land Reclamation Project in Char Jabbar, they have insisted that the Bangladesh government make any new lands available to the landless. Their commitment to this objective has so far placed some 1,000 acres of the 3,000 acres embanked at Char Jabbar in Najera Kori hands. It is hoped that when the vast embankment from Noakhali to Urirchar and Sandwip is completed these landless will press their right to that new land. But groups like Najera Kori have had to protect themselves from landlord *mafiosi* by organising something along the lines of a peasant army, and, before the land becomes available, they have to mobilise and educate the people to be prepared to take on the government and the landowners.

While participation by the people affected is essential for meaningful long-term development it is critical even for effective relief work. This is particularly true for the 'food for work' programmes now being instituted. The workers must be encouraged to organise and form labour societies, otherwise all that will happen is a repetition of Bangladesh's experience with tubewells, fertiliser and food aid—the middlemen will cream off all the money coming for these programmes. The other crucial determinant of the success of these programmes is that the government must ensure that there is enough grain on the market. The stockpiles exist; the question is whether the government is politically inclined to use it in this manner and for these people.

General Ershad, more preoccupied with politics than disaster, can talk of the next cyclone with greater fortitude than a coastal dweller: 'It is God's will, it will come.' Last year's floods left both Bangladeshis and relief workers impressed by the government's relief efforts. But 1984 might have been an election year and Ershad had to prove to the people that a military government works and soldiers can be better relied on in an emergency than politicians. This year, the relief effort was a shambles but the public relations exercise could not have been better. Urirchar, half of whose population drowned, became the backdrop for photographs of General Ershad wading about in gumboots, supervising relief efforts. Sympathy tours by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and President Jayawardene hastened similar gestures by General Zia and the King of Bhutan giving a kind of high-profile, South Asian solidarity feel to the catastrophe. But within Bangladesh there was a barely suppressed anger at the government's handling of the crisis. There were

grumblings about the piles of aid lying undistributed at Dhaka airport and there was even talk of relief being taken back from some of the survivors.

There is a case to be made for the media continuing to monitor the post-disaster phase, especially in a country where neither a free press nor a representative legislature are allowed to function. The extent of coverage of the African famine familiarised, almost popularised, terms like 'vulnerability' and provoked a deeper search for its cause and roots. It also demonstrated the power of the media either to inform the international community or to leave it ignorant about immense suffering. It is as if accountability could be withheld until the crisis became known. The carefully worded cables coming out from the relief agencies warn of the recurrent nature of the Bangladesh disaster. The problem is that the media's attention is also cyclical—it reports on a crisis, it does not warn about it. Tragically, because the drama of a crisis never lasts long enough, accountability never lasts long enough to bring about reform.

Mosque and State in Egypt

The Friday prayer in Cairo's Al-Nur mosque on 14 June 1985 saw a significant heightening of tension in the decades-old conflict between the Mosque and the State in Egypt. Seven thousand people assembled there to march to the presidential palace and present a petition demanding the immediate implementation of Sharia throughout Egypt. It was intended as a demonstration of the Islamicist movement's strength and a rejection of the government's promise of a gradual implementation of laws based on the Koran and Sunna. However the government was nervous enough already and needed no convincing of the Islamicists' strength—it banned the march and its security troops laid siege to the mosque. Sheikh Hafez Salama, the populist preacher who was leading the protesters, realised it could become a bloody confrontation in which his followers would be the main casualties and called off the march. But that was the kind of tactical retreat which the Islamicists have often had to make in the Egypt of Nasser and Sadat and, as unfolding events are demonstrating, of Mubarak as well.

A month later the government crackdown on militant clergymen and their followers began. Sheikh Salama and Sheikh Abd al-Rahman were arrested with scores of others on charges of sedition which were disturbingly reminiscent of the later Sadat years. Clearly, there is something which makes the government feel so threatened that it not only bans marches but orders riot police to disperse congregations before the Friday prayers.

Sharp acts of violence by the Islamicists and long periods of repression by the regime have characterised the tension between the two which has been a constant feature of Egyptian political life since 1952. Nasser's policy was one of brutal repression after the attempt on his life by a Muslim Brother in October 1954. He executed six leaders of the Society of Muslim Brethren (*Ikwan al Muslimin*) and placed thousands in concentration camps. The organisation was outlawed and its members feared that the regime's brutality could only have the intention of their total extermination. In 1965, Nasser announced that the intelligence services had discovered a plot in which the Muslim Brethren were implicated. Their headquarters were burned down and entire villages and suburbs harassed and intimidated in the searches and arrests which followed this announcement.

In 1966, Sayyid Qutb, the ideologue and thinker of the movement,

was executed together with two of his followers, after being found guilty by a summary military court of leading the conspiracy. Qutb was more an intellectual than an activist but his work *Signposts (Maalim fil Tariq)* became the inspiration and guide for Islamic revolutionaries seeking to overthrow the Egyptian government and establish an Islamic state. According to Qutb, the entire world, including contemporary Egypt, was in a state of *jahiliyya* (the characterisation of pre-Islamic society) and a vanguard had to lead the Islamic resurrection. However, the vanguard could not rely on preaching and propaganda alone to achieve its objectives, especially in a state where the media were controlled by the regime; it was necessary to launch a movement. For Qutb, the socialist philosophy of Nasser's regime, as well as the ruler himself, had no legitimacy in Islam.

Sadat's initial approach towards the Islamicists was conciliatory, partly because their denunciation of communism accorded well with his own regime's ideology. This role reversal from foe to patron was particularly important in the government's fostering of the *jamaat islamiyya* on university campuses. The *jamaat* helped him to crush his Nasserist and leftist opponents in the universities and it swept to power in the union elections and drove the left underground. Sadat also released many of the Muslim Brethren jailed by Nasser after his 'rectification revolution' of May 1971 and, although they still had no legal status, they were allowed to regroup and begin publishing a widely circulated magazine, *Al Dawa*.

However, just as the regime was becoming friendly to the *jamaat* and the quasi-legal Muslim Brethren were becoming a moderate mainstream organisation dissociating themselves from Qutb's writing, radical Islamicist organisations were being formed which were not interested in accommodation or collaboration with the regime. In 1974 one such group led by Salih Sirriyya, a Palestinian, tried to assassinate Sadat at the Heliopolis Military Academy. The government became vigilant and suspicious once again but then the threat came from another group, the Society of Muslims (*Jamaat al Muslimin*) which had until then been regarded more as cranks than guerrillas. In 1977 the Society of Muslims kidnapped and killed the Minister of Awqaf, Muhammad al-Dhahabi, after the arrest of some of its members. In the trial that followed they were dubbed the *takfir wal hijra* organisation because their leader, Shukri Mustafa, advocated withdrawal from contemporary Egyptian society which he regarded as *jahiliyya*, like Qutb before him, and excommunicated all those outside the Society.

He advocated *jihad* against the Sadat regime which he regarded as an infidel regime because the sovereignty of man rather than the sovereignty of God prevailed. Interestingly, to Mustafa there was little difference between Israel and Egypt, except that he saw the destruction of the Egyptian regime as the first priority. The press accounts of the trial represented it as the lunatic fringe of the Islamicist movement but the disturbing fact remained that it was a tendency which had attracted many young adherents. The public prosecutor castigated official Islam for having failed to influence and educate the young, a charge which the sheikh of Al-Azhar resented and contested strongly.

The beginning of Sadat's peace initiative with his visit to Jerusalem in 1977 brought an abrupt reversal of the conciliation he had undertaken with the Muslim Brethren and the *jamaat islamiyya*. Their opposition to the 'shameful peace with the Jews' was implacable and Sadat publicly denounced his erstwhile friends, the fundamentalists. Interestingly, as the *jamaat* became recognised as the opposition its area of influence grew beyond the campuses and its numerical strength increased dramatically.

Al-Jihad, the group which assassinated Sadat on 6 October 1981 was far more secretive and had groupings in both Middle Egypt and Cairo. To *al-Jihad* and Khalid al Islambouli, Sadat's assassin, the rulers were apostates from Islam and their priority was the destruction of the state through *jihad* beginning with the extermination of its leader. They expected a popular uprising to follow the assassination which would, like the Iranian Revolution, be of such immensity that the army and police would side with the protesters against the state. As it happened, the uprising failed to materialise but on 8 October 1981 the Asyut branch of *al-Jihad* took over the town until paratroopers restored government control.

Al-Jihad's belief that the people would rise was not so far-fetched because Sadat was killed when his unpopularity was at its zenith. His peace initiative had brought the Egyptians nothing but Sinai (which the Israelis never wanted to keep), humiliation and pariah status in the Arab world. While Sadat accepted the credentials of the first Israeli ambassador to Egypt, Begin declared Jerusalem the indivisible capital of the Jewish state, settlements were consolidated on the West Bank and Gaza. He upset both the right and the left in his country by giving sanctuary to the deposed Shah of Iran and then allowing the US to use Egyptian territory to launch the abortive Tabas raid to rescue the US hostages in Tehran. Egypt's esteem had sunk so low by June

1981 that when Israel destroyed Iraq's nuclear reactor at Osirak it was widely believed that Sadat must have had prior knowledge of it.

Domestically, from the food riots of January 1977 to the communal riots of June 1981, state repression and unpopularity had been on a steady increase. On 5 September 1981, a month before he was killed, Sadat ordered the arrests of more than 1500 people, students, journalists, religious leaders (both Copt and Muslim); anyone he believed had ever said or written anything critical of the regime. Egyptians remember it as one of the worst excesses of the state; Sadat, using emergency powers provided under the constitution, described it as the 'Revolution of 5th September'.

Although Mubarak represented the continuity and not the destruction of the Sadat regime he tried to placate the anger aroused by some of his predecessor's worst abuses of power. He made the gesture of a few sackings, Sadat's brother was tried and jailed for corruption, and many of those arrested by Sadat were released.

Although the past four years are supposed to have seen an opening-up of the political process in Egypt, neither the left nor the radical Islamicists are represented in the 448-seat People's Assembly, and Mubarak governs under a state of emergency. The May 1984 elections, although generally regarded as fair, were held under new electoral rules designed to favour the ruling National Democratic Party. The low voter turnout reflected the mistrust and apathy born of elections and plebiscites over the past thirty-two years in which the ruling party's share of the votes ranged anywhere between 98.6 per cent and 99.0 per cent. Journalists described how hundreds of thousands of dead would rise to vote for the ruling party.

The radical Islamicists in any case refute the idea of sitting in the legislature because, by their definition, an Islamic party cannot function in an infidel state, and participating in its legislature defeats the goal of establishing an Islamic state. The Muslim Brethren have nine members in the People's Assembly who were elected on the ticket of the New Wafd. However, the Brethren are seen by radical Muslims as compromised because they have accepted that Sharia will be implemented gradually, which the radicals interpret as a delaying tactic to ensure that it is never implemented at all. In May 1985 the People's Assembly voted against a proposal for the immediate implementation of Sharia. To assuage radical opinion the government formed a committee of lay and religious figures to consider how the Egyptian legal system could be brought into conformity with Sharia in 'a scientific

and gradual manner'. The 14 June demonstration was the Islamicist's response to that negative vote and to the appointment of the committee.

Why has official Islam proved such a failure? Sadat worked hard at fostering it only to make the *ulema* who legitimised his policies lose all credibility with the people because whether it was banking interest, beer, or peace with Israel, al-Azhar could be counted on to issue a *fatwa* legitimising it. Sadat was not alone in projecting the image of a pious leader, other rulers of Muslim countries have also suffocated the country with Islamic ritual through the government-controlled media. But at the first hint of any expression of genuine Islamic radicalism, the riot police are ordered onto the streets complete with tear gas and batons. Preachers like Sheikh Salama and Sheikh Kishk are admired because they are regarded as the unofficial opposition—fearless and untainted by complicity with the regime. Apart from the thousands who join their Friday congregation there are thousands more, from Morocco to Iraq (and even migrant workers in Europe) who listen to their sermons on cassette. The government has tried to silence them by imprisonment, torture, a ban on preaching and on the sale of their cassettes and has even resorted to appointing its own sheikhs to wrest control of the most well attended mosques. The Ministry of Awqaf has decided to extend its supervision to all mosques throughout the country and the government has increased its subsidy. However, when the government-appointed sheikh at the Al-Nur mosque tried to address the people, Sheikh Salama's supporters prevented him from giving the Friday sermon, which was delivered instead by one of Salama's aides.

But in admiring the courage of the radical Islamicists, one should not forget the very real risks in the implementation of their programme, which seeks to recreate the era from AD 622–660 when Muslim society was commanded by the Prophet Muhammad and the four 'rightly guided' caliphs. The two sections of society which would suffer an immediate loss of status and rights are women and non-Muslim minorities. Whatever advance it may have represented 1,500 years ago, today the law of personal status as laid down in the Sharia is unacceptably discriminatory towards women. Similarly, for Egypt's six million Copts the prospect of being reduced to tributaries (*dhimmis*) in a country of which they consider themselves the oldest descendants is hardly a prospect they look forward to. Gilles Keppel raises a possible way out of this, 'In itself, this sort of reference to an originating myth is not unusual; Periclean Athens has been the ideal of Western democracy at a distance of two millennia. This did not induce them to try to copy all

the features of Athenian society, the institution of slavery in the first place.'

For Muslims, particularly Shia Muslims, the world and the balance of power between the state and the mosque has never been the same since the Iranian Revolution of 1979. In contemporary terms, it is the only Islamic state born of an Islamic revolution—not a monarchy, not an 'Islamic socialist republic'. The 'turbulent sheikhs' of Egypt and the militant Muslims may be 'warned and warned again' by Mubarak, driven underground or incarcerated, but the conflict between them and the Mubarak government is just beginning.

Allan Boesak

Allan Aubrey Boesak is Senior Vice-President of the South African Council of Churches.

Educated in South Africa, the Netherlands and the United States of America, Allan Boesak was Chairman of the National Executive Association of Christian Students of South Africa. As President of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in 1982, he was instrumental in the passage of a declaration that apartheid was a heresy. He is a member of the International Dialogue—Third World Theology and President of the Alliance of Black Reformed Christians in South Africa.

He is active in the United Democratic Front, a non-racial federation of over 500 Black and Indian organisations formed in 1983.

His publications include Farewell to Innocence (1976) and Coming in out of the Wilderness (1976).

Altaf Gauhar interviewed Allan Boesak in New York in April 1985.

AG: *I saw you on the television leading a march to the Langa township. The police did not allow you to enter the town—the scene of a massacre a few days earlier, which recalled the horrors of Sharpeville.*

BOESAK: That was a most amazing thing. It has taken us a long time to get people to accept non-violent methods of protest. This is because the moment we become violent, the police can beat us into the ground. They are so good at that. I argued with my people that we could embarrass them no end if we remained peaceful. In that sense the march was a very big success. They arrested more than 239 people, and while I was kept separate the people said they wanted to see where I was and the police said 'no, he is fine', to which they replied, 'No, we don't trust you, we want to see him'. So they came out and they saw me sitting there talking to one of the policemen. The people kept singing freedom songs inside the gaol and shouting 'P W Botha is a terrorist'. It was marvellous to see that. I was kept in gaol for four hours that day.

AG: *At one point I thought they were going to shoot you.*

BOESAK: No, they would not have shot me. There were ten journalists and four television crews, including the BBC and UPI and

there were other press people around. I was in front and this young soldier began to count. I asked him 'What are you counting for?' His superior officer looked at him and he stopped counting. They told the journalists to go back and they withdrew about 200 metres while I stood there arguing with the police and asking whether I could go into the town. Finally, they said I could be given a permit but I did not want a permit. 'As a clergy and a minister of religion I can go in anywhere, I am free to go anywhere', I insisted. 'Either I go in here or you must physically arrest me'. Then the situation got a little out of hand because it was already late in the afternoon and they said, 'Please let us not fight about the issue'.

The police officer wanted to consult his superiors, and that took too long, the sun was going down and the press was getting jittery and they wanted a press conference before leaving the place. They had their deadlines and some had to put their copy on the plane by 6 pm. So I told the police officers to forget it and I walked off and that is when I had the press conference. That was scary, I am telling you. I don't know whether that police officer would have shot me. One of the things that struck me as I looked at those policemen was that some of them were very young, some of them were scared, others looked as if they were drugged or totally blank, almost like people who had been indoctrinated or brainwashed with one idea only. The first thing they do is that they shoot. They did not shoot me because their superior officer recognised me and, of course, he knew that if he had shot me with the international press looking on, the South African government would not have been able to get away with it.

AG: *Do you think these people are absolutely convinced in their mind that what they are doing is not only necessary but right and good?*

BOESAK: Some of them are. One of the characteristics of the South African government (one that is disappearing now and there are reasons for that) has always been their absolute unshakeable certainty that what they are doing (a) is right, (b) is necessary, (c) is the will of God. I have argued consistently with people like Chester Crocker that they will never understand what goes on in South Africa because people in the United States are too secular. They don't understand the

powerful influence of religion and what effect it can have in a society that believes that religion ought to be the basis of society. Americans have made so many mistakes in the Middle East, in Iran, and they are making the same kind of mistakes in South Africa.

One thing that shook the South African government's confidence was the declaration that apartheid is a heresy. Now we have fought on that one ever since I came back from Holland in 1976, and if I look back on the articles that I had written or speeches that I have made since that time I can see how the idea grew. But when the international Christian community began to say that apartheid is a heresy, and you really do not belong with the Christian church any more, that shook the government of South Africa. They were suddenly deprived of the moral basis on which they were operating. I remember that one of the things that made the white Dutch Reformed Church more angry at me than almost anything else that I had said was a sentence in an article that I had written. I had said that the white Dutch Reformed Church is the spiritual resting place of the oppressor. That is where he goes on Sunday morning to hear that whatever he had done during the week, even the killing of our children, is alright because it is the will of God. They had developed very sophisticated theological arguments for apartheid. It was not the old American crude 'blacks are children of Ham' kind of argument. They didn't have that. They had a sophisticated argument. It began with the creation when God put the innate law that could be understood in two ways: a law in terms of diversity and a law in terms of unity. So, whilst you have the unity of humankind, you also have all its diversity. What you have got to understand is that diversity is as important as unity. When in the end the system could no longer work, the argument began to sound wrong and empty. We declared that the argument was blasphemous. The South African government knew that there was only one justification for what they were doing and that was naked power, but they wanted to sound moral and to give the impression that they were observing a specific religious code.

AG: *What is the evidence of the impact of heresy on the ordinary white South Africans? Are they more willing to support you?*

Have they become less fervent in their hatred for the blacks?

BOESAK: There were two reactions. The first reaction was one of shock and of a fierce protection of what they thought was theirs, this moral feeling of being right. Their hatred is not so much for blacks in general but specifically for those blacks who were articulate, for people like me. I was a little shaken when I read in an Afrikaans newspaper at the end of 1982 (that was after the Ottawa conference where the Heresy Declaration was accepted) that the government and white people think that Desmond Tutu (because he is so well known abroad) is dangerous, but, in fact, the most dangerous man in South Africa at the moment is Allan Boesak. I was totally blown away. But the writer explained to me that the Heresy Declaration will shake the belief of the white churches and the white community, that they were pursuing a right cause. He then referred to the possible role that I could play in terms of the Constitution, and in the end said that if he could get his church (which happens to be the largest church in the so-called coloured community) and his community to support his views on the Constitution, then the government must face the fact that Mr Allen Hendrix and others will simply be puppets and will never have the support of the community. That was written towards the end of 1982. So that was the first reaction.

The second reaction was one of confusion in the white community. If they could no longer say that apartheid was the will of God, if they could no longer say that they meant well, if they could no longer claim that there were biblical arguments to support their conduct, they would be left in a void. They would then be as bad as the Americans or the Australians who had treated their black people so badly. One reason why the whites believed that they were better was because of their feeling of being chosen by God, placed at the southern point of Africa with a manifest destiny. They, not all white people, but specifically the Afrikaner nation, was called upon by God to be the bearer of the gospel into the hearts of the people who are part of darkest Africa. When that was no longer valid, what was left? The power of the gun, the power of manipulation, the power of threat and intimidation and violence. I once said that the white people that I know in South Africa are probably some of the most violent people in the world. Their response

was, 'How can you say that because we have tried our best to do what we believe God wanted us to do in this country'. It is the most amazing response. Some people are beginning to question whether they were right.

I am not arguing that the present confusion of the government lies in terms of which direction they ought to go and what constitutes change and what will be acceptable modifications of apartheid. Nor am I saying that the present phase is entirely the result of the Heresy Declaration. But I am arguing that the Heresy Declaration by undermining the moral basis of apartheid had a lot to do with the current confusion in the white community, more specifically the Afrikaner community.

AG: *It is extremely difficult for a community to give up its beliefs. If they think what they are doing is the will of God, it is extremely difficult for them to come to believe otherwise. What about this great big gathering where Botha went and was given some prize, and claimed that hundreds of thousands of black people had come to congratulate him for pursuing a righteous path?*

BOESAK: There is a Zionist-Christian church, one of the black independent churches. Now we have in Southern Africa some 3000 black independent churches, some large, some very small and some simply a person with his family or with two families and that's a church. He makes himself a bishop and for all kinds of reasons. One common reason is that Africans who come from the rural areas into the urban areas lose their sense of belonging to their community; being part of a little village is no longer there, and their sense of values begins to change. One way to hold on to some of the things that they hold dear is to establish a church. Another way is to achieve a synthesis of traditional religious beliefs with Christianity. The white people sit and intellectually try and reconcile different ideas or weigh one against the other, saying that 'I don't accept this but I do accept that'. Africans don't do that. Many of them will simply see whether a marriage of the two ideas would work and they simply merge some of the ideas.

Now Bishop Lekganyane has a very big following. I do not believe that he has a church of two million people. These numbers are clearly exaggerated, but that he does have thousands of followers is clear. Now he is a man who believes

and says that the Homelands policy is a good policy. On his part he tells these people that that is God's will, and thus he becomes a perfect aid to the government, an instrument to the government. These people did not even know what was happening, it was so clearly a set-up. He was asked by the government—that is what I believe—to provide this platform. The people come together every Easter, that is the tradition. Easter is their big time when everybody who belongs to this church comes from everywhere in the country, to come there to their little place that they have bought, and they call this Maria. It's not a city, it's a little village that belongs to the church and so everybody comes there according to tradition. After Easter they go away and next Sunday there are two hundred or four hundred people, but not more than that. So what they did was to simply say to P W Botha, 'Alright, we will provide this platform for you and you come on Easter'; the propaganda stunt in that was that there you have so many black people applauding, not even understanding what the State President was talking about. Botha turned around and said 'Where are the people who say that black people in this country don't support me? Of course I've got the support, look at that.' Let's say there were 100,000 people. The 100,000 people that were turned into two million people by the state propaganda machine, and they actually said on South African television that there were two million people physically present there, which was silly.

AG: *British television too quoted the South African Government and mentioned the figure of two million. They did not mention that it was the traditional Easter gathering.*

BOESAK: They wouldn't know that unless they went a little deeper into it. When it comes to religion, the black people, unless they are very politically conscious or extremely angry, would not walk out of a church when someone gets on the pulpit whom they don't like. Now in the cities that will happen, but for ordinary rural people religion is all they have got. The church is what gives them dignity, the church is what gives them life, the church is what they hold on to and the church is what keeps their dreams alive. Now I believe that the kind of religion that you find in such a situation is indeed what Marx said is the opiate of the people. It is true, but for people who have

nothing, that is their only possession. It is the easiest thing in the world, if you are clever enough to come and use that and manipulate the people without them even knowing it, and that is what happened on that Easter Sunday. And the one thing that people did not even notice, and which I found so remarkable, was Mr P W Botha saying at the end of his speech 'I have nothing I can offer you, that I can give you, except this gift, and it is the word of God in my mother tongue, Afrikaans.' What an irony! We Africans have a proverb, when the white man came we had the land and he had the Bible, now he has the land and we have the Bible. Here was the State President of South Africa talking to the black people whose land he has stolen, whose citizenship he takes away as if it means nothing, whose human rights he does not recognise, whose human dignity he does not recognise, and he tells them that the only thing he can give them is the word of God. I thought that was too much. The next Sunday when I preached, I mentioned this and I said he was lying and he knew he was lying. That's the manipulation of religion, of Christianity that I detest so much, because he knows he can recognise human dignity, he can recognise human rights, he can recognise that the land is theirs and he can return it all to them. But all he gives them is the Bible in Afrikaans which they cannot even read because it is not their language.

AG: *Doesn't this sometimes shake your faith in religion?*

BOESAK: No it doesn't. There was a time when I had to face the reality of my own life. I am a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, which is about as bad as you can get in our country. I had to face not only the question whether I wanted to be a minister in this church, but whether I wanted to remain in Christianity at all. If Christianity could be used to justify apartheid, then what in the world did it mean? And faced with that choice, I decided to dig a little deeper and actually find out whether that was a true reflection of what the Christian message was all about. And I have discovered that not only have white Christians in South Africa twisted and manipulated the Christian message in general, but the specific reform tradition that I stand for as a Christian has also been twisted and manipulated by them. What we have done is to simply say the Christianity that you talk about is not authentic. It doesn't exist. That is your

creation, but this is not how we understand the biblical message. So even the reform tradition they are so proud of is now being used against them. As a reform theologian, I use the same tradition to attack apartheid and it is much more effective because of all the traditions we have in Christianity, in Protestantism, the reform tradition is probably the most potent in terms of the struggle of the poor and the oppressed people. That is the tradition which says clearly that, of course, you have to be obedient to the government, but if that government does not understand justice, it is not a government, it is a gang of robbers. John Calvin is the name they quote every now and then because that is their great spiritual father. When I speak I say that John Calvin said that any government that doesn't understand justice or doesn't understand the difference between good and evil, like the South African government, is no longer a government, it's a gang of robbers. And so I accuse them of being a gang of robbers, they are not the servant of God but the beast from the sea. That is the kind of symbolic language that Christians understand so well, and it is much more effective than calling it an illegitimate government.

AG: *The irony is that both you and the whites are using the same weapons, the same phraseology, the same mythology. They too think they are using it according to the will of God. Doesn't it shake your faith in religion that it can be so easily manipulated, particularly in devout societies.*

BOESAK: One wonders about that, but to me the core of Christianity is now so clear that in the end those who manipulate it, and I think that is true of every religion, come to the end of the road very quickly. They come to a point where they find out that they can no longer do that, especially when large numbers of people begin to understand and their eyes begin to open. Black people for many many years believed what we were told. But since we have been able, as black Christians ourselves, to look into all these matters and to articulate for ourselves, our people have begun to discover the meaning of the message. One by one, all the arguments of white Christianity in South Africa have fallen away. They do not stand up in the light of scrutiny and in clear and direct confrontation. I can now say to the white people, if you believe that you are right and that God

is on your side, why do you need all this violence, why do you need all these guns to protect what you believe God has given you? If God had meant for you to have all of this, then surely with your kind of faith you will not allow the situation to change to such an extent. It is the blatant falseness of what they have tried to do with religion and with Christianity in particular which in South Africa is now so clear. I don't think that they can continue to do that, and so whilst I am no longer a romantic about my faith, and while I am fully aware of how anyone's faith can be manipulated and how vulnerable religion is, and how vulnerable in our case the gospels of Jesus Christ are, while I understand all that, I have also discovered the power that is intrinsically within religion and intrinsically within the Christian message that cannot be denied, even by people who have succeeded in manipulating religion for so long, as the white South Africans have done.

AG: *Will the battle be won or lost on the basis of religion?*

BOESAK: Religion is but one factor. It is very powerful, but it is not the only one. There are things like the forces in society, things like people's understanding of themselves which is not necessarily something to do with religion. There are economic forces, there are political forces, there are social forces. The battle in South Africa is not simply as to whether whites are Christians in the true sense of the word, but whether we can make them understand that, Christian or not, there are certain realities that they have to face like the human dignity of black people, the fact that it is impossible for a minority like they are to continue to oppress a majority like we are in South Africa the way they are doing right now. The fact that they must realise that even their military power, which in a sense is the only weapon they have, will have exhausted itself when the black people begin to say, as they are beginning to do right now, that it doesn't matter any more. The only thing you can really do is to kill us.

AG: *To what extent do you think the regime will go in suppressing the blacks?*

BOESAK: I think they will do what they are doing now. We will inevitably go through a period when there will be more killing. The South African government has no other recourse. It simply has to remain as violent as it possibly can in order to stop the black

people, but it will not help them in the end. I don't know how world opinion will react if the South African government continues to kill black people. I think it will be much more difficult for the South African government to kill scores of black people simply to stay in power today than it would have been twenty years ago.

AG: *But if there are no prospects of reconciliation, then the only possible scenario is a fight to the end. You may have a partition, a state within a state, another Israel, where the whites say 'OK, here we are with all our weaponry and you stay in your bit of territory?' What do you think is the most likely outcome?*

BOESAK: I think that the scenario that the South African government and many in the white community would like to hold forth for people is the second one that you have mentioned, where white South Africans say this is our birthright, this is our only country, we will never give up what we have. It's the kind of romantic image of the white Afrikaner of the eighteenth and nineteenth century with the Bible in one hand and the gun in the other and the knife between the teeth, but I think that that is a romantic image which is essentially a myth. I don't think that white people in South Africa will want to die simply to remain white. I think that when they are faced with the reality of one violent confrontation after another, or even with the reality that they will have to kill wave after wave of black people simply to remain in power, I don't think that in the end that is what the majority of white people would want. I am quite willing to accept that there might be a substantial minority who will want that and be prepared to go through with it. I believe that whatever happens within the next ten years South Africa will still have to go through what I would call our Ku-Klux-Klan period, both in terms of individual actions and a broadening of the violent front that we are facing right now; but in the end white South Africans have to come to terms with the realities. It is a question of what pressures can be put on the South African government both internally and externally and how effectively. When they face those realities they will change and they will accept that they have to live in a country where 80 per cent of the population is black, and they will have to accept that there will have to be some way of finding a form of government in which everybody is

represented, in which there is full and meaningful participation for every South African. I don't think they will do that simply through a change of heart. I think that we still have to find meaningful ways of exercising pressure to force the South African government to realise that the only alternative to coming to grips with the realities of the South African situation is the kind of senseless ongoing killing that would finally result in greater chaos.

AG: *You mentioned their sensitivity to external pressures such as the demand for disinvestment. There are two arguments raised against disinvestment. One is, if you withdraw and disinvest, a lot of blacks will lose their jobs and this will cause more misery, and secondly, that if the Americans pull out completely, then the Germans and the Japanese will come in and they will do less than the Americans are doing to bring about an improvement in the working conditions of the blacks. The belief in the US, even among the most liberal circles, is that by being there they can exercise some influence, some leverage, but by pulling out completely, they can do nothing at all. How do you respond to these arguments, since you have talked to Chester Crocker who is the author of this philosophy?*

BOESAK: If the American companies would only use the leverage they have, it would not be so bad. One reason why the disinvestment campaign is growing, and more and more representatives from the black community are asking for disinvestment, is precisely because the companies from this country and other countries operating in South Africa have not used the power that we believe that they have. Instead, they have used their presence to strengthen the system. They never cared about the condition of black people as long as they could make their profits. They would build a school in a black community or give some funds for this or that or the other which sounded right, but those were the very things which one way or the other strengthened the system. We are trying to get rid of that arrangement. It doesn't help us when we fight against Bantu education and when the children get shot in South Africa because of their protest against Bantu education that you come with your company and you give a million rand to build a black college to strengthen Bantu education. So, naturally, black people are not impressed when companies say

that this is what we are trying to do in South Africa in order to help you.

AG: *They quote the Sullivan Code which they claim provides for equal rights at the workplace. Is there any truth in this?*

BOESAK: From their point of view the Sullivan Code might actually mean something. From our point of view, it means nothing. What meaning can such a code have for a black person who is told that he cannot vote? You have no say in the government. Your children in the homelands will continue to die of hunger. Your old people will continue to be thrown in those concentration camps that the South African Government euphemistically calls Relocation Areas, but when you work in our factories you can have lunch in the same room as white people. This is what the Sullivan Code is all about. When we talk about equal pay for equal jobs, what does it mean when from birth onwards I am disadvantaged as a black person. Not only do I live in social conditions that will never give me the opportunity to prepare myself like any other normal white child, I am forced to go through an inferior educational system which is geared to make of me at most a menial labourer. If I am clever and exceptional enough, I might get through the system and somehow secure a position where I will be one of 0.1 per cent of black people who will be in a middle management or lower management position where I will be a little better off. There are still myriads of ways within the system through which white people are advantaged anyway, on the factory floor, or wherever, simply because they are white. As it is in South Africa, the Sullivan Code and the EEC Code do not mean much. That is why you find constant criticism from our trade unions of the Sullivan Code and the EEC Code. We are no longer talking about codes of conduct. One must understand that the time for codes of conduct in South Africa as a means of bringing about change in the situation has gone. That much must be clear.

When people tell me that disinvestment will bring more suffering for black people, I have two feelings, gut feelings; one of surprise and the other of anger. Surprise at the naiveté of people. Look, the black people in South Africa are engaged in a struggle for freedom. It is a life and death struggle. I am not talking about people who died fifty years ago and it's not as

if we haven't seen blood between then and now. I look back and I think of 1960 in Sharpeville and I think of 1976 in Soweto and I think of 1980 in Capetown, and of the children who were shot down. I think of last year, 1983-1984, and I think now of Uitenhage. And I say to people 'What are you talking about? You say black people will suffer more when you withdraw your investments? Your investments have always been bolstering the apartheid system in South Africa. Your investments have been used to make the apartheid system much stronger, your presence has been used by the South African government to show to the world how acceptable it is to come and invest in South Africa. Apartheid yielded profits to you like few other countries did'.

I get angry because of the hypocrisy behind that argument. We have been suffering for more than 300 years. We have been suffering under apartheid for well nigh four decades now. Where were these people and their concern for us when they helped to support an apartheid system and an economic system that constantly exploited our people? Where were they and their concern when the economic system of our country made it possible and necessary for black families to be broken up, for a man to be taken away from his wife and children? He had, as a married person, to come and stay in what they call single-sex hostels and saw his children and his wife once a year for three weeks. He will have to live, and they will have to live, on a measly salary that could not even give him the minimum subsistence level. Where were they then with their concern? Where were their concerns when our children marched on the streets and got killed as if they were dogs? Why didn't they say anything? The first time that businessmen in South Africa began to say something about the political system was when the disinvestment campaign became a reality in the United States and when Edward Kennedy was in South Africa and we took Kennedy to see what South Africa was really like, and they couldn't handle that. That was the first time. So, when people come to me and say to me that black people will suffer, I say 'Yes, of course. What do you think we have been doing?' If they had disinvested after Sharpeville in 1960, apartheid would have gone by 1970, and all the sufferings that black people go through simply because we are black, and simply

because their inhumane system is still intact and is being supported by Western governments like the UK, West Germany and especially the Reagan Administration and as well as by the business community in the Western world. If they had done that and they had not given apartheid that support, we would not have suffered for all these twenty-five years. We would have been able by now to begin to build the kind of non-racial, open, humane society that I crave for, that I worked for, that so many have died for, that I hope my children will be able to live in. So I would rather say that if we had gone through the suffering that disinvestment would bring, we would not have had to go through the suffering that apartheid still brings.

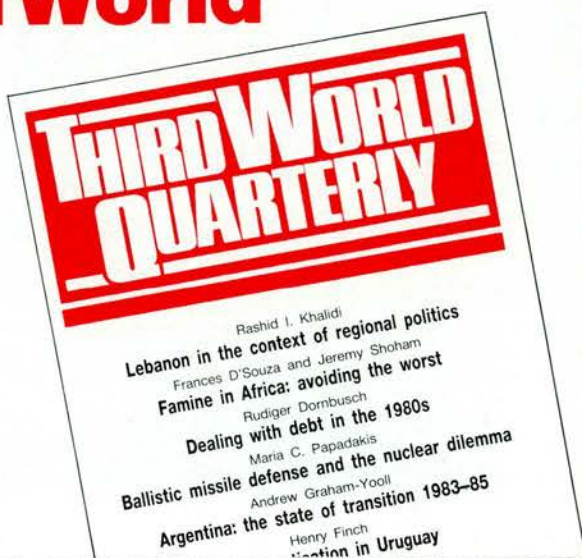
AG: *Supposing they disinvested completely tomorrow, and the apartheid regime did not topple as a result of that, and a number of blacks lost their jobs and had no alternative jobs, what would be your reaction?*

BOESAK: First of all, I would say I can hardly imagine a situation of complete disinvestment tomorrow. I am not saying that disinvestment alone will topple the government, but if that does not have an effect then I will personally come and I will personally beg all the companies to come back, and I will tell them that I will never again put pressure on them ever to do anything and that they can go ahead with their investments. I believe, however, especially in the present economic climate, I'm saying that there is a law, as you know, in South Africa that says that if you plead for disinvestment you commit economic sabotage. I can go to gaol for ten years. I have decided that the situation is such that I no longer care.

AG: *Does Desmond Tutu share that position?*

BOESAK: I think so. Desmond and I have talked about it. I have been to Uitenhage and I have spoken to those parents whose children were killed, and I was there that day at the funeral and I saw those coffins and I know that the government is lying. I know that there are at least forty-three people dead and we are not sure what happened to the bodies, but we will find them. When I see all of that, when I see their absolute callousness and the ruthlessness of that government I say to myself 'what is the risk that I take, in comparison with the misery and the difficulties and the risks that our people take who, unlike me, do not have

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the minimum kind of protection that I seem to enjoy at the moment?' So that is why I say I will personally go to those companies right now and say to them, 'Do no business in South Africa'. 'Use your power right now to force the South African government to bring about change, and, if you cannot do that, then there is only one meaningful role for you and that is to get out and let us settle things our own way'. If people say to me, 'Yes, but blacks will lose more jobs,' I will say to them, 'What do you think is happening in the economy today?' Right now the South African economy is so bad that disinvestment, even selective disinvestment, will do more to bring about meaningful pressure on the government than all of the resolutions of the UN put together over the last forty years.

AG: *There is one more argument which the South African government is using now. They are saying that the American and the European governments demand of us standards which are not applicable to the rest of Africa. Where is there a democratic government anywhere in Africa?*

BOESAK: First of all, I would say to them that they must make up their minds, because in the preamble of their new constitution it says that among national goals is the necessity 'To uphold Christian values and civilised norms'. Now if you say that, if you claim that you are a democracy, not just a democracy for white people, but a democracy, then you must act in a democratic way. They say that they have these civilised standards and act according to those beliefs. They are anti-communist; they say that everything that is communist is so uncharacteristic of South Africa. Then they must be what they claim to be. I would also say that everybody knows that there are certain values that we have learnt in the world, they have not fallen out of thin air; these are values that people have fought for and died for and suffered for, like democracy, like humane standards of living, like understanding and recognising and respecting the human dignity and human rights of other people. There are many factors that sometimes make that impossible in other countries in the world, but it would be very bad if you were to try to justify the situation in your own country by looking around for situations which might possibly be worse. I am not justifying what is happening in Africa, but I am saying that in terms of what is really

happening to black people in South Africa today, it is not much worse or not much better. So they should not say that we should take a bad example and adopt it as a standard. We must ask ourselves what is it that we must aspire to, what are the ideals we must strive for. The West, I think, is absolutely right in demanding democratic standards of the South African government, because in a sense they are asking that of everybody in the world. The people in Africa would like to have those standards, an open, clear democracy, and there are people there who are struggling to get those values accepted in their societies.

AG: *To what extent has your struggle been damaged by the accords which Angola and Mozambique have signed with South Africa?*

BOESAK: They had, of course, a psychological impact. You must not forget the people were very excited when Mozambique got its independence. At the celebrations in South Africa, students were even detained at the time when that happened ten years ago. Also the South African government used these Accords so cleverly in their own propaganda. But there is one thing that South African black people are learning more and more. Amilcar Cabral said, in the early 1960s, a very wise thing which we remember, and that is, 'The rice must be cooked inside the pot'. So in the end it is the people themselves. There are things that happen in the international community around us and we know that in the interdependence of our world we cannot simply go out on our own; even if the rice is to be cooked inside the pot, we must understand that other people can help to bring us firewood and so on.

Basically, therefore, what I am saying is that whatever happens in the countries around us, we have learnt that finally and ultimately the struggle is our responsibility. If there is a setback in terms of Mozambique, in terms of the Nkomati Accord, we know that that will have a certain effect on the struggle, but we must overcome that. We must find ways and means of not telling ourselves it did not happen, but we must ask ourselves why has it happened? What is the situation? How strong does that make the South African government psychologically, how strong does it make it diplomatically, how strong does it make the South African government in

reality, and can we cope with that situation? The most important thing, however, is that all these things that have been happening, the agreements, especially the Nkomati Accord, has not in any way dented or undermined the determination of the people in South Africa to be free or to continue with the struggle. If anything, the South African people are more determined than ever before.

AG: *To what extent do you think South Africa is going to get involved in trying to destabilise Zimbabwe.*

BOESAK: South Africa has always been involved in destabilising all those countries, and I think South Africa will do its level best to continue to make things difficult for Zimbabwe. We don't hear any good thing about Zimbabwe in the South African press.

AG: *Are you sure the South African press is wrong?*

BOESAK: In the South African press, whether the so-called liberal press or the government press, or the Afrikaans press openly supporting the government, there are certain issues about which they are fundamentally in agreement and we can see the way they report things; I think that the South African government does not like the idea of a stable well-run society in Zimbabwe. There are things that happen that they cannot hide. At the same time, when they are telling us how bad things are in Zimbabwe, we hear from other sources that there are Zimbabweans, or the old Rhodesians who had emigrated to South Africa, who are going back to Zimbabwe. Why is that? We have learned not to believe what we are told in the South African press. If you have a healthy cynicism in terms of what you are being told, then you will not allow those things to influence you one way or the other.

DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE

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ROBERT C JOHANSEN AND MICHAEL G RENNER

Limiting conflict in the Gulf

International danger

The Iran–Iraq war has killed more than 250,000 people, turned millions of citizens into refugees in their own countries,¹ destroyed over \$150 billion worth of property,² imposed severe economic dislocations³ and food shortages on the belligerents, jeopardised all countries' shipping in the Persian Gulf, endangered civilian international air travel over Iran, and periodically threatens to bring countries like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the United States more directly into the fighting. The possibility of an irrational eruption leading to a widened war increases with the war-weariness of the participants, their diplomatic rigidity, and their invitation to miscalculation through a war of nerves waged with a volatile mixture of genuine threat and vacuous bluff.

Although the war grows from indigenous conflicts, the fighting probably would not have begun and certainly could not continue on its present scale without enormous external military support. Why do the

¹ Some estimates put the death toll as high as 500,000 to 600,000. See Anthony Cordesman, 'The Gulf crisis and strategic interests: a military analysis', *American-Arab Affairs* (9), Summer 1984, p. 9. More recent Western estimates talk of even one million dead. See Eqbal Amin, 'The Gulf war: the crucial phase', *AfricaAsia* (16) April 1985, p. 21. Approximately 1.5 million Iranian civilians have been displaced by the war. Moreover, Baghdad deported to Iran over 100,000 people considered 'unreliable Iranian elements'. See Fred Halliday, 'Year IV of the Islamic Republic', *MERIP Reports* 13(3) March–April 1983, p. 4. Most of those deported remain in Iranian camps, under deplorable living conditions and without being recognised as either Iraqis, Iranians, or refugees. Ingeborg Kossmann, 'Irakische Fluechtlinge im Iran' (Iraqi Refugees in Iran), *Blaetter des Informationszentrum Dritte Welt* (Freiburg) (123) February 1985, p. 29.

² In March 1983, a special committee of the Iranian Plan and Budget Organisation estimated the damage to Iran's economy resulting from the war at \$163 billion. The oil industry has suffered the most (\$53.7 billion), followed by agriculture (\$40.7 billion), industry (\$8.2 billion), energy (\$3.7 billion), and construction and housing (\$2.9 billion). See 'PBO estimates war damage at \$163 billion', *Middle East Economic Survey*, 9 July 1984, p. A6. Iran has demanded that Iraq pay war reparations of up to \$150 billion. See Halliday, 'Year IV', *op cit*, p. 5. To date, Iraq has not made public any comparable estimate for the war damages it suffered, but Iraq's Deputy Oil Minister, Abd al-Moneim Samirrai, said in early 1982 that it would take five years to restore Iraq's hydrocarbon industry to its pre-war efficiency. See *Middle East Economic Digest*, 9 April 1982. The Economist Intelligence Unit in London estimates that it will take Iraq about ten years to reconstruct its economy after the end of the war, and Iran as much as twenty years. 'Iran Parliament to propose sweeping budget changes', *Financial Times* (London), 18 January 1985.

³ War expenditures, which run at about \$1 billion per month for each of the two combatants, are placing a severe strain on the economies. See 'The Iran–Iraq war. The war as others see it', *Great Decision '85* (New York: Foreign Policy Association, 1985), p. 31.

United States and other outside governments pour fuel on the belligerents' fires? Why are multilateral diplomatic initiatives not used to bring peace, or at the least to discourage escalation? Unable to end the war on their own, Tehran and Baghdad are staggering through their fifth year of fighting, with no end in sight. Yet with only feeble exceptions, the United States and the international community have not even tried collectively to halt their military involvement that sustains the war. It appears that international conduct has reached a new low in which most governments prefer the military self-indulgence of a stalemated war to the military self-restraint that could bring peace.

Because of Washington's extensive military ties with past and present governments in the region and its constant courtship of potential military allies, the United States is implicated in the origins and prolongation of the war. The purpose of this analysis is to suggest how the United States, by implementing a more principled diplomacy, might tip the diplomatic scales toward peace. Indeed, by constraining its own and thereby other countries' military involvement, the United States can actually reduce the violence and better serve its own and all countries' security.

International indifference

Before charting a new direction for US diplomacy, it is useful to probe the massive indifference to the continuation of the war. At first glance, there does not appear to be any good reason for the lack of international action to dampen the conflict. The international community has a strong stake in ending the war, without prejudice to either side, because this oil-rich region is vitally important to Japan, most states of Western Europe, and numerous other energy-importing countries. As the initiator of the war, Iraq hardly deserves external military support if there is any prospect of restoring the *status quo ante* through diplomacy. Iran, at the same time, lives in virtual diplomatic isolation; no government is allied so closely to Iranian leaders that it feels duty bound to sell arms to them. But, because of a desire not to harm the prospects for future military and economic ties with either the Iranian or Iraqi governments, the United States and the Soviet Union have avoided irretrievable commitments that would permanently alienate one belligerent or the other. Each superpower seeks to keep the other's influence in the region to a minimum, although they have not taken opposite sides in the conflict. Their (and other countries') professed

'neutrality'⁴ has meant not only willingness to sell arms to both sides but also neutral indifference toward efforts to tip the scales against war and for peace.

Keeping the belligerents bogged down

Indifference reigns, first of all, because many governments in the region, including Israel, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Syria, and Egypt, as well as the United States and possibly the Soviet Union, have been satisfied with keeping one or both of the belligerents bogged down in the war. Each of these outside governments fears Iran or Iraq as either an unruly or a rival power in the region. Keeping Tehran and Baghdad preoccupied with war may make them more docile and manageable. Henry Kissinger aptly explained that 'the ultimate American interest in the war [is] that both should lose.'⁵ International arms sales have in fact fine-tuned the currents of war in an effort to forestall victory by either side.

The neighbours of the two belligerents are equally content to have these two aspirants for regional hegemony exhaust each other rather than expand their influence into the smaller Gulf states. Iran's expansionist ambitions are well known. Three islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates were annexed in 1971, and Tehran has been making a territorial claim to Bahrain as well. Iraq's long-standing claim on Kuwait, although formally laid to rest, may well be revived. Saudi Arabia and its friends on the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)—Kuwait, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Oman—also fear that the Iranian Islamic Republic may stir a destabilising resurgence of

⁴ West Germany, for example, officially maintains a posture of 'strict neutrality' while shipping spare parts and support materials to both belligerents via France, Spain, Argentina, and Brazil—countries with which West Germany has co-production programmes or where subsidiaries of German companies are operating. See 'Deutsche Waffen im Iran-Irak Krieg' (German Arms in the Iran-Iraq War), *Blaetter des Informationszentrum Dritte Welt* (Freiburg) (120) September 1984, pp 30–31. A Brazilian subsidiary of the West German steel manufacturer, Krupp, is selling armoured personnel carriers to Iraq even though Iran has been a major shareholder in that company since the Shah's time. Bonn's indirect involvement in the Gulf war has been furthered through training Iraqi air force personnel in West Germany. See Konrad Ege, 'West German ties with Iran and Iraq', *MERIP Reports* 14(6–7) July–September 1984, p 48.

⁵ Kissinger is quoted by Walter Goldstein, 'The war between Iran and Iraq: a war that can't be won or ended', *Middle East Review*, 17(1) Fall 1984, p 48. This view was reiterated by the Reagan Administration: the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Richard W Murphy, stated that it is 'our basic position that a victory by either side is neither militarily achievable nor strategically desirable because of its destabilising effect on the region.' Quoted in 'The Gulf, the war and US policy', *Great Decisions '85* (New York: Foreign Policy Association, 1985), p 33.

Shiite minorities within their own countries,⁶ although the failure of Iran's efforts to mobilise Iraq's Shias against Saddam Hussein's government suggests that this fear may be exaggerated. These six states broadly share Iraq's objectives: to 'rectify' the territorial problems in the Shatt al-Arab, to work towards a return of the Gulf islands that Iran seized under the Shah's rule, and to eliminate Tehran's dominance in the Gulf. As a result, they have encouraged Iraqi belligerence.

Acquiescence in Baghdad's 1980 plans to step up 'pan-Arab' pressure on Iran, though never openly contemplating an invasion, eased restraints on Iraq not to launch a war.⁷ Once the war started, however, the Arab governments have generally been reluctant to rally to the cause of 'Arabism'. Nevertheless, the governments in the GCC regard their enormous financial aid to Iraq—an average of almost \$1 billion a month—as an indispensable insurance policy for their own security.

Other governments in the region are also interested in seeing the war continue. Their partisan involvement in the conflict is not so much determined by the fighting itself as by a heightened scramble for leadership and influence within an increasingly fragmented Middle East. If Damascus allies with Iran to keep a lid on Iraq's ambitions, then Amman will ally with Baghdad to check Syrian power. Cairo reckons that the preoccupation of Iran and Iraq with war will work toward elevating Egypt's standing in the area and offer it a golden opportunity to return to the Arab fold. Further, the war-related blockade of the belligerents' Persian Gulf harbours makes Turkey's Mediterranean ports an attractive alternative for Baghdad's and Tehran's oil exports and overall foreign trade; in Ankara's perspective, an end to the fighting would deprive it of the lucrative transit fees involved. Tel Aviv, finally, is pleased to see deep splits running through the Arab and Muslim worlds as a result of the war. Israel has been a major supplier of spare parts for US weaponry to Iran.⁸

⁶ Shia Muslims account for 4 per cent of the population of Oman, 8 per cent of Saudi Arabia, 16 per cent of Qatar, 18 per cent of the United Arab Emirates, and 24 per cent of Kuwait. In Bahrain (70 per cent) and Iraq (60 per cent) they are the majority. Iran's population is 92 per cent Shiite. See James A Bill, 'Resurgent Islam in the Persian Gulf', *Foreign Affairs*, 63(1) Fall 1984, p 120.

⁷ See Claudia Wright, 'Implications of the Iraq-Iran war', *Foreign Affairs*, 59(2) Winter 1980-81, pp 280-5.

⁸ The Israelis asserted that their support for Iran was coordinated with the United States, which Washington denied. The former Israeli Minister of Defence, Ariel Sharon, declared: 'We gave them [the United States] the lists, they knew exactly what was moving from Israel.' See *International Herald Tribune*, 30 May 1982.

Arms for profit

A second reason for international neglect of moves to bring peace are the huge profits and political influence that flow from the conflict. In particular a brisk weapons trade has led arms suppliers to smile privately at the war. It appears that the advanced capitalist countries and the Soviet Union remain willing to perpetrate this conflict for the sake of shadowy commercial and political calculations—as they did at numerous occasions before. The governments and corporations that have sold military equipment over the years have helped Iraq to launch and sustain a war of aggression, helped Iran to carry the war back to Iraqi soil, and have increased intransigence toward mediation efforts.

As the earliest and largest arms supplier to the region, the United States planted and nourished the seeds of militarisation throughout it. Strong military ties through massive arms transfers have been designed to bring petrodollars to the United States, to keep friendly governments in power, to exploit intra-regional conflicts, to ensure that recipients will be subject to US influence during war, to maintain an uninhibited flow of oil, and to discourage an expansion of Soviet influence in the region.⁹ In pursuit of these goals, the United States has stocked enormous arsenals throughout the Middle East. Between 1950 and 1982, for example, the United States sold about \$75 billion worth of weapons to the region.¹⁰

Indeed, far from being a static flow to the region, US arms sales have multiplied. In the first half of the 1970s, they averaged \$3.2 billion per year—more than the total accumulated sales (\$2.3 billion) over the previous fifteen years. From 1975 to 1979 arms sales tripled to an average of \$8.9 billion per year.¹¹ Annual arms imports to the Middle East jumped from \$2 billion in 1972 to over \$15 billion by 1982.¹² The

⁹ The last two goals are reconfirmed in the secret Defense Guidance of 1982: 'Our principal objectives are to assure access to Persian Gulf oil, and to prevent the Soviets from acquiring political-military control of the oil directly or through proxies.' Quoted by Richard Halloran, 'Poised for the Persian Gulf', *The New York Times Magazine*, 1 April 1984, p 39.

¹⁰ The Middle East received close to 60 per cent of the world-wide allocations from the Foreign Military Sales Cash Program and Foreign Military Sales Financing. Joe Stork and Jim Paul, 'Arms sales and the militarisation of the Middle East', *MERIP Reports* 13(2) February 1983, p 12. Between 1950 and 1981, one-third of all US military sales agreements went to only two states: Saudi Arabia and Iran. Joe Stork, 'Israel as a strategic asset', *MERIP Reports*, 12(4) May 1982, p 6.

¹¹ Joe Stork, 'The Carter Doctrine and US bases in the Middle East', *MERIP Reports*, 10(7) September 1980, p 4. For Fiscal Year 1982, President Reagan approved \$31.2 billion worth of arms transfers to the entire world. This was more than twice the amount approved by President Carter during his last year in office. See Michael T Klare, 'Soviet arms transfers to the Third World', *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 40(5) May 1984, p 26.

¹² *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1972-1982*, United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Washington DC, April 1984, p 55. Figures are in current dollars.

leading suppliers between 1978 and 1982 were the Soviet Union (\$17.5 billion) and the United States (\$14.1 billion), followed by France (\$6.5 billion) and Britain (\$5 billion).¹³

In recent years, the Middle Eastern countries have spent \$50–60 billion for military purposes each year.¹⁴ Syria, Libya, Iraq, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia have occupied the ranks of the world's five leading weapons importers since 1979.¹⁵ Iran, after having briefly cut its military budget following the Shah's overthrow, again ranks among the top ten arms importers. All these states are directly or indirectly involved in the present war. Many of the current procurement programmes began before the war started, with the Iran–Iraq conflict further expanding military acquisition programmes throughout the region. Since late 1980, each of the six members of the GCC has purchased major warships or missile-armed fast-attack craft, sophisticated jet fighters, helicopters, main battle tanks or other modern armoured vehicles, and a wide range of anti-aircraft, anti-ship, and anti-tank missiles.¹⁶

Given the headlong rush into ever-new armaments and the fierce competition between arms suppliers, prospects for arms trade restraint in the area seem bleak. Governments and private arms merchants, following circuituous, often secret, trade routes, have eagerly rushed to fill new arms orders generated by the war. Indebted Third World arms suppliers such as Brazil are desperate to sell weapons to both combatants in an effort to boost exports and use the proceeds to service

¹³ *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers*, op cit p 97 and Michael T Klare, 'The global reach of the superpowers', *South* (London) (34) August 1983, pp 9–14. Assessing the relative sizes of US and Soviet arms exports depends on what dollar values are assigned to the latter and what items are tallied. Statistical comparisons working under different assumptions may therefore show either the United States or the Soviet Union in the lead. Despite this qualification, however, the published figures give a good impression of the overall magnitude of arms transfers.

¹⁴ *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers*, op cit p 13, and *World Armaments and Disarmament: SIPRI Yearbook 1984*, London and Philadelphia: Taylor and Francis, 1984, p 117 [hereafter cited as *SIPRI Yearbook*]. The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) estimates Iraq's defence expenditures for 1982 at \$7.7 billion, Iranian military spending at \$13.3 billion, and the GCC countries' combined outlays at \$28.5 billion in 1983; Saudi Arabia alone accounted for \$22 billion of this latter figure. Quoted in Mahmoud al-Maaghi, 'Of Stingers and Sams: Gulf's Arms Bazaar', *Arabia*, 4(37) September 1984, p 6.

¹⁵ *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers*, op cit/pp 72, 85, and *SIPRI Yearbook 1984*, p 180. In 1982, Iraq imported \$4.3 billion worth of weapons, Iran \$1.3 billion, and Saudi Arabia \$7.3 billion. Riyadh cut its military imports to \$2.6 billion in 1983 and \$2.8 billion in 1984. See Michael T Klare, 'New merchants in the arms bazaar', *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, 41(1) January 1985, p 16.

¹⁶ *SIPRI Yearbook 1984* p 200.

their foreign debts.¹⁷ The conflict brought welcome relief to manufacturers previously worried about a slightly slackening demand in arms purchases by Third World nations in recent years.¹⁸ Severe economic hardship and indebtedness, worldwide inflation, and a strong dollar all contributed to the declining demand for arms. In addition, soon after the Iranian revolution, the Islamic Revolutionary Council decided to lower Iran's military budget by about 50 per cent and to cancel most of the Shah's orders for new military equipment.¹⁹ This development heightened the scramble to sell more weaponry to other customers. No sooner had the Shah's military strength proved useless in maintaining his hold on power than the US Secretary of Defense quickly scheduled a trip to the Middle East to find buyers to take up the slack left by the loss of sales to Iran. The USSR, also facing reduced arms sales, has made overtures to Iraq's pro-Western supporters, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, and North Yemen, in an effort to enter into new or renewed arms supply relationships with them. The Gulf countries, feeling threatened by the war, have stated their intention of buying arms from whoever is willing to sell.

Expanding the US military presence

A third reason for prolonging the war which applies to the United States is that it facilitates that country's effort to gain an expanded, more direct military influence in the region. The blueprint envisaged by the Reagan Administration for an expanded US military presence goes far beyond sales of weapons systems. In the long run, US officials seek to regain some of their lost influence in Iran and to exert greater leverage over Iraq, while deepening intelligence and military ties with Saudi Arabia,

¹⁷ The list of weapons suppliers cuts across any imaginable regional or ideological boundaries. Before the war, SIPRI had identified only six countries supplying the two countries. But with the onset of the war, the number of suppliers has exploded, which makes arms supply constraints an exceedingly complex issue. Arms re-supply during war is more complex, covert, and difficult to verify than in peacetime. Of forty supplying countries, most have supplied arms and lent other war support to both belligerents. In addition to private dealers, traditional suppliers—the United States, the Soviet Union, France, Britain, Italy, and West Germany—a number of new arms manufacturers from the Third World and the European periphery have entered the world arms market in recent years. Prominent among those are Brazil, Israel, North Korea, South Africa, and Spain.

After termination of the Iran–Iraq war, arms suppliers will put their hopes in the two countries' replenishing their war arsenals: 'a massive rearmament process is likely to emerge in Iran and Iraq . . . particularly in the field of high-technology weaponry. This will affect arms procurement policies throughout the region.' *SIPRI Yearbook 1984*, p 200.

¹⁸ Paul Lewis, 'The Third World limits its arsenals', *New York Times*, 18 March 1984.

¹⁹ *SIPRI Yearbook 1984* p 104.

Kuwait, and other Gulf states. In its quest for influence, Washington's policies have fluctuated widely to take advantage of the evolving war situation in an effort to translate the desperate situation of either belligerent at various times into gains for US influence. As a result, the United States and its allies have been far more successful during several years of war than they had been during a decade of peacetime in loosening Iraq's military ties with the Soviet Union. Out of desperation Iraq has been driven into America's arms. All Middle Eastern governments involved in war are forced more than are governments at peace to depend on the world's foremost military, economic, technological, and diplomatic power.

A fluctuating US diplomacy has disregarded international norms of conduct that it is in the US interest to uphold, and has made termination of the war more difficult. First, the United States studiously refused to condemn the Iraqi attack on Iran when it first occurred.²⁰ Washington officials only feebly did so later, during a short period when an improvement in relations with Tehran appeared possible. No matter how irksome Iranian provocations and verbal attacks against Saddam Hussein's government may have become, nothing in international practice or law justified Iraqi resort to war against them. Neither would contested Iraqi territorial claims against Iran justify war as a technique of dispute settlement.

Second, the redeeming possibilities presented by Washington's proclamation of neutrality, in itself inappropriate in the face of aggression, have not been utilised to help to end the war. Although US officials withheld direct sales of US arms to the belligerents, they allowed other purchasers of US arms to re-sell equipment to Iran and Iraq. Reagan officials have winked at arms shipments, first to one side and then the other, despite their authority to halt sales because of agreements with most purchasers that prevent them, against US objections, from re-selling weapons purchased from the United States.

Third, US policy has increasingly tilted in favour of Iraq in recent months—mainly because an immediate improvement in US relations with Tehran is out of the question, and because between 1982 and early

²⁰ Joe Stork and Martha Wenger, 'US ready to intervene in Gulf War', *MERIP Reports*, 14(6-7) July-September 1984, p 46. It has been suggested that Iraq's decision to go to war was encouraged by the United States, who wanted to take advantage of the revolutionary chaos in Iran in order to replace Khomeini by Shahpur Bakhtiar who was in Baghdad at the time of the Iraqi invasion. See Robert Soeterik, 'Irak, het Baathregime en de Oorlog met Iran' (Iraq, the Baath Regime, and the War with Iran), *MOI Bulletin*, (11) Fall 1983, Nijmegen: Dutch Association for the Study of the Middle East and Islam, p 2.

1984 it appeared that Iran might win the war.²¹ Since Baghdad now has the upper hand in possession of sophisticated weapons, a pro-Iraqi tilt threatens to make Iraq less eager to achieve a negotiated end to the war and more willing to widen its assault on oil tankers using Iran's Kharg Island port. The pro-Iraqi shifts have occurred just when Iran may have been more willing to end the war than at any time in recent years.

Washington has made substantial efforts to gain influence in Iraq:²²

- According to Western European diplomats, the United States exchanges military intelligence on Iran with Iraq.²³

Intelligence sharing has apparently been a powerful instrument of US influence;

- When it appeared that Iraq might suffer a decisive setback, Washington quietly sought help from Islamic nations to step up pressure on Iran to reach a settlement, and developed secret contingency plans for military intervention;²⁴

- The United States has softened its opposition to Western European delivery of major weapons to Iraq. For example, Washington dropped whatever reservations it had about the sale of French Exocet missiles, despite the clearest indications that these would be used against neutral shipping in the Gulf, would escalate Iraq's attacks against Iran, and would provoke more dangerous Iranian responses against US allies in the region.²⁵ In recent months, the Reagan Administration has pressed its allies and clients, including Israel, South Korea, and Britain, to halt

²¹ A *de facto* decision to tilt toward Iraq was made in a US National Security Council study completed in November 1983, which concluded that the defeat of Iraq by Iran would be a major setback to American interests. See 'The Gulf, the War and US Policy', *Great Decisions '85 op cit*, p 32.

²² Washington has sought other avenues of influence in the face of rather limited economic ties: in 1979, US imports to Iraq amounted to \$440 million, or about one-fourth of Japanese imports. Joe Stork, 'The War in the Gulf', *MERIP Reports*, 11(5) June 1981, p 17.

²³ *New York Times*, 29 March 1984. Saddam Hussein appeared to confirm these reports in an interview with a Kuwaiti newspaper, when he said '... we have benefited from the AWACs in Iraq'. *Financial Times* (London) 12 May 1984. Both sources are quoted by Stork and Wenger, 'US ready to intervene', *op cit*, p 46.

²⁴ For the US diplomatic contacts with Islamic nations, see Bernard Weintraub, 'US asking Arabs to press Iran to end war', *The New York Times*, 23 May 1982. For the report on plans for military intervention, see *The Wall Street Journal*, 11 April 1984.

²⁵ After a considerable delay, France delivered five Super Etendard jets along with Exocet missiles to Baghdad in November 1983. French officials claim, and Washington denies, that from the beginning of the war, the United States tacitly endorsed the French-Iraqi supply relationship. See Joe Stork, 'Arms Merchants in the Gulf War', *MERIP Reports* 14(6-7) July-September 1984, p 39. Moreover, the US government knew about Iraqi intentions: on 8 October 1983, more than five months before their first use, Baghdad informed Washington that it would employ the missiles against Iran. See Dilip Hiro, 'Chronicle of the Gulf War', *MERIP Reports* 14(6-7) July-September 1984, p 11.

military sales to Iran—not so much to end the war as to build ties with Iraq. In the initial stages of the war, nearly \$160 million worth of US-manufactured arms had been supplied to Iran through other countries;²⁶

- In 1982, the Reagan Administration removed Iraq from a list of countries officially regarded as supporting 'international terrorism', thereby facilitating US credits and exports to Baghdad. Since then, the United States has granted Iraq between \$1 and \$2 billion in commodity credits to buy food, alleviating the financial pressures that threatened Iraq with bankruptcy.²⁷ And on 26 November 1984, the United States and Iraq announced they had agreed to restore diplomatic relations after a seventeen-year interruption.²⁸ Although the reopening of diplomatic channels between two countries is a welcome development, in this particular case the decision to exchange representatives appears prompted by a mutual desire to upgrade military and intelligence ties;

- The US has encouraged Iraq's Arab allies to continue and even expand their financial assistance to Hussein's government. To help sustain Iraq's war effort, US officials also endorsed action by the Export-Import Bank and US construction firms to build new Iraqi oil export pipelines. After obtaining Baghdad's agreement to order about \$100 million worth of US-manufactured steel pipe, the US government also guaranteed \$425 million of loans to help Iraq build an oil pipeline through Jordan. Thus, even while tilting toward Iraq, Washington took advantage of Iraq's difficulties to press the Saddam government into buying US steel rather than less-expensive steel from other exporters.²⁹

Moreover, US officials have, perhaps inadvertently, encouraged Iraqi escalation of the conflict by publicly pledging to use military force against Iran if it closed the Gulf to pro-Iraqi shipping, even though Iran's action would be in retaliation for Iraqi attacks on oil tankers going

²⁶ Dilip Hiro, Safa Haeri, Godfrey Jansen and Robert Manning, 'Going for the jugular', *South (London)* (42) April 1984, pp 9–12; and *International Herald Tribune* 30 May 1982. The Reagan Administration has approved direct sales of certain militarily useful items to Iran by US companies. In 1984 this included spare parts for Boeing 747 jets, two Boeing 707 jets impounded since the hostage crisis, and one-hundred jeeps. The Administration tightened its export controls in September 1984, after a number of outstanding claims by US companies against Iran had been settled before the Hague Claims Tribunal. See 'The war as others see it', *Great Decisions* '85 *op cit*, p 31.

²⁷ Bernard Gwertzman, 'Iraqi leader says he is ready to renew US ties', *New York Times*, 13 October 1984.

²⁸ Bernard Gwertzman, 'US restores full ties with Iraq but cites neutrality in Gulf war', *New York Times*, 27 November 1984.

²⁹ This amount of pipe is equivalent to roughly 10 per cent of total US steel exports in 1983. See Clyde Farnsworth, 'Iraq deal reflects politics of steel', *New York Times*, 16 July 1984.

to Iranian ports. The United States has thus added fuel to the most volatile aspect of the conflict: the war on tankers. Iraq began the attacks to retaliate against the Iranian blockade and destruction of the Basrah port facilities, to deprive Iran of income, and to provoke it into taking retaliatory action that might bring the United States more deeply into the war against Iran. The Iraqi attacks were encouraged not by insufficient US military power in the region but, quite the contrary, by a continuing US military presence, and, particularly, by the Reagan Administration's promise to use force against Iranian blockage of shipping in reprisal for Iraqi attacks.³⁰

Once Iraq initiated its attacks, US officials indirectly encouraged their continuation by offering US naval escorts to tankers on the southern, Arabian half of the Gulf. These escorts represented a one-sided, unprincipled US policy toward neutral shipping rather than an effort to uphold the right of free transit for all innocent vessels: the US Navy protected ships in the southern Gulf from Iranian attacks but did not protect ships docking at Kharg Island against Iraqi attacks. In the absence of a well-balanced peace initiative, Iraq may escalate the war further in order to draw the United States more deeply into the conflict. US military guarantees have also encouraged Iraqi intransigence toward negotiations.

US forces in the region have already been directly and indirectly engaged in combat in the Gulf. A US Air Force KC-10 aerial tanker has helped Saudi air patrols to head off Iranian retaliation for Iraqi attacks near the Iranian oil terminal. The KC-10 and several smaller KC-135s would also enable US fighter-bombers, based on carriers in the Arabian Sea, to attack Iranian targets in the northern Gulf. US intelligence and aerial refuelling of Saudi jets are probably indispensable for operations by the Saudi air force such as the shooting down of two Iranian jets over the Gulf in the summer of 1984. In late February 1984, a US Navy destroyer fired anti-aircraft missiles against Iranian patrol aircraft.³¹

Long-standing US regional designs have received an unexpected boost by the war. Saudi acquiescence to American plans in general is well-known; however, the tanker war provided Washington with an

³⁰ President Reagan declared that an '... enemy's commerce and trade is a fair target', which seemed to condone Iraq's attacks on tankers docking at Kharg Island. But the President said that Iran's attacks against ships of Iraq's allies placed its tactics 'beyond bounds'. *Washington Post*, 1 June 1984.

³¹ See Fred Lawson, 'The Reagan Administration in the Middle East', *MERIP Reports*, 14(9) November–December 1984, p. 29.

opportunity further to enhance its military ties with Riyadh in a way hard to imagine had the region been at peace.

The fighting has encouraged Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to collaborate more closely than ever before with US naval, air, and intelligence activity. After four years of pressure, the Reagan Administration has succeeded in building an integrated regional air defence system according to US specifications. In June 1984, Kuwait agreed to buy \$475 million-worth of air defence equipment that could link Kuwait with Saudi and US systems. The centre-piece of the GCC's air defence system are the five US AWACS planes sold to Riyadh in 1981. Both Washington and Paris have successfully promoted further sales of air defence systems in the wake of stepped-up fighting.³²

On the surface, it seems as if Washington's allies were restraining US military involvement in the conflict. The Reagan Administration insisted that US intervention on behalf of Saudi Arabia must be contingent on a public invitation and full access to military bases in the Gulf states. The region's governments, however, sensitive to the domestic political costs of an apparent alliance with the United States, have rejected outright acceptance of the US offer.³³ Despite large arms purchases, joint planning, naval manoeuvres and plans by the GCC to set up a regional rapid deployment unit of 10,000 to 13,000 troops; and the Saudi extension of 'its' military zone (the 'Fahd line') into international airspace over the Gulf, the Gulf governments have exercised a relatively high degree of restraint about engaging directly in military combat.

However, the United States already has a substantial presence in the Gulf. In the absence of open collaboration by the Gulf states, the United States has continued to pursue its logistical preparations for the US Central Command, formerly the Rapid Deployment Force. US plans rely on existing bases in Oman and Diego Garcia in the Arabian Sea. Regular flights of US C-48 cargo jets into Gulf airports suggest that the United States has been pre-positioning considerable amounts of

³² In January 1984, France announced the sale of a \$4.5 billion mobile system of Shahine anti-aircraft missiles to Saudi Arabia; the United States may sell a similar system soon. Saudi Arabia 'is in the process of building up the most advanced air defence system of any Third World country'. The total cost of the command, control, communications, and intelligence system is estimated at over \$12 billion. *SIPRI Yearbook 1984* p 108.

³³ They also refused a British offer to put its fleet in the Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea at the disposal of these states in order to protect shipping traffic. Al-Maaghi, 'Of Stingers and Sams', *op cit*, p 8.

military equipment and supplies.³⁴ Continuing war games, such as 'Operation Bright Star', serve as rehearsals of a joint intervention by US forces and troops of allied Middle Eastern states.

Although the numbers are shrouded in secrecy, a substantial number of present and past US military personnel aid the Saudi military effort. In 1977, approximately 10,000 Americans in Saudi Arabia were involved in military activities. The number may have increased since then, as ever larger amounts of more sophisticated weaponry and munitions are being imported. This close military relationship suggests that the bases built and operated by the US are designed to serve as a potential arsenal that could swiftly be used by US forces in the event of a crisis.³⁵ In any case, the Saudis continue to finance base construction far in excess of their own limited needs or capacities. The existing US military presence makes a formal Saudi invitation to the United States relatively unnecessary, but an official Saudi request would bolster the Reagan Administration's effort to overcome Congressional limitations on the size and quality of US operations in the region.³⁶

US military opportunism has not been in the least constrained by the straightforward, clear principles that wisdom would call forth from US diplomats: to reinforce the international norm prohibiting aggressive use of force, to avoid a US exacerbation of the killing, and to reduce, rather than increase, the danger of escalation. Instead of these, three quite different constraints have limited US military activities so far: 1) Washington seeks to avoid a more permanent alienation of Iran, the prime 'political prize' in the Gulf region where expanded US military influence will be sought in the future. This desire highlights the tactical nature of Washington's new relationship with Iraq; 2) the Reagan Administration intends to prevent a strain in the military alliance with Israel which opposes rapprochement not only between Baghdad and

³⁴ Stork and Wenger, 'US ready to intervene', *op cit*, p 47, based on a report in *The Times* (London), 8 June 1984.

³⁵ Stork 'The Carter Doctrine' *op cit*, pp. 10-11. The 1977 estimate of force levels is taken from *U.S. Arms Policies in the Persian Gulf and Red Sea Areas*, House Committee on International Relations, Staff Survey Report, Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, December 1977, pp 8-9. Pentagon planners tacitly assume US access to Gulf military facilities in the event of a crisis.

³⁶ According to the Congressional Research Service, the notion that US forces require an invitation before going to the Middle East 'is inconsistent with [Defense Guidance] documents which say that the [Central Command] forces must be capable of coercive entry without waiting for an invitation.' James P Wooten, 'Rapid Deployment Force', *Congressional Research Service Issue Brief*, No. IB 80027, Updated 16 July 1984, p 4, quoted by Martha Wenger, 'The Central Command: Getting to the War on Time', *MERIP Reports*, 14(9) November-December 1984, p 20.

Tehran, but also between Baghdad and Washington. The administration subordinates cooperation between the United States and Arab governments to the US-Israeli 'strategic consensus';³⁷ 3) Washington maintains a cosmetically pleasing public pretence of neutrality to disguise efforts to expand the US military presence without blatantly offending sceptical members of Congress, the US and the world public.

The flaws in US diplomacy

By basing conflict resolution on an unprincipled trade in arms and military influence, the United States and other nations increase the risk of a wider war and damage future prospects for lasting peace. Although almost all parties want to prevent its expansion, they short-sightedly give less priority to this goal than to expanding their own military and economic fortunes in the region. The supposed benefit of letting the current war linger in order to exhaust and preoccupy two unruly governments is small compared to the dangers such policies encourage. In addition to the continuing human suffering, should Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, and subsequently the United States or, less directly, the Soviet Union be drawn into the fighting, the conflict could quickly bring world-wide implications.

The stalemated war not only continues to kill large numbers of people, threaten shipping and civilian air traffic, destroy vast amounts of property in Iran and Iraq, and undermine international norms against use of poison gas and inhuman treatment of prisoners of war; it not only broadens the range of military targets to such crucial civilian installations in the Gulf states as oil fields, refineries, petrochemical facilities, and desalination plants. For the belligerents and their neighbours alike, the fighting also perverts economic development,³⁸ increases indebtedness, deepens hatred and prejudices, entrenches animosities that will make future peace and stability far more difficult to achieve, and inhibits the growth of political cultures congenial to democracy. All of this occurs in precisely the area of the world where

³⁷ For a detailed discussion of these considerations during the first Reagan term see Lawson, 'Reagan Administration', *op cit*, pp 27-34.

³⁸ Probably the most neglected area in all countries concerned, despite its vital importance, is agriculture. In Iran, for example, the deficiencies under the Shah have been perpetuated by the clergy government: food imports had risen above \$3 billion in fiscal year 1982-3 and were predicted to approach the staggering figure of \$5 billion during 1983-4. See B A Sharraf, 'Gulf War drains Iran's foreign reserves', *Arabia* 4(37) September 1984, p 56.

the United States professes to be most concerned about avoiding future wars.

Many years of US military preparation for unrest in the Gulf now seem to have been years of self-deception about the utility of force. When the need for peace and stability is at hand, no effective way can be found to use the \$15 billion in weapons sold to the Shah of Iran in the 1970s, the equally large arms shipments to Saudi Arabia, the enormous military assistance to Egypt and Israel, and the extensive US naval presence in surrounding waters. Nor have the Soviet arms sold to Iraq ensured its loyalty to Moscow any more than similar shipments to Egypt in the 1950s and 1960s guaranteed Cairo's links to the Kremlin.

Although military ties do not assure lasting allies for either Moscow or Washington, they do force non-military procedures, influences, and values into a role of relative insignificance both within and between the societies in the region. It matters less who arms whom than that, together, Moscow and Washington, followed by their friends in France, West Germany and North Korea, are militarising Middle Eastern international relations at great cost to their own self-interest and to the lives and well-being of all people in the region.

Expanded military arsenals, more deeply entrenched military organisations, and continued social endorsement of violence sets the stage and provides the military means for future armed conflicts. The current war began and has been fought to a large extent with weapons acquired under procurement programmes initiated in the 1970s; this pinpoints the urgent need to end the ever-escalating spiral of the Middle Eastern arms race now, to avoid fuelling the fires of war in the 1990s.

The more the United States succeeds in expanding its military influence in the short run, the more it will fail in achieving security in the long run. Recent experience in the Middle East shows that when the United States flexes military muscle in the Middle East, the Soviet Union becomes more determined to extend its military arm to counter any attempted US embrace of the region.³⁹ From time to time the United States and the Soviet Union have each armed the other's former client. Weapons of both US and Soviet origin are now used on both sides of the Iran-Iraq war.

³⁹ Analyses of the US-Soviet Conventional Arms Transfers talks of 1977-8 indicate that Moscow was prepared to make significant concessions in return for US restraint in areas which had the greatest potential for a superpower confrontation, especially the Middle East. See Klare, 'Soviet arms transfers to the Third World', *op cit*, p 31.

As Moscow's attempts to restrain Iraq have proved ineffective, the Soviet leadership has tried to adjust its policies:

- The Soviet Union at first objected to Iraq's invasion of Iran, even though Iraq was a Soviet ally and the USSR had supplied the overwhelming share of Iraq's arms. The Soviet leaders even cut off military supplies to Iraq because of their desire not to offend Iran and their reluctance to see Soviet arms used in an act of aggression. While trying to avoid choosing sides in the conflict, Moscow nevertheless offered to supply Iran with major weapons systems. Tehran rejected direct supplies, but received Soviet-manufactured arms through Eastern European countries, Syria, Libya, and North Korea, presumably with the Kremlin's consent.⁴⁰

- Iran not only rejected the Kremlin's overtures, but renounced the 1921 Treaty of Friendship, cancelled construction of a second natural gas transit pipeline, increasingly condemned Soviet regional policies, and ruthlessly cracked down on the Tudeh party. Thus rebuffed, Moscow, during part of 1982, adopted a policy of real neutrality, calling the war 'senseless' and 'fratricidal'. Soviet commentators criticised Iran's behaviour toward the Soviet Union, but not Tehran's role in the war.⁴¹

- More than anything else it has probably been Western efforts to replace Soviet ties to Iraq with those of their own that caused Moscow to reaffirm its relationship with Baghdad and resume large military exports. In August 1982, the Soviet Union abandoned its stance of

⁴⁰ See Dennis Ross, 'Soviet views toward the Gulf War', *Orbis*, 28(3) Fall 1984, pp 437-47. According to another account, the Soviet Union, through the Tudeh Party, passed Iraqi war plans to Tehran in what was a clear expression of Soviet disapproval of Saddam's confrontationist policies. Eric Rouleau, 'The war and the struggle for the state', *MERIP Reports* 11(6) July-August 1981. North Korea has provided an estimated 40 per cent of the arms bought by Tehran during 1982. See Shahram Chubin, 'The Soviet Union and Iran', *Foreign Affairs* 61(4) Spring 1983, p 935.

⁴¹ If any opportunity arose Moscow would probably still trade its alliance with Iraq for a closer relationship with Iran, with which the Soviet Union shares a long border. Some analysts contend that a split developed within the Kremlin: those officials criticising the tilt toward Iraq want to improve relations with Iran, and fear that Baghdad may become emboldened enough to risk an escalation of the war. See Ross, 'Soviet views', *op cit*, p 442-3. The fear of a US-backed, pro-Western coup continues to dominate Soviet policy toward Tehran: on balance, the present government remains preferable. By concluding transit agreements with Tehran that allow the passage of Iranian natural gas and other goods otherwise trapped in the country after the outbreak of the war with Iraq, Moscow had hoped to expand at least economic, if not political cooperation with Tehran. Economic cooperation has fallen short of Soviet expectations, but trade between the two countries nevertheless had reached a record \$1.1 billion in 1981. See Karen Dawisha, 'The USSR in the Middle East', *Foreign Affairs* 61(2) Winter 1982-83, p 447 and Chubin, 'The Soviet Union', *op cit*, p 937.

cautious neutrality in the war and delivered extremely large arms shipments to Iraq—amounting to approximately \$2.5 billion in the first half of 1984 alone—and extended roughly \$1 billion worth of new credit.⁴² That Iran was utterly unresponsive to Soviet overtures and eventually pushed Iraqi troops back on their own soil may also have been an important consideration in Soviet decisionmaking: the spectre of a string of radical Islamic governments along the Soviet periphery owing their allegiance to a victorious Khomeini regime must have been a disturbing scenario. Yet the West and the Saudis would probably stave off an Iraqi defeat without Moscow's aid. Thus, the fear that without new Soviet arms shipments Iraq might move further into a Western military orbit has probably been paramount in Soviet calculations.

Despite Moscow's uneasiness about the loyalty of its Iraqi client,⁴³ Soviet restraint in the supply of arms seems unlikely in the face of the Western scramble for arms sales and influence.⁴⁴ Several developments illustrate the intensity of the East–West competition. France, now Moscow's foremost competitor in the Iraqi arms market, has sold Baghdad \$5.6 billion-worth of military equipment since the war began, equivalent to about 40 per cent of total French arms exports.⁴⁵ France sought to supplement its weak competitive position in civilian

⁴² 'Genscher puts "Look West" case', *Arabia* 4(37) September 1984, p. 40. This amounts to half the value of military shipments that Iraq received from the USSR between 1970 and 1979. See Klare, 'Soviet Arms Transfers to the Third World', *op cit*, p. 30. Some sources reported even higher Soviet credit commitments: David Ottoway wrote that the USSR extended \$2 billion in long-term loans at easy credit terms for various economic projects in Iraq. See 'Soviets seek better Persian Gulf ties', *Washington Post* 21 July 1984.

⁴³ Soviet leaders have felt uneasy about the erratic policies of the Hussein regime for years, particularly concerning Baghdad's purging of the Iraqi Communist Party. Nevertheless, 'Moscow . . . has often felt compelled to expand an arms-supply relationship it would have preferred to restrain in order to maintain some leverage over client behaviour.' Klare, 'Soviet arms transfers to the Third World' *op cit*, p. 29. The current rapprochement between Moscow and Baghdad is an expression of shorter-term convergence of interests, and it is therefore not unlikely that an open break could develop later.

⁴⁴ Iraq has for several years been diversifying its sources of supply to receive higher-quality equipment than it could get from the USSR. The Soviet share of Iraqi military imports has declined to 63 per cent in 1979 from 95 per cent in 1972. See Adeed I Dawisha, 'Iraq: the West's opportunity', *Foreign Policy* 60(2) Winter 1980–81, p. 136. The Iraqi Baath party paper, *Al-Thawra*, made the dependency on Soviet weapons responsible for alleged Soviet interference in Iraqi and Arab domestic policies. In accordance with this finding, the Iraqi Minister of Information stated in an interview with *Al-Nahar* on 21 June 1980 that Iraq would no longer seek weapons exclusively from the Soviet Union. See Karen Dawisha, 'USSR in the Middle East', *op cit*, p. 445.

⁴⁵ Hiro, 'Chronicle', *op cit*, p. 11. In comparison, French arms sales to Iraq during 1978 and 1979 amounted to \$2.2 billion. See Adeed I Dawisha, 'Iraq', *op cit*, p. 136. The first large-scale French shipment consisted of some 60 Mirage F-1s, worth \$1.6 billion, in 1977. See Klare, 'Soviet arms transfers to the Third World' *op cit*, p. 30. The value of military sales after 1980 expressed in US dollars understates the volume increase in shipments, since the French franc has considerably depreciated in value against the dollar in those years.

commercial markets with rising military sales. The French government may be unwilling to agree to any substantial arms curtailment out of fears that it could lose other lucrative arms markets, particularly in the Arab world, if it proves to be an unreliable supplier.

Iraq's gradual reorientation toward the West also finds expression in the decreasing importance of trade with the Soviet-bloc nations (falling from 26 per cent to 10 per cent of Iraqi imports between 1972 and 1978) and the simultaneous rise in the significance of imports from OECD countries increasing from 51 per cent to 80 per cent over the same years.⁴⁶ By 1979, Japan's imports to Iraq (\$1.6 billion) alone were more than twice those of all Eastern-bloc nations. Baghdad's import bill from West Germany, the second largest trade partner, amounted to \$1 billion the same year.⁴⁷ By 1981, Iraq's total trade with the Eastern bloc amounted to only \$499 million, compared to \$19.1 billion in trade with the Western industrial countries. Western exports were even larger in 1980 (\$27.7 billion in 1980), when Iraq's oil revenues were much higher.⁴⁸

The rationale for this trend in trade relations is obvious: the advanced capitalist nations have much more to offer to an oil-rich country that is embarking on an ambitious development programme than does the Soviet Union. Since, in addition, the USSR offers no potentially large market for Iraqi oil and could not make desired 'hard' currency payments anyway, links with the West are likely to become stronger.⁴⁹ After Iraq succeeded with the nationalisation of its oil industry under Soviet protection against possible Western reprisals, Baghdad's interest in maintaining close ties with Moscow has waned. The unravelling of a relationship in which Moscow has invested so much must be truly discomfiting to the Soviet leaders.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ *International Yearbook of Trade Statistics*, Vol. 1, New York, 1981, p 48; quoted by Robert Soeterik, 'Het Boomerangseffekt van de Iraaks-Iraanse Oorlog' (The Boomerang Effect of the Iraq-Iran War), *Derde Wereld* (The Netherlands) (February 1984), p 18.

⁴⁷ Stork 'The War in the Gulf', *op cit*, p 17 and Adeed I Dawisha, 'Iraq', *op cit*, p 136.

⁴⁸ Karen Dawisha 'USSR in the Middle East', *op cit*, pp 444-5.

⁴⁹ As Iraq's President, Saddam Hussein, has explained: 'I believe America has three fundamental interests in the region—commercial trade, improved economic relations and keeping countries from being attacked by [the Soviet Union]. These three considerations can be fulfilled. Take technology and expertise. Do these exist in the Soviet Union or in America? I will answer you. The technology we require exists in the United States, or in Europe and Japan.' Quoted from an interview with *Time* in July 1982, in *ibid* pp 444-5.

⁵⁰ In reaction to Western advances in Iraq, Moscow developed a new desire to strengthen relations with Baghdad after a period of distrust and estrangement. The general atmosphere and trade exchange did improve: in the first nine months of 1984, the trade volume between the two countries doubled compared with the period January–September 1983. 'Soviet trade with West in surplus', *Financial Times* (London), 2 January 1985. A clear expression of these improved ties

Parallel to Iraq's growing ties with the West, Baghdad has embarked on a pragmatic course of moving closer to Saudi Arabia and the other conservative Arab states, particularly Jordan. The Iraqi government has sided with those countries in a number of inter-Arab dissensions. This role is being cemented by Iraq's growing financial dependence on Saudi Arabia and other members of the GCC.

Western leverage over Iran, in contrast to Iraq, is more limited, but far from non-existent. Tehran is heavily dependent on imports from both West Germany and Japan.⁵¹ However, most current Western diplomatic activities remain so partisan and so much in the realm of economic profiteering as to undermine their effectiveness in bringing peace. The West Germans are using their economic leverage to orient Iran toward the West. After the West German Foreign Minister, Hans Dietrich Genscher, returned from a trip to Tehran, there were reports that Iran might consider some association with the European Economic Community. Western industrial corporations are eager to supply future Iranian needs in the heavy industry and energy sectors.

Tehran's increasingly embattled military position, reflected in its recent efforts to re-initiate contacts with Moscow and non-aligned and Western nations, presents an opening for an even-handed diplomatic initiative to scale down the fighting and get talks started between the belligerents. Because Iranian leaders feel that the international community has treated them unfairly in failing to take stronger stands against the Iraqi invasion and use of poison gas, and that they earlier had been victimised by the Western role in bringing the Shah to power and keeping him there, any policies which evoke feelings of inequitable treatment perpetuate a climate that makes a negotiated end to the war

was the announcement that the Soviet Union would build a nuclear power plant for Iraq. See William Drozdiak, 'Iraq to get Soviet nuclear reactor amid signs of better ties', *Washington Post*, 23 March 1983, p. A1.

⁵¹ West Germany is Tehran's foremost trading partner, exporting roughly \$3 billion worth of goods to Iran in 1983, which even surpasses exports to the country under the Shah's rule. German imports from Iran declined from about \$2 billion in 1978 to only \$618 million in 1983.

Japan also has significant trading ties with Tehran; it exported \$1.4 billion to Tehran, but took \$4 billion in Iranian imports during 1983. See Pauline Jackson, 'Competing for a slice of Iranian trade', *The Middle East* (121) November 1984, p. 31. Iran is arguing that West Germany has to increase its oil purchases before it can be allowed to participate in future Iranian investment projects. Tehran's only leverage is to exploit the competition between German and Japanese firms for the Iranian market; companies from these two and other industrial countries are unwilling to restrict sales to Tehran for fear of losing access to the large Iranian domestic market.

US exports to Iran are only about one-seventh of the pre-revolutionary level: in 1983 they were put officially at \$190 million, but indirect trade may be many times higher than this figure. Iranian exports to the United States in the same year were worth some \$1.2 billion. See 'The Gulf, the war and US policy', *Great Decisions '85 op cit*, p. 32.

impossible. Tehran's leadership still seems hostile to suggestions of ending the war as long as Hussein remains in power, but it has expressed interest in measures to prevent the war from spreading. That is the interest that the United States should seize upon as the opening step in a negotiated curtailment and then total halt to the fighting.

The need for multinational initiatives

Diplomatic initiatives by the UN Secretary-General have been handicapped by the prevailing climate of international indifference. In addition, mediation efforts by Islamic and other non-aligned governments, as well as by Western countries and Japan, have all failed either because they were unbalanced or because in acting separately their motives have been subject to misinterpretation and their individual influence and leverage have been too limited. A more broadly multilateral, principled approach would be more promising. It should be based on principles of free transit for all non-military shipping and strict reciprocity among belligerents, regional governments, and extra-regional parties. It should aim to reduce and eventually eliminate outside interference in regional conflicts. A new, more effective approach emphasises that it is in the long-term interests of outside powers to end the war, even though they perceive a short-term interest in allowing it to continue.

As the preceding analysis has shown, arms transfers and military threats undermine peace and stability in the long run; they do not keep client regimes in power; they are likely to induce rather than discourage Soviet involvement in the region; and they are not accountable for the flow of oil, which has continued relatively unimpeded despite the militarisation of the Middle East, while developments might yet take place—as the very consequence of militarisation—that will indeed threaten the West's oil supply.

To be acknowledged as a sincerely neutral arbiter, the United States would have to abandon its effort to enlist Middle Eastern nations in support of its quest for global military dominance. If there is a threat to the survival of pro-Western governments it comes not primarily from the Soviet Union but from internal social forces that seek to transform their own political, economic, and religious life. Indeed, the Soviet Union has expressed interest in establishing a non-interventionary code of international conduct in the Middle East. US and Soviet efforts to establish military ties with Middle Eastern governments often increase

the indigenous opposition to them. There is little that any outside power can or should do to stem the tide of internal change, nor is it likely that the superpowers could gain from interference for a protracted period—this, after all, is the central lesson of colonialism and imperialism in the Middle East. Thus, to increase the security of all parties concerned, it is necessary to develop an international code of conduct that will dampen the military competition and establish a non-interventionary regime.

Initiatives on arms control

The United States should undertake a multilateral effort to establish international restraints on the export of arms and the provisions of further military or financial aid to both belligerents.

When it has really tried, US success in stopping its allies from supplying Iran with arms and spare parts demonstrates that, given sufficient political will, Washington can help to slow the flow of arms into the Gulf region. The United States should press France and other suppliers to stop military shipments to Baghdad as well.⁵²

Although there is a flurry of activity by private arms manufacturers and dealers which is hard to control, the original source of those weapons is most often the governments of nation states. Export licences for military goods should be granted much more restrictively than is the practice now. A significant dent in the inflated arms market could be achieved through a firm commitment by the major supplier states to curtail military shipments.

If the United States encouraged the Soviet Union as a diplomatic equal to help to dampen down the conflict, Moscow might assist the effort to curtail arms exports. Both superpowers are less interested in the war itself than in the political trajectory of the governments in Baghdad and Tehran. Moscow has recently revived its long-standing call for an international peace conference that would involve both the US and the USSR.⁵³ Indeed, the Soviet leadership has continually expressed interest in a multilateral effort to solve the conflicts in the Middle East. Although it is allied with Iraq, the Soviet Union has been critical of both belligerents: of Iraq because it started the war, and of

⁵² The long period of hesitation before the French government finally gave the green light for delivery of the Etendard bombers and Exocet missiles to Iraq shows that an opening for such considerations indeed exists, and that it needs to be strengthened.

⁵³ Seth Mydans, 'Assad is in Moscow on visit; Soviets more active in Mideast', *New York Times*, 16 October 1984. Washington, however, never responded to Moscow's proposal.

Iran because it carried the war into Iraq. It is an appropriate place for Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev to cooperate in dampening down the conflict and demonstrating their avowed seriousness about peaceful conflict solution. A successful US-Soviet venture to de-escalate a war and bring a cease-fire would demonstrate that Third World conflicts need not always be exacerbated by the East-West conflict. It would set a precedent that might help to resolve other conflicts.

Some analysts have suggested that the current Soviet policy of tilting toward Iraq may in effect have been implemented to gain leverage over Iran. A protracted war, in which Tehran faces an opponent supported by both superpowers and numerous other states, may make the ruling clergy desperate enough to seek support from Moscow, which it considers the lesser of two evils.⁵⁴ This argument lacks plausibility. Soviet leverage with both combatants remains very tenuous. Moscow cannot expect to gain from switching its support back and forth. The Soviet leadership would be likely to help end the war if 1) the West does not gain influence in the region at Moscow's cost; 2) the spread of hostile Islamic regimes at its southern border is not encouraged; and 3) a more nearly equal role for Moscow as a broker in Middle Eastern affairs is recognised.

Moscow's diplomatic concern goes beyond the Iran-Iraq conflict itself. The competing claims to Soviet support by its adversarial clients—on the one hand Iraq, and on the other Iran's allies Syria and Libya—amount to a serious test of Soviet credibility and friendship.

Syria, one of Moscow's key allies and an important component of establishing peace in the region, appears to be rethinking its attitude toward the war. For several reasons, an international settlement that limits the flow of arms to the belligerents and ends the war might serve Syria's interests.

In the political realm, President Hafez al-Assad's claim to leadership in the Arab world is being badly damaged by Syria's increasing isolation. Together with Libya, it is the only Arab country that is siding with Iran in the Gulf war. A crucial Syrian role in terminating that war—reminiscent of its role in the Lebanon conflict—may enhance Assad's standing.

⁵⁴ See, for example, Ross, 'Soviet views', *op cit*, p 445. Proponents of this view point out that the Iranians suddenly changed their mind about improving relations with Moscow after the Soviet Union had resumed military supplies to Iraq. Sayed-Mohammed Sadr, Director-General of the Iranian Foreign Ministry, visited Moscow in early June 1984, urging the Kremlin to reduce military aid to Baghdad, and expressing interest in improving ties.

Militarily, the Syrian leadership may be content that the war prevents the Iraqi rulers from confronting Damascus; but an adversarial relationship with Baghdad is not desirable while Damascus faces continued Israeli hostility. Moreover, Damascus and Baghdad have long been rivals for deliveries of Soviet weapons. As long as the war continues, the Soviet Union may assign priority to Iraq over Syria in receiving arms.⁵⁵ Of course, the country's participation in the accelerating regional arms race has compounded the domestic social and economic difficulties.

Finally, the continuation of the war is not helping Syria economically. In closing the Iraq-Syria pipeline Syria has deprived itself of an important source of income. Before the war, one-third of Iraq's oil exports flowed to Syrian port terminals and refineries, earning Syria some \$30-40 million per year.⁵⁶ As Baghdad constructs and expands a number of alternative lines for exporting its crude oil through Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and possibly Jordan, it is clear that Syria will lose its former income and small leverage over Baghdad, once those new pipelines begin to operate. If Iraq then chose not to reopen the Syrian line, Damascus would lose all future transit fees. Reopening the Syrian pipeline would help to reduce the antagonism between Baghdad and Damascus, reduce Iraqi incentives to continue assaults on tankers, and thus to help to de-escalate the war.⁵⁷

In what is probably a reflection of these concerns, in June 1984 the Syrian President sent his brother Rifaat to Moscow to discuss ways to

⁵⁵ From 1978 to 1982, Iraq received arms worth \$6.5 billion (15 per cent of all Soviet weapons exports), only to be topped by Syria with supplies worth \$8.2 billion (18 per cent; Soviet re-supplies to Damascus after its military defeat by Israel in 1982 account for a major share of this huge sum). Calculated from *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers op cit*, p 97. In the period from 1975 to 1979, it was Iraq that received the largest share of Soviet supplies, with Syria in second position. See Klare, 'Soviet arms transfers to the Third World', *op cit*, p 28.

⁵⁶ So far, however, France, the Soviet Union and Iraq's Arab allies have been unsuccessful in trying to persuade Damascus to reopen the pipeline. Damascus's non-cooperative stance is bolstered by its March 1982 agreement with Iran, under which Syria receives 180,000 barrels of oil per day, more than half of which is free of charge. This has offset Syria's loss of transit fees. See Shaul Bakhash, *The Politics of Oil and Revolution in Iran*, Washington DC: Brookings Institution, 1982, p 26.

⁵⁷ The Baath regime in Baghdad is similarly economically dependent on its rival in Damascus: 'Syria's dams and irrigation policies can control the water of the Euphrates on which Iraq depends for its dates and other crops.' Wright, 'Implications', *op cit*, p 284. Recognition of such mutual dependencies might, through more constructive and imaginative diplomacy, be used toward Iraqi restraint in the current war and possibly to improve Damascus-Baghdad relations. It seems, however, that by the expanding Jordanian-Iraqi economic ties Baghdad is trying to reduce its dependence on Syria.

end the war.⁵⁸ Syria reportedly has also sought Iranian cooperation to terminate hostilities.⁵⁹

Unlike Damascus, the ability of either Cairo or Tripoli to further a negotiated end to the war seems limited; Libya's influence in most of the Arab world is negligible, and Egypt is still perceived as too close a US ally to play the role of a credible arbiter.

In contrast, the GCC states can employ enormous influence with Iraq to end the conflict. Although their massive financial support for Iraq has continued unabatedly, the conservative regimes have been anxious to avoid widening the war, reflecting some limits on their support for Iraq. Iraq's warfare could be curtailed if the Gulf states—and, for that matter, Egypt—withdrew or significantly reduced their financial support from Baghdad. The United States and the governments of the Gulf Cooperation Council cannot change Iran's behaviour, over which they have little influence, if they do almost nothing to change Iraq's behaviour, over which they can exert enormous leverage.

Reduction of the superpower presence

The United States itself should substantially reduce its military commitments and presence in the Gulf region. One-sided commitments to oppose Iranian mining of the Gulf while acquiescing in Iraqi attacks on tankers should be terminated. Further, the US government should encourage its allies and invite the Soviet Union and its allies to scale down their military presence also.

US and allied security can be better served by establishing a region free of all outside forces. An uninhibited flow of oil, the major concern of the Western powers, can be more effectively maintained through an even-handed diplomacy and a stabilisation of commercial relations than by the US Central Command in any case. As one Western military analyst in Dhahran, the major Saudi oil centre, explained, the oilfields are 'simply not defensible' through military means. An attack from Iranian airfields across the Gulf, even with AWACS 'planes on the scene, would give a warning time of only ten minutes to the Saudi air force.⁶⁰ Short-range conventionally armed missiles could also easily destroy oil facilities.

⁵⁸ Mydans, 'Assad is in Moscow', *op cit.*

⁵⁹ Apparently Damascus has been asked by other Arab states, notably Saudi Arabia, to use its good offices with the Iranians so they may negotiate a cease-fire. See Ihsan A Hijazi, 'Syrians reported to ask Iranians to soften policies and end war', *New York Times*, 20 November 1984.

⁶⁰ *New York Times*, 23 February 1981. 'Surprising though it may seem in retrospect, until at least the mid-1950s US military planners and policymakers believed that most of the Arabian

To promote peace and stability and to avoid the escalation of local conflicts, the superpowers should agree to a set of reasonable principles that could provide the basis for a mutual non-intervention regime. It is based on the understanding that, far from being a 'zero-sum game', one superpower's restraint holds the benefit of non-interference by the other. The following principles could form the basis for a mutual non-intervention regime:

- to refrain from expanding existing or establishing new military bases in the region;
- to deploy no weapons of mass destruction;
- to send no troops, even if invited, to countries in the region;
- to support international peacekeeping under a multilateral mandate, whenever external forces are required;
- to seek, with states in the region, to maintain genuine nonalignment and non-interference; and
- to support open commerce and trade.

Initially, the non-intervention regime should be focused on the immediate war zone, ie, Iran and Iraq, and be spread successively to include other countries in the region. The aim should be to curb not only external aggravation of the Iran-Iraq war, but also, in the longer run, of other conflicts in the Middle East as well.

Such an agreement appears to be within reach if the United States seeks to include Moscow and all other regional actors in the political settlements.⁶¹ Otherwise, the USSR will persevere in opposing US-sponsored settlements as it has in the past. Any successful peace initiative must avoid both the appearance and the reality of trying to reinforce US or Soviet dominance over the Gulf area. US diplomacy cannot succeed in gaining Soviet support for an arms embargo if it simply opens opportunities for new Western influence in the area.

A general reduction of outside military presence and the renunciation of the use of force as first resort would certainly strike a responsive chord with the Gulf states who are in the frontline of any regional conflict. Their hesitation to give up their relative military restraint and

peninsula and the oilfields on both sides of the Persian Gulf were *militarily indefensible*.' (emphasis in original), Claudia Wright, 'Reagan arms policy, the Arabs and Israel', *Third World Quarterly*, 6(3) July 1984, p 643. Only in the wake of a diminished US influence in the region have officials been again playing with the idea of a military seizure of the oil-fields, and have therefore been trying to circumvent their colleagues' earlier conclusions.

⁶¹ Back in 1980, the Soviet President, the late Leonid Brezhnev, made a declaration concerning outside involvement in the Persian Gulf, in which he embraced those principles. See Sheikh R Ali, 'Holier than thou: the Iran-Iraq war', *Middle East Review*, 17(1) Fall 1984, p 55.

to invite US military forces sprang from vivid recollections of US marines departing from Lebanon in the midst of an escalated, unresolved political conflict, after Washington officials had blown the crisis out of proportion by noisily asserting that 'vital' Western interests were at stake. Ironically, the rapid termination of US use of force in Lebanon, rather than revealing a spineless lack of will, as many hardliners alleged, defined a pattern that helped to avert a widening of the Gulf war. Policies likely to end the Iran-Iraq war will have to be based on this lesson: the scaling down of external military involvement has helped to restrain violence, while the extension of military and financial support by the United States, or other states has widened or threatened to widen the war.⁶²

The use of oil sanctions

The United States should explore with major oil importers the possibility of complementing the multilateral effort to halt arms shipments with a curtailment of oil purchases from Iran and Iraq as long as they remain at war.

The Middle East arms race has been fuelled by the large revenues of the oil-exporting states and the willingness of supplier states to sell them almost any thinkable weapon. There is a direct correlation between oil income and military expenditures:⁶³ a military recycling of petrodollars. In 1983, for example, Iran spent more than 70 per cent of its annual oil revenues for military purposes, and Iraq (in 1982) spent close to 80 per cent.⁶⁴ In fact, Iraq has received a good deal of its weapons supplies from France and Brazil in direct exchange for oil.

⁶² At the outset of the war, Iraq had moved some of its commandos and warplanes to Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Oman, Kuwait, Jordan, and North Yemen. One interpretation of this move was that Iraq wanted to protect its helicopters against an Iranian surprise attack; however, a British intelligence report suggested that Baghdad had pre-positioned its commandos to attack the Iranian port of Bandar Abbas. Such a move would likely have triggered an immediate spreading of the conflict into the Gulf. Under pressure from the outgoing Carter Administration, Saudi Arabia and the other Arab states forced Iraq to withdraw its planes. Thus, this episode suggests that, contrary to conventional wisdom, military restraint—in this case by the US and its Arab allies—indeed helps to limit conflict. See *Newsweek*, 13 October 1980, pp 52, 54.

⁶³ This is graphically demonstrated by a SIPRI chart reprinted in *South* (London) (21) July 1982, p 12. Petroleum revenue in 1973 was some \$25 billion, increasing to more than \$125 billion by 1979, while military expenditures rose from about \$10 billion to \$27 billion over the same period.

⁶⁴ In comparison, the percentage for Saudi Arabia (1983) is 47 per cent, and for Kuwait (1982) about 20 per cent. Calculated from figures reported by Nicholas D Kristof, 'Assessing OPEC's members', *New York Times*, 29 October 1984 (oil revenue) and by al-Maaghi, 'Of Stingers and Sams', *op cit*, p 6 (military expenditure). The military—versus civilian commercial—recycling of petrodollars is evident from the following comparison for OPEC as a whole. While in the late 1970s OPEC's share in international trade averaged at some 15 per cent, the same group of countries received about one-third of global arms transfers. See Robin Luckham, 'Militarisation: the new international anarchy', *Third World Quarterly* 6(2) April 1984, p 367.

The prevailing global oil surplus should not be seen as one of commercial opportunity where oil can be bought at bargain prices, but rather as the right time to curtail oil purchases from the two belligerents until they arrange a cease-fire.⁶⁵ The West has for decades obstructed the use of oil (and other resources) for development purposes in the Third World; it should now act to discourage the use of oil for aggression, repression, and destruction—uses which the Western governments have actively encouraged and supported through arms sales, direct intervention, and the deformation of local political cultures. The purpose of such a boycott is not to discriminate against any nation, or inhibit self-determination or development, but instead to achieve dispute settlement without war.

Sharply reduced oil revenues would limit both regimes' ability to shop for weapons from non-complying government suppliers and private arms dealers. They could not afford to be so obstinate towards serious peace overtures. Curtailment of oil purchases would also inhibit escalation of the war by reducing the advantage either side could expect to gain through assaults on the opponent's oil exports and neutral shipping.

To succeed, this initiative would need to confront these obvious problems:

- Both Saudi Arabia and Kuwait have been selling up to 400,000 barrels of oil per day on behalf of Iraq. If continued, this policy would to a considerable extent undermine the effectiveness of a curtailment of oil purchases. However, Saudi Arabia has already borne the brunt of OPEC's 1985 output reductions; therefore, the Saudis' flexibility in providing Baghdad with additional revenue is somewhat reduced.

- A considerable share of global oil sales is being made through barter. Iran has sold about one-quarter of its oil exports under

⁶⁵ Western countries are not heavily dependent on Iranian and Iraqi oil. West Germany, for example, receives only 3 per cent of its oil supplies from Iran. See 'Was kommt nach Khomeini?' (After Khomeini, What Next?), *Blaetter des Informationszentrum Dritte Welt*, No. 120 (September 1984), p. 29. For the United States, the entire Persian Gulf area accounts for only 3 per cent of its oil imports. See 'The War as Others See it', *Great Decisions '85*, *op cit*, p. 31. Japan is the most dependent on Gulf oil supplies among the industrial countries: 11 per cent of its consumption come from Iran, with another 54 per cent from other Gulf states. See 'Japan and the Gulf. Big spender, small voice', *The Economist* (London), 9 June 1984. But the global oil surplus is so large that even Japanese companies have been able to suspend liftings of Iranian crude without repercussion when they wanted to press Tehran to make price concessions. For a more detailed discussion see Michael Renner, 'Transformation of world oil markets and its impact on Iran's Oil Policies'; Paper presented at the Third Annual Conference of the Center for Iranian Research and Analysis on 'Post-Revolutionary Iran', Rutgers University Camden, New Jersey, 13 April 1985.

counter-trade agreements.⁶⁶ Iraq is also actively bartering. These deals are often very secretive, involve one or more 'middlemen', and would counteract an effort to curtail purchases. However, the largest recipients of bartered oil are usually governments or state companies, which may be more easily persuaded than private firms to comply with a curtailment policy.

- A curtailment of oil purchases would have a disparately greater impact on Iran than on Iraq, for the obvious reason that Tehran's exports are currently surpassing those of Baghdad by a factor of two. This would probably roughly balance the effect of a curtailment of arms shipments, which would hit Iraq harder since in both numerical strength and technological quality, Iraq's weaponry supplies are superior to Iran's.⁶⁷

- Reduced oil income would not only constrain both governments' arms procurement policies, but also affect their ability to 'buy political support' at home. They would be hard-pressed to carry on with civilian projects that improve living conditions for the broad population.

- Moreover, such a policy would have implications reaching far beyond the Gulf war. All major oil-exporting countries can understandably be expected to view a curtailment of oil purchases with suspicion. The industrialised nations have all too often intervened in Third World affairs under misleading pretexts. Britain's oil price cuts, which have caused the latest shock-waves in the world oil market, will only reinforce this suspicion.

A curtailment of oil purchases would therefore almost certainly be perceived as a hostile intrusion in both nations' affairs, and could well lead one or both countries to grow more intransigent toward peace overtures. But if it were clear that curtailment was designed to bring a cease-fire and would end once the fighting stopped, this danger would be minimised.

For all those reasons, it would be absolutely necessary to pledge that once peace is restored, the consuming countries will resume buying oil from Iran and Iraq in quantities at least as large as before the curtailment of purchases and at a fair market price. Further, it would be essential to make clear that the curtailment aimed not to penalise oil producers nor to discourage the use of oil, but instead to prevent the use of force.

⁶⁶ See 'Exports maintained despite difficulties', *Financial Times* (London), Iran Supplement, 1 April 1985, p 12.

⁶⁷ Drew Middleton, 'War In Gulf. Iraqi buildup versus Iranian menace', *New York Times*, 18 October 1984.

Although most Western powers have remained rather complacent about the war, they should see that in the long run the lingering conflict does not further their trading interests nor protect their investments. First, the war's sky-rocketing costs eat away at the belligerents' shrinking oil revenues. A cease-fire would tremendously increase the civilian market for consumption goods in both countries. Second, the devastations of the war call for extensive reconstruction programmes. Reconstruction, and the orders accompanying it, are unthinkable as long as the fighting continues. Development programmes will ensure the recycling of petrodollars just as arms purchases do, but without endangering common security. Third, both Iraq and Iran are facing foreign currency shortages. Beginning in late 1982, Iraqi state organisations were unable to pay obligations to foreign contractors, and prospective contractors were required to secure their own financing. In many cases France, West Germany and Japan guaranteed credits for their companies operating in Iraq.⁶⁸ Both nations would be able to pay in cash for a larger part of their imports once the war ends. Considering the high level of indebtedness, particularly of Iraq, this ought to be a crucial consideration for Western nations.

Multilateral peace initiatives and supply boycotts

The Western countries and the Soviet Union should stop all future deliveries on a credit basis to Iraq and Iran⁶⁹ as long as the war continues. This curtailment should include all equipment that allows the two belligerents to continue the fighting. Such a policy should be combined with a pledge to assist in the post-war reconstruction of the two societies and economies. Because of the crucial importance of outside credits in continuing the war, such a policy would be an additional incentive for Baghdad and Tehran to end it. The fundamental principle underlying all these initiatives is that the benefits of peace clearly outweigh the benefits of war.

⁶⁸ Marion Farouk-Sluglett, Peter Sluglett and Joe Stork, 'Not quite Armageddon: impact of the war on Iraq', *MERIP Reports*, 14(6-7) July-September 1984, p. 28. Iraq now owes about \$3.5 billion to West German companies. See *The Middle East*, October 1984, p. 10. Paris also has a stake in the survival of the present regime in Baghdad: of the \$5.6 billion in military sales and the \$4.7 billion in civilian contracts since September 1980, at least \$7 billion was in the form of loans and credits which might be at risk if the present regime were to be replaced by one strongly under Iranian influence. See Hiro, 'Chronicle', *op cit*, p. 11.

⁶⁹ Since the hostage crisis, virtually no country has extended credits to Iran, forcing Tehran to pay cash for almost all of its international purchases. These totalled \$22 billion in fiscal year 1983. See Mansour Farhang, 'Push Iran, burdened, for peace with Iraq', *New York Times*, 27 July 1984.

The Reagan Administration is unlikely to undertake the proposed initiatives without Congressional and public pressure to do so. Congress could create a forum for greater scrutiny and public discussion of US policies. There is a clear need for Congressional oversight of US military operations in the Gulf region before an unexpected, uncontrollable incident might deepen the US combat role in the region. Under prevailing conditions, the United States may easily get involved in combat without Congress ever declaring war; the Reagan Administration's Lebanon adventure has clearly demonstrated that Congress should not wait to act until US troops are already committed to a loosely defined mission abroad. Congress should therefore hold hearings to discuss how the War Powers Act can be applied more effectively and restrictively than has been the past practice; to consider legislation restricting US credit policy in order to curtail the belligerents' purchases of equipment for military purposes; to obtain clarifications from the executive branch about the scope, purpose, and limits of US military operations in the Gulf area; and to suggest policy guidelines for implementing the non-interventionary principles laid out in this analysis.

The Gulf war has gone through various phases, each characterised by relative advantages of one belligerent over the other. The pendulum of the military balance has swung back and forth: By spring 1981, the initially successful Iraqi offensive turned into a stalemate; Iranian troops started a counter-offensive in March 1982 which by 1984 settled into another stalemate; Iraq's tanker war marked a phase of the war in which Baghdad tried to regain the initiative; after the last round of fighting, neither power seems to have the upper hand. The practical effect has been that all mediation efforts have been turned down, because at various times one side or the other felt confident it could win the war—confident enough to reject peace overtures. As is well known now, this confidence invariably turned out to be a miscalculation.

The lesson to be drawn is that a peace initiative can hope to meet with success only if it seizes the opportunity when both belligerents perceive their chances to win the war or to secure significant military advantages over the opponent as limited or nonexistent. The timing of an initiative plays a crucial role. As Mansour Farhang⁷⁰ has pointed out, during the first twenty months of the war, when the Iraqis were occupying Iran, Tehran's rulers were only asking for a return to the pre-war *status quo*.

⁷⁰ *ibid.*

Then, before Iranian troops threw back the Iraqis into their own territory, would have been a good time for a balanced multilateral peace initiative.

Another such occasion exists now. It is widely assumed that after Iranian ground troops were badly defeated in their March 1985 offensive, Tehran would be more accommodating toward efforts to negotiate an end to the war. Iraq, on the other hand, should be sent a clear signal that the world community is not willing to see the tide of war once more turned against Iranian territory. Baghdad has warned that commercial planes flying in Iranian airspace are in danger of being shot down. Although it bears the danger of yet another twist toward escalation, the Iraqi statement should be seen in proper context: like Baghdad's declaration of the northern part of the Persian Gulf as a war zone in early 1984, this announcement is made not so much because it makes sense militarily; rather it is a message intended to mobilise world opinion to help end the war, a result which the two belligerents are incapable of achieving by themselves.

Also, Iran is clearly trying to draw world attention to the stalemated conflict by raising charges of renewed use of chemical weapons by Iraq and putting the world on notice that it too may acquire the capacity to produce poison gas—as the last resort—if the international community allows Iraq to continue its first use of chemical weapons. Should Tehran also conduct chemical warfare, then the Geneva Convention prohibiting the use of such weapons would be severely eroded. If the world community fails to challenge the use of poison gas with a sense of urgency backed by a comprehensive plan to limit the conflict, it will send a signal to other governments already producing and storing or intending to produce chemical weapons that they can proceed without being considered an outlaw nation. The negative effects will be felt world-wide, and will introduce an alarming unpredictability to future conflicts.

This is where a most important rationale comes into play for multilateral action to end the war: all governments have a stake in upholding rules of the international game that restrain governments against extreme violence even in war. Because these rules become the custom for decisionmakers, they are quite influential. Yet the Iran-Iraq war and the international community's indifference to its prolongation erode these important rules:

- the universal prohibition of aggressive use of force in Articles 1 and 2 of the UN Charter;

- the time-honoured prohibition of the use of poison gas established in the Geneva Protocol of 1925;
- the requirement for humane treatment of prisoners of war established in the Geneva Convention of 1942; and
- the incipient norm banning weapons whose effects are notoriously brutal or indiscriminate in their effect on civilians, as reflected in the Inhumane Weapons Convention of 1981 and other customary rules of warfare.

An appeal merely to foresake a military solution, like the one issued by Washington on 20 March 1985, will fall on deaf ears. Only a comprehensive multilateral peace initiative, coupled with an international effort to prevent the re-supply of arms and to help in reconstruction, will induce both warring regimes to accept a cease-fire in return for a secure future. External powers should do nothing to encourage either Iraq or Iran to expect that it could gain from further intransigence toward mediation efforts.

Although unable to stop the fighting altogether, the world community has on occasions been successful at least in convincing the belligerents to halt some of the worst atrocities of war. A UN-sponsored moratorium on bombardments of the adversary's cities held for nine months. Although it has completely broken down, statements by both belligerents indicate their willingness to return to such an agreement. Again, those atrocities are probably committed in part as a desperate gamble to escape the stalemate and to draw world attention to the continued conflict. This signals that some avenues for influencing the combatants' behaviour do exist if their concerns receive attention.

Of immediate concern to both belligerents is to regain access to their Gulf port and oil facilities, without the constant danger of having to reckon with military strikes against these installations. One indication of this desire was Iran's aborted offer of 15 June 1984 to extend the agreement prohibiting attacks on civilians to shipping in the Persian Gulf. Iraq accepted the offer, but insisted that Iran allow reconstruction of Iraq's oil facilities in the Gulf to proceed unhindered. Iran subsequently refused to give that guarantee and attacks on shipping in the Gulf continued.⁷¹ Obviously, movement on that question would

⁷¹ Iran's parliamentary speaker was quoted as saying: 'We declare to the United Nations that if the Iraqis do not strike in the Persian Gulf, we will not fire even one bullet.' See Ann Florini and Nina Tannenwald, *On the Front Lines. The United Nations' Role in Preventing and Containing Conflict: The Iran-Iraq War*, New York: The Multilateral Project: United Nations Association of the United States of America, 1984, p. 41. Both Iran and Iraq could have probably afforded to be more flexible on this question. Still, both governments apparently hope to gain the upper hand by undercutting the adversary's financing of the war through oil sales.

diminish the threat of escalation, and could be a first step towards a cease-fire.

The visits of the UN Secretary-General, Pérez de Cuellar, in March and June 1984 and April 1985 to Iraq and Iran did address these and other concerns of both combatants, and he has emerged as possibly the only go-between trusted by both sides. But the confidence vested in his person is not enough to bring the belligerents to the negotiating table. His initiative needs the unambiguous support of the world community. The United States could be instrumental in shaping a global forum that would allow the Secretary-General to exert his mediation role unimpeded by the current realities: the unabated and massive supply of arms, the continued extension of credits that sustain the war economy, and the oil purchases that fuel the conflict. A mediation effort that takes place in such a changed environment is likely to have a greater chance of succeeding.

The nature of the two governments and the ideological mobilisation they have used to support their war effort make it absolutely crucial that pressure on them not be exercised in a heavy-handed or one-sided manner. For this would probably push the leaders of either country into a position where—for domestic reasons—they would choose isolation and continued violence over the acceptance of an externally formulated peace formula, which inevitably would be perceived as humiliating. Any approach, therefore, should be conciliatory in tone and nature, applying low-key pressure coupled with positive incentives that would allow both regimes to save face. There must be unequivocal evidence that neither side will be victimised by the international community.

A realistic peace proposal should take into account the domestic dynamics that may work either to perpetuate or de-escalate the war. Baghdad, and more so Tehran, continue the war in part because it generates unusual internal support, legitimises the regime in power, and silences the opposition. Both governments may prefer that the war gradually wind down without publicly acknowledging so. This would allow them to continue to crack down on their critics and to gain breath from the exhaustions of the war. On the other hand, the war mirrors the many domestic conflicts within the two societies, and these may well prolong the conflict.

With shrinking revenues, Baghdad's ability to buy off domestic opposition has been considerably reduced over the past two years.⁷² In

⁷² The Baath regime has traditionally followed a policy of *tarhib* and *targhib* (carrot and stick) in its dealings with the various communities, classes, and opposition groupings in Iraq. The

order to resume or continue popular public projects and improvements in living conditions particularly for the urban and rural poor, Saddam may accept a face-saving cease-fire if he is convinced that he cannot either win or politically survive the war. Although at present it appears that Iraq's weaponry is by far superior to Iran's, Tehran is still strong enough, particularly on the ground, to hold its own against any Iraqi offensive. Without international pressure, the leadership in Baghdad seems content to continue the war at its current slow-moving pace.

Despite the fear of Iraq (and of the GCC states) of Shiite unrest (which was one of the major reasons why Saddam Hussein went to war in the first place), it does not appear that Iraqi Shias currently threaten the survival of the regime in Baghdad. The kind of society that has evolved in Iran seems not to attract Iraqi Shias. Only a small minority of the Shia community 'would actually welcome the prospects of an Iranian victory.'⁷³

Tehran's clergy regime, able to prosecute the war without much outside assistance, may be expected to be less accommodating. Internal contradictions are becoming more apparent, however, with some indications that the rulers in Tehran may become less rigid toward Baghdad. Last year, it was reported that the Iranian Majlis might be given authority to conduct the war, which would somewhat increase the likelihood that the Iranian leadership would take a more conciliatory stand.⁷⁴ Ever since Iranian territory previously occupied by Iraq has

government has in particular embraced a course of modernisation and development which expressly included programmes for the rural and urban areas inhabited by the (largely Shiite) underclasses. Despite undeniable improvements, the low living conditions of many Shiites make them susceptible to the influence of fundamentalist organisations (see footnote 73). Hanna Batatu, 'Iraq's Underground Shi'i Movements', *MERIP Reports*, 21(1) January 1982, pp 3-9. The war has considerably reduced the regime's ability to woo its foes through economic measures. Contracted development projects fell from \$20 billion in 1981 to \$4 billion in 1982. See Farouk-Sluglett, *et al*, 'Not quite Armageddon', *op cit*, p 28.

⁷³ *ibid*, p 25. The Shias' under-privileged position in economy and government cannot be ascribed to a conscious Sunni Baathist policy of discrimination. Nevertheless, after the elimination of the Iraqi Communist Party as a viable forum of organisation for the poor classes, many Shias have found their political home with the growing Islamic fundamentalist movements. The most prominent of these, al-Da'wah al-Islamiyah (The Islamic Call), has lost much of its appeal by its unconditional alliance with, and subservience to, the Khomeini regime in Tehran. This has even worked to exclude the group from a united Iraqi opposition front. Nevertheless, al-Da'wah's rise and radicalisation in the late 1970s—in concurrence with the triumph of the Shia-Islamic revolution in Iran—have made it the prime target of repression, and significantly contributed to the regime's decision to go to war in order to get control over the 'Shia factor'. See Guenter Schroeder, 'Irak—Opposition: Aus der Verborgenheit ins Abseits,' *Blaetter des Informationszentrum Dritte Welt*, No. 121 (November 1984), pp 19-27.

⁷⁴ Cordesman 'The Gulf crisis', *op cit*, pp 14-15. Interpretations of positions taken by different factions within Iran's ruling class and the regular armed forces with respect to the continuation of the war still seem premature, however. Even the various opposition groups (in exile) are split

been recovered, a greater willingness to question the war seems to have developed among the political elite⁷⁵ and the military as well as among the general populace. There definitely is a diffuse form of war-weariness: the economic and human cost of the war has imposed an enormous burden on the country. Yet, the sense of grievance against Iraq remains strong.

Since the Islamic government's fate is tied to whether the war ends on terms perceived as favourable to Iran or not, the domestic circumstances obviously have a great impact on Tehran's willingness to end hostilities.⁷⁶ Also, the degree to which the population's economic needs can be satisfied by the government plays an important role. An end to the war will enable Iran to import more supplies, on which the country is increasingly dependent.⁷⁷ As long as the war absorbs huge amounts of revenue, there is little hope of reviving the Iranian economy.⁷⁸ In the face of the population's gradual apathy and disappointment, the political implications are grave, because the regime rallied popular support through acclaiming the benefits of political and economic independence.

While the war has not basically altered the political *status quo* between Iran and Iraq, the ideological warfare has damaged constructive efforts to transcend and reconcile national, ethnic, and sectarian divisions in the region. The entire pattern of social relations

along the question of relations with Iraq. The Mudjahedin Khalq, the largest resistance group, has entered into talks with the Iraqi leadership with the apparent expectation that a truce would loosen the grip of repression within Iran and, as a result give the opposition some leeway in its organising efforts against the clergy regime. The outlook for such a strategy and indeed for ending the war, however, appear very bleak. See 'Zerstritten und Geschwaecht: Die Iranische Opposition' (Disunited and weak: the Iranian opposition), *Blätter des Informationszentrum Dritte Welt*, No. 120 (September 1984), pp 40-42.

⁷⁵ 'Several prominent clerics, who are concerned about stability in post-Khomeini Iran, have . . . privately asked the Ayatollah to modify his position on the war.' Farhang, 'Push Iran', *op cit.*

⁷⁶ Eric Hooglund, 'The Gulf war and the Islamic Republic', *MERIP Reports*, 14(6-7) July-September 1984, p 37.

⁷⁷ During fiscal year 1983-84, the government pursued an ill-fated expansionary policy by launching a \$170 billion development plan and relaxing import restrictions. Imports rose by 40 per cent in 1983-84 to a post-revolutionary record of \$22 billion. Foreign-exchange revenues for the same year came only to \$18 billion, however. To finance this relatively large trade deficit, the country has delayed payment of bills, currently affecting an estimated \$7 billion. See 'Khomeini's other crisis', *Financial Times* (London), 3 July 1984. These ambitious development projects had to be scrapped, postponed, or revised, creating a situation similar to Iraq's. The persistent foreign-exchange shortage and the immense war costs will unquestionably continue to damage the economy.

⁷⁸ The economy has been stabilised for now, but there are no signs of improvement on the horizon. Factories are operating at no more than 50-60 per cent of capacity, unemployment continues to be high, inflation ranges between 50 and 60 per cent, and real income is declining. See 'Was kommt nach Khomeini?' *op cit.*, pp 27-29.

and of political and economic democracy cannot be separated from the quest for peace.

Although the territorial dispute over the Shatt al-Arab has acquired great symbolic meaning in the overall political-ideological conflict, territorial conquest is not at the centre of dispute. Iraq has never wholeheartedly embraced the idea of annexing Iran's oil-rich Khuzistan province, inhabited by a substantial ethnically Arab population.⁷⁹ Similarly, Iran's war goal is to facilitate the establishment of an Iraqi government amenable to Tehran, not the dismemberment of Iraq. The *status quo ante*—retaining pre-war borders and giving both nations equal navigation rights—appears to be the easiest, most satisfactory solution. It is also compatible with international law and practice. Solving the quagmire of continued conflict between Iran and Iraq is further complicated by the intertwined, but causally independent conflict of the central state in both countries with its respective Kurdish minorities. Another, undeclared war between Iran and Iraq has been and is being fought out largely through Kurdish forces.⁸⁰

In the absence of fundamental political changes within the two societies it is unlikely that human, minority, and national rights, which contribute to a lasting peace, will be respected. To be most effective, diplomacy would demilitarise the political cultures in the region as well as the human mind's perception of ways to resolve conflicts. There is little that external governments can or should do beyond securing an end to the enormous influx of the means of destruction, providing an equitable international forum for mediation, and demonstrating by their example that a determined effort to reduce the role of military force in their own policies is the most effective means for increasing regional security.

⁷⁹ The previously semi-independent emirate of Arabistan was annexed by Iran and renamed Khuzistan by Shah Reza Pahlavi in 1925. See Soeterik, 'Irak', *op cit*, p 2.

⁸⁰ The close interrelationship between the Kurdish war and the Iranian-Iraqi conflict is reflected in the Algiers Pact of 1975, in which Baghdad had agreed to trade its claims in the Shatt al-Arab for Iranian assurances to end support for the Kurdish insurgency in Iraq.

Currently, more than one-third of all regular Iranian ground troops—some 150,000 soldiers—are engaged in battles against Kurdish forces struggling for greater autonomy from Tehran. Militarily, these battles are intimately related to the war between Iran and Iraq on the northern front, although politically of an altogether different nature. See 'Kurdistan—Die Zweite Front' (The second front), *Blaetter des Informationszentrum Dritte Welt*, No. 120 (September 1984), p 43.

Religion and strategy in the Iraq-Iran war

The emphasis that has been given to the role of religion in the Iraq-Iran war by many Western observers reflects the view Iraqi officials themselves have promoted from the start. It is also a view most of Iraq's Arab allies hold. They believe that Islamic fundamentalism, at least in its Iranian Shiite form, is a subversive and expansionist ideology that can only be stopped by force, and that sectarian conflict between Iraq's Sunnis and Iran's Shiites made war inevitable in 1980 and, five years later, impossible to halt. Ever since the Islamic Republic was established, statements by the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and Iranian government officials have helped to reinforce this interpretation.

For those who support an end to the war—for the good of both sides—it is important not to allow the official rhetoric of Baghdad and Tehran to mislead interpretation of what has already happened and what may happen in the future. Accordingly, it is necessary to identify the combination of strategic and tactical reasons—quite apart from the religious factor—that led Iraq's President Saddam Hussein to consider that war was inevitable, and to act pre-emptively as he did. Without taking sides in the conflict, it is also possible to conclude that Iraq's calculations regarding Iran proved to be wrong, and that Saddam compounded his initial miscalculations by prolonging and repeating them.

In this interpretation the emphasis is on the inflexibility of thinking inside the Iraqi Baath Party, and the way in which power inside the Baath, the power that Saddam had fully acquired in 1979, cannot easily or quickly adjust to changing realities outside the party—especially not to the swift changes that occur on the battlefield. Twice in a decade—in the war against the Kurds of the 1970s and in the current war with Iran—this inflexibility has manifested itself in Baghdad, allowing Iranian regimes that have been vulnerable and weak in many ways, to exploit Iraqi misjudgements and impose terms just short of capitulation.

It can be useful, therefore, to consider the Iraq-Iran war from a perspective that neither of the combatants endorsed. According to this

interpretation, religion and religious sectarianism were not important factors in Iraq's decision to go to war—they have become important only after the fact. They have helped to justify the continuation of the war and to sustain Iranian troop morale. Religion provided ideological support to the clerical factions struggling for power in Tehran in 1980 and 1981. Religion has been a potent source of apprehension among Iraq's Arab allies, whose rulers depend on religious legitimacy. For this reason, the religious factor has reinforced the perceptions of both sides in the war, without having much influence on their actions.

The religious factor has also been given great emphasis in the Western press. This does not mean much because the Western media have virtually no influence on the combatants, and because Western reporters have been poorly informed about conditions in both countries.

In the Arab world, the combination of Islam, nationalism and revolution is complex, and varies significantly from state to state, region to region. Islamic fundamentalism, as this is currently understood, has been both a challenge to the Arab regimes, and a reinforcement for them against secular, left-wing opponents. In the past Arab Shiites have threatened the Sunni regimes without any support from Iran; Iranian Shiites have made alliances with Arab Sunnis against local Shiite opposition. In the past, as now, religious sectarianism has been one of the ingredients of conflict, but not the cause.

What is different now is that the Sunni grip on political power is weakening throughout the Middle East. The Shia of Lebanon, for example, have been the major beneficiaries of the civil war since 1976. The Alawite regime of Syria is the predominant power in the Arab world as a whole. Today the Shiite communities of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf emirates enjoy greater leverage than ever before to alter the conditions of economic and political inferiority in which they have been forced to live.

In this context, the Iranian revolution and the rise to power of the Shiite clerics have been helpful to these Arab developments. On the other hand, Tehran's clumsy appeals for sectarian solidarity across the Gulf have increased the repressiveness of the Sunni regimes. This has halted the secular evolution of Arab society from which the Shiites were benefiting. It is nonetheless a myth of the Arab Sunni rulers that the challenge they face from Arab Shiites stems from a conspiracy hatched in Tehran or Qum.

In March 1985 the war was escalated by both sides. Iraq initiated air

bombing and missile attacks against more than twenty Iranian cities and civilian centres; then, on 13 March, Iranian land forces launched an offensive through the Huweiza marshes, aiming for the Baghdad-Basra highway, only to be halted after several days of fierce fighting and driven back by Iraqi artillery, air strikes and gas attacks. In the first week of April the 'war of the cities' was intensified even further by Iranian long-range missile attacks on targets in Baghdad.

The results, according to Iraqi spokesmen and their freshly vocal supporters in Washington, were proof that they had once again seized the initiative from the Iranians, inflicted heavy casualties on their troops and civilians, and demonstrated that the continuing military stalemate cannot serve Iran's advantage. Iraqi officials also appear to believe that the same lessons have been drawn in Tehran, and that there is a widening gap between the largely clerical factions in the Iranian government who support protracted war, and the mostly civilian and professional military factions who are thought to favour a negotiated end to the conflict.

Such convictions on the part of the Iraqis have proved illusory many times in the past. They have been unable to manipulate Iranian policymaking through military means, and their efforts to do this have backfired more often than not; increasing consensus, rather than division, within the Iranian government. Because Iraqi leaders appear convinced they can appeal to non-religious, non-ideological policy calculations in Tehran, it is important to ask three questions about the role religion has played in the course of the war. The questions are these:

- What was the impact of religion on Saddam Hussein's decision to go to war in 1980?

- What role has religion played in Iraq's conduct of the war?

- What part is religion likely to play in the future resolution of the conflict?

The Iraqi decision to go to war

The origins of the Iraqi decision to go to war lie in the events that followed Saddam's succession to the presidency of Iraq in July 1979. There were four crucial steps which Saddam took that made the launching of the war a year later almost inevitable. The first came in late July 1979 when Saddam ordered a purge that began in the Baath party executive and spread to the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), the cabinet, and the upper echelons of the government bureaucracy. A

small number of Shiites was targeted, but most of those purged were Sunnis. The reason for the purge has never been clear, but religious sectarianism played little or no part. Altogether, twenty-two men were sentenced to death, and thirty-three were sent to prison. It was the largest political purge in a decade, and unlike earlier ones in Iraqi history, not a shot had been fired by the erstwhile conspirators. What happened was that Saddam liquidated all those whom he thought posed a threat to his control of the government.

The second step followed immediately afterwards. Saddam accused Syria of instigating a plot against him and ordered the Syrian embassy in Baghdad to be closed. This abruptly terminated a year-long attempt by the Iraqi and Syrian governments and the two wings of the Baath party to reconcile their differences and achieve a partial union.

With the first step, Saddam had secured his grip on the government. With the second he ended any prospect of a challenge from within the Baath party. His control of the armed forces seems not to have been in doubt at the time, although just before the August executions, there had been an unpublicised purge of two dozen officers at the Al-Rashid airbase near Baghdad. The army and the air force were now solidly under Saddam's control.

That left only one wild card—one potential source of threat: Iran. Saddam's assessment of Iran was roughly the same as that of his contemporaries and predecessors in Baghdad. If the two neighbouring states, Iraq and Iran, are internally stable, their land and river border tends also to be stable, without challenges from either side. If either state becomes unstable, however, the border becomes a flashpoint of conflict, dissidents on one side find sanctuary and support across the line, and Baghdad accuses Tehran of meddling, and vice versa.

The meddling has taken different forms over the years. During Iraq's wars against the Kurds, Iran has provided weapons and sanctuary for the Kurdish forces, aided and abetted by the United States and Israel. The Iraqi Baath has also blamed Iran for secretly supporting anti-Baathist organisations of Shiites, whose protests against the government produced sharp repression in 1974, 1977, and early 1979. On the other hand, when the Shah began to face serious domestic challenge in 1977 and 1978, he obliged the Iraqi government to expel the Ayatollah Khomeini from his residence at Najaf.

For Saddam it was natural to anticipate that the instability of revolutionary Iran might lead to fresh trouble with the Kurds and new clandestine activities among the Shiites. It was also natural to expect

that an unstable situation in Iran would attract the heightened concerns of the superpowers. The greater the involvement of the superpowers in Iran, the greater the likelihood of superpower pressure on Iraq.

In these circumstances, Saddam could welcome the overthrow of the Shah, particularly as this weakened American influence in the region. But for his own security, Saddam could not welcome an extended period of internal conflict and civil war across the border. This was an assessment based on long Iraqi experience. It had nothing to do with the sectarian issue as such.

But Saddam's third step *was* a sectarian one. Starting in April 1980 he ordered the rounding up of thousands of Shiites living in southern Iraq. Those of Iranian nationality or those who could not produce evidence of Iraqi nationality were taken into trucks to the border and force-marched into Iran. Meanwhile, membership of several clandestine Shiite organisations was proscribed, and suspected Shiite activists were arrested, imprisoned and shot.

These three steps, the three purges, might have been enough to assure Saddam's political security from internal threats. But in the context of the worsening civil war in Iran, they created an opportunity for Khomeini and the contending factions around him to define their own battles in terms of an Iraqi adversary. Thus, attempts by Iranian Kurds, Azerbaijanis, and other Iranian minorities to secure the rights that the revolution had promised were opposed by the Tehran regime on the ground that they were secessionist movements inspired by Iraq. Khomeini loyalists attacked Iraqi representatives and consulates; anti-Baathist Iraqis were given money, arms, and sanctuary. Iranian gun batteries opened up on Iraqi villages across the land border; there were shooting incidents along the Shatt-al-Arab river.

Thus, the die was cast. Saddam was right in judging that instability in Iran would spill over the border to threaten him. His retaliation made it inevitable that the conflict would escalate, and that he would take sides in the Iranian civil war, exactly as the Iranians were taking sides against him. That left one last step short of war, which Saddam appears to have taken between April and July 1980. This was to support an Iranian military *coup d'état* against the Bani Sadr government. The objective of this coup was to instal Shahpour Bakhtiar, the Shah's last prime minister, as the new Iranian president. Bakhtiar was Iraq's man.

On 10 July 1980, the Tehran authorities announced that they had foiled a plot by units of the air force near Tehran, and by army, navy and police officers based in Khuzistan. Several hundred military men and

gendarmes were arrested and several hundred more were purged. At that point, Iraq began the countdown to war. The invasion of Iranian territory began on 9 September. This was a logical consequence of Saddam's earlier four steps to assure the security of his regime. The war itself was an extension in Saddam's mind of the coup attempt that failed. At the time it appeared an opportunity to alter the military situation along the border to Iraq's advantage when the regular Iranian forces were disintegrating and central authority in Tehran was in turmoil. At the very least, Saddam calculated, he could exploit Iranian weakness to establish a wide *cordon sanitaire* along the border, and end the twelve-month campaign of sporadic skirmishes and shootings. If he were lucky, he thought, and if the Bani Sadr government was as weak as he had been told by Bakhtiar, then perhaps there would be a successful coup in Tehran after all.

The war was a political opportunity Saddam could not pass up. The religious factor in the calculation was relatively insignificant.

The role of religion in Iraq's conduct of the war

Saddam is a very cautious man, and so are members of the Iraqi officer corps. They are a product of modern Iraqi politics, in which the army has been involved in fifty years of putsches. The Baath has learned never to allow military commanders the freedom to deploy or manoeuvre in a way that might threaten the regime itself. This makes for a highly centralised, slow and inflexible system of command. This may be strong in defence, but it is weak in offence. It is poorly adapted for modern tank fighting and for the use of airpower to support a ground assault.

Saddam's conduct of the war in its offensive phase was governed by four assumptions. Each of them proved to be a misjudgement. However, religion played only a very minor part—at least on the Iraqi side.

Saddam's first mistaken assumption was that the Iranian forces were weak. This was an understandable mistake to make. It was obvious in 1980 that the regular Iranian officer corps had been decapitated. The loss of the generals was not as significant as the purge of between one-third and one-half of the field-grade officers from major to colonel. In addition, it was also plain that Iran's most sophisticated weaponry—its planes and missiles—had been disabled by sabotage and the US embargo. Saddam was assured by a stream of Iranian military visitors to Baghdad—most of them the Shah's generals—that the revolutionary

guards were an undisciplined, ill-trained rabble. The same intelligence was communicated by the PLO, which was monitoring the Iranian forces closely and relaying the information to its friends abroad.

What Saddam was told about the Iranian forces was nothing new. He had heard the same thing from his uncle and predecessor, General Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr. As cadets and junior officers, the older Iraqi men remembered the performance of the Iranian forces in 1941. Invading from the south at the same time as the Soviet Army moved from the north, the British had been able to incapacitate the Iranian air force and navy, and force a swift surrender of the army without significant resistance. Saddam thought the Iranian forces would collapse before an Iraqi assault, just as they had forty years earlier.

But history did not repeat itself. The Iraqi attack did not destroy the Iranian air force or navy; the Iraqi forces did not move on Tehran; and the Iranian leadership did not surrender. Although the Iraqis anticipated that the Iranian regulars would not defend the regime, both the revolutionary guards and the regular forces put up a tougher than expected defence. While the religious conviction of these forces was clearly an important part of their morale, and thus of the Iranian staying power, it was a minor factor in the failure of Iraq's offensive to achieve either its military or political objectives.

Saddam's second mistake was to over-estimate the effectiveness of his own forces. His air force failed in the crucial task of crippling the Iranian air force on the ground in the first two days of the war. Enough Iranian aircraft survived for retaliatory bombing missions, for air defence, and for support of ground and naval action. Why the Iraqi air force failed in this first task is not clear. But once it had failed, it was obvious that Saddam had not anticipated the amount of damage which the Iranians could inflict on Iraq's oil and port installations. The failure to knock out Iranian artillery and gunboats compounded the military losses for Iraq on the southern front.

Testimony from Iraqi officers who fled abroad suggests that Saddam explicitly prohibited his armies from pressing home their early advances towards Tehran. He also wanted to avoid protracted battles for the southern Iranian cities in order to minimise Iraqi casualties. Saddam thus sacrificed his early advantages in manoeuvre and firepower. Without air and naval superiority, he blunted his own offensive and gave the Iranians time to regroup, reform their defences, and ultimately to launch their counter-attack. With Kharg Island intact, the Iranians also had the oil revenue to pay for fresh arms and ammunition.

It is not necessary to consider in detail the decisions which Saddam made that, in retrospect, look like colossal miscalculations. It is enough to say that Saddam acted towards his commanders as the Baathis have always acted; he was mistrustful of ever allowing the military any initiative on the battlefield. In the defensive phase of the war, this mistrust was less costly than in the early offensive phase. But by then Saddam had been forced to pay a military and political price that was unimaginable at the beginning. Saddam's error here was exactly the kind of error that a man with his political background is susceptible to making. Politics, not religion, is the key factor.

Saddam's third mistake was to misjudge the Arabism of Khuzistan. Gauging ethnic loyalties is a tricky business in the Middle East. The Israelis are learning today that they must pay a heavy price for misjudging the loyalties of the Shiites of southern Lebanon. So Saddam is not alone—he has General Sharon and General Eytan for company.

Although the population of Khuzistan has traditionally moved back and forth across the border to Iraq, sharing family ties and making the traditional pilgrimage to the shrines of Najaf and Karbala, the Arabs of Khuzistan are not well understood either in Tehran or in Baghdad. The Arab consciousness of the community has been diluted by considerable intermarriage with ethnic Persians. The migration of non-Arab Iranians into the area has also reduced the Arab proportion of Khuzistan's total population. Because of a past history of manipulation of local loyalties by the British, who controlled the oilfields, the Shah had made conscious efforts to co-opt the Arabs or neutralise them.

Saddam should have suspected that the ethnic Arabs of Khuzistan might not align themselves with Iraq after Iraqi forces moved on to their territory. It is true that they had been disappointed with the unfulfilled promises of the revolutionary regime, but this sentiment fell far short of a declaration of secession. Senior Iraqi officials whom I interviewed in 1980 and 1981 told me they had no intention of encouraging the Khuzistani Arabs to secede from Iran, or of incorporating the region into Iraqi territory. It is also clear that there was no demonstrable popular support in Khuzistan for the Iraqi occupation. Considering the destruction and violence that the occupation brought, this is hardly surprising.

But from this lack of pro-Iraqi sentiment, we cannot jump to the conclusion that the Arab Shiites of Khuzistan consciously sided with their non-Arab co-religionists. For one thing, no one is sure what the

sectarian affiliation of the Khuzistan Arabs actually is, and how many Sunnis there may be among them. For another, by the time the Iraqi forces arrived, the ethnic Arabs living there may have been a minority in their own province. The simplest conclusion is that, caught between the Iraqi and Iranian armies, the Arabs of Khuzistan tried to get out of the way, fleeing in the direction of their Iranian national identity rather than in the direction of their Arab ethnic one.

If Iran's oil-exporting facilities had been destroyed as fully as Iraq's, the Iraqi occupation of Khuzistan might have been more purposeful. Instead, the occupation allowed Tehran the opportunity to outmanoeuvre the Iraqis on difficult and hostile ground. The Iraqi commanders who understood this were never permitted by Saddam to improve their position until it was too late.

Saddam's fourth miscalculation lay in his failure to assess properly Soviet reactions to his aggression. When the war began, the Soviet Union was Iraq's principal military supplier, its largest trading partner, and its principal technical adviser on oil production and exploration. Saddam apparently assumed that Moscow would support his move. At about the same time as Iraqi warplanes were failing in their mission to destroy the Iranian air force, Tariq Aziz was in Moscow failing to get Soviet support for the war. Iraqi officials have claimed that they had been stockpiling arms and ammunition to ensure that there would be enough for a six- to twelve-month campaign without the need for resupply. Nonetheless, they had not anticipated the forcefulness with which Soviet officials told them that they were making a big mistake. The partial Soviet arms embargo that followed, combined with the Soviet attempt to stay neutral between Baghdad and Tehran, were a surprise to Saddam. These Soviet moves probably speeded up the ideological re-orientation of the RCC towards the United States. The subsequent *rapprochement* between Moscow and Baghdad and the resumption of arms supplies owes more to the breakdown between Iran and the Soviet Union than to any significant reassessment in Moscow of the wisdom of Iraqi policy.

The Baath party has always had its suspicions of the Soviet Union, and within the RCC there have traditionally been those who represented a relatively tough anti-Soviet line compared with those who put hostility towards the United States first. This has been a fluid situation, and it can change quickly for personal, factional or strategic reasons. Strategically, all Iraqi officials acknowledge the importance of balancing the influence of the superpowers in the region. But among

some of these officials, this has led to naive optimism that they can play Moscow off against Washington and vice versa.

Scenarios for the future

If religion has played only a marginal role in Iraq's decision to go to war and in its conduct of the war, what can be said about the role of religion in the future? It is true that on the Iranian side, religious ideology thoroughly permeates the political factions that have survived the civil war. It is important in legitimising Iran's costly counter-offensives, in justifying the rejection of Iraq's terms for a settlement, and in rationalising the sacrifices the Iranian people must pay so long as the military stalemate is unbroken.

It is also true that Iraq has persuaded its Arab allies that a Shiite breakthrough in the war would threaten the Sunni ruling families from Riyadh to Muscat. But this should not alter the conclusion that the conflict that threatens the Gulf states is not primarily religious in character. It will not be decided on the strength and power of religious or sectarian loyalties.

Two scenarios suggest themselves for the near future of the war and its impact on the Gulf region. Both scenarios assume that Iran will be unable to break through Iraqi defences, and that Iraq will be unable to coerce Iran into agreeing to a settlement through the war of attrition against civilian population targets, tankers and oil facilities in the Gulf. Both scenarios assume that Saddam Hussein will not voluntarily step down, and that if Khomeini dies, his successors will not feel confident enough to end the war on Iraq's current terms.

One scenario might be called a good stalemate; the other, a bad stalemate. Good and bad here are evaluations from the Iraqi perspective, others will have their own evaluations. In the good stalemate, Iraq would steadily expand its capacity to export oil through the enlarged Turkish pipeline and through either the Jordan or Saudi branch lines, or both. Revenue from an additional one to three million barrels of oil a day would remove the need for Saudi and Kuwaiti oil sales on Iraq's behalf, and help to restart development projects that have been slowed down or halted. As Iraq's debts begin to be paid off, credit for new projects would be easier to obtain. Saddam would be able to remove some of the austerity that has been imposed on the domestic economy. There would be more money to reinforce the loyalty of the urban middle class, the southern Shiites, and the Kurds. The pressure

on the leadership from within the party and the military would be relieved. Saddam would survive politically.

In the bad stalemate, Iran would maintain the military pressure, inflicting a daily toll of casualties. Iraq's pipeline alternatives would not generate revenue for domestic use quickly enough to satisfy public demands. There are already indications that none of the new oil pipelines will be completed as quickly as Iraqi officials have forecast, and that some of the most ambitious plans for the Saudi and Jordanian lines may not materialise at all. Even when Iraq's pipeline capacity is operating at greater levels of capacity than now, the Baghdad government may be forced to allocate all of the new revenues to repayment of its accumulating debts, particularly to those states like France, the Soviet Union, and Brazil on which the Iraqis depend for military *matériel*. So far these states, as well as Iraq's principal civil debtors (West Germany, Japan, India, South Korea and Britain), have been patient and flexible in granting deferral of loan repayments. The patience will not last.

The frustrations of the Iraqi officer corps are also likely to grow. The Battle of the Huweiza marshes resulted in at least 20,000 estimated casualties on the Iranian side and Iraqi field commanders explain the initial territorial penetration by the Iranian forces as the result of an intentional feint by the Iraqis, the better to trap the Iranians in a 'killing ground' from which they could not escape. Nonetheless, the evidence suggests that the Iranian offensive inflicted sizeable Iraqi casualties—perhaps as many as 7,500 to 10,000. In human terms, that represents something of a pyrrhic victory for Saddam, and not one his commanders would relish undergoing again. Iraqi officers are already conscious that the military independence they have prized has been severely damaged by their losses to Iran, and by the intervention of the United States in the war. Their resort to mustard gas as a desperate measure, and the Iranians' ability to hit major targets within a few miles of the Presidential Palace, ought to be interpreted as indicators of military weakness on the Iraqi side, despite their overwhelming superiority in firepower.

For the first time in its history, Iraq is under almost complete surveillance by a superpower. In the 1960s and 1970s, US listening-posts monitored Iraqi military communications from secret sites in Iran and Turkey. Passes by satellites and spy-planes added further data on Iraqi military deployments. But now US Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft based in south-eastern Turkey and north-

western Saudi Arabia provide the kind of coverage of Iraqi territory that Iraqi military men have naturally resisted in the past. This surveillance increases foreign intervention capability considerably. US basing arrangements in Turkey do the same.

During his visit to Washington in early April 1985, the Turkish prime minister, Turgut Ozal, once again raised with US defence officials Turkey's longtime interest in moving forces into northern Iraq. In part this reflects the historic Turkish claim to the oil-rich region around Mosul which was stripped from Ottoman sovereignty after World War I. In part, also, it reflects the opportunity which Turkish military leaders see to exploit Iraq's military weakness and the ongoing guerrilla war with the Kurds. They would like to occupy a much deeper strip of territory than the one Turkish and Iraqi officials have already agreed to treat as a zone of 'hot pursuit' for operations against the Kurds. For the time being, the US response to Ozal is negative. The Reagan Administration does not want to destabilise Saddam's regime or encourage partition of the country. But US resistance to the Turkish ideas might evaporate in the event of an internal *coup d'état* against Saddam or a military breakthrough by Iran in the south.

This situation makes Iraq almost as vulnerable as it was at the moment in July 1958 when the Hashemite regime of King Faisal II and Prime Minister Nuri al-Said was overthrown by the military officers led by Abdel Karim Qasim. At that time Syria was hostile, and Turkish forces were mobilised on the border ready to intervene for the ostensible reason of restoring the Hashemites. The British and US governments were unable to save the regime or control subsequent events. Only a threat of Soviet intervention dissuaded the Turks from making their move.

The more Saddam appears to tilt towards the US in the present circumstances, the more it can be expected that there will be growing restiveness within the Baath and among the younger officers. For them, the removal of the president may be seen as the only way to end the military stalemate with Iran, and thereby free Iraq from its growing dependence on the US, the West in general, and on the pro-Western Arab states. Iraqi nationalists have never endured for long the number of potential border threats that currently exist, nor dependence on the great powers for their defence.

While it is possible that an anti-Saddam coup could be successful, it is far from inevitable that it would be Shi'ite in origin or pro-Iranian in conviction. The leaders of such a coup would be likely to align

themselves with Syria, and perhaps through President Assad work out an accommodation with Iran. Such an alignment might be anti-Western without directly threatening Iraq's Arab neighbours. It need not dismantle the Baath party, and it is very unlikely that a Shiite clerical regime could establish itself in Baghdad on the model of Tehran.

What impact would such scenarios have on the Arab Gulf states? Five years ago there was support at the highest levels of the Baath and the RCC for Saudi military rebels who were plotting to topple the royal regime. Further back in time, the Iraqis backed the Dhofar rebellion against Sultan Qabus of Oman, and demanded territorial concessions from the al-Sabah ruling family in Kuwait. It is still official Baath policy to oppose a pro-Western orientation of the Gulf Cooperation Council, and the granting of base and military rights on GCC territory to any foreign power. Iraq's dependency on its Arab neighbours and the failure of its war strategy have pushed these policies aside. If the war were to end, they would be likely to reappear.

At the same time, the internal forces that are dissatisfied with their share of economic and political power in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf states will continue to express themselves, taking advantage of whatever opportunities the course of the war provides. The Shiite communities have long-standing grievances against the ruling families of the sheikhdoms. But they are not the only ones. There is a growing class in the Sunni communities that has developed strong grievances of its own. This class includes many of the young, well-educated urban professionals.

The repressiveness of the Gulf regimes has driven these dissident groups to express themselves in the language of Islam, to meet in the mosques, and to identify with the doctrines of fundamentalism because the alternative, secular forms of political expression have been rigorously banned. This does not mean that fundamentalism is the cause of conflict in the Gulf, or that the Iranian Shiites are the source of all the trouble. The idea that there is a spillover from the Iranian revolution is like the old domino theory in Southeast Asia or Central America. It is an exaggeration and simplification which appeals to those who do not understand the complexity of local politics, and to those who are unwilling to make concessions to their local critics.

For those who seek to preserve the *status quo* in the Gulf, it should be reassuring to observe that Iranian efforts at influencing or subverting Gulf politics have been just as clumsy and ineffectual as the Iraqi efforts

were a decade or two ago. If Shiite clerics can be as inept as Sunni secularists, then perhaps the religious label does not mean much at all.

The Gulf Cooperation Council: search for security

In the past, both Iran and Iraq sought hegemony over the smaller and weaker states of the Gulf. Yet, conservative Arab states of the Gulf shared with the Shah's Iran a basic interest in the preservation of the status quo for nearly a decade after the historic withdrawal of British forces from the area. This relatively stable situation, however, was swept away by the dramatic eruption of the Iranian Revolution and its aftermath. Added to this revolution, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan further intensified the concern of the conservative monarchies with the stability and security of their regimes. Finally, the outbreak of the war between Iraq and Iran, and the fear of its spill-over effects in the region, seemed to call for greater security and economic cooperation among the conservative governments.

These developments may be said to have temporarily neutralised the ambitions of Tehran and Baghdad, leading Riyadh to seek the establishment of an effective Arab Gulf commonwealth to defend the region's resources and growing industrial base. On 25 May 1981, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), established the Cooperation Council of the Arab Gulf States (*Majlis al-Taawun li-Duwal al-Khalij al-Arabiyyah*), or as it is generally known, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).¹

Through the GCC, Arab Gulf states have attempted since 1981 to coordinate and cooperate in all fields, including security. Given existing differences in size and capabilities between the six member-states, unified regional defence policies indeed seem to offer the best alternatives to unilateral and often prohibitive schemes aimed at maintaining regional stability. In fact, the adoption of regional security and defence measures has been and continues to be one of the major goals of the GCC. Yet, despite numerous political and military agreements between the six member-states, there are still significant differences which prevent complete coordination and integration.

This paper discusses the GCC's regional security and integration

¹ Abdallah Al-Ishal, *Al-Itar al-Qanuni wal Siyasi li-majlis al-Taawun al-Khaliji* [The Legal and Political Framework of the Gulf Cooperation Council], Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: n.p., 1983, p. 7.

prospects, and is divided into two parts. The first discusses the GCC's search for regional security by examining military and political developments during the past three years. What are the prospects, if any, for the establishment of a permanent regional security system? Do GCC member-states aim to create a regional collective system and can the organisation perform such functions effectively? In the second part, an attempt is made to describe the unique features of the GCC as a security integrative case. A brief theoretical summary of the conceptual framework is followed by a discussion of four specific variables developed to supplement the traditional neo-functional approach to regional integration.

The search for regional security

Despite the heavy toll of the Gulf war between Iran and Iraq, both countries remain more powerful than the GCC states, which are embarked on a steady build-up, hoping to strengthen their military power bases. The merits for a military build-up in the lower Gulf seem to be evident following disturbances in Oman (Dhufar war, 1970s), Saudi Arabia (Mecca uprising, 1979), Bahrain (coup attempt, 1981) and Kuwait (bombings, 1983), among others. Yet, an examination of available capabilities in GCC states indicates how limited those resources are against perceived internal as well as external sources of threats, emanating primarily from Iran, Iraq, Israel and the Soviet Union² (see Tables 1 and 2). While there is considerable debate in the Gulf regarding sources of threats to the security of the region,³ major efforts have been initiated to coordinate the six member-states' defensive postures. What has been accomplished, and what are the military and political options available to the GCC?

Military options

Military cooperation between member-states has become a pressing matter for the GCC. At the outset it is important to note that there are two distinct schemes under consideration which would cover (a) internal security, and (b) external/regional security. With respect to

² M S El-Azhary, *The Gulf Cooperation Council and Regional Defence in the 1980s*, Exeter: Centre for Arab Gulf Studies, University of Exeter, 1982, Paper No. 1.

³ See Ishal, *op cit*, and Abdallah Fahd al-Nafisi, *Majlis al-Taawun al-Kahlji: Al-Itar al-Siyasi wal-Istratiji* [The Gulf Cooperation Council: The Political and Strategic Framework], London: Ta-Ha Publishers, 1982.

Table 1: Comparative military forces: Gulf Cooperation Council States, Iran, Iraq and Israel—1984

| Description | GCC | Iran ¹ | Iraq ¹ | Israel |
|----------------------------|------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------|
| Population | 14,720,000 | 42,500,000 | 14,900,000 | 4,200,000 |
| <i>Armed Forces:</i> Total | 137,300 | 2,000,000* | 642,500 | 141,000** |
| Army | 108,800 | 250,000* | 600,000 | 104,000** |
| Navy | 7,500 | 20,000 | 4,500 | 9,000** |
| Air Force | 21,000 | 35,000 | 38,000 | 28,000** |
| Paramilitary Forces | 64,180 | 250,000* | 664,800*** | 4,500 |
| <i>Military Equipment:</i> | | | | |
| Tanks | 1,093° | 1,050 | 4,920 | 3,600° |
| Naval Craft | 239° | 56° | 58° | 105 |
| Combat Aircraft | 358° | 95° | 580° | 555° |

* Figure is for general mobilisation and includes paramilitary forces. Regular army of 155,000 is supplemented by 400,000 on mobilisation. The paramilitary forces included under separate heading are the Pasdaran or the Revolutionary guards.

** The Israeli Army is composed of 98,300 conscripts, and at mobilisation stands at 500,000 of which 100,000 can be mobilised in about twenty-four hours. The Army, at mobilisation stands at 600,000 if civil defence units are included, the Navy at 10,000 and the Air Force at 37,000.

*** Frontier guards, Security troops 4,800; People's Army 650,000; perhaps 10,000 volunteers from Arab countries.

° GCC states have on order 361 battle tanks, 49 naval crafts of all types and 87 combat aircraft.

°° Israel has on order 125 additional battle tanks and 146 fighter planes.

°°° Iran's pre-War inventory of naval craft was 63. Estimates of up to 13 losses are advanced. For the Air Force, pre-War inventory was 316, perhaps only 95 are serviceable today.

°°°° Iraq's naval losses may be of the order of 20 ships. Additional combat aircraft on order total 219, including advanced Mirage fighter planes, some of which were delivered in 1984 and 1985.

¹ Data for Iran and Iraq are very tentative given the lack of reliable figures on losses in the Gulf War.

Source: Adapted from *The Military Balance 1984-1985*, London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1984.

internal security, GCC states continue to discuss the adoption of the Internal Security Agreement (ISA), blocked by Kuwait's insistence that certain extra-territorial rights conceded to Saudi Arabia be revoked.⁴ From Kuwait's perspective, there is a legitimate concern that the ISA, if applied as it stands today, would infringe upon the Sheikdom's relatively open political system. In fact, members of the Kuwaiti

⁴ See my 'The internal security agreement of the Gulf Cooperation Council: an instrument of cooperation?', unpublished paper presented at the 17th Annual Meeting of the *Middle East Studies Association*, Chicago, 1983.

Table 2: Gulf Cooperation Council states military data

| Country | Area Sq. Km ² | Population | (1) 1982 GNP \$ | (1) 1982 GNP (\$) per capita | Military Expenditures in US\$ million ² (in current prices) | | | | | | Armed Forces ³ | | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------------------------|---------|-------|--------------|-----------------------------|
| | | | | | 1979 | 1980 | 1981 | 1982 | 1983 | 1984 | Total | Army | Navy | Air Force | Para- military Forces |
| Bahrain | 669 | 400,000 | 3,483,000 | 8,215 | 143 | 157 | 214 | 224* | 253* | NA | 2,800 | 2,300 | 300 | 200 | 2,680 |
| Kuwait | 17,818 | 1,450,000 | 27,512,000 | 16,219 | 1,168 | 1,301 | 1,254 | 1,147° | 1,360° | NA | 12,500 | 10,000 | 500 | 2,000*** | 18,000 |
| Oman | 300,000 | 970,000 | 5,910,000 | 6,194 | 779 | 1,179 | 1,512 | 1,685 | 1,772 | 1,960 | 21,500*** | 16,500 | 2,000 | 3,000 | 3,500 |
| Qatar | 10,437 | 260,000 | 6,516,000 | 20,490 | 474 | 604 | 896** | — | 166** | NA | 6,000 | 5,000 | 700 | 300 | 6,500 |
| Saudi Arabia | 2,300,000 | 10,000,000 | 161,118,000 | 15,047 | 13,914 | 16,840 | 20,679 | 24,754 | 21,952 | 22,731° | 51,500° | 35,000 | 2,500 | 14,000 | 33,500° |
| United Arab Emirates | 77,700 | 1,130,000 | 27,366,000 | 21,511 | 1,196 | 1,724 | 2,043 | 2,179 | 2,422 | 1,867† | 43,500 | 40,000 | 1,500 | 1,500 | NA |
| TOTAL | 2,706,624 | 14,210,000 | 231,905,000 | 87,676 | 17,674 | 21,805 | 26,598 | 29,989 | 27,926 | 26,558 | 137,300 | 108,800 | 7,500 | 21,000 | 64,180 |
| Average figures | | | 38,650,000 | 14,612 | | | | | | | | | | | |

Sources:

(1) *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1972-1982*, US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, April 1984(2) *World Armaments and Disarmament SIPRI Yearbook 1983*, (Stockholm, International Peace Research Institute, 1983), [Data for 1979 to 1982 only, except for Qatar (1979, 1980). Statistics for 1983 and 1984 are drawn from *The Military Balance 1984-1985* (London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1984)](3) *The Military Balance 1984-1985*

* Excluding Defence and Security Development Budget

** The 1981 figure for Qatar is for an 18-months transition budget between 1981 and 1983 and may include about \$450 million in military aid to Iraq. The 1983 budget excludes capital expenditures estimated at \$166.6 million as well as military aid to Iraq.

*** Including some 3,700 foreign personnel for Oman, and excluding expatriate personnel for Kuwait

° Including National Guard Budgets; † Excludes Defence Expenditures by Dubai

∞ In addition, there are some 10,000 Foreign Contract Military Personnel

∞∞ The National Guard is composed of 25,000 men; 8,500 are in the Frontier Forces and Coastguard

National Assembly remain opposed to the ISA, preferring instead to entrust their independent judicial system with any offences committed by 'Gulf criminals' in Kuwait. In the face of rising regional threats, however, the GCC's primary concern is with external security, and it is through the Joint Defence Arrangement that the organisation seeks to face challenges to its politico-military stability.

Joint defence arrangement. Between May 1981 and May 1983, the Chiefs-of-Staff of GCC states met four times under the chairmanship of Brigadier Yusuf Al-Madani, to discuss and coordinate military strategy in the Gulf region.⁵ While their first meeting in September 1981 might have covered organisational matters, by early 1982, considerable progress had been registered on procedural and substantive matters. On the recommendation of the Defence Ministers, who held their first meeting in January 1982,⁶ GCC Chiefs-of-Staff considered a number of reports prepared by the member-states' joint military committees at their second meeting held in Riyadh on 15 March 1982.⁷ These reports were compiled at the end of visits to Bahrain and Oman, by a GCC military delegation, and covered primarily the needs of these countries in military equipment.⁸ In fact, according to the London-based *Middle East Economic Digest*, the GCC had agreed to invest \$1.8 billion in military purchases for Oman alone over a period of twelve years, and also revealed that the decision to provide Oman with this large sum was apparently reached in February 1981 (thus, prior to the formal establishment of the organisation), 'but [that] details were not settled until the Kuwait meeting of GCC foreign affairs ministers in July (1983)'.⁹ While it was not known which of the remaining four member-states provided contributions, the funds would permit Muscat to acquire advanced fighter aircraft from Washington, which lifted its sales restrictions on such weapons to the Sultanate in mid-summer 1983. As of 1 July 1985, Oman had still not placed any orders for high-performance aircraft from any sources. Nevertheless, the decision of

⁵ The four meetings were held on 21 September 1981, 16 March 1982, 19 November 1983, and 13 February 1984, see *Al-Jazirah*, 22 May 1984, p. 6.

⁶ 'GCC defence ministers conclude conference work', *Federal Broadcast Information Service, Middle East and Africa* [FBIS-MEA], V-82-018, 27 January 1982, pp. C1-C4.

⁷ 'GCC chiefs of staff begin second conference', *FBIS-MEA-V-82-051*, 16 March 1982, p. C1.

⁸ 'GCC chiefs of staff discuss military cooperation', *FBIS-MEA-V-82-052*, 17 March 1982, p. C1; see also Wahib Ghorab, 'On military cooperation: GCC talks set today', *Arab News*, 7(107) 15 March 1982, p. 1.

⁹ 'GCC provides \$1,800 million for defense', *Middle East Economic Digest* (MEED), 27(37) 16 September 1983, p. 46.

the GCC to boost the military positions of its two weakest members, is quite significant and indicative of regional security cooperative activities.

The Chiefs-of-Staff also agreed in March 1982 to form a joint military force. This information was revealed by GCC Secretary-General Bisharah in late March 1982, in two separate interviews to Kuwait Television, and the Saudi daily *Al-Madinah*. According to radio reports, Bisharah revealed to 'Kuwaiti television that the six GCC countries have agreed on four main points that will probably be the basis for this joint Gulf force',¹⁰ without identifying them. Reportedly, the primary reason for the formation of the joint force would be to avoid any reliance on foreign states for support during a crisis. Bisharah elaborated on the Council's motives by stating to *Al-Madinah* that the GCC was 'neither NATO nor the Red Army, but . . . realise[d] . . . [its] potentials and some kind of a feeling and resolve ha[d] arisen among [member states] to create this force.'¹¹ The decision to create this force must have been directly tied to the Gulf War, as its announcement coincided with the Iraqi withdrawal from territories occupied in Iran, and as the latter launched a major counter-offensive. Interestingly, up until 1982, the two main sources of threats to the security of the Gulf were considered to be the two superpowers.¹² By the time the GCC Defence Ministers held their second meeting on 12 October 1982, however, a noticeable shift was registered in the defence policies of the GCC, which came to view Iran as the primary source of threat to the security of the Arab Gulf states. According to a Riyadh radio commentary, regional developments compelled GCC states to 'attain military superiority' over hostile forces,¹³ meaning over Iran and/or Iraq. Secretary-General Bisharah for his part declared that the Defence Ministers had agreed to operate within the framework of a unified strategy,¹⁴ further indicating how far the individual states' positions had come in view of the perceived threats!

At the Third Summit meeting held in Bahrain in November 1982, the Supreme Council of the GCC considered the recommendations of their Defence Ministers together with those of the Interior Ministers. No

¹⁰ 'GCC members considering joint military force', *FBIS-MEA-V-82-057*, 24 March 1982, p C1.

¹¹ 'GCC to form joint military force', *Arab News*, 28 March 1982, p 2.

¹² See Lieutenant-Colonel Muhammad Safa, 'Al-Difa ann al-Khalij', [The Defence of the Gulf], *Islamic World Defence*, 1(2) Summer 1982, pp 6-8; see also Abdul Kasim Mansur (pseudonym), 'The American threat to Saudi Arabia', *Armed Forces Journal*, September 1980, pp 47-60.

¹³ 'Gulf defense', *FBIS-MEA-V-82-197*, 12 October 1982, p iv.

¹⁴ 'GCC defence ministers stress unity for security', *Arab News*, 12 October 1982, p 2.

agreements could be reached on either the ISA or the Defence Pact.¹⁵ The final communiqué stated, however, that the Heads of State had 'approved' the recommendations of the organisation's Defence Ministers, 'which aim to build the intrinsic strength of GCC member countries and coordinate among them to achieve the self-reliance of the area countries in protecting their security and safeguarding their stability.'¹⁶ While it was generally known why the GCC could not adopt the Internal Security Agreement, why did the Supreme Council postpone its expected decision to agree on a unified defence pact?

By all accounts, it was Iran's reaction to a unified defence pact excluding Tehran which was responsible for the postponement. In fact, according to *Al-Khalij* (UAE), in response to Sheik Zayid's overtures to offer Tehran the GCC's good offices in mediating the Gulf War, the Iranian government sent a letter which rejected the offer and stated that the security of the area 'must be secured only by countries bordering the Gulf on the basis of Islamic Brotherhood.'¹⁷ In effect, Tehran reaffirmed its position and served notice to the GCC that it was the principal power which must be acknowledged in any Gulf security arrangement. The Iranian letter, published in *Al-Khalij* further noted that on the premise that Gulf security concerns all states in the region, 'the Islamic Republic of Iran, whose policy is based on independence from both East and West, who has the lengthiest borders with the Gulf, and who is the most powerful country in the region, must be considered the principal part of this security.'¹⁸

At a time when Iran enjoyed the upper hand in the Gulf War, such remarks could have easily persuaded the Supreme Council of the GCC to postpone any decision which could be interpreted in Tehran as a challenge to the existing *status quo*. But, while the Heads of State temporarily delayed their decision, they reaffirmed the Defence Ministers' earlier resolution to hold joint military manoeuvres in 1983,¹⁹ and re-emphasised their goal to coordinate Gulf security matters in the context of the 'Arab world'.

As planned, in 1983, GCC states held their first joint military

¹⁵ David B Ottaway, 'Persian Gulf states fail to achieve pacts on security, defense,' *The Washington Post*, 12 November 1982, p A21.

¹⁶ 'Third GCC summit concludes in Bahrain, 11 November: Communiqué on Summit', *FBIS-MEA-V-82-219*, 12 November 1982, p C2.

¹⁷ 'GCC summit views joint defence pact', *Arab News*, 7(347) 10 November 1982, p 2.

¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁹ Claude Monier, 'Le Conseil de Coopération des États du Golfe: Bilan des Réalisations Après Trois Ans d'Existence', *Défense Nationale*, Octobre 1983, pp 167-169.

exercises in the UAE, permitting the organisation to cross a major hurdle in coordinating security affairs.²⁰ These joint manoeuvres, irrespective of their success, raised the morale of both the military and political officials in GCC states. *For the first time in the twentieth century, forces from all six states participated in a cooperative activity aimed at defending their territories.* As a result of this newly found vigour in the GCC, the Fourth Summit meeting held in Doha, was noticeably upbeat despite elaborate security precautions set after the discovery of a coup plot in July 1983.²¹ High on the agenda of the Doha Summit was the Gulf War and the increasingly frequent Iranian threats to block the Strait of Hormuz. The Heads of State pledged support to UN Security Council Resolution 540 of 31 October 1983, which called for an end to all military activities and hostilities in the Gulf,²² and expressed satisfaction that the GCC states 'will be able to rely on themselves in defending their security and safeguarding their stability.'²³ This optimistic stand on GCC's military capabilities must be contrasted with the doubts surrounding the deterrent value of their military build-up since 1981. Indeed, three years ago, Israeli warplanes flew undetected and unchallenged across the Arabian Peninsula to destroy the Iraqi nuclear reactor at Osirak; similarly, two years ago, a defecting Iranian pilot landed his Phantom jet at Dhahran Airport without early detection.²⁴ With the installation of early warning systems, the probabilities of such daring violations of GCC airspace going unnoticed diminished considerably in 1983. Cognisant of the added military capabilities of member-states, Secretary-General Bisharah declared in November 1983 that GCC states were strong enough to defend themselves and warned that any attempt at blocking the Strait of Hormuz would introduce foreign forces into the region.²⁵ In fact, at the Doha Summit meeting, discussions on the joint defence policy received an unprecedented level of attention by the Supreme Council. Nevertheless, GCC states continue to face a very serious

²⁰ See 'GCC's first military exercise begins', *Kuwait Times*, No. 6615, 3 October 1983, p 1; and 'Dara al-Jazirat: Al-Munawarat al-awla liquwat dual Majlis al-Taawun al-Khaliji', [Peninsula shield: the first military manoeuvres for GCC states], *King Khaled Military Academy Quarterly*, 1(3) November 1983, pp 6-9.

²¹ 'Tight security and palm trees for Qatar summit', *The Times* (London), 25 October p 3.

²² 'Iran and Iraq urged again to end conflict', *UN Chronicle*, 20(11) December 1983, p 25.

²³ 'Final statement issued', *FBIS-MEA-V-83-218*, 9 November 1983, p C4.

²⁴ David B Ottaway, 'Saudi Arabia, Iran struggling for control of Gulf sheikdoms', *The Washington Post*, 25 November 1982, pp F1, F2, F4.

²⁵ Raghida Dergham's interview with Bisharah, 'We don't need volunteers to protect our house', *The Middle East*, November 1983, pp 13-14.

weapons standardisation problem in coordinating their military options as well as relying on expatriate technical labour to train their personnel and maintain their equipment. What are some of the achievements in this area?

Expatriate military workforce and weapons standardisation. GCC member-states have a total strength of approximately 200,000 men, equipped with 1,100 main battle tanks and more than 3,500 other armoured vehicles. GCC air forces total 358 interceptors and ground-attack aircraft, with an additional eighty-seven on order. Naval strength is still very limited but assuming increasing importance with a complement of fifty fast-attack vessels, many of which are armed with Exocet MM40 surface-to-surface missiles (Tables 1 and 2). The bulk of this equipment is in Saudi Arabia whose air force and navy are embarked on a rapid expansion. The Saudi navy, for example, has acquired four frigates and is negotiating with France for the purchase of its first two 4,000-ton destroyers. The Royal Saudi Air Force is integrating its sixty US-made F-15s with five AWACS surveillance planes and creating effective transport wings with fifty C-130 Hercules and forty Spanish-made C-212-200 Aviocars.²⁶

Kuwait, Oman, the UAE, Qatar and to a lesser extent Bahrain, have also increased their military purchases since 1981, mostly from France. For example, at the end of a visit to Paris by Kuwait's Defence Minister, Shaykh Salim Al-Sabah Al-Salim Al-Sabah, a contract for six Super-Puma helicopters armed with air-to-surface Exocet missiles, was signed.²⁷ More recently, the UAE and Kuwait agreed to buy new batches of Mirage fighter planes,²⁸ and Qatar placed an order for three Combattante-class 200-ton missile fast-attack craft, the first of which was delivered in 1982.²⁹

Such an impressive array of military hardware might imply that the security of GCC states at present and in the foreseeable future, is assured. Admittedly, that is not the case for two main reasons. First, without exception, all six states rely heavily on expatriate technical labour to operate these sophisticated weapons systems and train indigenous military and civilian personnel. Second, the variety of these weapons systems has slowed down the process of integration at the

²⁶ See *The Military Balance 1984-1985*, London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1984.

²⁷ 'Kuwait buys French weapons,' *MEED*, 27(19) 13 May 1983, pp 32-3.

²⁸ 'Abu Dhabi agrees to Mirage purchase', *MEED*, 27(20) 20 May 1983, p 2.

²⁹ 'First missile vessel launched', *MEED*, 26(30) 23 July 1982, p 32.

technical level. A closer examination of the expatriate military workforce indicates that in Saudi Arabia alone, there may be as many as 10,000 military advisers, including 1,500 British and 1,500 Americans. There are also large numbers of French, Pakistani, Jordanian and Egyptian advisers and technicians.³⁰ According to the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies, there are some 3,700 foreign military personnel in Oman alone.³¹ An unspecified number of Asian and Arab military advisers are also active in the armed forces of the UAE, Qatar, and Kuwait. In Bahrain, Pakistani military personnel man the internal security forces. Based on non-classified sources, it is almost impossible to determine the correct number of military advisers in GCC states. The data presented here suggest, however, that there may possibly be close to 15,000 foreign military personnel, at a minimum, training some of the 200,000 indigenous armed forces in all six states. Obviously, since the background of these advisers is diverse, their training will reflect a definite 'cachet' which will accentuate different approaches. It is thus difficult to conceive of a unified training programme which would provide, under present circumstances, 'independence' from the foreign advisers. Whether a second generation indigenous trainers-corps might be created for the GCC remains to be seen. Such a desirable outcome will greatly depend on the armed forces' capacity to grow vertically as well as horizontally. In other words, more educated recruits will probably enhance the potential of the armed forces. The problem of expatriate advisers, however, is compounded with the diverse weapons systems purchased by the six states, and is not expected to diminish in the near future.

Complete military cooperation, coordination and integration in the various fields of defence, is not possible as long as GCC states continue to purchase their equipment from so many sources. This is, in fact, a double-edged weapon for member-states who seek, on the one hand, to reduce their dependence on one or two states, and remain dependent on so many advisers, on the other. Assuming that the question of training is alleviated as time passes, and as Gulf troops acquire the needed skills to operate their equipment, incompatible weapons will limit GCC military cooperation. For example, Saudi Arabia's AWACS air defence system bought from the United States, cannot be integrated with those of the other GCC members' systems purchased from Western European

³⁰ Robin Allen, 'Gulf Co-Operation Council—Theory or Practice?', *MEED*, 27(43) 28 October 1983, p 12.

³¹ *The Military Balance 1984-1985*, *op cit*, p 60.

sources. Presumably, Riyadh's new Shahine air defence system, which will provide low-altitude protection to a number of strategic installations, is compatible with systems purchased by other GCC states from France. But, within Saudi Arabia's own armed forces, the existence of two independent systems creates a significant barrier as the American and French equipment is operated by separate and almost totally independent units. Whether these barriers are removed at the Command levels remains to be determined, although it is generally known that the Saudi defence establishment bases its training on the American model.³²

Joint command. This significant 'incompatibility' within each member-state's command structure is exponentially increased when regularly trained NCOs cannot give orders to soldiers serving in tribal guard units. Such occurrences are not uncommon and may have in the case of the Mecca uprising of 1979, for example, delayed the defeat of the rebellion in the Holy City.³³ Since all GCC states have national guard units drawn from tribes loyal to the ruling families, this dichotomy exists in all member-states. When compounded, however, it does represent a major hurdle for GCC Chiefs-of-Staff whose tasks include the coordination of all military affairs. As GCC states increase their training, this identifiable hurdle may indeed be successfully crossed once the spirit of an elite military corps is established in the six states.

There are, however, political reasons why GCC states have not been able to establish a joint military command at the organisation's level. The first identifiable reason is the genuine concern by several member-states that Oman has 'privileged' relations with both Washington and London. Kuwait and the UAE, for example, consider Muscat's close military relations with the United States and Britain as prohibiting the GCC from adopting collective security schemes. It is important to note that both Kuwait and the UAE came under serious pressure from Iran throughout 1982 and early 1983, and may feel organically closer to Muscat than generally assumed. Second, since joint command by necessity means that Riyadh, as the leading GCC power, would 'legitimise' its *de facto* political and military role within the GCC, it is probable that certain members might not be so keen to

³² For a discussion of Saudi National Defence, see Richard F Nyrop *et al*, *Saudi Arabia: A Country Study*, Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1976, chapter 14; for an up-date, see Anthony C Cordesman, *The Gulf and the Search for Strategic Stability: Saudi Arabia, the Military Balance in the Gulf and Trends in the Arab-Israeli Military Balance*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1984, pp 122-251.

³³ Cordesman, *ibid.*, pp 231-239.

concede such an 'advantage' to Saudi Arabia. Nevertheless, despite earlier reservations expressed by Kuwait, Oman and the UAE on a variety of issues, after the December 1983 bombings in Kuwait and the escalation of the Gulf War in the Spring of 1984, noticeable changes occurred within the GCC, including the fact that several states were drafting conscription laws to mobilise their populations during an emergency,³⁴ and coordinating their air defence plans.³⁵

In summary, despite noticeable strides made by GCC states' armed forces over the past three years, there remain a number of regional and internal roadblocks which prevent Gulf officials from advancing unified plans. Nevertheless, the record also indicates that Saudi Arabia's determination to defend the GCC states and its capability to actually deliver on certain policies, promises further to coalesce the different positions within the organisation. Conceivably, the GCC's military options will increase as the six states' armed forces reach a credible level of deterrence in the region, once their initial training is complete. More important, however, the GCC's military options rest on the organization's future political achievements, to which we turn next.

Political options

Officials in the six GCC member-states have repeatedly emphasised that their goal is complete cooperation and coordination in all fields. As a means of accomplishing these stated goals, a number of economic plans were adopted and are in the process of implementation. For example, GCC states today enjoy a common tariff levied on imports and increasingly seem to present a common oil-policy within OPEC and OAPEC. What are the consequences of these policies in the political arena?

Economic and political integration. The GCC's search for regional stability has kept the spotlight on security matters. For the six member-states, however, internal and regional stability require cooperation and coordination in non-military fields as well. For example, unless GCC states develop their human resources, their future might be placed in jeopardy since they rely too heavily on expatriate

³⁴ See for example, 'Introduction of Draft is Considered by Saudis', *The Wall Street Journal*, 27 March 1984, p 38; 'Gulf states may unify armies', *MEED*, 26(46) 12 November 1983, p 6; and 'Mobilization Plan for All: Salem', *Kuwait Times*, No. 6757, 21 March 1984, p 16.

³⁵ 'Dual Majlis al-Taawun itakhazat Tadabir askariat mushtarakat satakun jahizat fi al-usbu al-hali', [GCC states took common military steps which will be implemented this week], *Al-Jazirah*, No. 4254, 22 May 1984, p 1.

workers.³⁶ Cooperation is also required in the economic arena to manage their financial assets and eliminate the pattern of uneven social and economic development. In terms of political development, and with the exception of Kuwait, GCC states lag behind in devising popularly acceptable formulas which would encourage political participation. Economic opportunities and individual freedom varies from one state to the other, and many intra-state disputes remain unresolved. Admittedly, if integration is to become possible, some if not all of these obstacles must be removed.

Since 1981, GCC officials have indeed attempted to reconcile their differences by creating a number of institutions mandated to assume specified responsibilities. For example, the Gulf Investment Corporation (GIC) is now operating and has already initiated several joint development projects, including a refinery in Oman. As mentioned above, a common minimum customs duty is now applied by Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman and Saudi Arabia with Qatar and the UAE to join shortly. Coordination of oil refinery and petrochemical development schemes are at advanced stages, and Qatar's large North Dome natural gas field is slated to provide an abundant and reliable energy source to all six states through a supra-national grid under construction.³⁷

The GCC's twenty-eight-article unified economic agreement,³⁸ confirmed on 8 June 1981, has been ratified by all six member-states, and purports to accomplish the following:

- Eliminate customs duties in intra-GCC trade (Articles 2, 3)
- Establish a common tariff on imports (Article 4) [this has been set at 4 per cent]
- Coordinate import-export policies and create a 'collective negotiating force' which would strengthen the GCC's overall position in dealing with suppliers (Articles 5-7)
- Permit the free movement of labour and capital (Article 9)
- Coordinate oil policies (Article 11)
- Coordinate industrial activities and adopt standardised industrial laws (Article 12)

³⁶ See my 'Demographic problems facing the Gulf Cooperation Council', *International Demographics*, 2(4) April 1983, pp 3, 12.

³⁷ *MEED*, *op cit*, 28 October 1983, pp 15-19.

³⁸ Majlis al-Taawun li-dual al-Khalij al-Arabiyyah, Al-Imanat al-amat, *Al-Itifaqiyat al-Iqtisadiyat* [GCC Economic Agreement], Riyadh: The Cooperation Council for The Arab Gulf States of the Gulf, 8 June 1981.

³⁹ *ibid.*

- Coordinate technology, training and labour policies (Articles 14–17)
- Coordinate land, sea and air transport policies (Articles 18–20)
- Adopt a unified investment strategy and coordinate financial, monetary and banking policies, including the ultimate adoption of a common currency (Articles 21–23)³⁹

By early 1984, the GCC had issued a compilation of each member-states' accomplishments in adopting some of the provisions of the Economic Agreement.⁴⁰ For example, the UAE government had agreed, among others, to (a) lift duties on agricultural and farm products originating in GCC states; (b) accept the transit regulations of the GCC;⁴¹ and (c) lift restrictions on GCC citizens to practise medicine, law, accounting and engineering in the UAE.⁴² Bahrain's ruler, for his part, issued a Royal Decree (1983-Number 3), which permitted (a) GCC citizens to invest in Bahrain, (b) to practise medicine, law and legal accounting, and (c) which permitted the same transit laws to apply in the island-state.⁴³

In turn, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar and Kuwait introduced more liberal regulations in the framework of the Economic Agreement.⁴⁴ On 9 November 1983, at the conclusion of the Doha Summit meeting, GCC states also agreed that their citizens would be allowed to practise (a) pharmacy, (b) work in hotels and restaurants, and (c) trade in all six states.⁴⁵

While the GCC has given much thought to economic questions, there is no evidence that the same attention was devoted to political issues.⁴⁶

⁴⁰ Majlis al-Taawun li-dual al-Khalij al-Arabiyyah, Al-Imanat al-amat, *Al-Khudawat al-ula alati itakhazat min qibal al-dual al-ada li-tadbiq al-itifaqiyat al-iqtisadiyat al-Muwahadat* [The First Measures which member states adopted to implement the unified economic agreement], 2nd edition, Riyadh: The Cooperation Council for The Arab Gulf States of the Gulf, Jamadi Awal 1404H, February 1984 [Hereafter *GCC Economic*].

⁴¹ The GCC Transit regulations permit 'the shipment of commodities in means of Transportation through the lands of all countries signatory to the Unified Economic Agreement, without delay, restriction or discrimination on the type of containers,' if certain conditions are met. These well publicised conditions include (1) the use of a Customs Seals System which may be easily stamped, and (2) proper wrappings and coverings. See Majlis al-Taawun li-dual al-Khalij al-Arabiyyah, Al-Imanat al-amat, *Nizam al-ubur* [Transit System], Riyadh: The Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, n.d.

⁴² *GCC Economic*, *op cit*, pp 6–7.

⁴³ *ibid*, pp 8–9.

⁴⁴ *ibid*, pp 10–23.

⁴⁵ *ibid*, pp 26–7; for a complete discussion of economic cooperation in GCC states, see Yahya Halmi Rajab, *Majlis al-Taawun li-dual al-Khalij al-Arabiyyah: Ruyat Mustaqbaliyat* (The Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf: Future Developments), Kuwait: Maktabat Dar al-Arubat lil-Nashr wal-Tawzi, 1983, pp 213–443.

⁴⁶ Al-Nafisi, *op cit*, p 43.

It is critical to note that the ultimate success of the organisation rests on the support of the public at large rather than that of an elite. Since the GCC purports to be a functioning, democratic institution established to serve the peoples of the Gulf states, it must accommodate the expectations of a rising educated middle class, without appearing to represent the interests of the bourgeoisie. In the political arena, the organisation must encourage governments to separate legitimate grievances from rebellions and champion the rights of all citizens fully to participate in parliamentary and constitutional activities. While serious political differences remain, popular discontent must be eliminated, restrictions on the press removed, and judicial systems greatly enhanced. GCC states must turn inward for strength and establish a secure and legitimate political environment if they are to prosper in the region and thwart numerous internal challenges.

Participation of Iraq, Iran and the Yemens. GCC states' regional security has been dominated by perceptions of (a) threats to legitimate institutions, and (b) challenges to the authority of their rulers. While the six states share a common religion, similar political systems, economies based on petroleum, and numerous other characteristics, the formation of the organisation was timed, whether voluntarily or by coincidence, with the outbreak of the Iran–Iraq War. In addition, the GCC's foundations were based on a number of Gulf organisations of which Iraq and Iran are members. For example, Baghdad is the seventh member of the Gulf Organisation for Industrial Consultation (GOIC) which was set up in Doha in 1977 and whose purpose is to encourage joint planning of industrial schemes among member-states. Similarly, the Kuwait-based Regional Organisation for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME) groups Tehran and Baghdad in addition to the six GCC member states. Why then were Iran and Iraq excluded from the GCC?

Fundamentally, GCC states came to realise that both Iraq and Iran were the sources of regional conflict and preferred not to ask Baghdad and Tehran, at war with each other since September 1980, to join the organisation. Furthermore, the Khomeini regime was perceived in the lower Gulf as particularly threatening since the Iranian revolutionary regime was calling for the establishment of a new 'Islamic world order'.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ For a full discussion of this most critical interpretation, see R. K. Ramazani, 'Khomeini's Islam in Iran's foreign policy', in Adeed Dawisha (ed), *Islam in Foreign Policy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, pp 9–23.

which would deny Saudi Arabia its natural leadership role in the Muslim world. Presumably, Ayatollah Khomeini's order would take from the 'privileged few' (*mustakbarin*) and give to the 'under-privileged masses' (*mustaz afin*),⁴⁸ in turn reorganising the political structures of Muslim states. From the other side of the Gulf, Khomeini's Islamic revolutionary ideology was viewed with great unease. Whether GCC states believed that Iran would challenge the status quo in the lower Gulf it is difficult to say. What is clear, however, is that Riyadh and to a lesser extent, the other five Arab Gulf states, maintained a certain distance from Tehran as the revolutionary regime was defining its aims and policies.

With respect to Iraq, GCC states were equally distant in their relations despite close cooperation in the past. Iraq had been a strong supporter of Arab Gulf cooperation ever since it first attended one of the regional meetings—that of Abu Dhabi in January 1976. In the intervening years, Iraq had participated in all of the regional ministerial conferences on foreign affairs, finance, commerce, planning, agriculture, health, education, and information. It had also joined in the establishment of the Gulf News Agency and participated in the plans for the creation of the Arab Gulf University in Bahrain. Yet, 'to some extent the Iraqis often appeared to be the odd men out at these conferences. Their style and approach to the conferences was markedly different; even the fact that the heads of their delegations were the only ones in Western dress seemed significant.'⁴⁹ More importantly, while the GCC states did not give a reason for excluding Iraq from the Council, they did emphasise that the six members had similar social, economic and political systems, inferring that Iraq's Baathist regime did not share these attributes with the conservative monarchies.⁵⁰

Despite calls for Iraq's inclusion in the GCC, Baghdad's admission into the organisation would necessitate a considerable softening of Iraqi ambitions in the Gulf, including a total renunciation of claims on Kuwait or parts of it, namely the islands of Bubiyan and Warba. Iraq

⁴⁸ R K Ramazani, 'The Gulf Cooperation Council: a search for security', in William L Dowdy and Russell B Trood (eds), *The Indian Ocean: Perspectives on a Strategic Arena*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press (forthcoming); for an interesting discussion on Khomeini's world views, see Farhang Rajaee, *Islamic Values and World View: Khomeyni on Man, the State and International Politics*, Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1983.

⁴⁹ 'Iraq on Gulf cooperation', *Arabia: The Islamic World Review*, No. 1, September 1981, p 29.

⁵⁰ For one example, see Enver M Koury, 'The impact of the geo-political situation of Iraq upon the Gulf Cooperation Council', *Middle East Insight*, 2(5) January/February 1983, pp 28–35; see also, 'Al-Rai Al-Aam Urges GCC Accept Yemen', *FBIS-MEA-V-84-032*, 15 February 1984, p C1.

continues to express interest in these islands and has offered to lease Bubiyan and Warba for a period of 20 years.⁵¹ For obvious reasons (fear, unease, historic precedent, Baathist threat), the Kuwaitis rejected this offer and called on Baghdad to stop its aerial attacks on oil tankers in the Gulf. Iraq's ambitions in the area did not seem to have diminished and judging from Saddam Hussein's pronouncements, Baghdad is still very much interested in joining the GCC as a senior partner. On one recent occasion, the Baathist leader is reported to have told visiting Kuwaiti newspaper editors:

Brothers, when the war is over and you want to set up a Gulf intervention force, remember Iraq is Arab and Iraq is situated on the Gulf. Iraq is not seeking external manifestations and wants only good for its brothers. Any time that you feel that Iraq is in the Gulf and that it is worthy of becoming a Gulf brother at any level of cooperation, we shall study this. It is our conviction that the basis for this is pan-Arab interest.⁵²

Such statements reiterate Iraq's long-term goals in gaining the upper hand in regional politics. It is clear, however, that GCC states are no longer satisfied or willing to simply accommodate Baghdad's threatening ambitions. From Saddam Hussein's vantage point, the call for Gulf unity within the Riyadh-based organisation is directly related to the Gulf War. Hussein has repeatedly suggested that the Iran-Iraq War is being waged to defend the Arab Gulf states from Iran, and it is for this reason alone that Baghdad is seeking financial assistance from them. Yet, the Iraqi ruler has shown signs of dismay at the debate under way in some quarter calling for a reassessment of the Arab Gulf states' unquestioned support. He is reported to have said:

I have heard at an Arab Parliament three persons opposing assistance for the purpose of defending the security of another Arab country. They oppose those who want to render this assistance because they fear and doubt those who are supposed to receive this assistance. If the matter were left to me, I would have deported them.⁵³

Clearly, this reference is made to the Kuwaiti parliament where a number of Shia deputies have called upon the Al-Sabah regime to curtail or reduce its financial support to Baghdad. Hussein also called on GCC states to gain full control over the expatriate problem and not hesitate to deport those elements which threaten their stability. This last

⁵¹ 'Hussayn discusses country's security situation', *FBIS-MEA-V-84-088*, 4 May 1984, p E4.

⁵² *ibid*, p E2.

⁵³ *ibid*, p E4.

reference may have been to the active *Al-Dawa* Party members who were involved in the December 1983 bombings in Kuwait.⁵⁴

Thus, the Iraqi and Iranian memberships in the GCC present a difficult dilemma for the organisation. On the one hand, GCC states have declared that their enterprise was not just for the Gulf people,⁵⁵ and on the other, they remain fearful of the potential power-struggle between the two giant regional powers. Admittedly, GCC states cannot claim to have achieved regional security without 'neutralising' Iraq and Iran, and to a lesser extent, those of the Yemens, which could threaten stability in the lower flank of the Arabian Peninsula. Yet, it remains to be determined whether GCC states would extend membership invitations to Baghdad and Tehran when they may have already turned down requests from Somalia and North Yemen.⁵⁶

In summary, while economic achievements seem to have established solid foundations in GCC states, little internal or regional political progress has been registered. Despite member-states' good intentions, serious conflicts remain unsolved, including several border disputes which are examined next.

The Arbitration Board. Historically, border disputes on the Arabian Peninsula have resulted in major clashes between states whose territorial claims had been settled by tribal agreements. With the exploration of petroleum, some of these border disputes could no longer be resolved by tribal leaders with limited expertise in legal matters. The need to settle such differences increased sharply in the 1970s as off-shore petroleum exploration in the Gulf was encouraged by oil companies. Recently, Kuwait proposed that the GCC establish an arbitration court with a specific mandate to address grievances of member-states. According to *An-Nahar Arab Report and Memo*, legal experts from the six GCC states were drafting a plan to create the court prior to the first summit meeting held in 1981.⁵⁷ Even before the Heads of State gathered in Abu Dhabi, the UAE Prime Minister's office announced that 'the Sultanate of Oman and the UAE ha[d] agreed to

⁵⁴ *ibid.*, p E3.

⁵⁵ See Abdallah Khawaja Bazq, 'Majlis al-Taawun al-Khaliji laisa lil-khalijiyyun faqad' (The GCC is not Just for the Gulf People), *Al-Bilad*, No. 7067, 15 June 1982, p 1.

⁵⁶ 'Gulf Council turns down Somalia plea', *Kuwait Times*, No. 5743, 21 March 1981, p 1 and 'Somalia: president on Gulf cooperation, regional summit', *FBIS-MEA-V-81-055*, 23 March 1981, p R4; see also, 'Sanaa studies joining GCC', *Arab News* 6(292) 16 September 1981, p 1.

⁵⁷ 'Gulf summit will discuss arbitration court', *An-Nahar Arab Report and Memo (ANARAM)*, 5(21) 25 May 1981, p 3.

adopt specific bases in the demarcation of the border of the Sultanate of Oman and Ras al-Khaymah.⁵⁸ Muscat was less fortunate with Aden on whose border serious skirmishes were reported in 1981. In April 1981, Oman presented a note to the League of Arab States to register its displeasure with actions attributed to the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY), rather than to the GCC.⁵⁹ Since the PDRY was not a member of the GCC, it would have been redundant to lodge a protest with the Riyadh-based organisation. Yet, Omani Under-Secretary at the Foreign Ministry, Mr Yusuf al-Alawi, noted that the last straw in the continuing disagreement between Muscat and Aden, was the latter's reaction against the establishment of the GCC. Not surprisingly, the foreign ministers of the GCC stressed during their Muscat meeting in April 1981, that border tension between the PDRY and Oman must be eliminated. As a way of accomplishing this goal, the good offices of Kuwait and the UAE would be used to close the gap of disagreements and avert 'ambitious elements in the world the opportunity to infiltrate the region.'⁶⁰ Early in 1983, high-level talks were held in the UAE between Oman and the PDRY⁶¹ which resulted in the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two countries.⁶²

A more serious border dispute is over the Huwar island between Bahrain and Qatar. Qatar's claim of ownership of the Huwar island was rekindled in March 1980 after the Bahrain government granted an oil concession to a consortium of American companies which included Huwar island. Shaykh Abdul Aziz ibn Al-Khalifah Al-Thani, Qatar's Minister of Finance and Petroleum, is reported to have told the Doha daily *Al-Raya* that 'the conclusive evidence of geography, history, law and logic, proves that these islands are an indivisible part of Qatar'.⁶³ The Huwar island group lies approximately at a distance of 3 kilometres from Qatar's western border, and could be reached by foot at low tide. Furthermore, according to Sheik Abdul Aziz, the British decision in 1939 to 'give' the islands to Bahrain was not accepted by Qatar.⁶⁴ At the

⁵⁸ 'Ras al-Khaymah, Oman Agree on Border Demarcation', *FBIS-MEA-V-81-067*, 8 April 1981, p C5.

⁵⁹ 'Note to Arab League clarifies PDRY "Aggression"', *FBIS-MEA-V-81-072*, 15 April 1981, p C4.

⁶⁰ 'Editorials praise Omani-Yemeni effort', *FBIS-MEA-V-81-073*, 16 April 1981, p C4.

⁶¹ 'PDRY-Oman border committee ends second session', *FBIS-MEA-V-83-019*, 27 January 1983, p C1.

⁶² 'Satisfaction expressed with Oman-PDRY relations', *FBIS-MEA-V-83-210*, 28 October 1983, p C5.

⁶³ 'Qatar and Bahrain dispute ownership of islands', *ANARAM*, 4(11) 10 March 1980, p 6.

⁶⁴ Rosemarie Said Zahlan, *The Creation of Qatar*, London: Croom Helm, 1979, pp 88-90.

time, the British were trying perhaps to avoid a repeat of the Zubarah conflict and stated that since the Al-Khalifah had drilled water on Huwar, they 'possessed a *prima facie* claim to Huwar'.⁶⁵

In an effort to settle this dispute, it was reported that both Qatar and Bahrain were prepared to agree to a mediation by Saudi Arabia to determine the ownership of the islands.⁶⁶ Saudi officials had smoothed over the two sides in 1980 without, however, succeeding in settling the dispute. On 4 March 1982, the controversy was once again on the front pages with the Doha government deploring Bahrain for naming a naval craft 'Huwar' and conducting military exercises near 'Fashat Al-Dabil',⁶⁷ an area subject to dispute between the two states.

Bahrain seems to be particularly interested in the islands since ownership would extend its continental shelf for potential petroleum exploration. Interestingly, Doha contended that Manama was 'not merely resorting to provocative action, but also to aggression' on the Huwar controversy.⁶⁸ GCC foreign ministers placed the dispute on their 8 March 1982 regular meeting agenda in Riyadh, and stated that both parties had agreed to use the organisation's 'constitutional framework for settling' their differences. Furthermore, the foreign ministers adopted the following decisions:

- 1) To ask the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to continue its good offices to settle the dispute between the two countries.
- 2) The agreement reached between Bahrain and Qatar regarding the commitment of both sides to freeze the situation and not to cause an escalation of the dispute, is to be recorded at the GCC Secretariat-General.
- 3) Propaganda campaigns between the two countries are to be halted and they are to refrain from stirring them up.
- 4) To confirm the continuation of fraternal relations between the two countries and to return to their earlier conditions.⁶⁹

Discussions on the Huwar islands continued throughout 1983 and early 1984 without an apparent settlement. Noticeably, however,

⁶⁵ *ibid.*, p 89.

⁶⁶ Ali Hashem, 'Gulf summit to decide ownership of disputed islands', *ANARAM*, 4(12) 17 March 1980, p 3.

⁶⁷ Al-Nafisi, *op cit.*, p 66.

⁶⁸ 'Qatar, Bahrain row over Huwar', *Kuwait Times*, No. 6088, 6 March 1982, p 3.

⁶⁹ 'GCC Ministerial Council concludes session: press statement issued', *FBIS-MEA-V-82-047*, 10 March 1982, p C1; see also Muhammad al-Jasim, 'Al-Khilaf hawla jizir huwar bayna al-hal al-Qanuni wal-hal al-Siyasi, (The Controversy Over the Huwar Islands between the legal and political solutions), *Al-Hawadess*, No. 1330, 30 April 1982, p 24; and Rajab, *op cit.*, p 211.

neither Manama nor Doha voiced their concerns in public, indicating that they were abiding by the GCC foreign minister's decisions. It remains to be determined whether Riyadh is the only mediating party at the present time and whether further discussions may be held on the subject at the GCC level.

The GCC has still not adopted the legal framework for its proposed Arbitration Board since the discussions seem to cover both commercial and political disputes. A draft agreement on the establishment of a GCC Commercial Arbitration Board, however, is apparently ready and could be implemented as soon as the Supreme Council approves it.⁷⁰ If created, the board could deal with disputes arising between companies and governments, and save considerable amounts of time and resources which is currently spent on settling Gulf trade disputes in European courts. Since there is a shortage of lawyers qualified in commercial law in the Gulf states, the adoption of such a board or court would require the appointment of expatriate legal personnel. Whether the GCC would agree to such a scheme depends on whether member-states can agree on the proposed court's jurisdiction. Conceivably, a decision on the establishment of a GCC Commercial Court could be made within the next two years, as well.

Integration prospects in the Gulf

The most remarkable change in post-World War II international politics has undoubtedly been the proliferation of independent nation-states. The resulting impact of these changes rocked existing balance of power equations and introduced both stabilising and destabilising factors in international relations.⁷¹ As a result, the international system witnessed dramatic changes as rising nation-states asserted their rights for self-determination.

Collective security was the new theme in vogue, which purported to reduce world tension by 'superimposing a scheme of partially centralised management of powers upon a situation in which the possession of power remains diffused among national units.'⁷² This

⁷⁰ 'GCC arbitration panel draft ready', *Kuwait Times*, No. 6712, 28 January 1984, p. 3.

⁷¹ For a discussion of balance of power which 'represents the extreme of decentralisation, a kind of *laissez-faire* arrangement in the sphere of power politics', see Inis L. Claude, Jr., *Power and International Relations*, New York: Random House, 1962, pp. 9, 11-93; see also F. H. Hinsley, *Power and the Pursuit of Peace: Theory and Practice in the History of Relations Between States*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963, especially pp. 349-359.

⁷² Claude, *Power and International Relations*, *ibid.*, p. 9.

ideal, albeit intermediary step in international relations, has failed to accomplish much of the stated goals of its proponents largely due to perceptions that collective security contained a 'doctrinaire approach to international relations,' whereas 'the pursuit of peace and security require[d] . . . pragmatic' proposals.⁷³ It seems, however, that collective security's 'doctrinaire' label prevailed largely because major powers were (a) pre-occupied with each other and (b) failed to adjust their frameworks of political reference to the status, utility and limited power of small states. Consequently, small states' incapacity to be included in the pragmatic wing of world politics led to a new trend which brought culturally, geographically, politically, and economically compatible entities together.

Integration as a conceptual field

The noticeable increase in scholarly interest in the concept of integration on regional and international levels may be traced to the emergence of the European Economic Community and its associated agencies. This new conceptual variable of world politics has led many to ponder why 'sovereign' states pursued political and economic integration which resulted in the establishment of centralised power bases.⁷⁴ Not surprisingly, researchers first examined the pragmatic and utilitarian aspects of integration, often complementing their definitions. Among the more prominent, Karl W Deutsch and Ernest B Haas, have offered the following:

⁷³ *ibid.*, p 203; significantly, the record of collective security as a tool for resolving conflicts is rather positive. For a discussion of the record of the United Nations, the Organisation of American States, the Organisation of African Unity, and the League of Arab States, see Mark W Zacher, *International Conflicts and Collective Security, 1946-1977*, New York: Praeger, 1979.

⁷⁴ For selected studies in this area discussing the theory of integration in the European framework, see (alphabetically), Karl W Deutsch, *Political Community at the International Level*, Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1954; Karl W Deutsch *et al.*, *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area: International Organisation in the Light of Historical Experience*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957; Ernest B Haas, *The Uniting of Europe: Political, Economic and Social Forces, 1950-1957*, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1958; Ernest B Haas, 'The challenge of regionalism', *International Organization*, 12(4) Autumn 1958, pp 440-58; Ernest B Haas, 'Technocracy, pluralism and the new Europe', in Joseph S Nye (ed), *International Regionalism*, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1968; Roger H Hansen, 'Regional integration: reflections on a decade of theoretical efforts', *World Politics*, 21(2) January 1969, pp 242-71; Stanley Hoffman, 'Obstinate or obsolete? The fate of the nation-state and the case of Western Europe', in Nye, *International Regionalism*, *op cit*, pp 177-230; Philip E Jacob and James V Toscano, *The Integration of Political Communities*, Philadelphia: J B Lippincott Company, 1964; Leon N Lindberg, 'Integration as a source of stress on the European community system', in Nye, *International Regionalism*, *op cit*, pp 231-268; Joseph S Nye Jr, 'Comparative regional integration: concept and measurement', *International Organization*, 22(4) Autumn 1968, pp 855-880.

- 1) The attainment, within a specific geographic area of a 'sense of community' and the creation of institutions which would maintain 'peaceful change' among its inhabitants. (Deutsch)⁷⁵
- 2) A process through which political actors in sovereign nation-states shift their allegiances toward a centralised entity whose legitimacy overrides that of individual members states. (Haas)⁷⁶

Both definitions consider the question of allegiance to be the core of the European integration scheme and undoubtedly, both Deutsch and Haas greatly influenced later theoretical studies in the area of integration and regionalism. Deutsch, for example, developed a framework for the study of international integration which classified his case studies in the so-called 'security communities' and 'pluralistic security communities'.⁷⁷ The first would require a supranational institution with specific mandates to enter into binding agreements on behalf of its member-states, and the second would stress 'cooperation' among its autonomous member-states. For his part, Haas suggested that economic cooperation would strengthen relations and inevitably lead to political integration.⁷⁸ This neo-functional framework took into account the size of member-states, existing rates of economic transactions, degrees of pluralism and similarities, if any, of each member-state's elite's expectations. Furthermore, Haas also considered the purposes of common governments and the authority of centralised institutions, before and after the establishment of a union.

Later, Haas and Schmitter developed an applicable empirical scale and suggested that politicisation is more likely to develop in unions with

⁷⁵ Deutsch, *et al*, *Political Community and North Atlantic Area*, *op cit*, p 5.

⁷⁶ Haas, *Uniting of Europe*, *op cit*, p 16; the question of political allegiances toward a new centralized power centre requires from the regional institution a certain element of blind thrust. Since it is quite difficult to properly assess the perceptions and motivations of member states in lending support to such a scheme, there is an element of failure ingrained in such arrangements. This question of perceptions is critical and despite socio-economic-political expedients, it may still remain obscure. The combination of questionable 'allegiances and perceptions' may have indeed limited the capacity of international regional organizations from functioning effectively. On the question of perceptions, see Raymond Aron, *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations*, Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966. On the question of allegiances (with references to the United Nations), see Inis L. Claude, Jr, *The Changing United Nations*, New York: Random House, 1967.

⁷⁷ Deutsch, *et al*, *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area*, *op cit*, p 6.

⁷⁸ The best example here is of course the European Community. Despite and because of the EC's economic problems, progress at the European Parliament level is very slow indeed. In the Arab World, a very interesting example is the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC). While OAPEC interests have fallen outside production and pricing of crude oil, it was nonetheless hoped that economic cooperation would strengthen political unity. Yet, with the variety of political systems represented within OAPEC (ie Libya vs Qatar), it is perhaps clear why the neofunctionalist approach to integration is terribly weak.

stronger economic relations. The authors added a caveat to their 'model' by stating that functional equivalents to 'industrialism, pluralism and democracy' (all necessary ingredients for the success of this linkage), were needed in order to compensate for the lack of such characteristics in non-European settings.⁷⁹ Noticeably, however, this generalisation to other parts of the world where 'required attributes' are not so easily substitutable, reduces the framework's utility.

In sharp contrast to these two approaches which emphasise the levels of integration, Joseph Nye proposed a conceptual framework based on 'disaggregation', which considers each part of any integration scheme separately before assessing its relative overall success.⁸⁰ Political integration is thus evaluated from the (1) institutional, (2) policy interactional, (3) attitudinal, and (4) security community perspectives.⁸¹ The merit of Nye's approach is to measure empirically the bureaucratic and jurisdictional strengths of the central unit. In addition, this methodology assesses how member-states are enacting their joint policies and whether each country's elite is developing loyalty to the central institution.⁸² Finally, Nye's attempt to disaggregate the security community assures that partners in a union have non-violent expectations. Such expectations, however, vary between partners depending on their sizes, capabilities and above all, concerns over their 'sovereignty' which are not included in Nye's model.

In his study on functionalism, David Mitrany examined the question of sovereignty and suggested that political integration at the leadership level was unlikely since no state could conceivably 'surrender' its sovereignty to a regional body.⁸³ Alternatively, Mitrany argued, states might be willing to 'share' responsibility in technical and non-

⁷⁹ Ernest B Haas, *The Obsolescence of Regional Integration Theory*, Berkeley: University of California, Institute of International Studies, 1975, and Ernest B Haas and Philippe C Schmitter, 'Economics and differential patterns of political integration: projections about unity in Latin America', *International Organization* 18(4) Autumn 1964, pp 705-37.

⁸⁰ Nye, *Comparative Regional Integration*, *op cit*, pp 855-880.

⁸¹ *ibid*, p 865; see also Joseph S Nye, Jr, *Peace in Parts: Integration and Conflict in Regional Organization*, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971.

⁸² *ibid*, *Comparative Regional Integration*, p 869; Nye acknowledges that it would be difficult to determine the loci of power in each system's public policy sector since his main interest is to find out 'how much of the process of arriving at the decisions in a field is subject to group interaction as against completely independent action.' The experience of the Arab World in generating a strong sense of loyalty to the Arab and Islamic Umma through strong centralised institutions is replete with failures. The examples of federation (Ittihad) between Egypt, Iraq, Libya, Syria, the Sudan and the Yemens, are ably discussed by Peter K Bechtold, 'New attempts at Arab cooperation: the federation of Arab republics, 1971-?', *The Middle East Journal* 27(2) Spring 1973, pp 152-172.

⁸³ David Mitrany, *A Working Peace System*, Chicago: Quadrangle, 1966, p 30.

controversial areas. While there is ample historical justification for this position, it is conceivable that the level of internal and external threat to the stability and sovereignty of a small state might indeed lead a government to seek the protection of a regional security organisation. In fact, it is quite possible that a state would acquiesce to the common identity of a regional body if that would safeguard its sovereignty and ultimate survival.

The above discussion has identified some of the more salient concepts of political integration. Having examined these theoretical concepts, the GCC's unique security attributes are outlined next.

The unique security features of the GCC as an integrative case

The turbulence through which the Gulf region passed in the late 1970s persuaded GCC leaders to shoulder the responsibilities of 'Gulf security', as they perceived distinct sources of threats emanating from Iran, Iraq, Israel and the Soviet Union (directly through Afghanistan and indirectly through developments in the Yemens and the Horn of Africa).⁸⁴ Although these urgent concerns were not given the public attention they deserved, questions of security were high on the agenda of the Gulf leaders gathered in Taif, Saudi Arabia and Muscat, Oman in early 1981. Moreover, to the extent that the GCC is a historical union, perceptions of foreign threats were critical to the creation of the GCC, despite the fact that Deutsch and his associates did not consider external military threats as essential conditions for integration. Furthermore, there is a clear linkage between world energy markets and a regional organisation like the GCC whose members control over half of the world's hydrocarbon resources. Arguably, the protection of these resources can only be guaranteed by a power whose military strength may be easily deployed to stop potential hostilities. It is in this framework that the GCC's preoccupation with security must be outlined, and it is towards that end that the following four characteristics are developed.

Dependence on one or more power centres. Raimo Vayrynen has defined a regional power centre 'as an actor which exerts a regional hegemony akin to the global dominances of an imperial power, but at a

⁸⁴ While Gulf leaders have not specifically identified these countries as potential sources of threats, there is little doubt that in fact such is the case. The Omani leaders frequently refer to the Soviet Union, the Bahraini and Saudi leaders refer to the Iranian threat, the Kuwaitis refer to the Iraqi threats and all six refer to the Israeli threat to the Arab world, of which the Gulf is an integral part.

subsystemic level'.⁸⁵ Furthermore, he suggested that 'the emergence of regional power centers and blocs around them, is a manifestation of the unequal development of the international system,' since that is 'a particular aspect of the center-periphery structure of the international system.'⁸⁶ These regional subsystems, according to Vayrynen, are 'characterized by two types of dynamic processes.' The first is 'related to the interaction between the growth of the domestic military and economic capacity and the extension of power . . . to neighbouring countries,' and the second 'is related to the interaction . . . between the regional assertiveness and dependence on the technology, arms, and capital supplied by global power centers.'⁸⁷ As a result of these interactions, regional power centres enjoy limited political and economic independence while remaining dependent on the hierarchy.

Although this hegemony of regional power centres is explained in terms of anti-imperialism the present economic balance in the Gulf region is clearly illustrative of this concept. In other words, the security concerns of the GCC are directly proportional to their economic relations with the industrialised world markets. Only in these terms can Vayrynen's variables be applicable, since the interests of the industrialised world in the GCC states are not only tied to long-term petroleum production, but also to the large sums of 'petrodollars' re-invested back in the oil-importing countries.⁸⁸

This characteristic of GCC dependence on one or more power centres must therefore consider whether the organisation can effectively become an 'independent' power centre, capable of challenging threats to its long-term security.

Military and economic capacities of the GCC. As discussed in the first part of this paper, all six states within the GCC rely heavily on the importation of their military equipment from Western, particularly

⁸⁵ Raimo Vayrynen, 'Economic and military position in the regional power centres', *Journal of Peace Research* 16(4) 1979, p 350.

⁸⁶ *ibid.*

⁸⁷ *ibid.*, pp 350-1.

⁸⁸ The influence of the industrialised world on the economic capacities of the Gulf states has received particular attention by Paul Vieille, 'Pétrole et classe fonctionnelle: Le cas de l'Arabie séoudite', *Peuples Méditerranéens*, No. 1, October-December 1977, pp 153-92. Vieille asserts that Saudi Arabia does not enjoy any privileges in world economic affairs, and has compared the present situation of Saudi Arabia with that of Iran under the Shah, see his *Pétrole et violence*, Paris: Anthropos, 1974. With respect to Iran, see also Behrang, *Iran, Le maillon faible*, Paris: Maspero, 1979. This theme was also applied to Iraq by Joe Stork in 'Oil and the penetration of capitalism in Iraq: an interpretation', *Peuples Méditerranéens*, No. 9, October-December 1979, pp 125-51.

American, sources. Nevertheless, the procurement of advanced weapons systems must parallel the growth of military personnel trained to man these systems. In the economic area, the construction of giant petro-chemical plants in GCC states will continue to require the presence of large numbers of foreign workers, thereby heightening existing security fears. It remains to be determined whether GCC member-states can acquire the necessary military capabilities to safeguard their rising economic power.

Regional political expansion on the military and economic spheres. This is the phase in which the core unit of the Council (Saudi Arabia) will shoulder regional responsibilities by expanding its military and economic clout to cover the entire Arabian Peninsula. While there might exist a degree of hesitancy within the GCC for such a development, events beyond the control of the core unit (bombings in Kuwait or coup attempt in Bahrain), could conceivably influence future collective security moves. In addition, there is also the possibility that the core unit of the Council, supported by its partners and outside elite-actors, will attempt to take advantage of developments in the region which may temporarily incapacitate other regional players, like Iran and/or Iraq. Whether this opportunism will succeed or not, largely depends on the support extended by the elite-actors to the Council.

Collective security. Four years after its inception, the GCC has yet to define publicly its concept of collective security. Nevertheless, there is a widely shared perception in the Arab Gulf states that regional and/or international wars are likely to occur in the future involving them, and that such wars ought to be prevented at any cost. While the organisation's primary attention has been focused on foreign sources of threats, there remain nascent disputes between the six states on the one hand, and fears by smaller states that Saudi domination of the organisation would 'eclipse' their interests, on the other. It is critical that these 'perception-discrepancies' be eliminated if the organisation's integration efforts are to succeed.

Integration prospects for the Gulf Cooperation Council

The four security variables identified as potential factors of integration concerning the Gulf Cooperation Council indicate that the Council enjoys certain unique features. These are distinct from similar integrative efforts in other parts of the world, primarily because of the

region's economic and military linkage with industrialised countries. With this observation, it is possible to contrast the four variables developed in this paper with the approaches of Deutsch, Haas/Schmitter, Nye and Mitrany, summarised above. At the outset, it is clear that none of these approaches satisfies the security integrative quest of the GCC. Nevertheless, each perspective contains variable elements which may be borrowed to construct the framework under discussion.

As a result, the GCC framework may be said to have Deutsch's historic security needs of an emerging union, Haas and Schmitter's central decision-making process and powers, Nye's empirical variables on the institution and its leaders' attitudes, and Vayrynen's concepts of elite-actors and sub-systemic regionalism. Thus, integration prospects for the GCC require an amalgamation of these variables. But what kind of integration does the GCC envisage?

Clearly, on the regional scale, the establishment of the GCC has two unexpressed but identifiable objectives. First, it seems that GCC states wish to isolate themselves from their environment and plant the seeds of a restricted Gulf (Khalij) identity, distinct from their broader Arab political obligations. This objective is reinforced by the organisation's activities over the past four years, which centre on adopting defence policies and creating a unified tariff-zone, a Gulf university, a common monetary unit, an economic agreement for industrial and financial affairs and a unified oil policy, among others. Understandably, the rush of the six member-states to strengthen their ties is interpreted negatively by neighbouring countries. Iraq, for example, considers the GCC as an instrument established to curtail Baghdad's influence in the Gulf region. President Saddam Hussein's Baathist government has not failed to criticise Riyadh for adopting a 'secessionist' approach within the OPEC and OAPEC forums as well as advancing the Fahd Peace Plan to help solve the Arab-Israeli conflict. From Iraq's perspective, the Saudi initiative ignored the Arab resolutions adopted at the two Baghdad Steadfastness meetings. Similarly, Iran views the organization as an anti-Tehran alliance, guided by the West in general, and the United States in particular.

The second identifiable objective of the GCC is the establishment of a regional hierarchy within the organisation. In other words, the GCC may be said to be a geo-strategic entity, dominated by one country at the expense of other member-states, perceptively coined by *The Economist* in 1981 as the 'One Plus Five' organisation.⁸⁹ Obviously, there are

⁸⁹ 'Gulf security: one plus five', *The Economist*, 279(7187) 30 May 1981, p 36.

substantial differences between Saudi Arabia and the other five states, but as Riyadh succeeds in persuading its partners to share its views on internal, regional and international threats, a more congenial atmosphere could in fact emerge for the GCC. There are strong indications, however, that consensus on major political issues is far from reality, and it remains to be seen whether the Sixth Summit meeting scheduled for November 1985 in Muscat, Oman, would witness the dawning of a new cooperative era in the security field.

Yet, it is amply evident that since 1981, Riyadh and its partners took full advantage of the chaos which engulfed the area and established themselves as the bastion of modernisation and stability in the region. After their Fifth Summit meeting held in Kuwait last November, GCC Heads of State finally agreed to establish 'for a limited time' and under a unified command, a joint military force which would be 'prepared to intervene to help any member country threatened with aggression.'⁹⁰ GCC states' relatively successful *Dara al-Jarirah* joint military exercises in 1983 and 1984 demonstrated that rapid intervention may in fact respond to both internal and external acts of aggression directed towards any member. As a result of these recent developments, the continued success of the GCC as a regional security organisation largely rests on two major points. First, on its member-states' capacity to surmount their fears and meet the challenges initiated by the equally militant, secular and nationalist republicanism of Iraq and the revolutionary Islamic revival of Iran. Second, on their capacities effectively to integrate their military capabilities and sharply reduce their reliance on foreign military technicians and advisers. Only then can the conservative GCC states preserve their *khalij* identity and guarantee their stability and security without jeopardising the region's socio-political development.

⁹⁰ 'Further reportage on GCC summit meeting: joint military force', *FBIS-MEA-V-84-232*, 30 November 1984, p C1.

The PLO and the Jordan option

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) stands at a crossroads. The battle of Beirut has revealed the valiant and tenacious character of Palestinian nationalism and the corresponding paralysis of the Arab state system. But the forced withdrawal of the PLO from Lebanon presented the organisation with the most serious challenge to its cohesion and vitality in its twenty years of existence. There have been discernible and nearly immediate consequences for the Palestinian national movement: first, the institutional infrastructure of the PLO has been dealt a crippling blow; second, the movement has been reduced to a second-level player in the diplomatic configuration of the region; third, long-standing discord within the movement has erupted into a full-fledged civil war.¹ As a result, the political gains of the past decade are suddenly endangered.

The period since the movement's departure from Beirut in late August 1982 began as a search for readjustment and accommodation, shifting between reconstruction of a shattered consensus and defining a new one more relevant to the tasks of the movement and conditions in the region. A new urgency had arisen to re-examine the politics of consensus, to make hard and unprecedented choices. No longer could the movement afford a cloak of multiple ideological coloration. The future path of the movement needed to be clarified and refined.

The announcement on 11 February, 1985, that King Hussein and Yasir Arafat had agreed on a joint approach to resolve the Palestine-Israel conflict is bound to sharpen the strategy debate under way within the Palestinian national movement. As the first substantive follow-up to the Seventeenth Palestine National Council (PNC) meeting of November 1984, the accord endorsed the principle of exchanging territory for peace, the right of self-determination for the Palestinian people within the framework of a Palestinian state and a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation, and a comprehensive settlement under the umbrella of an international conference at which the Palestinians would be

¹ See Naseer Aruri, 'Palestinian nationalism after Lebanon: the current impasse', *American Arab Affairs* (8) Spring 1984, pp 54, 65.

represented in a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. President Mubarak's senior foreign policy adviser, Usama al-Baz, proclaimed the accord 'historic'. 'For the first time, the PLO has unequivocally and irrevocably accepted the premise of a peaceful settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict.'² Neither the United States nor Israel shared this enthusiasm. The immediate issue has come to this: whether the two principal provisions of the 1974 Rabat summit formula—Palestinian statehood and PLO representation—will emerge intact or suffer further corrosion, reduced to the status of negotiable items in the present diplomatic battle. These are the crux of the Palestinian debate under way since the movement's expulsion from Beirut.

This Palestinian debate, intended to guide post-1982 Palestinian strategy, has focused largely on Jordan's role in the new strategy, as the leadership of the movement endeavoured to explore the 'association clause' in the Reagan Plan of 1 September 1982.³

The seriousness of the challenge to the Palestinian movement is best illustrated by a number of paradoxical situations. First, Washington's complicity in the Israeli invasion of Lebanon has not kept the PLO or most Arab states from interacting with the Reagan Plan. Second, the inaction of Arab regimes during the invasion has not diminished their ability to manipulate the Palestinian movement and attempt to dictate terms to it. This is in sharp contrast to conditions following their 1967 defeat, which had tipped the Arab balance of forces in favour of the Palestinian movement. Since 1982, the PLO more than ever has had to respond to external factors, seriously limiting its effectiveness as the guardian of the central issue in the Arab-Israeli conflict. The initiative has been captured by the power brokers.

The Jordan question

The Reagan Plan placed Jordan in centre stage. Where Sharon had succeeded in evicting the Palestinian spokesman from Beirut, Reagan now sought to transfer the spokesman's role to Jordan.

Jordan, with the other Arab states, had committed itself at the October 1974 summit meeting in Rabat to recognise the PLO as the 'sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people', and to support the endeavour of creating an independent Palestinian state on the West Bank and in Gaza. In compliance with this general Arab

² *New York Times* 13 February 1985.

³ For an analysis of the Reagan Plan, see Naseer Aruri, *et al*, *Reagan and the Middle East*, Belmont, MA: AAUG Press, 1983.

consensus, King Hussein took steps to disentangle Jordan from the West Bank. The chief manifestation of this divestiture was the suspension of the Jordanian Parliament, where the West Bank had been entitled to equal representation with the East Bank following King Abdullah's annexation of the disputed territory in 1950.

But Hussein's divestiture was more symbolic than substantive. In place of the parliament, he established a consultative National Council and appointed Palestinians to it. He neglected to revoke the 1950 Act of Union, and the West Bank thus remained juridically a part of Jordan. Akef al-Fayez, the speaker of the Jordanian Parliament and a confidant of King Hussein, spelled out the implications of this in February 1984:

The West Bank has been an integral part of Jordan under the constitution of the Hashemite Kingdom. Therefore, it is the responsibility of Jordan to regain the area either through peace or war. . . The PLO was established in 1964, before the occupation of the West Bank. Therefore, the PLO's authority and efforts as derived from the 1974 Arab Summit in Rabat, should be limited to the liberation of Palestine rather than the West Bank.⁴

The Jordanian government has also maintained, since 1967, an active role in the affairs of West Bank municipalities, trade unions, agricultural organisations, charitable associations, and public education. Ten years after Rabat, Amman continues to pay the salaries of many civil servants on the West Bank. Today, Jordan is pressing forward with claims it had never in fact renounced.

At the same time, the views of the regime are not monolithic. The king and an important sector of the Jordanian establishment see Jordan's future inextricably linked to that of eastern Palestine (the West Bank) and Gaza. Crown Prince Hassan and the Queen Mother view Jordan east of the river as a separate entity which must remain free of Palestinian 'troubles'. Shortly after the announcement of the Reagan Plan, Hassan expressed his fear that now 'Jordan will be placed in greater jeopardy in terms of action by the Begin government than at any time in the past.'⁵ A short while later, he wrote that 'this area should evolve a distinct identity of its own. An Arab identity which is not a springboard for further Israeli expansion.'⁶

The position of the Crown Prince has restrained but not altered King

⁴ *Al Watan al Arabi*, 17 February 1984.

⁵ In an interview with Anthony Cordesman. *Armed Forces Journal International*, November 1982.

⁶ *Trilogue*, 9 January 1983.

Hussein's approach. In January 1983, only one month after he had reaffirmed, in Moscow, his support of Palestinian statehood 'under the leadership of the PLO',⁷ his regime embarked on a vigorous campaign to reassert this claim of responsibility for the fate of the West Bank.

The first round

The Palestinian movement had then just taken the first steps toward formulating its own strategy in the aftermath of Lebanon. At a meeting in Aden in early December 1982, four resistance groups—Fatah, the Democratic Popular Front (DPF), the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), and the Palestine Liberation Front—insisted that the struggle for an independent state be waged 'in a way that guarantees [the Palestinian people's] right to return and to self-determination.'⁸ Their communiqué also included a categorical rejection of any 'affiliation with neighbouring countries.' The stand against Jordan was even more explicit: 'Jordan will never be authorized [to represent the Palestinians]; the relationship between the Palestinians and the Jordanians is that of two independent states and must not be more than a confederal relationship'. The communiqué also ruled out 'any relations' with Egypt as long as Egypt maintained its commitment to Camp David and called for 'rectification' and 'improvement' of PLO relations with Syria and Libya.

The Aden meeting, attended by Yasir Arafat, George Habash and Nayif Hawatmeh, was a first attempt to strike a balance between 'hard-liners' and moderates within the Palestinian movement since the departure from Beirut. While the former inscribed maximalist phraseology (such as 'historic rights' and the right of return), called for reconciliation with Syria and denied power of attorney to Jordan, the latter succeeded in leaving the door open for a confederal relationship with Jordan.

The tenor of the Aden resolutions permeated the pronouncements of the PNC meeting in Algiers in February 1983.⁹ That meeting excluded any diminution of the PLO by means of partnership, proxy or delegation of authority, and resolved that the PLO is sole representative 'inside and outside the occupied territories'. The session acknowledged the 'special and distinctive relationship' between the

⁷ See the speech by King Hussein while heading an Arab delegation visit to Moscow, 3 December 1982.

⁸ See text of the communiqué in *Journal of Palestine Studies* 12(3) Spring 1983, pp 243–5.

⁹ Text of resolutions of the 16th PNC in *ibid.*, pp 250–4.

Palestinian and Jordanian people, but declared that relationship could only take the form of a 'confederation between two independent states'. Confederation could not be a substitute for statehood, and could only be established after statehood was achieved. The PNC further declared 'its refusal to consider the [Reagan] plan as a sound basis for a just and permanent settlement to the Palestinian question', and characterised the Fez Plan as 'the minimum for Arab political action'.

Conservative, pro-Jordanian Palestinians did not consider the resolutions of the Sixteenth PNC conducive to a diplomatic settlement. Elias Freij, the mayor of Bethlehem, urged the PLO to place the Algiers resolutions 'on the shelf'.¹⁰ Since that time, an important part of the Palestinian movement has been searching for ways to re-fashion the decisions of the Sixteenth PNC to accommodate the Jordanian option. The more intense that search has grown, the more pronounced the internal divisions became. This dilemma was precipitated by the growing Palestinian realisation that the movement's military options were closed. But the available diplomatic options were also untenable, and this created the paralysis which has plagued the movement to this day.

The first phase of the search for a joint Palestinian-Jordanian formula ended abruptly in mid-April 1983. The contradictions between the Palestinian and Jordanian positions were starkly dramatised in a Jordanian declaration and a Palestinian reply. The points of difference were as follows:

- *Bases for negotiations:* Jordan considered the Reagan Plan, the Fez Plan and UN Resolution 242 as the bases for a joint PLO-Jordanian negotiating platform. The Palestinian side recognised only the Fez Plan and the Sixteenth PNC resolutions as acceptable bases.

- *Sequence of negotiations:* The Palestinian declaration considered confederation a 'strategic goal', which must follow the establishment of the Palestinian state. For the PLO, a future Jordanian-Palestinian relationship could not be a 'tactical move aiming to facilitate motion towards the Reagan Plan'.¹¹

- *Role of the PLO:* While the Palestinian declaration stressed 'full and independent representation by the PLO', the Jordanian declaration supported the PLO only 'within its means and in so far as its national security allows'.

¹⁰ *Newsweek*, 14 March 1983.

¹¹ *Taha* (Jerusalem), 14 April 1983.

The Palestinian declaration warned that any attempt to render the Palestinian national cause, even indirectly, to a mere territorial problem was unacceptable. The bottom line of the declared Palestinian position was mutual recognition: endorsement of the Fez Plan implied PLO recognition of Israel, and insistence on statehood to be negotiated only by the PLO implied reciprocal Israeli recognition.

But mutual recognition was unacceptable to either Israel or the US, and Arafat was unwilling and unable to yield the role of spokesman to King Hussein. This brought the talks to a halt. Even if Arafat had yielded on such a critical issue, a settlement based on the Reagan Plan was still beyond reach. Any sign of US readiness to distance itself from Israel on questions such as the settlements would have dramatically altered the balance of forces in the PLO on the question of the Jordanian option. There was none whatsoever. Secretary of State, George Shultz, nevertheless blamed the PLO for the impasse; their decision to cling to the Rabat mandate was disruptive of the 'peace process'. Shultz urged Arab governments to withdraw that mandate.

Arab realignment

A second phase in the search for a common Jordanian-Palestinian negotiating platform surfaced towards the end of 1983. It was prompted by the worsening split in the PLO. The bloody conflict with Syrian-backed forces in Tripoli in November 1983 had the paradoxical effect of giving Fatah a new negotiating flexibility. Syria's involvement in the Tripoli battle helped Arafat to disengage himself from the seemingly steadfast positions of the 1983 Algiers PNC—as was immediately apparent with his trip to Cairo in December 1983. It was the first for any Arab leader since the Baghdad summit in 1978, and signalled a new readiness on the part of the Fatah mainstream to restructure its Arab alignments.

Blessings upon Arafat's trip to Cairo came from Jordan and other conservative Arab governments. Washington expressed approval while the Israeli government strenuously protested about the visit which it regarded as a violation of Camp David. The US and Israel were looking for an opening towards revival and expansion of the autonomy talks which Egypt had suspended even before the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June 1982. The US hoped that a reoriented PLO might provide enough political cover for Jordan to enter the autonomy talks.¹²

¹² President Hosni Mubarak's senior foreign policy adviser, Usama al-Baz, said on 20 January 1984 that the coming talks between Egypt, Jordan and the PLO would be aimed at 'widening the

The conservative Arab states were now looking towards Egypt as a bulwark against insurgent Islamic movements, particularly in the context of the Iran-Iraq war. Jordan was hoping to seize the opportunity of this conjuncture to forge ahead as the primary Palestinian spokesman in an impending diplomatic encounter. The interests of many strange bedfellows seemed to converge on the need for settlement that could only come with some revision of the Rabat mandate of 1974.

These developments seemed to provide a new political environment for a 'moderate' diplomatic strategy. President Mubarak was reluctant to take the leading role, preferring instead to act within the framework of an evolving consensus of moderate Arab states. Hussein and Arafat would have to take the leading roles, with the Arab states pleading for US pressure on Israel to promote the Reagan Plan.

King Hussein embarked on a new course early in January 1984 to enhance Jordan's position *vis-à-vis* the PLO. He recalled the country's long-dormant parliament into special session on 9 January, and amended Article 73 of the constitution in order to permit Palestinians living in the East Bank (60 per cent of the total Jordanian population) to vote for deputies who would represent Palestinians in the West Bank.¹³ Twelve of the nineteen surviving representatives who served in the old Parliament now live in Jordan. The Likud government permitted the seven still residing in the West Bank to go to Amman. On the next day, 10 January, Hussein accepted the resignation of his cabinet and appointed a new one. Nine of its twenty members were Palestinians, compared with five in the outgoing government. Two Palestinians assumed the important portfolios of Foreign Affairs and Occupied Territories.¹⁴

The minister in charge of the occupied territories and refugees and the parliamentary committee for the occupied territories were entrusted with 'domestic matters'. The message was clear: the West Bank remained an integral part of Jordan. In his message to the new cabinet, Hussein declared the East Bank and West Bank 'partners for better or worse'. While the West Bank is a 'general Arab problem', he said, 'it is a far more intimate Jordanian concern'.¹⁵

terms of reference' under which negotiations with Israel could be held. *New York Times*, 2 January 1984.

¹³ *Boston Globe*, 10 January 1984.

¹⁴ Taher al-Masri became Foreign Minister and Shaukat Mahmoud became Minister for the Occupied Territories.

¹⁵ *The Jerusalem Post*, 13 January, 1984.

His new Prime Minister, Ahmad Obeidat, underscored Jordan's determination to diminish the PLO status as sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people when he told a Saudi magazine, *al-Majallah*, that 'the PLO represents something of the Palestinian rights and some of the legitimacy of Palestinian peoplehood.'¹⁶ Even the Crown Prince, who does not generally favour re-incorporation of the West Bank, described the parliamentary decision as one taken so that 'all citizens will have a say in the decision-making process.'¹⁷

A member of the Parliament, Sami Judeh, went so far as to accuse the PLO of having failed in representing the Palestinians and hence forfeiting that responsibility:

The basic motive behind the founding of the PLO in 1964 was to liberate the 1948-49 occupied territories, and to establish its own state there. The PLO was not conceived in order to meddle in the affairs of the West Bank, which is inseparable from the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan . . . It is incumbent upon Jordan to revert the West Bank to its pre-1967 position . . . The PLO has failed to unify the Palestinians; and it represents only a small Palestinian element.

Jordan simultaneously attempted to intervene in the appointment of members of boards of directors of West Bank universities and the application process for West Bank students at universities abroad. This was only one feature in its ongoing campaign to consolidate the monarchical bloc in the West Bank. Israel was ready to oblige: a thirty-one-member West Bank delegation, representing mostly the pro-Jordanian establishment, was allowed to travel to Amman on 28 February 1984 to meet Hussein and Arafat. PLO supporters were denied travel permits and thus excluded from the delegation.

The delegation, headed by Hikmat al-Masri, urged Arafat to find a practical formula with Hussein.¹⁸ Al-Masri boasted that 'the meeting has given added weight to the role of the residents of the West Bank in finding a solution to the conflict.'¹⁹ The Mayor of Bethlehem, Elias Freij, bluntly lectured Arafat 'to join in the efforts of the king.'²⁰ Arafat responded that 'this time you may be certain that the joint communiqué

¹⁶ *Al Majallah*, 9 June 1984.

¹⁷ Hassan ibn Talal, *The Search for Peace* London 1984, p 68. (Emphasis added.)

¹⁸ Hikmat al-Masri, a pre-Jordanian Nablus businessman-politician, told the Jordanian daily, *al-Rai*, prior to this visit that 'the Jordanian-Palestinian bond is ancient, and has been reinforced by the 1950 Referendum which united both banks of the river. Any separation between them will multiply the problems faced by the Palestinians.' (16 January 1984).

¹⁹ *Yediot Ahronot*, 6 March 1984.

²⁰ *ibid.*

issued by King Hussein and myself will be to your liking—you will not be disappointed.²¹

Mayor Freij, in a subsequent interview with the *Jerusalem Post*, promoted Hussein's pressure tactics. 'If Hussein, acting through the new cabinet, came to Parliament and asked for a vote of confidence for moving [diplomatically] without the PLO,' said Freij, 'he would no doubt receive it.'²² He continued:

There is no real common ground between [Hussein and Arafat]. The Reagan Plan offers nothing in particular to Arafat, and he could wind up as chairman of no more than a charitable organisation concerned with the welfare of refugees outside Israel and Jordan.

The campaigns of pressure and counter-pressure during and after the revival of Parliament in January 1984 also involved the West Bank press. While the Jerusalem daily *al-Kuds*, which receives support from Jordan promoted the Freij line, *al-Fajr* and *al-Sha'ab* advanced the PLO position. *Al-Fajr's* editorial on 6 January 1984 said:

The travel to Amman of Parliamentarians living in the West Bank in no way means that they have been delegated by the West Bank people to speak on their behalf . . . Palestinian-Jordanian relations are close to our heart, and we hope for the building of a strong fraternal relationship based on equality, taking account of the independence of Palestinian decisions within the framework of the legitimate representation of the PLO.

The winter of 1984 was a busy time for the Jordanian government. This time the King's arsenal was more impressive, with its constitutional amendments, revived parliament and mobilised West Bank constituencies. While many in the PLO stressed the importance of PLO unity, the king did not hesitate to express his preference for negotiations that would not necessarily have the support of the Palestinian movement as a whole. Addressing the reconvened Jordanian Parliament, he expressed 'resolve and determination to arrive at a practical formula for cooperation with *the legitimate and free* Palestine Liberation Organisation, with the Arab blessing and backing for the sake of salvaging the land and the people.'²³

In the same speech, Hussein also called for an end to the Arab states' insistence on unanimity in setting collective policies. Syria, and the Syrian-backed PLO opponents of Arafat, were thus neatly drawn out of Hussein's scenario. Majority rule would deprive Syria of its veto power

²¹ *ibid.*

²² *The Jerusalem Post*, 13 January 1984.

²³ *Al Fajr*, 6 January 1984. (Emphasis added.)

in Arab councils and also equip Jordan with the political cover of Arab legitimacy for its diplomatic initiatives. The open split in the Palestinian movement and in the Arab world could thus provide Fateh's mainstream, along with Jordan, greater room to manoeuvre towards a settlement, unencumbered by the requirements of consensus.

The Aden-Algiers Agreement

In 1984, the PLO was gripped by two dynamics, one pushing towards a conservative Arab direction and alignment with Jordan and Egypt, and the other aligned with Syria. The battles of Tripoli in November 1983 produced three distinct groupings. The Fateh loyalists and the small pro-Iraqi Arab Liberation Front favoured diplomatic initiatives and a Jordanian connection. The National Alliance, comprising the Fateh dissidents, al-Saiqa, the PFLP-General Command, and the Popular Struggle Front, was backed by Damascus and preached armed struggle. The Democratic Alliance—the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), the Palestine Communist Party (PCP), and the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF)—emerged as a mediator, trying to heal the rift within Fateh, prevent a formal split, and preserve a common Palestinian political denominator. The Democratic Alliance at the same time actively opposed the opening to Jordan and impeded the search for that 'practical formula' which King Hussein actively solicited.

The Democratic Alliance convened a series of meetings in Aden between 22 June and 27 June 1984, to pursue these objectives. The meeting, held under the auspices of the ruling parties of South Yemen and Algeria, was attended by all factions of the PLO except the National Alliance. The National Alliance insisted, together with Syria, on the removal of Arafat as a precondition for 'comprehensive dialogue' and any further PNC session.

The Aden political document rejected the Jordanian initiative and labelled the revival of the Jordanian parliament a violation of the Rabat decisions of 1974. It reaffirmed previous Palestinian decisions regarding the Reagan Plan, the Allon Plan, the United Kingdom Plan and any others which compromise 'the right of return, self-determination, and statehood under the leadership of the PLO as sole legal representative.' It criticised Yasir Arafat's Cairo visit as a 'violation of PNC resolutions' and absolved the PLO of any responsibility for 'its harmful consequences'. Arafat alone was to be held accountable for this breach 'within the framework of the legal institutions of the PLO'. The

document specifically barred any further contacts with Egypt as long as Egypt continued to adhere to Camp David.

With regard to Palestinian-Syrian relations, the political document called for a consolidation of relations based on 'mutual respect, independence, equality and non-interference in internal affairs.' It also considered the 'joint Syrian-Soviet declaration, which affirmed the unity of the PLO on national, progressive and anti-imperialist bases,' as essential for surmounting the present predicament.

The organisational document agreed to in Aden envisaged an expanded participatory system, and increased legislative checks on the PLO Executive Committee. Sweeping reforms in the existing structure aimed at diffusing power and assuring collective decisionmaking. For example, the Central Committee was to be elected directly from the membership of the PNC, and would have authority over the Executive Committee for implementation of PNC resolutions. The Central Committee could also suspend up to one-third of the members of the Executive Committee. Under the rules proposed in Aden, the Executive Committee could elect an unspecified number of vice-chairpersons to assist the chairperson. The agreement also called for a general secretariat to represent 'collective leadership' and be 'responsible for transacting daily decisions on organisational, political, financial and military matters when the Executive Committee is not in session.' The Palestine Communist Party, a component of the Democratic Alliance, was admitted as a constituent group in the PNC.²⁴

The Aden-Algiers accord provided that Yasir Arafat could remain as chairperson of the Executive Committee pending the next PNC meeting and decision. But this accord was the first serious attempt to curb his freedom of action. In effect, the Aden-Algiers document represented an indictment of Arafat's strategy of aligning the PLO with Jordan and Egypt. That indictment reflected the views of the Democratic Alliance, some independents, and a small sector of the Fateh mainstream.

Arafat's dilemma

By mid-summer 1984, the PLO seemed to be committed to two diametrically opposed strategies, both grounded in official declarations and formally sanctioned decisions. At some point, Arafat himself was bound to decide which of the two he cared most about. Yet it is not

²⁴ See *al Wathiqah al Siyasiya wa al Tanthimiya* (The Political and Organizational Document). Adopted in Aden, 22-27 June 1984 (mimeographed).

certain whether a unified line might have emerged if the PFLP and Algeria had not succumbed to Syrian pressure and allowed the Seventeenth PNC to convene in Algiers.

But the PLO dilemma was made impossible by Syria's uncompromising attitude towards Arafat's leadership and strategy. Control of the PLO has been, since 1970, a primary objective of Syria's regional strategy. Jordan and Egypt envisage a similar role for the PLO in their own regional strategies. One significant issue becomes whether the PLO is going to be an appendage of Syria or of Jordan. The PLO experiences with Jordan in September 1970 and with Syria in 1976 and again in 1982-3 and 1985 do not make either of these options attractive to the PLO.

In the short term, neither Jordan nor Syria can promise the Palestinians fulfilment of their goals. Those Palestinians who decided to cast their lot with Jordan stress the need to 'save the land', and view their mission as a salvage operation in the face of steady Zionist colonisation. From their perspective, the Mubarak regime has effectively shed Camp David. They welcomed Jordan's restoration of diplomatic relations with Egypt in October 1984 as a step towards a settlement based on 'land for peace'. At the same time, though, none of these leaders anticipates that the Jordan connection could fulfil the irreducible minimum of Palestinian aspirations.

Those other Palestinians who embraced Syria's position, or who refused to endorse the Jordan connection, are convinced that their minimum redress is definitely excluded by the existing and prospective balance of forces. The alternative for them is to hold out for a more favourable regional balance of power that could only accrue from a sustained resistance to Israeli occupation and a reinvigorated campaign against US interests in the region. They take inspiration from the success of the Lebanese resistance to Israeli occupation of South Lebanon and from Syria's stand against US hegemony. Their perception of Israel as a declining power prompts them to insist on the need to restore Palestinian unity and strength and not to fall prey once more to Arab promises that can never be fulfilled.

A momentous decision

By the autumn of 1984, pressures on the PLO had grown impossibly intense. The need to go one way or the other became more imperative. The need to preserve PLO unity assumed lesser importance. Arafat could no longer balance himself between the views of West Bankers,

diaspora leftists and rival Arab establishments. When the PFLP and the Algerian government effectively put off indefinitely the PNC called for in the Aden-Algiers document, Arafat was faced with the choice of presiding over a disintegrating movement or convening a new PNC in the absence of unity. The latter course would have the benefit of reducing or even eliminating the veto power of the Palestinian factions aligned with Syria, and avoiding the encroachments on his freedom of political manoeuvre that Aden-Algiers called for. Furthermore, he could portray himself as the aggrieved party, having exhausted every remedy, and impelled by the integrity of the Palestinian cause to move ahead. As a result, the Seventeenth Palestine National Council was convened in Amman on 22 November 1984, by decision of the Fateh mainstream and without the sanction of the Aden-Algiers decision.

Whether the PLO as embodied in the Amman PNC will be a phoenix or a phantom, only time will tell. What is clear at this time is that the decision to convene confirmed the schism and sanctioned the realignment of the movement. A quorum was somehow obtained (261 out of 384), but the Democratic Alliance, the National Alliance, and many independents boycotted the session. Internal difficulties continued to overshadow the larger problems of the Palestinian people.

The Amman assembly was a clear tactical victory for Arafat. He outmanoeuvred his PLO opponents and Syria. He fended off critics in the session who objected to his 1983 Cairo visit by offering to resign and provoking a predictable outcry to retract his resignation. When it all ended, he emerged with a resolution calling his Cairo visit 'a step on the road to strengthening relations between the Egyptian and Palestinian people.' He could not have asked for a more eloquent exoneration!

To his critics who stayed away from the meeting and to those who straddled the fence, Arafat could simply waive the latest resolutions. Their forceful language posed a resounding challenge to the assertions of the radicals. The PNC communiqué issued on 29 November 1984, rejected all peace proposals which did not recognise 'the right of return, right of self-determination and right to the creation of an independent Palestinian state.' This formulation recalled the language used in the Aden meeting of January 1983 and in the previous PNC meeting of February 1983 in Algiers. As for PLO-Jordanian relations, the Amman PNC appears to have left them where they were in April 1983, when Yasir Arafat backed down from his initial agreement to explore the Reagan initiative with King Hussein. But the February 1985 agreement with King Hussein made it clear that Arafat was edging towards the

Jordanian and Egyptian position with regard to UN Resolution 242 and the Reagan Plan.

The Amman session's most important accomplishment, therefore, may well have been the re-establishment of Arafat's authority and the leadership of his Fateh branch. A second major accomplishment was the introduction of the PLO leadership and the Palestinian parliament to Palestinians in the West Bank, via Jordanian television. The nightly sight of the council meeting instilled a renewed pride among the captive population, and reinforced their sense of belonging to a national movement. The inertia and disillusionment produced by the Beirut débâcle were temporarily alleviated. But while the scenes of Palestinian democracy in action boosted morale in the West Bank, the outcome promised no reprieve. It had no material effect on the lives of Palestinians there or elsewhere.

It does not matter that King Hussein and Chairman Arafat called in their PNC opening speeches for an international conference as the proper forum for negotiations. That concept has no place on the agendas of the US or Israel, both of which possess a virtual veto over the issues of war and peace in the Middle East. More significant was King Hussein's visit to Cairo only two days after the PNC ended, and the limits of the Egyptian Foreign Minister, Ismet Abdel Meguid, of a new formula for representation by 'certain Palestinians' outside the PLO.²⁵ Mubarak's National Security Adviser, Osama al-Baz, told reporters that his government regarded even the idea of an international conference as something appropriate 'at a later stage, to achieve a settlement of the Palestinian problem.'²⁶ Similarly, Jordan's Foreign Minister, Taher al-Masri, expressed the view that although his government supported the idea of an international conference, it had no objection to a revival of the Reagan Plan, which implied a solo role for the United States.²⁷

Jordan's decision to restore diplomatic relations with Egypt was greeted with much approval in Washington and Tel Aviv. The Foreign Minister of Israel, Yitzhak Shamir described that decision as 'a victory for the Camp David process,'²⁸ while the US State Department welcomed it as 'helpful to the cause of peace and stability in the region.' The Seventeenth PNC has publicly called for the readmission of Egypt

²⁵ *New York Times*, 7 December 1984.

²⁶ *Washington Post*, 4 December 1984.

²⁷ *New York Times*, 2 December 1984.

²⁸ *ibid.*

into the Arab League. Egypt is now a player in this renewed bid for diplomatic manoeuvrability.

The dim prospects for success of the Jordanian initiative are further reduced by the Arab world's lack of any leverage in Washington. Saudi King Fahd's visit to Washington in February 1985 reflected the place of Palestinian rights on the agenda of the Arab governments. He was utterly silent on three essential principles of the Rabat (1974) and Fez (1982) declarations: Jerusalem, Palestinian statehood and the representative character of the PLO. Fahd's performance underlined the Arab world's lack of leverage in Washington. Collective Arab lobbying for a new US initiative has not proven and is not likely to prove more successful than the pathetic efforts to sell the Fez Plan in 1982, or the Hussein-Mubarak meetings with President Reagan in February 1984 and in the spring of 1985, Arab lobbying in Washington today amounts to a euphemism for supplication.

From The Seventeenth PNC to the Amman Accord

King Hussein, who presided over the PLO's birth in 1964, addressed its Seventeenth PNC in 1985. Ironically, as the Organisation was facing the most serious threat to its independence and cohesion, he offered the delegates congratulations for having 'defeated the attempts to impose tutelage on [them],' for having 'entrenched [their] people's national unity,' and for having affirmed their 'legitimate representation of this people.'²⁹ He then proceeded to enumerate the contributions which he and his family had rendered to the Palestinian cause, including those of the Sharif Hussein who 'sacrificed his throne in defence of Palestine's Arabism,' and King Abdullah who 'sacrificed his life in his sincere efforts to save the biggest part of Palestine.' The applause which the mention of these two Hashemite scions has evoked hardly concealed the reality that a half a dozen prominent Palestinians were convicted by a Jordanian tribunal of the conspiracy to assassinate King Abdullah, after he attempted to make a deal with Zionist leaders in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

Hussein offered the PNC a peace plan based on the acceptance of Security Council Resolution 242, which embodies the principle of exchanging territory for peace. His message was not subtle enough: 'Either work with me, or go it alone'. Deprived of a military option and Syrian support, and unsure of the loyalty of West Bank politicians,

²⁹ Text of the King's speech in *Update: Mideast* 1(11) 31 December 1984, pp 54-8.

Arafat was inclined to work with him. To save face, the PNC qualified its agreement by promising to 'study' Hussein's proposals.

Although the convening of the Seventeenth PNC in Amman was Arafat's momentous decision, which abandoned ambiguity and nudged the PLO in the direction of Jordan and Egypt, the resolutions of the PNC instructed the PLO Executive Committee to proceed in opposite directions; to 'study' King Hussein's proposals and to seek rapprochement with Syria. The course of events since then, however, has clearly favoured the former. Almost immediately following the session, the Palestinian and Jordanian sides again endeavoured to formulate a common framework of action. Jordan made it clear that it expected the PLO to take an unambiguous stand with regard to King Hussein's proposal to the PNC. This was delivered in writing during a meeting between the King and Khalad al-Hasan, a high ranking Fateh official in Amman on 27 January 1985.³⁰ The first substantive follow-up of the Seventeenth PNC meeting was the Hussein-Arafat 'Framework for Common Action' concluded in Amman on 11 February 1985, and containing the following provisions:³¹ recognition of the principle of territory for peace in accordance with UN resolutions, including those of the Security Council; the right of Palestinian self-determination within the framework of a Palestinian state confederated with Jordan; solution of the Palestinian refugee problem in accordance with UN resolutions; a comprehensive settlement of the Palestine problem; and, peace negotiations to take place under the umbrella of an international conference, to be attended by the five permanent members of the Security Council and all parties to the conflict, including the PLO, and in which the Jordanian and Palestinian sides would be equally represented within an Arab delegation.

It is now clear that the Amman Accord which implies PLO recognition of UN Resolution 242 and agreement to share the 'sole legitimate representative' status with Jordan, is emerging as the new consensus of the Palestinian mainstream. Consequently, it supersedes the resolutions of Rabat (1974) and those of Fez (1982). Yet, the Seventeenth PNC resolutions as already cited, which preceded the Amman Accord, as well as the PLO Executive Committee's declarations and elaborations, which succeeded it, continue to pay lip-service to the PLO orthodoxy. Nine days after the approval of the

³⁰ Yusif Hasan, 'The Amman Agreement and Palestinian reactions', *Shu'un Filastiniyah* (Palestine Affairs) No 144-145, March-April 1985.

³¹ Text in *ibid*, p 117.

Amman Accord, the PLO Executive Committee issued an explanatory statement insisting that the accord was based not only on the resolutions of the Seventeenth PNC but also those of the Sixteenth PNC as well as the resolutions of Rabat, Fez and the United Nations.³² Hence the statement claimed for the accord a 'Palestinian, an Arab and an international legitimacy'. Striving to convince doubters, the statement rejected 'capitulatory plans and unilateral deals such as the autonomy plan, the Camp David Accords, the Reagan Plan, and UN Security Council Resolution 242.' Furthermore, the statement insisted that Palestinian statehood must precede confederation with Jordan. In a statement on 25 February 1985, the PLO 'foreign minister', Farouk Qaddumi, reiterated the same in more emphatic terms:

If fraternal Jordan thinks that its interpretation of the plan of action contradicts and varies with our concept and viewpoint, then it is better that we stop at this point; we should forget about this plan of action forever because this is better for all of us. This is because as leadership and leaders we cannot jump over the PNC resolutions in any form whatsoever. If this plan becomes an agreement, then the PNC will have the right to discuss it before it is approved. As a leadership, we have no right to replace the PNC.³³

Obviously, Qaddumi's statement expresses a rift within the Executive Committee regarding the emerging watered-down consensus. It is a blunt reminder to Yasir Arafat that the PNC must not be a mere window-dressing or a fig-leaf for new unauthorised positions intended to entice the United States and Israel. But the pragmatists at the top see no alternative to King Hussein's position, which is more in consonance with US imperatives. It is no secret that diplomacy since the Seventeenth PNC endeavours to bridge the gap with the United States and Israel on terms which reflect the current power configuration. In reality, Arafat's pragmatists do not see their organisation as a victor, either in the inter-Arab or in the Arab-Israeli conflicts. And so, while the PLO institutions, which address Arab public opinion, continue to uphold orthodoxy and provide legitimacy, the men of action, who address the United States, deal with the art of the possible.

Despite the public repudiation of Camp David and the Reagan Plan by the PLO Executive Committee, the two new and significant features of the Amman Agreement of 11 February 1985 are those which parallel, to a large extent, the Reagan Plan. Title I of that agreement reads: 'An exchange of territory for peace, as stated by UN resolutions, including

³² *ibid.*, p. 120.

³³ Text of the interview in *Update: Mideast* 2(2) 31 March 1985, pp 59-60.

those of the Security Council.' The Reagan Plan states: 'We base our approach squarely on the principle that the Arab-Israeli conflict should be resolved through negotiations involving an exchange of territory for peace.' Secondly, Title II of the Amman agreement qualifies the right of self-determination thus: 'The right of the Palestinians to self-determination, within the framework of a Palestinian state, as part of a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation.' The Reagan Plan states: 'The United States will not support the establishment of an independent Palestinian state . . . but it is the firm view of the US government that self-government by the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza in association with Jordan offers the best chance for a durable, just and lasting peace.'

In the following sections, we will delineate the parameters of the 'possible', from the vantage-point of the United States and Israel.

The US agenda

The US position on the question of Palestine has procedural and substantive aspects. The procedural aspects. The procedural aspects refer to the well-known encumbrances, which Henry Kissinger agreed to in return for Israeli agreement to abide by the Sinai Accord of 1974: the US refrains from negotiating with the PLO until the latter accepts Resolutions 242 and 338 or recognises Israel. On the substantive level, the US position continues to be governed by the principles of the Camp David Accords and those of the Reagan Plan.

Initial US reactions to the Amman Accord of 11 February were fairly cautious. While the State Department viewed it as 'step in the right direction',³⁴ having implied PLO acceptance of Resolutions 242 and 338 as required by Camp David, and having endorsed the confederative principle required by the Reagan Plan, it remained to be seen whether the other three provisions of the Accord were binding or rhetorical. Hence, Secretary Shultz's almost immediate reaction was concluded in the form of questions:³⁵ Will it lead to direct talks between Israel and a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation? Will the Arabs insist on a broad international conference which the US and Israel oppose? Will the Palestinian component of the contemplated confederation be a state (as the Accord provides) or an autonomous West Bank entity, as the US insists? And what about the clause which calls for a settlement of the Palestinian refugee problem in accordance with UN resolutions? The

³⁴ *New York Times*, 25 February 1985.

³⁵ *New York Times*, 15 February 1985.

US was concerned that the Accord's adherence to UN resolutions is a double-edged sword: while 242 would bring Israel Palestinian recognition, other UN resolutions call for the establishment of a Palestinian state and a return and/or compensation of the Palestinian refugees, which the US finds untenable.

The State Department, however, continued to voice cautious optimism that Hussein and Arafat were sufficiently astute to know and observe Washington's guidelines. After all, despite a near Israel veto on the US position, Washington is seen by them as the principal leverage over Israel. The Reagan Administration expressed satisfaction that the proper assurances that the Amman agreement was a 'framework, not a detailed accord', had been received.³⁶

The *Washington Post* commented that:

If the Jordanians and their friends are smart, they will play to Labor. They will get their act together while Labor's Shimon Peres is still prime minister. They will help Ronald Reagan revive his 1982 peace plan . . . They will realize there is no profit in fuzzy 'frameworks'.³⁷

The unfolding of events between February and May 1985 reveals that the gap between the US and the Jordanian-Palestinian positions has been greatly reduced. A close analysis of the principal issues will be attempted item by item.

1) *The negotiations*: Title V of the 11 February Amman agreement grants the PLO ('the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian peoples') the right to participate in peace negotiations jointly with Jordan, as part of an Arab delegation. The Reagan Administration, however, clings tenaciously to positions which both Israel and the United States agreed to at Camp David. Thus Israel continues to propose direct negotiations with Jordan without preconditions. For the United States, the Amman framework agreement is useful *only* if it leads towards realising that Israeli proposal deemed in pursuance of Camp David. Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Richard Murphy, put it this way:

Israel has proposed negotiations with Jordan . . . Jordan and the PLO have reached agreement on a joint approach that we have said could be a helpful step in the process leading toward direct negotiations between *Jordan and Israel* with the participation of representative Palestinians.³⁸

³⁶ *ibid.*

³⁷ *Washington Post*, 17 March 1985.

³⁸ Text of Murphy's statement before the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East of the House Foreign Affairs Committee on 4 April 1985 in *Current Policy* No 683 Washington DC. US Department of State. Bureau of Public Affairs. (Emphasis added.)

This statement reveals that Washington considers the negotiators to be primarily Israel and Jordan. 'Palestinian participation' in the contemplated direct negotiations between Jordan and Israel will be open to 'representative Palestinians', i.e. non-PLO Palestinians, but possibly 'non-ranking members of the Palestine National Council', whom Secretary of State Shultz considers 'truly dedicated to non-violent, negotiated solutions'.³⁹ While this articulation of the problem is utterly incompatible with Title V of the Amman agreement, which considers the PLO to be the 'sole legitimate representative', it is not expected that either Israel or the United States will go beyond it.

2) *The Venue*: Title V of the Amman framework agreement stipulates that the 'peace negotiations will take place under the umbrella of an international conference with the participation of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, and all other parties to the conflict, including the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people . . .' The idea of an international conference, which is unacceptable to Israel, is actually regarded with contempt by the Cold Warriors in the Reagan Administration, who were pleased to see Soviet influence decline in the Middle East. Ever since the still-born US-USSR communiqué of 1 October 1977 on the Middle East, the United States has virtually monopolised Middle East diplomacy. Even the ill-fated Venice Declaration of June 1980 by members of the European Economic Community lies in the deep freeze, as the US emerged as sole arbiter in the Middle East.

Despite this, however, a face-saving formula might emerge whereby some sort of an 'international' forum could be found to ratify whatever is agreed on in direct negotiations between Jordan and Israel. Top-level Jordanians and Egyptians are on record as agreeing to such a formula. President Hosni Mubarak's initiative of 24 February 1985 states that 'the international conference could be the last stage . . . as a blessing of the solution'.⁴⁰

3) *The preconditions*: For the United States, PLO acceptance of UN Resolutions 242 and 338 has become a prerequisite for any negotiations or even formal contacts with the PLO. As Title I of the Amman Agreement, which implied PLO acceptance of this condition, failed to impress Washington, King Hussein formally conveyed PLO acceptance to President Reagan on 29 May 1985.⁴¹ While this action made

³⁹ *Boston Globe*, 6 June 1985.

⁴⁰ *New York Times*, 25 February 1985.

⁴¹ *New York Times*, 30 May 1985.

Washington nudge the Peres government towards accepting Hussein's general approach, the Reagan Administration will continue to seek some unequivocal confirmation of the King's announcement by Yasir Arafat himself. Also, the US will undoubtedly demand from Arafat a renunciation of 'terrorism', an explicit recognition of Israel's right to exist inside secure and recognised borders, and a disavowal of certain clauses in the Palestine National Charter.

In return, the PLO might ask the US to issue a public recognition of the right of Palestinians to self-determination, a declaration for which the US could find a 'legal' formula. By all indications, the Amman agreement has made it possible for the Reagan Administration to revive its diplomacy towards resuming what is commonly known in the US as the peace process, i.e. Camp David and the Reagan Plan.

The Israeli agenda

No Israeli agenda has any place for the idea of an independent Palestinian state. On the eve of the decision to hold the Seventeenth PNC, Prime Minister Shimon Peres made the startling announcement that he was ready to talk to Yasir Arafat. His two conditions, however, were that the PLO agrees to forego the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, and that it relinquish the aim of destroying Israel.⁴² Beyond that, Prime Minister Peres and his party are committed to their Likud coalition partner, which opposes any Israeli withdrawal, not to reach a territorial settlement without a referendum. Any Israeli moves in the direction of negotiations are therefore likely to produce a coalition crisis. Also, the ruling Labour Party is not sufficiently united on the matter, despite its traditional concern about the demographic consequences of annexation of the West Bank and Gaza, which the Allon plan forewarned.

Although the demographic imperative, as it is known in Zionist parlance, still weighs heavily in the ideological and strategic formulations of the Israeli political establishment, we are witnessing a perceptible shift away from the strict logic which used to dictate a Jordanian option. The Labour Party, which is the principal adherent to that logic, seems to be in search of a new consensus to accommodate the present demographic and territorial realities. Likud, on the other hand, has its own solutions for the 'demographic problem', which include expulsion in the interest of a more palatable demographic

⁴² Uri Avnery, 'Arafat's rabbit and Peres' hat', *Ha'olam Haze*, 24 October 1984.

balance. The architects of Labour's policies disagree on the exact relationship of a truncated West Bank entity to Jordan and Israel. Abba Eban, a powerful voice on behalf of ethnic purity and a proponent of the Jordan option, is now advocating a solution excluding a territorial compromise. His solution calls, instead, for a 'functional compromise' along the lines of the Benelux model, in which a relationship between Israel, Jordan, and Palestine will be patterned after the relationship between Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg.⁴³ Nadav Safran expressed that relationship thus:

Palestine would, of course, be the Luxembourg; Jordan would be the Belgium; Israel would be the Netherlands. . . . You would end up with the sovereign state of Israel, with its might, and the sovereign state of Jordan, with its might, and the sovereign state of Palestine, without might—but with all the other elements of sovereignty, with a flag and a legislature and stamps and what-not.⁴⁴

Eban's shift from the orthodox Zionist view which characterised the Labour Party seems to have been decided, for the most part, by the existence of 114 colonial settlements stretching over more than 50 per cent of the land in the West Bank. These settlements, with their own regional councils, court system, vigilante army and powerful lobby, have imposed their permanence on the American-Israeli parameters of a negotiated settlement. The Reagan Plan, as well as the Israeli Labour platform, recognise their permanence. Eban's model accommodates these settlements in the sense that 'the boundaries become a painted line on a street, with little more significance than the Massachusetts-New Hampshire boundary'.⁴⁵

This perspective is not shared by the Labour Defence Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, who revealed his own Jordanian option, in which nearly 60 per cent of the West Bank would be incorporated within Israel in a final settlement:

There is no other solution than the one connected with Jordan . . . that will allow Israel to maintain a security border on the Jordan River for a period which I cannot for the moment set a terms to, and [provide for] the return of parts of the West Bank and Gaza to form one entity with Jordan: one flag, one army, one capital—Amman. I would not object if Jordan and the Palestinians subsequently decided to establish cantons within one sovereign state, east and west of the Jordan. All this on condition that the peace agreement were signed between the State of Israel and one Jordanian-Palestinian State.⁴⁶

⁴³ Nadav Safran, 'The Jordanian Option' *Movement* (Boston), November 1984.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*

⁴⁵ *ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Yediot Ahronot*, 5 June 1984.

The present pursuit of a Jordanian option is considered unfeasible by the former deputy mayor of Jerusalem, Meron Benevenisti, whose elaborate surveys concluded that Israel's control of the West Bank and Gaza has now reached a 'state of quasi-permanence':

There are strong indications that the critical point had passed and that therefore the whole political discussion, which is based on the premise that things are reversible, is irrelevant and has been overtaken by events.⁴⁷

When Ezer Weizmann was pressed on 3 March 1985 by Sam Donaldson of ABC News to answer a question about Israel's willingness to make a territorial withdrawal, he said: 'We can trade not land but sharing the governance process . . . direct talks, without mediator—bilateral with Egypt, with Jordan . . . There is no role for Arafat . . . only Hussein . . . Let us carry on what was achieved in 1978–79.'⁴⁸ When he was asked further whether Shimon Peres would be willing to swap land for peace, he said, 'No. Delegations should meet and discuss autonomy.'⁴⁹

A common Israeli denominator, given the present conditions and looking towards the next decade, is not likely to stray beyond the parameters of the trilateral equation of Camp David (favoured by Likud), the Allon-Rabin plan (favoured by Labour) and the Reagan Plan, which the US would be expected to resurrect under optimal conditions. The Jordanian version of this 'compromise' is King Hussein's United Kingdom Plan of 1972, which he had never abandoned. Jordan's amenability to such a federative arrangement derives from its conception of the proper Jordanian–Palestinian relationship. This kind of 'compromise' is not likely to focus on the national rights of the Palestinians, not on the refugees' right of return, not on the status of Jerusalem, nor the right of the PLO to represent the Palestinians; it will focus on whether Palestinian autonomy will be territorial or personal, on how much of the West Bank's water resources, labour, trade and tourist resources would be controlled by the autonomy regime. It will focus on the juridical relationship of Israel's colonial settlements to the autonomy regime, and on the nature of the confederative links between Jordan and the autonomy regime. In those negotiations, Israel will play most of the cards against both Jordan and the PLO, while Jordan will produce cards of its own against the

⁴⁷ See articles by Danny Rubinstein, 'Economic woes In The Territories', *Davar* 18 November 1984; Zion Rabi 'Demographic update', *Ha'aretz* 28 November 1984.

⁴⁸ As monitored by the author on 'David Brinkley This Week', 3 March 1985.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*

PLO. Should the latter prove to be not sufficiently cooperative, Jordan would be able to call on its own Palestinians who are well-represented in the cabinet, and are strategically situated in the West Bank.

This reincarnation of Camp David is expected to be Israel's best offer to the Palestinian people as long as the environmental constraints with which they have to deal remain: the lack of cohesion, of a secure base, of independent financial, military and technological resources, and the inability to count on the support of major powers. Trying to enlist Egyptian support, to gain leverage with Israel and the United States, implies PLO acceptance of Mubarak's commitment to Camp David. In the meantime, neither Egypt (under the present regime) nor Jordan would be willing to risk war with Israel in the foreseeable future. Yet the Egyptian-Jordanian connection has less than one year to deliver, before Yitzhak Shamir assumes the leadership of the National Unity Government in Israel in the Fall of 1986. The Palestinians would then be faced with more of the open-ended occupation and the state of no-war, no-peace.

Conclusion

What are the implications of this compromise? The proposed arrangements—call it the Reagan Plan, the Allon Plan or the United Kingdom Plan—seem clearly grounded in the strategic and territorial interests of the sponsors. They would give Israel the defence border on the Jordan River and the territorial border to the west of the river, thus fulfilling Israel's demographic and strategic imperatives as interpreted by Labour. They would partially fulfil Jordan's historic ambitions in Palestine and elevate its claims for pan-Arab leadership. They would re-integrate Egypt into the Arab fold and vindicate Washington's claim to be the sole effective agent of conciliation in the Middle East. If an arrangement can be imposed on the Palestinians, it will place them under a virtual Israeli-Jordanian condominium, an advanced form of a League of Nations mandate.

Will Arafat's fateful decision to convene the Seventeenth PNC in Amman encourage the Arab world to extricate itself from the Rabat commitment of ten years ago, and end more than sixteen years of resistance to American-Israeli hegemony over the region? The answer depends largely on the coherence which the Palestinian movement can assume. The Jordanian option in and of itself cannot possibly achieve the most minimal version of Palestinian requirements. But can this

course provide the political space for the movement to regroup and rebuild in the new conditions that prevail after Beirut?

The Syrian effort to dominate the Palestinian movement, and to eliminate Arafat from the leadership, was a major factor in accelerating the movement in the direction of Arab conservatives. This in itself is a testament to the condition of Arab nationalism in the 1980s. It reflects the predicament of the 'radical' wing of the Arab bourgeoisie, which has been striving to build modern nation-states, partners within the world system of nation-states.⁵⁰

The failure of the so-called Steadfastness Front after the Baghdad Summit of 1978 to respond to Egypt's separate peace, the preoccupation of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states with the Islamic fundamentalist challenge, and Iraq's absorption in the Gulf War allowed Israel to attack the PLO in Lebanon and prepared the ground for the present realignment. The Fez summit declaration of 1982 signalled a shift to a new Arab guardianship over the Palestine question. This is the meaning of the Hussein-Arafat accord of February 1985. It may be that now the ageing leadership of the last organised presence of Arab revolutionaries has finally decided to join forces with the 'moderate' Arab regimes, which have decided to submit to Washington's terms.

⁵⁰ See Samir Amin, 'The Middle East conflict in a world context', *Contemporary Marxism* (7) Fall 1983.

The Philippine military and civilian control: under Marcos and beyond

No discussion of the contemporary Philippines would be complete without including the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), particularly its current and probable future role in the society. The military's significance in the Philippines was highlighted amid the political uncertainty that followed in the wake of the assassination of President Ferdinand E Marcos' strongest political rival, the former Senator Benigno S Aquino, Jr on 21 August 1983, as the latter was being led by military escorts from the plane which had brought him home after more than three years of exile in the United States.

The public outrage and mass outpouring of sympathy for the slain senator unleashed a wave of protests which rocked the Marcos regime to its very roots. Mass demonstrations started from the time of the lying-in-state when millions of Filipinos lined up for hours just to take a brief glance at his remains. Demonstrations continued beyond the funeral and beyond the observance of the first anniversary of his assassination. Mass protests against the Marcos regime survive to the time of writing in May 1985. They are not longer focused on Aquino's regime, be they politically or economically motivated.

The alleged involvement of certain military officers and men in the Aquino assassination struck a major blow to the military's image. The Fact Finding Board that was created to investigate the assassination concluded that a military conspiracy was responsible for his death and that the AFP's Chief of Staff, General Fabian C Ver, allegedly participated in the subsequent cover-up. Public demands for a fair and speedy trial of those found by the Board to be indictable were made. Even a number of retired generals demanded an impartial investigation of those responsible in order to clean the military's tarnished image and restore its integrity. Many in the military privately decried the poor state of affairs affecting their institution.

The assassination took place at a time when Marcos was widely rumoured to be seriously ill. Speculation once more gained ground as to the nature and gravity of his illness and its probable implications for the

political stability of the country. The question of political succession, long an issue in contemporary Philippine politics, once again became paramount and with it, the question of the probable role of the military in the process of political succession as well as in its outcome. This article is an attempt to address the issue of the military's likely role in the political future of the Philippines. It will provide an overview of the Philippine military at present and deal with how this present situation may affect the future.

The contemporary Philippine military

Today the Philippines military can be described as a political partner of government. Since the imposition of martial law in September 1972, the military has acquired a wider sphere of responsibility, one which transcends 'normal' military responsibility, ie, the promotion of external defence, and one which even transcends the traditional roles of the Philippine military, ie external defence, internal security, and law and order. During martial law, the military underwent role expansion not only by the enlargement of its traditional functions, but also by the assignment to it of a new judicial role, as well as the development of a political role.¹ It is important to note that this role expansion was not initiated by the military but instead by the civilian political authority which, because of the constitutional grant of emergency powers, was able to direct and command the military to assume various kinds of responsibilities during the period of the emergency.

Consequently, the military soon found itself not only keeping law and order, and maintaining internal security, but also managing military-related industries, public corporations and even diplomatic posts, and dispensing justice as well as political patronage. The latter was the consequence of the proscription of political parties and political activities, the disbanding of the legislature, and the imprisonment of many leading politicians soon after the imposition of martial law. The role of dispensing political patronage naturally devolved upon the military as the officers were perceived by the people to have replaced traditional politicians in the political field.

¹ For a comprehensive discussion of the Philippine military, see Carolina G Hernandez, 'The extent of civilian control of the military in the Philippines: 1946-1976', unpublished PhD dissertation, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1979; on Philippine military role expansion, the author's 'The role of the military in contemporary Philippine society', *Diliman Review*, January-February 1984; and 'The Philippines', in Zakaria H Ahmad and Harold Crouch (eds), *Military-Civilian Relations in Southeast Asia*, Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Military participation in politics first became evident with the attendance by the high command at a joint meeting of the Cabinet and the now defunct Executive Committee² in November 1983. Marcos later announced that the high command could also attend the caucuses of the ruling party (*Kilusang Bagong Lipunan*, KBL). Moreover, the military is permitted, on grounds of public order and national security to exercise a veto over the power of local executives to grant permits for the exercise of the people's right of peaceful assembly. It is extremely difficult to challenge a military veto in this matter because the usual justification for its exercise are intelligence reports of subversive elements infiltrating planned public assemblies. How does one challenge intelligence reports affecting national security in an authoritarian political environment?

The military has also ignored some orders of the civilian courts to release detained persons whom the courts have adjudged to be qualified for bail,³ and the return of confiscated properties to their owners.⁴ Consequently, even when civilian institutions assert themselves, their orders can be disregarded by the military. And the civilian courts, in these cases, will have no power to demand military obedience.

Military strength grew from about 55,000 in 1972 to approximately 200,000 in 1984.⁵ This growth reflects the increased importance of the military in assisting the government in various tasks at the same time that it reflects the increased strength of the communist insurgency led by the Communist Party of the Philippines and its military arm, the New People's Army (CPP-NPA).

² The Executive Committee was the body appointed by the President to serve as a collective successor to the Presidency before the restoration of the position of Vice-President during the plebiscite of January 1984.

³ An example of this is the case of Cynthia Nolasco, a faculty member of a womens' college in Quezon City whose detention continued on the strength of a Preventive Detention Action (PDA) purportedly issued by the President, before the case went on preliminary hearing before the civilian court having jurisdiction over it.

⁴ The *We Forum* publication properties seized by the military in 1982 were ordered to be restored to them by the Supreme Court. The military initially ignored the order and delayed the return of the said properties.

⁵ Estimates of Philippine military strength vary widely. The 200,000 figure includes the Philippine Constabulary (which is the national police force and is by law part of the AFP) and the Integrated National Police which used to be under the operational and administrative control and supervision of local executives but which was integrated and placed under the directorship of the Chief of the Philippine Constabulary in 1975. The latest issue of *The Military Balance* estimates 60,000 (Army), 28,000 (Navy, including marines and Coast Guard), 16,800 (Air Force), and 43,500 (Constabulary) or a total of 148,300 men. The Civilian Home Defence Force is placed at 65,000. No estimates were given for the Integrated National Police. See the International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance: 1984-1985*, Oxford: The Alden Press, 1984, pp 107-8.

Military expenditures have also increased since 1972. According to Guy J Pauker, among the ASEAN countries (excluding Brunei for which data were not provided), the Philippines experienced the highest percentage increase in military expenditures (MILEX) between 1971 and 1980 even as it had the least percentage increase of GNP. Indonesia's percentage increase of MILEX was 51 per cent, while that for GNP was 85 per cent; Malaysia recorded 193 per cent and 100 per cent, respectively; Singapore 53 per cent and 110 per cent, respectively; Thailand 62 per cent and 81 per cent, respectively; while the Philippines figures were 279 per cent and 75 per cent, respectively.⁶

In the current budget, the military's share is 9.4 per cent as against 31 per cent for economic services, 25.6 per cent for social services, 10.2 per cent for general public services and 23.7 per cent for debt service. The government argues that the military has the smallest share of the budget. However, it must be pointed out that the 31 per cent for economic services includes trade, food, industry and agriculture, just as the 25.6 per cent for social services includes education, health and social welfare. In addition, the 10.2 per cent for general public services also includes an item called 'peace and order', which, given the structure and functions of the military, would properly fall within it. All told, the budgetary allocation for the military would still be larger than most of the other sectors. In addition, the military is also the beneficiary of large sums of annual military assistance from the United States, some of which come from the compensation package for the American use of military bases in the Philippines and part of which is derived from the Military Assistance Agreement between the two countries.

The authoritarian portion of Marcos' nineteen-year rule also saw the alteration of the channel of command and control from the President, who is Commander-in-Chief of the country's armed forces, to the military. This channel originally passed from the President to the Minister of National Defence, a civilian political appointee of the President, down to the AFP Chief of Staff, then on to the heads of the major services (army, navy, air force, and constabulary) and below. There was no direct contact between the military and the Commander-in-Chief in order to provide another layer of civilian control between the highest civilian political authority and the highest military authority.

⁶ Guy J Pauker, 'Security and economics: issues of priority for ASEAN', in Karl D Jackson and M Hadi Soesastro (eds), *ASEAN Security and Economic Development*. Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, Research Papers and Policy Studies No. 11, 1984, p 282.

However, on 31 July 1983, Marcos clarified the civilian chain of authority over the military,⁷ in effect depriving the Minister of National Defence of operational command and control over the military. He stressed that the Chief of Staff was his *direct* link to the military and the Minister of National Defence, while the President's *alter ego*, was not part of the chain of command and can act on military matters only upon delegation by the President.

A structural reorganisation of the AFP in 1983 into Regional Unified Commands (RUCs) similarly enhanced the centralisation of the chain of command within the military. Each of the twelve RUCs throughout the country is composed of a mix of troops from the major services. The commanding officer of the RUC reports directly to the AFP Chief of Staff. On the other hand, the major services of the AFP are also under their respective commanding officers who, under the RUC structure, tend to be by-passed by the RUC commanders because of the latter's direct access to the Chief of Staff to whom the service commanders are also directly responsible. It might be argued that the RUCs can serve as a mechanism of military mobilisation for control purposes since all of them are under the direct control of the AFP Chief of Staff, in effect removing one layer of military control between the Chief of Staff and the troops. However, it can also be defended, as it has been defended, as a management mechanism for greater efficiency and effectiveness in the discharge of military responsibilities.

The jurisdictional scope of the RUCs in geographical terms is far wider than that of any existing sub-national civilian political institution, with the possible exception of the Metro Manila Commission governing the National Capital Region and the two autonomous regional governments in Mindanao. The members of the legislature represent provinces (and districts in the case of the National Capital Region) and not regions. The same is true of governors. There is therefore no civilian political institution of comparable territorial scope which can exist side by side with the RUCs.

In terms of the consequences of military role expansion, the increase in its size and the amount of resources available to it relative to other institutions, its structural organisation, and its monopoly of legitimate force, the military may be said to enjoy a very powerful position in contemporary Philippine society. At the same time, the relative

⁷ *Bulletin Today*, 1 August 1983, p 1.

retardation of civilian political institutions during Marcos' authoritarian rule facilitated the emergence of the military as a major political force in the country.

The problem of civilian control

In spite of the powerful position of the military, civilian control still exists in the Philippines. It lies in the hands of the President who, since the imposition of martial law, can be said to exercise the control powers over the military which he once shared with the legislature. Civilian control has declined since 1972 precisely because of the decline of civilian political institutions which used to enjoy these control powers with the only possible exception being the presidency.

At the outset of martial law political parties and activities were banned, Congress was dismantled and many leading politicians were jailed. The only institutions that were spared were the presidency and the military. Even the courts suffered a setback. Consequently only two institutions were able to develop during the period of authoritarian rule. Thus, civilian control over the military diminished as those institutions with one or another type of control power either disappeared or weakened. This is why the civilian control which presently exists is based on a single entity, namely President Marcos, the man rather than the institution which he symbolises.⁸

However, recent events which unfolded after Aquino's assassination may positively affect civilian control in the immediate future, facilitating the restoration of multi-institutional control over the military. One of them is the liberalisation of the Philippine press, a change viewed by many as having been responsible for the much improved state of public information presently existing in the country. It has also affected the military organisation itself, and possibly civilian control as well. There are more stories printed about the military, its activities and the abuse of power by some of its men after the Aquino assassination than before. The reported abuses have contributed to a worsening of the military's public image. However, they have also provided a modicum of hope that military abuses will not remain unreported so that public pressure may be brought to bear against the guilty. It is hoped that this can exert a moderating influence among

⁸ The problem of civilian control is discussed at length in Carolina G Hernandez, 'The military and the future of civilian rule in the context of the prevailing political crisis', in Alexander R Magno (ed), *Nation in Crisis: The University Inquires into the Present*, Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1984, pp 84-103.

members of the military who may not be very diligent in observing the hallmarks of their profession.

Greater press freedom is one of the most important ways by which civilian control may be exerted over the military. It was certainly one of the reasons for the maintenance of civilian control before 1972. The press then saw to it that perceived military abuses or excesses were reported. This spurred responsive action on the part of the public, the government and even the military itself. A full reinstatement of press freedom can help to restore a measure of institutionalised civilian control. The prospects for this taking place are certainly much brighter today than they were before August 1983.⁹ Several independent publications (now called 'the alternative press') rode on the crest of the system's opening up following the Aquino assassination; notably, *Ang Pahayagang Malaya* which started as a small weekly newspaper and is now a daily with a circulation of 55,000; the weekly *Mr & Ms* supplement which started as a special series for 'justice and national reconciliation' with an average circulation of 300,000; and *Business Day* which was the most respected of the leading newspapers before the assassination and remains so up to the present.¹⁰ Even the newspapers controlled by people close to the Marcos government had to relax their control over what could be reported as a consequence of this development in order to be able to compete with 'the alternative press'.

The Church has also become more vocal and active in its criticism of authoritarian rule in general and of military misbehaviour in particular. The involvement of many Church-based organisations and personnel in human rights concerns has facilitated the documentation of military involvement in human rights violations especially associated with the government's counter-insurgency operations. The official position of the Catholic bishops of the Philippines was articulated at their January 1983 assembly when, after analysing the causes of social unrest in the Philippines, they cited 'militarisation' as one of its major causes. One bishop remarked that '... A pattern of systematical campaign against the Christian communities [in Mindanao] modeled after Bolivia's Banzer plan emerged as a working policy of the military against groups promoting and defending basic human rights.'¹¹

⁹ A lengthy analysis of the gains made by the press in the Philippines since August 1983 may be found in Guy Sacerdoti, 'The born-again media', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 23 May 1985, pp 30-33.

¹⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹ Bishop Federico Escaler, SJ, 'Militarisation—an issue facing Philippine society today', a workshop paper presented at the Bishops-Businessmen's Conference for Human Development, Metropolitan Club, Makati, 14 January 1984, p 2.

The Task Force Detainees, a cause-oriented organisation headed by Sister Mariani Dimaranan, has been responsible for looking after the interests of detainees, including the search for missing persons. Her organisation has documented hundreds of cases of torture and even killing by some members of the military while these persons were under military detention. Their findings are shared with the public through reports, workshops and lectures. These have publicised the negative tendencies of military behaviour, tending to raise public awareness and sensitivity to military activities which can affect the future of civilian control in the country.

Similarly, lawyers' groups are engaged in providing legal assistance to persons accused of insurgency, and victims of alleged human rights violations by the military. Among them are the MABINI, FLAG, and BONIFACIO.¹² They have been defending these persons before military and civilian courts, representing them in other ways, and even participating in the protest movement against alleged military abuses and government mismanagement in general. Directly related to the problem of civilian control is their attempt to restore the supremacy of the civilian courts over legal cases involving subversion where the military has sometimes ignored decisions ordering the release of persons and property under military custody.¹³

Since the assassination, the Supreme Court has become more assertive of its independence from the executive by handing down decisions in favour of opposition groups. In the past the judiciary tended to decide most contentious cases in favour of the government, to the great dissatisfaction of many Filipinos. This led to the loss of prestige and credibility by the judiciary. However, a noticeable reversal of this tendency occurred after the assassination. The Supreme Court enabled opposition-organised rallies to take place, decided against the government in a number of subversion cases, and ordered the release of persons and property under military custody. A civilian court (the *Sandiganbayan*) is currently trying the Aquino assassination case where twenty-five military officers and other ranks are implicated in an alleged military conspiracy to kill Aquino and to cover up military involvement in it. While the prosecution had faced a number of difficulties including its initial inability to locate vital witnesses, lately its luck seems to have

¹² MABINI and BONIFACIO are acronyms inspired by the names of two national heroes, Apolinario Mabini and Andres Bonifacio. FLAG stands for Free Legal Assistance Group.

¹³ The most recent cases are those of three lawyers who were accused of being organisers of the general strike in Mindanao in early May 1985 who remained under military detention even after the Supreme Court ordered their release.

turned as a possible eye-witness came forward and testified that she saw one of the military escorts pointing a gun at Aquino when the first shot rang out. If the *Sandiganbayan*, including its presiding officer is able to demonstrate its objectivity and impartiality in this case when the trial is finally concluded, it would mean a very important step forward in institutionalising civilian control over the military.

The restoration of political parties can also have a salutary effect on civilian control. The parties were able to contribute towards civilian control before 1972 through their participation in confirming top military promotions and appointments in the Commission on Appointments of the defunct Congress. At the same time, their role in calling public attention to military excesses cannot be ignored. Political parties in contemporary Philippines, including the KBL have concerned themselves with the problem of maintaining and strengthening civilian control by publicising, in and out of the legislature, alleged military misbehaviour towards civilians. Many members of political parties also support the idea of detaching the police forces from the military and restoring their operational supervision and control to local political executives. Law and order can then be the concern of civilians, and national defence and security left under the responsibility of the military. The restoration of supervision and control over police forces to civilian authority can contribute towards strengthening civilian control as this would facilitate the distinction between military and civilian responsibilities. Moreover, the monopoly of control over the use of force presently enjoyed by the AFP will be broken. Hopefully this can serve civilian control much better than under the present arrangement where even the Integrated National Police (INP) is under the control of the military through the commanding officer of the constabulary.

Within the military, certain recent developments can assist in the strengthening of civilian control. One of them is the assumption to the position of Chief of Staff, albeit in an acting capacity, of General Fidel V Ramos, a West Point graduate who is generally regarded as a professional soldier and a man of personal integrity. His career is a combination of military educational training, combat and managerial experience. In spite of the bad public image of his own service (the constabulary) he has succeeded in keeping his own integrity intact. On the other hand, the Chief of Staff, General Fabian C Ver, who is currently on leave, rose to the top military position from being Marcos' former personal bodyguard and driver. He was trained under the Reserve Officer Training programme which was administered by

civilian colleges and universities and is said to have had no combat experience. His implication in the alleged military cover-up of the Aquino assassination has sullied his reputation for integrity.

When Ramos became Acting Chief of Staff he set three goals for the AFP.¹⁴ These are the restoration and maintenance of the peoples' confidence and trust in the military, the improvement of the soldiers' morale and discipline, and the enhancement of their operational effectiveness. Reforms initiated included an increase in the penalties for military misbehaviour, the creation of special action committees to investigate complaints against the military, an increase in pay and allowances, the speeding up of promotions, and the improvement of military R and R (rest and recreation) as well as medical care benefits. He also rationalised the allocation of equipment and supplies using need as the basis. The civic action programmes in insurgency-affected areas were intensified and a system of integrated defence security plans was drawn up for local governments.¹⁵

However, his authority to carry out substantive reforms is limited because of his acting capacity as Chief of Staff, a condition which was further clarified when Marcos disclosed an agreement between Ramos and Ver for the latter to return to his post when and if he is exonerated from the conspiracy to assassinate Aquino. Moreover, it is said that Ver continues to exercise control over some units of the AFP. *Asiaweek* cites AFP sources as saying that 'the members of the J-staff continue to report regularly to General Ver.'¹⁶ Reportedly he also goes to the presidential palace regularly, coordinating security arrangements there with his three sons, the eldest of whom, Colonel Irwin Ver, heads the Presidential Security Unit of the Presidential Security Command, the elite corps of soldiers whose main function is to protect the Marcos family. The commanding officers of the army, navy and air force are Ver appointees, whose tenures were extended by Marcos. This precludes Ramos from replacing them. Even the commanding officers of the RUCs are Ver appointees, except one who was appointed upon Ramos' recommendation upon the retirement of the original commander. However, the replacement's appointment is only temporary.¹⁷

¹⁴ On the issue of reforms within the AFP, see 'A push for military reform', *Asiaweek*, 24 May 1985, pp 13-16.

¹⁵ *ibid*, pp 15-16.

¹⁶ Cited in *ibid*, p 16.

¹⁷ *ibid*.

The second major development within the military is the emergence of a reform movement which became public during the graduation ceremony in March 1985 of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA). Composed of PMA alumni from 1971 to 1984 (it now includes Class 1985), the group demands the restoration of unity, dignity, honour, and discipline in the AFP through reforms. The 'Statement of Common Aspirations' of the movement expressed a need to:

- 1) Maintain a strong and solid AFP that can uphold the sovereignty of the people and the state, support the Constitution and protect the geographical integrity of the country and at the same time extirpate all divisive forces within and outside the organisation;
- 2) Cleanse the AFP of undesirables;
- 3) Maintain a high standard of discipline;
- 4) Effectively enforce the merit system;
- 5) Reorient training and education in the AFP;
- 6) Promote the morale and welfare of every man and woman in uniform;
- 7) Restore camaraderie and *esprit de corps* in the AFP;
- 8) Rationalise the management of the AFP's limited resources; and
- 9) Align the concept and practices of leadership with the basic constitutional concepts and the tasks of the AFP.¹⁸

These common aspirations indicate a strong commitment to military professionalism as well as the conditions required to achieve it, conditions which apparently do not obtain or else there would have been no sufficient ground for the reform movement to grow. The movement must have been consented to by key officers, for, given the hierarchical organisation and chain of command, it would not have been possible to launch it without some disciplinary action being directed at its leaders. Nevertheless, it appears to be a genuine movement among concerned officers who view with alarm the deterioration of professionalism in the military and the consequent loss of prestige and public esteem amid the growing insurgency. Long before the movement's public emergence, many junior officers had privately voiced their concern over the decline of professionalism among the officer corps leading to abuses and corruption, as well as the worsening morale and discipline of the rank and file due to low pay and poor working conditions. They yearned for reforms to restore the military's

¹⁸ 'Statement of Common Aspirations', 15 March 1985, mimeograph.

good image, but they were concerned about the possible implications of articulating these objectives to the service and to their own careers.

Their decision to launch a reform movement must have been encouraged by several considerations. One of them is the change of leadership in the AFP. Perhaps they saw Ramos as preferable to Ver in this regard since Ver, being the Chief of Staff, represents the establishment which they seek to reform. Ramos' reputation as a truly professional soldier must have been a consideration as well as his own call for reforms upon assuming the position of Acting Chief of Staff.

As already noted, the Aquino assassination compromised the military as a result of the Fact Finding Board's finding that the assassination was a military conspiracy in which twenty-five military personnel, including the Chief of Staff, were indictable. The loss of military credibility in the public mind must have provided a strong impetus spurring the reform-minded officers to proceed with the movement if only to improve the military's image.

The call for reforms among many retired generals could also have inspired the reform movement. These generals came out with a statement after the assassination decrying the fact that the military had Aquino in its custody when the assassination took place. The statement called for a speedy and impartial investigation of the case, the punishment of the guilty, and general reforms in the military so that its shattered image could be rebuilt.

Then, of course, the sentiments of officials in the US government regarding the military cannot be ignored in this regard. Recent statements of high-ranking officials at the Pentagon and on Capitol Hill indicate that the United States would like to see reforms undertaken by the Marcos government not only with regard to free and honest elections, and an impartial trial of the Aquino assassination, but also with regard to the military. In fact, the Pentagon's recommendation to the congressional sub-committee headed by Congressman Stephen Solarz is that military assistance to the Philippines should be conditional on substantial reforms of the military being undertaken by the Marcos government. This is because the Pentagon feels that the military's counter-insurgency efforts are hampered, not only by poor and inadequate equipment and supplies, but also by military misbehaviour occasioned by low morale and poor discipline among the troops.

This is not to say that the United States has had a direct hand in the reform movement. However, the American inclination to see a reformed AFP must have encouraged the growth of the movement.

After all, the AFP is oriented towards the United States, a close ally of the Philippines which has provided substantial military assistance since 1946, including advanced training to a substantial number of officers and men in the AFP, as well as American military surplus equipment and supplies. Filipino troops hold joint military exercises with American forces on a regular basis and they are linked with one another through the Joint United States Military Advisory Group (JUSMAG) and the Mutual-Defense Board.¹⁹ Mutual consultations on defence concerns take place between the two sides. Consequently, a conjunction between American perceptions on the necessity for reforms and the AFP reform movement may have reinforced the impetus for the latter among its concerned officers. The United States is seriously concerned over the growth of the NPA insurgency. It believes that the AFP must improve its discipline, morale, combat effectiveness and image if the insurgency is to be stemmed. It will not look unkindly at a movement pursuing goals similar to those which the reformers would like to achieve.

It appears that the reform group has been able to meet with both Ramos and the Defence Minister, Juan Ponce Enrile. The latter reportedly evaluated the reform group as simply working for the improvement of discipline, unity, training, promotions, assignments, and changes in tactics and doctrine of counter-insurgency. It is not opposed to the Marcos government; neither does it want to challenge the Constitution nor to undermine society.²⁰ If the group is what it claims to be, then it can be an important force for civilian control since, among others, the Constitution is founded on the principle of civilian supremacy over the military at all times. The question is how far it will succeed in its objectives.

In order to succeed, the movement must reach the top of the military hierarchy because if it does not, then lower ranking officers will find themselves in the very difficult position of having to disagree with their superior officers. This is not likely to take place. If Ver is seen as the key to the problem, then his reinstatement as Chief of Staff would have adverse effects on the movement. In this case it would be wise to retain

¹⁹ JUSMAG provides liaison functions between the AFP, the American Embassy in Manila and the United States military. It advises the Philippines on military matters of common concern and oversees the procurement of arms under the Military Assistance Agreement. The Board is composed of top Philippine military officers, the commanders of American forces in Subic Bay Naval Base and Clark Air Force Base, the American Ambassador to Manila, among others. It serves as a mutual consultative forum for the Mutual Defense Agreement and the overall military relations between the two countries.

²⁰ *Bulletin Today*, 8 May 1985, p 1.

Ramos at the top position in a permanent capacity in order to superintend the reforms. American influence in this regard would be an important consideration since it is widely recognised that Ramos is better regarded by the United States than Ver.

Prospects for the future

The kind of role which the military is likely to play in the future is a crucial issue in the prospects for the restoration of democracy in the Philippines. In this connection, three probable scenarios may be considered. The first is the return of the military to its pre-1972 roles of providing for external defence, internal security and law and order. The second is a continuation of the present military role as a partner of government and the third is the take-over of political power by the military.²¹

The first scenario is helped by the opening up of the system since August 1983. The process of press liberalisation which began after that time has provided the people access to information including that relating to the military. There is greater public awareness of and concern over military excesses now than at any time between 1972 and August 1983. The pressure which the press and the public can exert over the government and the military can be great so that public demands for a return to the barracks cannot be easily ignored. Public awareness and demands are enhanced by the election of more assemblymen from various opposition groups into the legislature who articulate the desire of their constituents to see current military activities and behaviour altered to ensure the continuation of civilian supremacy over the military.

Similarly, the emergence and growth of the protest movement, called 'the parliament of the streets', serves to highlight the importance of preserving civilian control if violent repression of basic human rights is to be curtailed. The violent dispersals of peaceful protest activities like mass rallies and demonstrations, strikes and marches only served to emphasise the significance of civilian control in protecting the rights of the people from being infringed upon by the military.

The reform movement within the military is another hopeful sign that the first scenario may be viable after all. The call of the reform movement boils down to a return to professionalism. Within the context of the AFP's professional doctrines, professionalism is founded upon

²¹ This issue is also addressed in Hernandez, 'The military and the future of civilian rule', *op cit*, pp 96-101.

the principle of civilian supremacy over the military at all times. This means that if the civilian political leadership decides to send the military back to the barracks, the military will return and not resist that decision. There may be enough personnel in the military who would welcome this decision because they may feel uncomfortable in performing civilian roles and they may view such performance as inimical to professional military ethics. The question is, will the present civilian leadership take this decision?

This question leads us to the second scenario where the military continues to be a partner of government. There are several factors which point to its probability. One of them is the fact that the military continues to be the primary institution from which the Marcos regime draws its support. Any diminution of the present role of the military may be perceived as weakening the source of that support. The Marcos regime may not be able to afford this situation especially due to the public perception that the present political and economic difficulties can be traced back to the doorstep of the presidential palace. Returning the military to the barracks may lead to the loss of the palace by Marcos. From what is known of the man, this is an intolerable situation which he will resist as long as he can.

In this regard, the relative weakness of existing civilian political institutions can be used as a rationale for continuing civilian-military partnership in government. Time and again, Marcos has stressed the efficiency of military officers in civilian jobs compared with their counterparts in the civilian bureaucracy. This can be used as an excuse to retain the fusion of military and civilian functions in certain areas of activities. The fact that the opposition political parties and groups remain unwieldy and splintered can only contribute towards keeping these institutions weak, especially in presenting an alternative to the present regime. As already noted, the military occupies a more favourable position in the political system than any civilian institution apart from the presidency. It is easier to maintain this than to undertake the efforts required to strengthen civilian political institutions so that they can compete favourably with the military in the political system.

The military may also wish to preserve the status quo. In spite of the reform movement within the military, there may be officers who would not support any reform which will tend to undermine the present powerful position of the military in society, as well as their personal power. These officers will lobby for the maintenance of the status quo for various reasons, chief of which is the threat posed to the nation's

survival by the growing communist insurgency. They will probably argue that any change affecting the military's power will weaken its capability to resist that threat, thereby compromising national security.

Fear of reprisals by victims of military repression may be another reason why some in the military would want the preservation of the *status quo*. In their participation in the management of society, they have been guilty of repression and violence against their own people. A change in their position in society may be perceived as making them vulnerable to possible reprisals by those who suffered at their hands. This may be one reason why the military will be interested in the outcome of the presidential succession. It is in its interest to support a successor who would be supportive of military corporate interests, who would respect military corporate autonomy in the internal affairs of the organisation, and who would defend the military against possible reprisals. In this light many probable presidential candidates in the opposition may not be acceptable to the military. Most of them have decried the ascendancy of the military in certain respects and have expressed their disagreement with what some of them call the 'process of militarisation' which took place after the imposition of martial law in 1972. Intelligence reports linking some of the opposition leaders to the National Democratic Front (NDF), an umbrella organisation of the left, may also be another reason why the military, which is virulently anti-communist, may not wish to see a succession to the presidency by a member of the opposition as this would allow the left an entry into the halls of power.

A reduction of the role of the military will also require a reduction of its size and budget. Given the chronic economic crisis facing the country and the attendant high rate of unemployment which is not likely to decrease within the next four years or so, the idea of displacing employed military men in a deteriorating employment market is not at all wise. This will only worsen the employment situation and could lead to further increase in criminality as well as a further deterioration of peace and order.

The third scenario can happen if the military should be willing to act as a group and carry out a *coup d'état*. Some of the significant factors for a *coup d'état* to take place, such as capability and opportunity, may already be present in the AFP.²² The fact that the military is in place as a

²² Some of these factors for military intervention are discussed in S E Finer, *The Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics*, Penguin Books, Revised Edition, 1975, pp 5-11, 20-76. See Hernandez, 'The extent of civilian control of the military in the Philippines: 1946-1976', *op cit*, Chapters 4-6 on the potential for intervention in politics of the AFP.

major power-holder enhances its capability for intervention in politics, and the opportunity may present itself in the event that a political vacuum takes place before 1987 when the term of the incumbent expires and should a fierce and disorderly struggle for power between civilian aspirants ensue. If it is willing, it may yet bring the third scenario about.

However, there may be some constraints against the military acting in this manner. One of these is the principle of civilian supremacy which the AFP has upheld as a matter of tradition. The AFP has had no history of military intervention in its past. While this is not a guarantee that civilian supremacy will be observed, it nevertheless serves as a restraining factor. Another is the presence of the reform movement within the military. Intervention in politics could also split the military with one group supporting a *coup d'état*, and another group opposing it. Such a split would be antagonistic to the entire organisation as it could lead to its own destruction. If the survival of the organisation becomes the issue, then tradition may yet prevail and the status quo preserved.

US influence could be crucial at this point if the United States is interested in restoration of democracy in the Philippines as well as in reforming the military. This message will not be lost to the leaders of the AFP because they require American military support in maintaining the viability of their organisation. Should these forces converge upon the AFP, military control of politics is not likely to take place. The most likely scenario in the short term would then be the second, where the military remains a partner of government, possibly attempting to accommodate the forces for reform. Perhaps it is through the reform movement that the first scenario can become a reality beyond the near term, and the risk/option of military control of politics can be foreclosed.

Communism in Rajiv Gandhi's India

Those who take an academic interest in Indian communism sometimes feel as the communist leaders themselves must do: will our time never come? After sixty years of existence the communist movement shows no sign of a breakthrough in a country whose toiling masses are legion and poverty is a byword. One should not, of course, underestimate the diffuse contribution of socialism and Marxism from Subhas Chandra Bose—who led the left challenge to Gandhi in the 1930s—to Jyoti Basu—West Bengal's current Chief Minister—to modern Indian history. Nevertheless, the Marxist hope of peaceful transition has regularly proved a false dawn since the 1950s as the revolutionary situation proved a mirage before. Table 1 summarises the essential facts of communist performance in India's general elections. Compared with the communists' best showing—48 seats in 1971—the 1984 figure of 28 is a setback. More importantly, the trend in the share of the vote which peaked at 9.9 per cent has edged slowly down since 1971 to 8.5 per cent in 1984. It is also clear that the parent party, the Communist Party of India (CPI) has not recovered from the loss of support incurred by its alignment with Mrs Gandhi during the Emergency. Although the CPI still enjoys the patronage of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and links between the rival CPI (Marxist) are unofficial, it is the CPI(M) which is the major communist party in India; and so it is on the Marxist party's performance and prospects that this article focuses.

Table 1: Communist performance in Indian general elections 1952–84

| | Seats won | | | | | | | |
|--------|-----------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| | 1984 | 1980 | 1977 | 1971 | 1967 | 1962 | 1957 | 1952 |
| CPI | 6 | 11 | 7 | 23 | 23 | 29 | 27 | 16 |
| CPI(M) | 22 | 36 | 22 | 25 | 19 | — | — | — |
| | Percentage vote | | | | | | | |
| | 1984 | 1980 | 1977 | 1971 | 1967 | 1962 | 1957 | 1952 |
| CPI | 2.7 | 2.6 | 2.8 | 4.7 | 5.1 | 9.9 | 8.9 | 3.3 |
| CPI(M) | 5.8 | 6.1 | 4.3 | 5.1 | 4.4 | — | — | — |

Source: *Hindustan Times*, 4 January 1985

Despite the dynastic continuity—and Rajiv Gandhi's adoption of such Rajput symbolism as the *tilak*—1984 potentially marks a great divide for India: the country now has a leader for whom the Freedom Struggle is history and who unambiguously welcomes modernity. With an unparalleled mandate from the electorate, without obligations to other politicians and, at forty, in the prime of life, the former airline pilot can claim not only to be a man of our technological times but a forerunner of the twenty-first century. By contrast the collective communist leadership—after Shripat Amrit Dange's reign as party chief, individual ascendancy is eschewed—is elderly, careworn and a trifle politically shop-soiled. Film-going, transistorised young India does not understand the 1930s puritanism of the communists nor understand its equivocal attitude towards material progress. As Bipan Chandra, an independent-minded communist critic, has recently written: 'Today, as India changes before our eyes . . . as the old leaders . . . entrenched for decades have passed away or are passing away, though the poverty and oppression are still with us, a question mark has been raised round the fate of the Left. Has it a future?'¹

Comment on India's eighth general election held in December 1984 in all states bar Punjab and Assam has understandably focused on the reasons for Rajiv Gandhi's sweeping victory in the wake of his mother's assassination and the murderous attack on the Sikh community. In winning four-fifths of the seats in the Lok Sabha and taking 49 per cent of the popular vote, the new Prime Minister bettered the performances of Mrs Gandhi and Nehru himself. The national opposition was virtually wiped out: the Bharatya Janata Party managed 2 seats from 226 contests, Janata 10 from 207, and the Dalit Mazdoor Kisan Party 3 from 168. Their share of the vote was hardly more impressive: 7.17, 7 and 5.9 per cent respectively. The only opposition parties to resist the trend were Telugu Desam in Andhra Pradesh and the Marxist-led Left Front parties in West Bengal and the tiny (and Bengali-speaking) north-eastern hill state of Tripura.

The arguments bruited are familiar: the wave of sympathy; a surge of nationalism; the Hindu backlash; divisions in the opposition; juventocracy versus gerontocracy; Mr Clean; and the floppy disk icon. Telugu Desam, a regional party, led by the former film star N T Rama Rao, need not concern us here, nor the special case of Tamil Nadu where another regional party, AIADMK, fought the election in alliance

¹ *Sunday* (Calcutta) 24 February–2 March 1985, p 34.

with Congress (I). The Left is however interesting because—perhaps for the first time—it faced a clearly differentiated and polar opposite in Rajiv's new-style Congress and because it claims to be the national alternative.

Congress (I) has since the election reaffirmed its belief in 'socialism' and Mr Gandhi's initial foreign assignment was to call on Mr Gorbachov but President Reagan's speech welcoming India's Prime Minister accurately summarised the country's new image. We share, the President enthused, a joint commitment to 'free peoples, free minds, free markets'; and the ceremony was relayed live to millions of television viewers in India, perversely in slums as well as suburbs.² During the election campaign poverty had scarcely rated a mention and from subsequent statements it is clear that Rajiv Gandhi believes in the trickle-down theory of development. The 1985 Budget with its reduction in wealth tax in particular confirms the impression of a fundamental shift in policy from mother to son. Elite-led technological modernisation will create an overflow of goods which will filter down to the masses.

In terms of its support base, the Left bloc is in fact *regional*, effectively confined to West Bengal, Tripura and Kerala. CPI(M) membership exceeds (1981) 10,000 in only five states with Kerala (38 per cent) and West Bengal (30 per cent) providing two-thirds of the total. In the parliamentary elections CPI(M) contested only 59 of the 508 seats fought; and all but 16 were the 3 core states. The CPI's fifty-four candidates were scattered more widely but three of its six victories were in West Bengal and two in adjoining Bihar. Apart from one seat each for the CPI and CPI(M) in Andhra, all other Left successes (or near misses), including the Revolutionary Socialist Party and the Forward Bloc, were in the heartlands.

The two communist parties however have their headquarters in Delhi—in the CPI(M)'s case, after a period based in Calcutta—and adopt a national posture in their propaganda. The headlines in *People's Democracy*, the CPI(M) weekly, in the run up to the election highlight this: 'The Congress (I) is Unfit to Govern'; 'The Alternative Before the People'; 'Reject the Congress (I)'; and 'Defeat Congress (I)', 'Isolate Divisive forces, Strengthen Secular and Left and Democratic Forces.' Indeed, the tensions between a nationally oriented Politbureau and powerful State Committee interests caused concern at the last CPI(M)

² *The Times* (London) 13 June 1985, p 2.

Congress in 1982. The important Political Organisational Report censured those who had succumbed to 'federalism', a deviation defined as 'the glorification of the achievements of individual state Party units or decrying their failures without looking at them from the all-India angle'. 'Comrades who are victims of this trend', the Report continued, 'do not realise that without a strong all-India centre and its intervention no strong state Parties . . . can continue for long in face of the onslaught from the authoritarianism of the Central Government'. 'The federal outlook which ends up in each state functioning, more or less, as an independent body reduces the all-India centre to a sort of co-ordinating body which periodically meets to adopt some resolutions . . .'³ The implication is clear: only the central leadership is committed to a national breakthrough.

The CPI(M)'s official interpretation of their losses in the general elections is among other things a reiteration of the claim that the Marxists are a national party. The Politbureau's communiqué explained the setback with central reference to the shock and sympathy waves and the countrywide concern for national unity and the devil of Hindu chauvinism. Both the CPI—at some cost to its Punjabi backing—and the CPI(M) have been deeply concerned with the maintenance of national integrity since the beginning of the Punjab crisis. The elections, the CPI(M) Politbureau contended, were taking place in a 'qualitatively new situation' in the wake of the assassination. Discontent with the 'anti-people' policies of the Congress (I) government was therefore relegated to the background. Unfortunately, the bourgeois opposition did not grasp the new popular mood and 'continued as if nothing had changed, talk[ing] of the Government's economic policies, broken pledges etc when people had started thinking of something else'. The meaning of Telugu Desam's victory in Andhra Pradesh in this context was not addressed. As to the variability of the CPI(M)'s own performance, the Politbureau merely 'took note' of the reverses and decided 'to examine whether there were any other reasons for this setback' later.⁴ Subsequently, at Central and State Committee levels, that promised examination was conducted but 'sympathy' and 'national unity' continued to appeal to many, though not all, national leaders as the principal factors.

How real was 'the rout of the Left' announced in the press? The

³ *Documents of the Eleventh Congress of the CPI(M)*, Vijayawada, January 26–31, 1982 New Delhi: Desraj Chadha on behalf of CPI(M) [1983] pp 140–2.

⁴ *People's Democracy* (New Delhi) 6 January 1985, pp 1 and 7.

CPI(M) more or less retained its 6 per cent of the national vote in 1980 from a similar number of contests. In Tripura the party retained both seats despite the support of a local communal party for Congress (I) and appalling economic difficulties for the Left Front Government. In West Bengal the Left Front lost twelve seats and reduced its state representation from thirty-eight out of forty-one in 1980 to twenty-six out of forty-two in 1984 with the CPI(M) coming down twenty-eight to eighteen. Congress (I), on the other hand, went up from four seats in 1980—a perversely low figure from 36 per cent of the poll—to sixteen seats. Its share of the vote at 48 per cent was equal to its best ever—in 1957—and indicates that—post-Janata—it has now aggregated the entire non-left vote. The Left Front vote fell from 54 per cent in 1980 to 48 per cent, with the CPI(M) securing 35 per cent and the CPI, Revolutionary Socialist Party and Forward Bloc gaining around 4 per cent each. The arbitrary nature of the British-style electoral system still followed in India is reflected in the fact that almost the same share of the vote which gave Congress four-fifths of the seats nationally gave it less than two-fifths in West Bengal.

However the ostensible haemorrhaging of the Left was in Kerala. There the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF), in power in the state won seventeen out of twenty seats, and with a little more care could have swept the board. The CPI lost all its four seats including Trichur which it had held ever since 1957. Of the twelve seats won by the Left Democratic Front (LDF) in 1980, six had been held by the CPI(M). In 1984 the party lost all its sitting members but gained one seat from a local party, Kerala Congress (Mani). Among CPI(M) losses were the Politbureau member, Mr E Balanandan, and Mrs Susheela Gopalan, widow of the legendary Kerala peasant leader, A K Gopalan. Perhaps significantly, the CPI(M)'s one success was achieved by a dynamic young student leader.

What made the Kerala result so dispiriting for the LDF was the fact that it was in opposition. In a state with a deserved reputation for political volatility, governments are supposed to lose support not gain it; and communists relish anti-government agitation. The UDF ministry, though led by the seasoned Mr Karunakaran—one of the few to stand by Mrs Gandhi at the nadir of her career in 1977–8—is publicly riven by communal and sectional rivalries and has skidded on as many banana skins as there are varieties of that prolific fruit in Kerala. Yet the gap between the LDF and UDF has grown between the assembly elections of 1982 and the general elections of 1984 from 100,000 to

1 million votes. From the Left's perspective particularly worrying is the fact that the state has fallen into line with the country as a whole after almost routinely asserting its electoral independence of mind from 1957 to 1980.

The ultimate significance of how the setbacks in Kerala and West Bengal are interpreted by the Left rests, of course, on what would happen if there were state elections 'tomorrow'. On the basis of assembly segment declarations in Kerala at the parliamentary poll, the ruling UDF's tally would have risen from 77 out of 141 to 113, a slender to a substantial majority. The government in Kerala could fall at any time given its internal conflicts. The LDF's position in West Bengal is rather different since its majority is overwhelming, but Janata after its 1977 victory and Mrs Gandhi after her 1980 triumph both dismissed opposition-led state governments claiming the parliamentary result as a mandate. Rajiv Gandhi has stated that he regards these precedents as bad ones, sought to establish good relations with opposition Chief Ministers, and in any case has sound political reasons for leaving well alone in West Bengal. Nonetheless, from a communist perspective the risk is always there.

Assessing the lessons of the Kerala outcome in *People's Democracy*, E M S Namboodiripad, the CPI(M)'s general secretary and former Chief Minister there, deviated somewhat from the Politbureau's general line on the elections. While accepting that the sympathy vote and the desire for national integrity played a part, he argued that 'equally important was the political situation developing in the state which marked it off from the rest of the country'. The UDF had won back power from the LDF in 1982 because one wing of the 'clergy-dominated Kerala Congress' and the dissident Antony Congress had changed sides. In the run up to the parliamentary elections such parties had been at odds with the Congress (I) leadership but vested interests had forced the warring factions into a truce for the duration of the campaign and 'hence the spectacular (UDF) victory'.⁵ All true—but why, one asks, should the Left Democratic Front need such fickle and unsavoury allies anyway? Finally the Kerala Left was urged to consider whether there was truth in the impression that was gaining ground among voters that the LDF was as soft on 'minority communalism' as the UDF which being translated means tailoring policies to catch Muslim and Christian votes. Did they, Namboodiripad asked, need a new—more accommodating?—approach

⁵ *People's Democracy* (New Delhi) 20 January 1985, pp 1 and 11.

to 'majority communalism', especially in the light of the growth of a third and Hindu chauvinist front in Kerala politics: the BJP and Hindu Munnani?

In fact, if we look at the evidence there seems little doubt that the national factor was the most powerful one in Kerala if we consider the parliamentary elections in isolation. The electorate had gone up since 1980 by 6 per cent but polling registered a 14 per cent increase. Reliable correspondents noted that women outnumbered men at the poll in many constituencies and that young people, including first-time voters, often preponderated over older voters.⁶

Even more persuasive is the outcome of three by-elections held for the state assembly only a month later. With high turnouts of 73 per cent to 77 per cent the LDF won all three with varying degrees of ease whereas on the disaggregated assembly segment voting in December they would have lost. *The Hindu* reported that the pendulum had swung back again and that the by-elections were 'a setback for Mr. Karunakaran'.⁷ By May 1985 some of the wilder elements in Youth Congress were talking of one party (Congress) rule; but in a state ruled by fronts since 1967 no party is in a position to win an absolute majority. It is not ideology which decides the course of politics but the communal equation.⁸

In an earlier work I wishfully under-estimated the continued vigour of caste and community in Kerala in the 1970s; and the 1980s has witnessed a resurgence of community as opposed to class as the basis of Kerala politics.⁹ This phenomenon is undoubtedly both cause and consequence of a long-term secular decline of communist support in the state. It is this, not the contingent factors influencing the general election or possible state elections, which is important.

Save for the tiny Italian principality of San Marino, Kerala was the first instance of the democratic election of a communist government in the world. It is worth remembering that in 1960 the united CPI won 39 per cent of the Assembly poll—44 per cent if party-backed independents are counted—against a formidable combination of vested interests, a determined Congress high command and injections of foreign finance. By 1982 the CPI(M), effective heir of the old CPI,

⁶ *The Hindu International Edition*, 12 January 1985, p 11.

⁷ *The Hindu*, 3 February 1985. Also *People's Democracy*, 10 February 1985, pp 2 and 10.

⁸ Special Correspondent, *The Hindu International Edition*, 11 May 1985.

⁹ T J Nossiter *Communism in Kerala* London: C. Hurst, 1982; Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1981; Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1982.

managed only 19 per cent. Even a generous allowance for the fact that it was part of the Left Democratic Front—generous because not much of the front was 'left' and some of it was doubtfully 'democratic'—the Marxist vote amounted to only 30 per cent. Detailed analysis suggests that the communists have been losing old bases without gaining new ones.

Why are the communists losing ground in Kerala? The state has always been very different from any other Indian province. In the past its uniquely high levels of literacy served the communist cause well. As early as the 1940s, literacy was widespread among the poor and this undoubtedly facilitated a genuinely mass-based movement. By 1947, virtually every village of any size had its reading room where the Communists skilfully placed so many of their workers or sympathisers. The radical schoolteacher was equally important. Now the general literacy rate is up to 69 per cent—in West Bengal 40 per cent—but that very literacy is working against the party. In the past the CPI successfully mobilised the underprivileged because its message chimed with popular aspirations. Today, the daily press magnifies the real and imagined failings of the Left from end to end of the state; the cinemas constitute a kind of South Indian Hollywood—recently producing two or three films of great cynicism on political themes—and currently television is occupying most leisure hours.

The development of privately managed schools and colleges, complemented by an elaborate system of reservation for backward communities throughout a burgeoning public sector, has institutionalised and legitimated caste and communal segmentation. In 1981–2, 61 per cent of all lower primary schools were privately run, while at degree level 84 per cent of students were taught in private colleges. Social mobility is by no means universalised but there is enough to release social tensions. By 1968–9, for instance, Ezhavas, the main low-caste group who form some 22 per cent of the population, were officially estimated to hold 88 per cent of the places they would be entitled to if there were strict demographic proportionality in standard ten of school, 70 per cent of engineering college places, and 49 per cent of the coveted seats in medical schools. The equivalent figures for the main caste group—some 15 per cent of the population—were 148, 149 and 128 per cent.¹⁰ Ezhavas, once reckoned to be the mainstay of the communist vote, have through a variety of means—education, land

¹⁰ *ibid.*, pp 35–6.

reform, job reservation, communal organisation, communist political pressure and government action—risen socially and economically to the point where they can challenge their former landlords, the Nairs. Caste and community, which historically have been unusually well delineated in Kerala, have been transposed into a modern political and economic idiom.

Kerala is composed of three communities, Hindu, Christian and Muslim, roughly in the ratio 60:20:20; and, apart from Punjab, the state is the least Hindu in India. It is also, because of differential birth rates, becoming steadily less Hindu—67 per cent in 1911; 59 per cent in 1971. This is testing from a communist point of view since its support base in Kerala has been Hindu, and the movement has never been able to make sizeable inroads into the minority communities. The combination of some pronounced regional concentrations of Muslim and Christian, giving rise to 'pocket boroughs', with many constituencies where caste and communal groups are finely balanced has through the process of electoral competition forced even the CPI(M) to compromise with the system, by choosing Assembly candidates with a view to maximising the vote on caste as well as class lines, by allying in fronts with communal parties and by adapting its policy stances to caste and communal pressures. Over time, the interaction of Kerala's political geography with party competition for control of scarce governmental resources has brought about the total fragmentation of the party system. Fronts in the state have only residual ideological content. The nine-party Left and Democratic Front of the 1982 Assembly contest was scarcely less a coalition for winning power *per se* than the eleven-party United Democratic Front it opposed. To the extent that the CPI(M)'s tactic of dividing progressive from reactionary wings of bourgeois parties has played a role, it has proved counter-productive.

A powerful new factor in recent years in the revival of caste and community as channels of political action has been the impact of Gulf employment and expatriate remittances. At any one time in the later 1970s and early 1980s there have probably been nearly 200,000 Keralites in the Middle East, principally engaged in the construction industry. The flow of funds has been at least Rs 220 crores (£110m) annually and may have been a good deal more. Kerala has rapidly gone from a deeply traditional society to a materialist one. Hardly a village has been untouched: lavish modern houses, cars and scooters and the electronic goods of a consumer age. The effect has been the more

marked because the chief beneficiaries have been the formerly disadvantaged Moplahs (Muslims), Ezhavas and Latin Christians. The high caste Nairs, reluctant to engage in manual labour, are relatively rare in the Middle East. In consequence, communal jealousy, resentment and rivalry have been fuelled. The RSS, noted for its hostility to Muslims, which prior to the 1970s had little following in Kerala has become a significant force. Its (youthful) membership is reckoned to be about half that of the CPI(M); and although disproportionately high caste—links are alleged with the Nair-dominated National Democratic Party—the RSS in the state has made a point of enrolling Hindus from the lower castes also. The Muslims have not only improved their economic position dramatically but have been touched by the Islamic revival in the Middle East and in Kerala now display a renewed pride in their distinctive religious identity. Whether or not the burning of a largely Muslim Bazaar in the state capital of Trivandrum in late 1981—which attracted notice precisely because Hindu-Muslim clashes had been so rare in Kerala—or Hindu-Christian conflict over a claimed church site are directly connected to RSS activities there can be little doubt that communalism has heightened in the state. The National Democratic Party and the Socialist Republican Party, founded in the early 1970s, are thinly veiled covers for Nair and Ezhava interest groups.

Gulf money, some of it 'black', has also enlarged the scale of corruption in politics and public life. The writer's (unpublishable) evidence has led him to the conclusion that in both politics and administration the incidence and size of corrupt payments has grown horrendously since 1977. While the communists appear to have more or less maintained their individual standards of probity—the parties of course accept donations—the monetisation of Kerala politics presents difficult problems for them. It erodes the parties' actual and potential support, and, as class and caste become more loosely related, the CPI(M) faces a dilemma. Ideologically, they are committed to a class analysis of society. Whereas in the past it was fair to equate class and caste when tackling such key issues as in educational and employment reservation, now with a widening gap between the two, the CPI(M) finds itself increasingly torn between the expediency of supporting its notionally backward constituency and its doctrinal purity.

In the face of such trends in the political economy of Kerala it would have taken a remarkable party to hold the line. In some respects the CPI(M) has achievements to its credit: the construction of the A K

Gopalan centre in the state capital, largely from the contributions of supporters and sympathisers in Kerala and overseas; growth in party membership—though the drop-out rate of new members is high; efforts to improve party education; and a courageous fight against the more extreme communal forces. Nonetheless, the CIP(M) does seem to have surrendered its hegemony.

If this is true then a number of factors may be adduced. First, the provincial party lacks interest in class analysis. The party has been unresponsive to the potential input of Kerala's left-leaning social science centres. *Deshabhimani*, the party's Malayalam organ, according to the most recent CPI(M) Congress report, contains 'no political guidance worth mentioning from the state Party leadership'. It is also officially regarded as not well managed and has failed to reach its target sales of 100,000 copies. Second, although the Kerala party is credited with an enormous amount of work preparing material for party education, the leadership had no programme for using it. Third, despite their rich experience the State Committee 'have yet to develop themselves into a collectively functioning unit. Meetings are not properly prepared; subcommittees exist on paper; and discussions are lengthy and un-business like'. And all this notwithstanding past strictures.¹¹

The party's own assessment of its problems did not deal with the operation of the last (1980–81) CPI(M)-led Left Democratic Front ministry which left much to be desired. Both within and without the party the contrast was drawn with the first communist government of 1957–9, vigorous, informed and united. In the 1980–81 ministry the elderly Chief Minister is alleged to have dozed in Cabinet; the CPI(M) ministers too frequently appeared ill-prepared to the point where argument broke out between them; while in the Assembly its members failed to display the knowledge and parliamentary skill which had earned so much respect and excited fear in earlier administrations. In sum, Mr Nayanar's ministry was the palest shadow of the first communist government. It was symptomatic that the collapse of the LDF administration was precipitated by inept handling of the law and order issue. If one adopts the parliamentary road—and there is no alternative in India—then one cannot give such hostages to the opposition as allowing the headload workers to hold the 20 per cent of Kerala families who live in *pucca* houses to ransom especially when it

¹¹ *Documents of the Eleventh Congress of the CPI(M)*, *op cit*, pp 184–5.

became known that a substantial premium was required for a union card. Jyoti Basu would not make such a mistake—witness the fact that Calcutta is probably the safest city in the world for the tourist. While adopting the same policy of neutrality between capital and labour as in Kerala, the Left Front in West Bengal has no ambiguity about the goondaism of the Left whatever its theoretical character as social protest. The Naxalite experience is etched on the collective mind of the Left: order and industrial peace are crucial to industrial investment; and a breakdown of law and order would not only alienate the middle classes but invite central intervention.

Turning to an analysis of the results in West Bengal, there is no reason to doubt that the national dimension moved voters. Bengalis are deeply proud of their special identity, but nonetheless were in the forefront of Indian nationalism during the Freedom Struggle. The Calcutta daily, *The Telegraph*, surveyed voting intentions in a range of constituencies and confirmed the India-wide impression that women and youth were particularly moved by national concerns.¹² It is probable also that the non-Bengalis—notably the Biharis—who are less likely to be unionised responded to Rajiv Gandhi's appeal.

The Bengali press—like the national press not overly sympathetic to the Marxist regimes in West Bengal—dwelt on the provincial dimension in explaining 'Big Erosion in LF Support Base' by reference to the real and imagined deficiencies of the ministry. The scale of that erosion can be overstated: the swing against the front between 1980 and 1984 is just under 4 per cent; and clearly some proportion of that must be attributed to the unique situation nationally.

In three by-elections to the Assembly four months later the ruling Left Front retained all three seats vacant. However, if it is possible to explain away the shock defeat of a rupee-millionaire CPI(M) barrister by a 28-year-old lady of modest bearing and background in the Calcutta satellite town of Jadavpur on personal grounds, it is far harder to account for the defeat of the veteran and respected CPI(M) union leader, Niren Ghosh, by a virtually unknown Congress (I) candidate in Dum Dum, buckle of the Red Belt, without calling on a provincial dimension.

In the 1980 general elections, West Bengal had rejected Congress (I) in opposition to the national trend in favour of Mrs Gandhi in part because of continuing disenchantment with the provincial Congress unit

¹² *The Telegraph* (Calcutta) 21, 22 December 1984.

but mainly because of the existence and performance of the state's Left Front ministry. In 1984, the tide of popularity had ebbed somewhat. In India, student elections are early indicators of changing fortunes in politics. In 217 college elections held in the first six months of 1984, the Marxist Student Federation of India took 115 but Chhatra Parishad, the Congress (I) union, was catching up with 85.¹³ *The Telegraph* polls included questions rating the rival party candidates in parliamentary constituencies on a ten-point scale: voters rated both Congress (I) and Left Front nominees near the mid-point. In the late 1960s and through to 1977, the West Bengal Left had been through fire—Naxalism, shameless vote-rigging in the 1972 Assembly elections, goondaism and police excess—so that when, in the wake of the Emergency, the Left Front went to the polls it was with a cadre which had suffered deeply for their convictions and who offered the electorate a substantial thirty-six-point programme, focusing on agrarian reform. Congress was deeply unpopular; and, by dint of the division of the non-Left vote between Congress and Janata, the Left Front's 46 per cent of the popular vote yielded 78 per cent of the seats in the Assembly. The CPI(M) alone won 36 per cent of the vote. By the time the panchayat elections were held in June 1978 the ministry's initial moves on land reform met with a huge affirmation of rural support: from 54 per cent of the vote the LF took 69 per cent of the seats. When, at the end of its term of office the LF ministry sought a renewed mandate, the result was a triumph: the Left took 81 per cent of the seats and 52.6 per cent of the vote. Alone the CPI(M) took 174 of West Bengal's 294 seats, 39 per cent of the poll overall, and 54 per cent of the votes cast in the 209 constituencies it contested. A final vote of confidence came in the 1983 panchayat elections when the LF edged up to 53.4 per cent. The ministry had quite simply sought seriously and systematically to tackle the problems of the rural areas where the mass of Bengalis live. The International Labour Organisation commented favourably on the government's decisive action for peasants, sharecroppers and agricultural labourers against landlords and big farmers and on the direct communication in a way that instilled confidence in the poor.¹⁴ In December 1981, a comprehensive bill designed to close further loopholes was passed, and by December 1982 three-quarters of a million acres had been distributed to the landless of whom 55 per cent were scheduled castes or tribes-people.

¹³ *The Statesman* (Calcutta) 7 Jan 1985; A Ganguli, 'Outcome in Bengal'.

¹⁴ *Overcoming Rural Underdevelopment*, Geneva: International Labour Organisation, 1979.

Agrarian reform had been implemented at a time of extremely adverse climatic conditions: the greatest floods in living memory followed by severe droughts; and it is clear that in many areas the promptness of government action and the dedication of party workers and local officials materially contributed to the raising of popular consciousness with consequential benefits for the Left Front. Utilising central assistance through the Food for Work programme, 200 million man-days of work had been allocated by the end of 1981 and 17,000 tanks or canals repaired.¹⁵

All however was not what it appeared; and by 1984 there were clear signs of slippage in the rural vote. Benoy Chowdhury, CPI(M) Minister for Land Reform, and one of the ablest and most perceptive of the LF government, is quoted as arguing at the State Committee *post mortem* on the parliamentary results that the arrogance, high-handedness and sectarianism of party functionaries had antagonised the bulk of the middle peasantry and even some marginal farmers and landless labourers. 'Imposition of punitive measures and social boycott by party leaders and workers had wreaked havoc in the rural areas. Sectarianism and partisanship while providing relief jobs or recording the names of sharecroppers also led to the alienation of natural allies of the Left'.¹⁶ The CPI(M) is quoted as estimating that in Mathurapur—a rural seat lost to Congress—the bulk of the middle peasantry and some 40 per cent of the landless voted for Congress. Yet this was a seat which except in 1962 had always been held by the Left. A further factor is implied by a state government survey which showed that over 90 per cent of those elected to the panchayats in 1978 were either landowners or had vested interests in the rural areas,¹⁷ a problem to which we will return below.

That the Left Front should not merely have stumbled as it did in the countryside but tripped over in the industrial and urban areas which had long been its heartland is no less important for understanding the present strengths and weaknesses of the Marxist experiment in West Bengal. The Left Front's record in the cities has been far from satisfactory. In part this arises from a simple political choice: in terms of the number of constituencies the real power base of West Bengal lies in the countryside; and whatever the current urban decay of Calcutta and

¹⁵ *Significant Six Years of the Left Front Government of West Bengal* Calcutta: West Bengal State Committee of CPI(M), 1983, pp 49–50.

¹⁶ *The Statesman* (Calcutta) 9 January 1985.

¹⁷ Samaren Roy, 'Electoral Politics in West Bengal', *Amrita Bazar Patrika* (Calcutta) 4 December 1985.

its environs, historically the state capital has milked the villages as surely as the Raj exploited both. In part, too, it arises from brute facts in the current economic relations of India. At partition in 1947 West Bengal was deprived of its eastern hinterland; its industries have, in key instances, been overtaken by technological innovation; and, from the point of view of available investors, private, public or international, other areas of India are seen as more attractive. West Bengal has also suffered central neglect—to what degree is a matter of controversy. Central concern can be even worse, as in the case of the Calcutta Metro which would be on any short-list for development albatross of the decade. Certainly too the disruptive and irresponsible activities of opposition-led trade unions as well as judicial obstruction have caused real difficulties. Electricity is an excellent example. However, when all that is granted, and such successes as the Calcutta Port Trust are noted, the Ministry has under-achieved in the Calcutta urban agglomeration. In those areas of urban infrastructure which, directly or indirectly, the ministry can improve, performance has not been up to the mark: power, transport, and urban development are examples. At the CPI(M) inquest on the general election many members were bitterly (and justifiably) critical of the inefficient functioning of party ministers in charge of public utilities and services which they held had cost many votes.¹⁸ The reasons vary. In some instances the allocation of portfolios between parties results in ministers who lack the requisite ability, and in one notorious instance, of a corrupt minister in what is probably the 'cleanest' state government in India. In other instances, conflict (or lack of coordination) between departments arising from competing political interests of rival Left Front parties is crucial. Here the death of the CPI(M) State party secretary, Promode Das Gupta has removed the only person (other than Jyoti Basu, the Chief Minister) whose authority was ultimately accepted by all Front constituents. Competition on the trade union front is also important and in this respect the CPI(M) has not always been able to subjugate its own affiliated unions. Transport is an incontrovertible example where the ministry, having sought to render the Calcutta bus service efficient and profitable and found experts able and willing to undertake the task, backed down when faced with union resistance. Clashes between ministers and senior government officials have caused difficulties but though less well

¹⁸ *The Statesman* (Calcutta) 9 January 1985. Also author's interview notes with Left party workers, November–December 1983 for evaluation of ministerial performance.

publicised the lack of motivation of less-elevated government servants is overall probably more damaging.

As this article goes to press the Calcutta Corporation elections of 30 June 1985 provide further confirmation that the Left Front is losing ground in the urban areas. The previous substantial Front majority has been eroded to a bare one. The Left Front won 68 seats, Congress (I) 67, the BJP two and the Muslim League-Independents two. Since the League-Independents are understood to be supporting the Front the Left will just retain control but this is clearly a minor setback and hardly attributable to all-India factors.

In drawing up a balance sheet one question remains: how far, as the CPI(M) sometimes avers, are the difficulties the party encounters in Kerala and West Bengal 'problems of growth'.¹⁹ Membership of the party and front organisations has been increasing rapidly in both states since 1977. Membership grew in Kerala between 1978 and 1981 by 64 per cent, in West Bengal by 124 per cent; in the same period mass organisations have grown threefold—in West Bengal to 6.4 million and in Kerala by two and a half times to 2.5 million; these are figures, of course, indicative rather than exact. Quality control, even of new party members, it is agreed within the party, is lacking. In Kerala the annual drop-out rate for these four years varied from 10 to 19 per cent. In 1978 the West Bengal unit was faced with the task of finding some 47,000 candidates for panchayat elections (of whom 34,000 won election) when the membership of the party was barely 30,000. It was thus forced to nominate candidates whose subsequent service left much to be desired and in some cases damaged the party's local standing—in short opportunists, and often from the more privileged rural strata. It is clear in both states, and especially in West Bengal, that the CPI(M) is acutely aware of the danger that those—the majority—who joined the party after the fighting was over may not necessarily be moved by the cause of the people. It is also cognisant of the fact that there is a massive problem of education not only of rank and file but also middle-level cadres and that the skills which serve well for agitation when in opposition are different from those required when in government however limited state autonomy is. 'We have made the observation,' the 11th Congress Political-Organisational Report reminds the party, 'at Salkia that all the problems of organisation that we have now to deal with are problems of growth . . . A growing party is bound to have differences. Comrades in

¹⁹ *Documents of the Eleventh Congress of the CPI(M)*, *op cit*, p 350.

different states, working under different objective conditions and having different experiences, cannot have the same approach'.²⁰ The CPI(M) moves towards the understanding of its own 'centre-state relations'.

The future of the Left in India is now more uncertain than at any previous time. This is so because on the one hand, Rajiv Gandhi's vision constitutes a sharp break with the past for which the Left is ill-prepared and on the other because the Marxist parties have given so little thought to how their conception of the future can be brought about.

On present evidence the passing from the scene of the ageing leadership is unlikely to lead to radical shifts in policy. Those who succeed are next in seniority and too long in the shadow to escape from the bureaucratisation of the class struggle. Where talent stirs, suspicion alights. As Bipan Chandra has noted, the Marxist world internationally has been moved in recent years by a whole range of profound debates to which the Indian Left has contributed little. 'The issues raised by Eurocommunism were dismissed as revisionist, though India was the only country where the Communists had exercised political power under parliamentary democratic conditions'.²¹ Although the CPI is engaged on the publication of a valuable series of official party documents, neither the CPI nor the CPI(M) has undertaken any serious or searching analysis of its past. The study of communism in Kerala, West Bengal—or the failed cases of Andhra and Punjab—should not be left to outsiders alone, even where sympathetic observers. Contemporary India cannot be understood and therefore changed in the spare time of party functionaries overburdened with organisational work and lacking in specialist skills. Marx—and the incarcerated Gramsci—exemplify the point. To face up to the question of what it means to be a revolutionary in India today would have been the most apt way to celebrate the centenary of Marx's death. The problem is put succinctly by Chandra: electoral politics can lead to the cooptation of the Left but unless it is recognised that civil liberties and parliamentary democracy are part of the fabric of Indian society no Left advance is possible. Indeed without them the communists would be more summarily dealt with than ever they were by the Raj. 'Socialist' democracy must be an improvement on extant democracy not its negation.

²⁰ *ibid.*, pp 350–51.

²¹ *Sunday* (Calcutta) 24 February–2 March 1985, p 34.

Election results and governmental performance are not the only indicators of the success of a Left movement in India; but they are central to any viable strategy; and for all the criticisms which can be made of the West Bengal ministry it is hard to resist the conclusion that the West Bengal Left Front is better vindicated by events since 1977 than the Marxist unit in Kerala. The relative autonomy of the provincial Indian state—to adapt a Western Marxist cliché—offers more opportunities than rocking the bourgeois-capitalist system from within and the forums of assembly and parliament more avenues than propaganda. The Lok Sabha and the Vidhan Sabhas are no more the Duma than the Indian Prime Minister is the Tsar of all the Russias. The slogan of one of the smaller parties of the Left, the Forward Bloc, is 'an Indian revolution, in an Indian way, by Indian means'. Although intermittently the bigger parties acknowledge the inevitability of any Indian road to socialism being unique, there is insufficient commitment to mapping it out. Unless the theoretical work is done there will be at best a Communist Party of India (Marginal), a regionalised party confined to West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura; and at worst a Communist Party of India (Moribund).

Economic liberalisation and the Indian state

The mandate the Indian electorate gave Rajiv Gandhi in December 1984 had enough contradictory meanings to satisfy any pundit or French deconstructionist. But the new prime minister's association with technology, dating back to his pre-political career as an airline pilot, ensured that the urban voters would attach their hopes for economic modernisation and accelerated industrial growth to him. After nearly two decades of much-heralded attempts at a variety of programmes that all too often petered out into the disarray of patronage politics or crisis management, voters hoped that a new generation of 'non-political' politicians, surrounded by young entrepreneurs and economists without 'hang-ups' would get the country moving again, much as generational transitions in leadership led Americans to hope in 1960 and Soviet citizens to hope in 1985.

The budget presented to parliament on 24 March 1985 by Mr Gandhi's finance minister, Vishwanath Pratap Singh was a clear attempt to carry out this part of the mandate, in which the Prime Minister had apparently taken a lively personal interest. Most of the urban middle classes in India seemed exuberant (in approximately direct proportion to the size of their incomes) as they prepared to enter (or at least fantasise about) the era of home computers and VCRs. From labour and the left came protests that the budget contained nothing for the poor but a threat of inflation that would erode the purchasing power of the lower sectors of salary and wage earners.¹

Both those who foresaw more rapid industrial growth and those who saw no benefit or even increased hardship for the poor were almost certainly right, at least in the short run. Analysts and critics rightly saw the new budget as an attempt to accelerate growth by freeing the upper sectors of society to consume and invest. What most of them missed, however, was that it was part of an attempt to reshape the relationship of the Indian state to economic interests, most notably the domestic industrialists. The budget reasserts the autonomy of what Rudolph and

¹ For reactions by left economists see the articles in the 20 April 1985 issue of *Economic and Political Weekly* by Lakdawala, Basu, Kumar, Rakshit, Baru, Patnaik and Datta.

Rudolph² have called 'high politics'. It proposes not only to free business from the state (within limits), but to free the state from business, or at least, from businesses. The budget is an attempt to move the state away from patronage politics and toward playing a developmental role, in opposition to the tendencies of the last two decades, as analysed by Bardhan.³ The new developmental role, however, is an openly elitist one.

Slow industrialisation in India

The longing for faster industrialisation among India's upper and middle classes is a reaction to the feeling that the country's efforts to modernise had stagnated over the years, as a public sector intended to guide and accelerate growth had instead come to strangle it. Recent studies (most notably by Ahluwalia⁴) have shown that the growth rate of real value added in manufacturing decreased significantly after 1965-6, and that this deceleration was concentrated in basic and capital goods (in a use-based classification) and in metal-based goods (in an input-based classification). Even before the deceleration, Indian industrialisation never attained the rapid rates of expansion of other newly industrialising countries such as China, Brazil, or South Korea. Even a marked improvement in the foreign exchange position in the mid-1970s and a rise in the rate of domestic savings a few years later (breaking what some had seen as the major bottlenecks) did little to reverse this trend.⁵

The debate on slow industrialisation has analysed both the economic policies that have been the immediate causes of slow industrialisation and the configuration of political forces that produced these policies. The immediate economic causes can be divided into three types: inefficiencies resulting from the industrial policy regime, which insulates both private and public sector from the market; inadequate demand for industrial products; and inadequate (and decelerating) investment in the public sector.

Indian industrial policy has been statist, protectionist, and regulatory. Certain sectors have been reserved to the public sector, and these industrial sectors have been insulated from the need to show

² Lloyd I Rudolph and Susanne Hoeber Rudolph, 'In pursuit of Lakshmi: the political economy of the Indian state', unpublished manuscript, University of Chicago, 1985.

³ Pranab Bardhan, *The Political Economy of Development in India*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1984.

⁴ Isher Judge Ahluwalia, *Industrial Stagnation in India since the Mid-Sixties*, New Delhi: Indian Council of Research in International Economic Relations, 1983.

⁵ For a review of the debate see Ashutosh Varshney, 'Political economy of slow industrial growth in India', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 1 September 1984, pp 1511-17.

operating surpluses by subsidies from the government budget. The public sector enterprises have often expanded employment more for political patronage than for productivity. Management of capital has been correspondingly inefficient, as shown by incremental capital-output ratios (ICORs) that have been rising even more quickly than in the economy as a whole.⁶

Restrictions on imports of goods as well as on investment of foreign private capital have insulated Indian industry from the world market, allowing it not only to move into product areas it would otherwise not have been able to enter, but also protecting its outdated technologies and uncompetitive cost structure. Heavy taxation of profits and regulation of investment and the product mix have directed entrepreneurship toward lobbying for licences that guarantee monopoly rather than toward increasing productivity or meeting consumer demands. The tax structure and the financial system have also encouraged the Indian corporate sector to rely on subsidised state credit for expansion rather than on internal savings or private capital markets. At the same time, licensed industry has been largely guaranteed against failures, as the government has taken over 'sick' industries. The Indian 'private' sector has thus been dependent on the state for many aspects of its operation.

Industry has also suffered from inadequate demand for its products. The protected high-cost structure makes Indian products uncompetitive internationally, so exports have not proved a stable source of demand. Internally, the slow expansion of agriculture, which has pulled only slightly ahead of population despite the Green Revolution, has limited the growth of demand for mass-consumption items, while restrictions on the product mix and on the import of technology have prevented the private sector from satisfying the pent-up demand for luxury consumer durables among urban upper classes. (The result has been a black market for smuggled smaller items; it is difficult to smuggle many foreign-made automobiles, for instance, into the country, but in 1985 someone smuggled a carefully disassembled Mercedes Benz.⁷) The government's income-distribution (non-) policy (which did not

⁶ For a debate on the meaning of the ICORs, see Ahluwalia, *Industrial Stagnation*, *op cit*; Varshney, 'Political economy', *op cit*; K N Raj, 'Some observations on economic growth in India over the period 1952-53 to 1982-83', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 13 October 1984, pp 1801-4; Pranab Bardhan, 'Some observations on economic growth in India', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 22-29 December 1984, p 2176.

⁷ For a description of this incident, see *India Today*, 15 May 1985, p 7.

strengthen the purchasing power of the poor) and its industrial licensing policy (which limited production of goods demanded by the rich) were inconsistent with each other.

These factors may explain why Indian industrialisation has been slower than it might have been or than industrialisation in some other countries. There is general agreement now, however, that the immediate cause of the slump in industrial growth after the mid-1960s was the cut-back in public investment occasioned by the shocks of two consecutive bad harvests, devaluation of the rupee, and loss of foreign aid subsequent to the 1965 war with Pakistan.⁸ This slump led to backlogs in power generation, transportation, and fuel, among other things, that still create serious bottlenecks for industry as well as agriculture.

Bardhan⁹ provides a model that explains these policies as the outcome of a balance of power among what he identifies as three dominant 'proprietary classes'. These classes are the industrialists ('national capital' in the language of dependency theory), the rich farmers (similar to what Rudolph and Rudolph call 'bullock capitalists',¹⁰ plus the larger landowners), and the educated professionals, or literati, with their main economic base in public employment. Bardhan justifies calling the professionals based in the bureaucracy a distinct class by reference to the 'autonomous role of the state' as a result of both Indian history from ancient times and the legacy of colonialism with its 'overdeveloped' state. (The term 'overdeveloped state' is due to Alavi.¹¹ Rudolph and Rudolph, in their forthcoming work written from a quite different point of view, also emphasise the state as an 'autonomous actor'.¹²)

When Bardhan writes of the autonomy of the state, he has in mind something different from what Marxists usually mean by it.¹³ Some Marxists, notably Poulantzas,¹⁴ argue that the state in capitalist society may be *relatively* autonomous, that is autonomous from the interests of

⁸ T N Srinivasan and N S S Narayana, 'Economic performance since the Third Plan and its implications', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Annual Number, February 1977; John F J Toye, *Public Expenditure and Indian Development Policy 1960-1970*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982; Barnett R Rubin, 'Private power and public investment in India', unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Chicago, 1982; Ahluwalia, *Industrial Stagnation*, *op cit*.

⁹ Bardhan, *Political Economy*, *op cit*.

¹⁰ Rudolph and Rudolph, 'In pursuit of Lakshmi', *op cit*.

¹¹ Hamza Alavi, 'The state in post-colonial societies', *New Left Review*, no. 74, 1972.

¹² Rudolph and Rudolph, 'In pursuit of Lakshmi', *op cit*.

¹³ The difference is discussed in Bardhan, *Political Economy*, *op cit*, pp 33-4.

¹⁴ Nicos Poulantzas, *Political Power and Social Classes*, London: NLB and Sheed and Ward, 1973.

particular capitalists (who may wish to be saved from the adverse judgment of the market place, for instance, or to obtain monopolistic privileges) the better to guard the interest of 'capital as a whole'. What Bardhan has in mind, however, is that the state in India and other late industrialising societies has, at least in part, its own economic base: it is not simply dependent on the private economy. Consequently, class formation occurs within state institutions themselves: the managers of state capital may have interests and outlooks quite distinct from private capital or any other social group.

Bardhan sees the policy package of the Indian state as the expression of the coalition of these disparate groups. (His concept is similar to the notion of 'developmental alliance' discussed by Cardoso and Faletto.¹⁵) The industrial policy regime is the expression of the compromise between the professionals and the businessmen. The literati receive expanding public employment and patronage, as well as the opportunity to extract bribes ('rents', as economists call them) through their discretionary control of the licensing system. Business, while frustrated with some of the restrictions, receives protection from competition from both foreign capital and new entrepreneurs who cannot negotiate the bureaucratic hurdles. (The need for contacts and influence in the bureaucracy and the ability to wait favours the established business houses.)

Bardhan attributes the mismanagement of public capital and the inability of the public sector to mobilise resources for investment to the costs of cementing this disparate coalition. He views the public sector budget as a gigantic mechanism for dispensing subsidies, overt and covert, to various sectors of the dominant coalition, whether through public employment, rationed credit, fertiliser subsidy, electricity and water supplied below cost, or export subsidy.¹⁶

This system of interconnected bargains creates vast numbers of conflicts requiring arbitration. These conflicts are so many opportunities for political leadership to step in and appropriate part of the benefits generated, either for clients of the politicians or for the politicians themselves. The sky-rocketing cost of political campaigns (due in part to the disintegration of local voluntary structures) created a demand for

¹⁵ Henrique Fernando Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, *Dependency and Development in Latin America*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979.

¹⁶ For a brief but penetrating discussion of Bardhan's thesis, see Ashok Rudra, 'Political economy of Indian non-development', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 20 April 1985, pp 914-16. Rudra asks the key question why the alliance should be cemented through wasteful subsidies rather than through a balanced set of investments.

black money, which politicians obtained by serving as brokers and 'bagmen' for the various interests. While politicians learn to use their authority to great advantage in interfering in the administration, politics ceases to be autonomous in the sense of providing a process through which coherent policy can be formulated and implemented. In particular, in the area of industrial policy, the autonomy of the state in Bardhan's sense (the ability of the class of state officials to define and pursue a distinct set of interests), together with the power of the other dominant classes, limits the autonomy of the state in the Marxist sense. Private deals negotiated among politicians, bureaucrats, and industrialists, closed with industrial licences and black money, render difficult the pursuit of policy in the interest of 'capital as a whole' or, for India, the dominant coalition as a whole. While the Indian state continued to build up its repressive capacity and its power in the international arena, it lost the ability to steer the economic system. Indeed, Indira Gandhi's last term in office as Prime Minister was virtually devoid of major economic-policy initiatives. The sole exception was the beginning of large-scale borrowing from the International Monetary Fund. External borrowing, of course, can be a substitute for domestic political capacity.

The 1985 Budget: fast industrialisation

The clearest effect of the March 1985 budget is to offer benefits to both the professionals and business. Salaried professionals, who have had fewer opportunities for tax evasion than the self-employed, will benefit the most from the decrease in tax rates on personal income and the increase in the maximum bonus for employees. Business clearly stands to benefit from a variety of measures, including the reduction of corporate income tax rates, the much higher level of assets at which anti-monopoly regulations will now apply, the abolition or reduction of import duties on a wide range of intermediate and capital goods, a reduction in the lending rate by the public sector banks, the higher rate on debentures (designed to move more private sector savings into corporate finance), the exemption of 50 per cent of income from exports from corporate taxation, and the removal of licensing requirements from twenty-five industries.

Critics argue that this programme may increase growth, but only by redistributing wealth to the rich. This is only a part (although a significant part) of the truth. The programme offers benefits to the two urban proprietary classes, but, at least in theory, at the price of

depriving them of opportunities for seeking rents at the expense of society as a whole. It does this by promising to abolish or change policies that were central to the nexus between bureaucrats and business. It is, in fact, an attempt to transform at least some of the conditions that the theoretical debate has pointed to as causes of slow industrialisation.

The changes in the tax system, for instance, are not simply reductions. Lower tax rates will supposedly reduce the incentive to create black income which escapes planning and is often hidden in unproductive uses such as real estate or precious metals. The reductions are combined with simplifications (such as the abolition of the investment allowance, similar to the investment tax credit), and a crack-down on tax evaders, including some with political connections. Together, these measures should make enforcement easier and encourage more honest declaration of income from the self-employed. (Rakshit discusses the distinction between tax reduction and simplification.¹⁷) A number of critics have expressed scepticism as to whether reductions in tax rates will indeed have any effect on compliance, especially if punitive sanctions are not also enforced.¹⁸ The financial policy package also seems designed to push business away slightly from its dependence on public sector finance, although the tax code still does not include many incentives for corporate internal financing.

De-regulation frees business from interference, but it also reduces the institutional basis for protection of those who receive the coveted licences.¹⁹ The public stance of the Finance Minister, which is also part of the new policy, is to oppose such protection. He refuses to meet individual businessmen and has stated: 'I am determined to end all lobbies.'²⁰ When asked why the government had raised the minimum level of assets for application of the Monopoly and Restrictive Trade Practices Act (MRTP) above what had been requested by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), he replied:

We are not bargaining with FICCI. . . . Whatever big businessmen [who dominate FICCI] say, they have a vested interest in the quota-permit system. That is because once you are across the fence—once you have a licence—you

¹⁷ Mihir Rakshit, 'The Budget and plan priorities', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 20 April 1985, pp 707–10.

¹⁸ Arun Kumar, 'Union Budget 1985–86: have have while have-nots nought', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 20 April 1985, pp 717–21.

¹⁹ Bardhan, *Political Economy*, *op cit*; Kaushik Basu, 'India's fiscal policy: lobbies and acquiescence', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 20 April 1985, pp 715–16.

²⁰ *India Today*, 15 April 1985, p 22.

have access to institutional finance, scarce foreign exchange and services of the public sector. That paper licence is your guarantee to wealth. So those who have crossed the licensing barrier and have a licence, they have a vested interest in perpetuating them. It is widely believed that entrepreneurial skill consists largely of getting around the Government's regulatory mechanism. We want to dismantle this, we want to expose him to internal and external competition by giving opportunities to new and upcoming entrepreneurs.²¹

The liberalisation programme thus aims to force the private sector to take more risks and face the consequences of failure. The assets of the private sector as a whole should increase more rapidly, but some businessmen will fail. Under new regulations, managements that erode 100 per cent of net worth will be ineligible for public sector finance. Here, too, the stance of the finance minister is at least as important as the regulations. Although he has not ruled out that the government will ever again take over a 'sick' mill, he has stated, 'The concept has to be there: if you are broke, then you are broke.'²² In an important symbolic gesture, he refused to authorise bank drafts to cover deficits by the state of Uttar Pradesh, of which he was formerly Chief Minister. As a result UP cheques could not be cashed for ten days.

The major test of the government's determination will probably come in textiles. This industry has been subjected to massive government regulation over the years. Its output was restricted to force mills to produce coarse cotton cloth for mass consumption, and differential tax rates and other regulations favoured the power-loom sector over the mills. Partly as a result of these regulations, the power-loom sector took off, and the textile mills suffered from chronic 'sickness'. The government responded to the problems of the textile mills by nationalising the sick mills, protecting both the owners and the workers. A new textile policy, announced in June 1985²³ removed the output restrictions on the mills (they can now produce 100 per cent synthetic fibres), and removed virtually all regulatory distinctions between mills and power-looms. The government also announced that, henceforth, government take-overs would not be the answer to industrial sickness in textiles and proposed a programme to ease the transition for workers put out of jobs by the closure of mills.

The combination of direct tax reduction and lifting of output restrictions seems intended to match the structures of consumer

²¹ *ibid.*, p 24.

²² *ibid.*

²³ *ibid.*, 30 June 1985.

demand and supply in an inegalitarian direction. The reduction of income tax rates will increase disposable income among the urban upper classes, increasing the demand for consumer durables. The relaxation of licensing requirements and of controls on the import of technology will make it easier for private industry to satisfy that demand.

While the budget does not contain any measures specifically aimed at managing public capital more efficiently, the Finance Minister has recognised the need:

We have to look to the public sector to generate internal resources. It should become more efficient. . . . This should be our effort in the Seventh Plan, one, to make our investments more efficient and, two, to get more out of the existing investments.²⁴

It should be noted, however, that the Finance Minister's pitch for greater efficiency in the public sector served as a justification for the lack of major growth in projected investment in the Seventh Plan (1984-5 to 1988-9). (The failure to keep up investment in central government plan schemes is a major theme in criticism of the budget. This is the major cause of slow industrialisation that the budget did not address. The central plan expenditures were to increase only 7 per cent. On the other hand, central assistance to State plans increased 39 per cent. Since some of the major infrastructure sectors, such as power, water, and irrigation are State subjects in the federal division of functions, this direction of plan expenditures into the State plans may indicate an effort to target the key bottlenecks. The Prime Minister has appointed one of his close confidants, Arun Nehru, as Minister of State for Power. Nehru has stated that 'power will get priority' in public sector finance and that pressure will be put on the State electricity boards to improve their operations.²⁵ It is unlikely, however, that simple political pressure will make up for the shortfalls of the Sixth Plan in key areas such as power and irrigation. A major investment effort is needed, and does not seem to be forthcoming. Indeed, in the months following the budget the power supply 'famine' continued to get worse, without the government offering a clear programme to deal with the problem.²⁶

The politics of implementation

If the obstacle to accelerated industrialisation of India has been a system

²⁴ *ibid.*, 15 April 1985, p 23.

²⁵ *ibid.*, 30 April 1985, pp 50-51.

²⁶ *ibid.*, 30 June 1985.

of subsidies and protection of the elements of the dominant coalition, why did at least the urban elements of the coalition overwhelmingly welcome a programme aimed at weakening that system? The new economic policy consists of allowing the urban proprietary classes to keep more income (and allowing business to operate more freely) in return for depriving them of subsidies and protection. Long experience of Indian economic policy, however, should alert us to the difference between announced and implemented policy. The present government appears to be following a strategy of offering benefits first and trying to impose costs afterwards. The easiest part of the policy to implement—because it encountered little opposition from those with the most power—has been allowing the professionals and business to prosper more freely. In fact, the mere passage of the budget accomplished this, without further political struggle. These measures, together with the nationalistic atmospherics accompanying the Prime Minister's official visits to Moscow and Washington created a wave of political support for the policy as a whole.

The hard part, however, required continual political struggle, if the government was serious about implementing it. Depriving the professionals of their 'subsidies' means cracking down on patterns of administration that have developed in the public sector over decades. It means professionalising the management of the public sector corporations, which can be expected to encounter resistance from the politicians who use such appointments as a form of patronage and the bureaucrats who have been used to exercising discretionary power. (As an example of the latter, 'mandarins' in the Ministry of Communications resisted the government's proposal to create financially autonomous State telephone companies for Delhi and Bombay and managed to block the proposal, aimed at upgrading the telephone systems, for several months.²⁷)

It means ending the plundering of some of the corporations by politically influential gangs, such as those who pilfered two million tons of coal in Bihar during nine months of 1981 or 10 per cent of the output of the State Electricity Boards during 1981–2.²⁸ It means resisting labour unions affiliated with Congress(I) who have raised the demand that employment in public sector corporations be made heritable, from father to son. It means cracking down on massive corruption in the nationalised banking sector, which has generated massive black

²⁷ *ibid.*, 30 April 1985, p 52.

²⁸ Bardhan, *Political Economy*, *op cit*, p 70.

incomes for bank officials with large pay-offs to Congress(I) members of bank boards. (The same issue of *India Today* that carried the Finance Minister's stern statements quoted above, also published a story about a scandal in the Punjab National Bank (PNB) in which over £25 million of unsecured loans were granted to an Indian-owned group of companies in London. The loans were reportedly approved by either the chairman of the board or the entire board, which includes a number of Congress(I) members.²⁹)

While some private businessmen and officials have been prosecuted, the government has so far not indicated its willingness to investigate the involvement of the ruling party in such deals. The arrest of a powerful Ahmedabad industrialist in April 1985 for smuggling foreign exchange was a strong signal to the business community.³⁰ But the failure to prosecute or investigate the alleged involvement in the same scandal of the Congress(I) Chief Minister of Gujarat, Madhavsingh Solanki, sends an equally strong message to politicians. Prosecution of the Prime Minister's own supporters when they use public funds for such private purposes would send a powerful message that the Prime Minister seems reluctant to send.

Similarly, businessmen are pleased to be freed from regulations, and they are no doubt prepared to support the *idea* of competition. It will be another matter when established companies start to lose business to either new entrepreneurs or to multinational subsidiaries or joint ventures. (The Indian computer industry has been actively protesting at the lowering of barriers to imports of small computers.) If the public sector administration is not made more productive and efficient, business will be able to point the finger in that direction, blaming its weakness on inadequate supplies of inputs and evoking nationalist arguments for protection. (These are especially strong in the 'high-tech' products that many consumers seem particularly eager to import, since there is a legitimate argument that Indian industry needs a chance to learn by doing before being exposed to the world market.) In this struggle business may be able to count on the support of labour, threatened as it is with unemployment.

Attempts to streamline the State level public sector enterprises will be resisted by the agrarian lobby, which has benefited from employment for family members on Electricity and Irrigation Boards and from subsidised rates for those two inputs vital for the new

²⁹ See 'Rajendra Sethia: a tangled web', *India Today*, 15 April 1985, p 12.

³⁰ *India Today*, 30 April 1985, pp 40 ff.

agriculture. (The government decided to retain fertiliser subsidies, which along with the introduction of crop insurance, was the only concrete benefit to the agrarian lobby in the budget.) Rajiv Gandhi has not shown the strength in dealing with state political leaderships that would be required to push through such changes. Indeed, his party's weak showing in the State legislative elections relative to the national elections, combined with the continuing consolidation of opposition control of a number of State governments, do not augur well for his government's ability to do so.

The agrarian lobby has also protested that the tax relief given so far is limited to direct taxes, which farmers do not pay. Furthermore, while the decrease in direct tax rates and other measures may, as the government claims, ultimately increase revenues by encouraging honest declarations, in the short run the government is partially making up for a loss in direct tax revenues by increasing indirect taxes, particularly excise taxes, which as V P Singh noted, the rich farmers pay 'on everything that they buy'.³¹ Furthermore, the considerable deficit left by the reduction in direct tax revenues, added to the liquidity already pumped into the economy by budget deficits in previous years, creates conditions for serious inflation.³²

Of course, those outside the dominant coalition have also become increasingly mobilised as politicians solicited their votes with a variety of promises. A new phase in Indian politics began in the 1971 national elections, when Indira Gandhi responded to the opposition's slogan 'Remove Indira' by saying, 'They say, "Remove Indira", but I say, "Remove poverty"'. In April 1985 *India Today* asked her son's Finance Minister, 'How do you intend to remove poverty?' He replied, 'I don't have any such pill. It is by general growth and redistribution of incomes that you can remove poverty'.³³

The new economic policy has granted immediate benefits to business and the higher salaried employees, while the poor are asked to wait for general growth. Despite the Finance Minister's reference to 'redistribution of incomes', the budget contained no new measures for progressive redistribution of income and quite a few new measures likely to produce regressive redistribution. The lower income tax rates benefit only those who had been earning enough to pay taxes previously

³¹ *ibid.*, 15 April 1985, p 24.

³² Kumar, 'Union Budget', *op cit*; Sanjaya Baru, 'The state in retreat?', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 20 April 1985, pp 703-6; Bhabatosh Datta, 'The Central Budget and the new economic policy', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 20 April 1985, pp 693-98.

³³ *India Today*, 15 April 1985, p 23.

(incomes over Rs. 2000 per month). Much of the increase in excise taxes fell on intermediate goods such as cement, steel, and petroleum and thus, in the first instance, on business. Many of these increases, however, were quickly passed on to the consumer, especially in the form of rises in the price of basic necessities, for which the demand is inelastic with respect to price. Increases in the cost of transportation (due to increased excise on petroleum and higher railroad freight charges intended partially to offset lower tax rates) quickly raised the price of rice, dal, tea, kerosene, cooking gas, and cotton cloth. Those sectors of the poor, such as industrial labour, that rely most extensively on the market for purchase of these necessities, suffered the most.

These increases were *ad hoc* measures designed to guard against excessive deficits, and the government plans to review the indirect tax structure. While the shift (consistent with the overall trend since independence) towards reliance on indirect taxes is likely to have regressive effects, changes in the rate structure could shift more of a burden on to consumers of luxury goods away from both industrial inputs and mass consumption items. Given the high rates of excise already in effect on such goods, however, as well as the political pressures for luxury consumption, this may be difficult to do.

One result is thus likely to be increased labour conflict. The combination of inflation of prices of wage goods with increased profits for employers is an explosive one. Worker militancy need not be a drag on the economy if there are adequate institutions for representing workers' interests and reaching agreements through collective bargaining. The large industrialists of São Paulo, Brazil, for instance, asked the government not to repress strikes in the metal-working industry in 1978 so that they could bargain with the strong leadership that had emerged.³⁴ Indian trade unions, however, are so fragmented that they are often unable to bargain effectively. (Rudolph and Rudolph describe the Indian labour system as 'involuting pluralism'.³⁵) Unless the labour laws are changed to strengthen collective bargaining, the government will be likely to continue the path of increased repression of labour dating back to the passage of the Essential Services Maintenance Act of 1981.

A number of elements of the new economic policy are likely to work

³⁴ Leigh Payne, 'Capital and labor in Brazil: the path of redemocratization or recorporatization?', New Haven: Yale University, unpublished manuscript, 1985.

³⁵ Rudolph and Rudolph, 'In pursuit of Lakshmi', *op cit.* The Fourth Report of the National Police Commission, p 26, also discusses this problem.

to the disadvantage of scheduled castes and tribes. The increased reliance on the private sector will mean that employment will be growing in organisations where no places are reserved for them and where some case studies indicate that caste discrimination is pervasive.³⁶ Pressures to increase the efficiency of the public sector by eliminating redundant employees or limiting new hiring are likely to intensify the already violent communal conflicts over reservations. Furthermore, concern over a deficit in the central budget as a result of the decrease in direct tax rates has inspired cutbacks in certain central government welfare programmes such as the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Tribes, rural water supply, and rural sanitation. Again, the finance minister pointed to the increase in allocations to States, which they could use for such programmes. But no influential person in the government has suggested that these programmes should be a priority in the same way as power generation, for instance. Programmes that directly benefit the poorest communities in India are likely to be sacrificed for the sake of growth concentrated in consumer durables.

Protests by those outside the dominant coalition may create some disorder, but resistance from the dominant groups themselves to crack-downs on inefficiencies institutionalised in various forms of patronage, subsidies, and corruption, if the government indeed attempts such crack-downs, will be a more difficult challenge. The will or capacity of the political leadership to meet the challenge is especially questionable since political parties, and particularly Congress(I), have relied on such arrangements to fund many of their activities.

Some policies seem to signal that the present government will try to reduce, if not eliminate, the role of black money in politics. Its passage of a law legalising political contributions by corporations has been presented as a move toward bringing a well-known fact of Indian political life out of the shadows. Many companies, however, may still prefer to contribute illegally, and critics have noted that the government failed to consider more equitable alternatives, such as the public funding of political campaigns.³⁷ The outlawing of defections by legislators from the party on whose ticket they stood (with certain restrictions) also eliminates one of the major uses to which black money has been put: buying defections in order to topple opposition governments. This law, on closer inspection, however, seems to favour

³⁶ N R Sheth, *The Social Framework of an Indian Factory*, Delhi: Hindustan Publications, 1981.

³⁷ Romesh Thapar, 'The "new economics"?', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 30 March 1985, pp 531-2.

large parties and limit freedom of expression. The attack on tax evasion has been presented as part of the same policy package aimed at reducing the parallel economy.

Another use of black money, and one for which it would be difficult to use publicly raised funds, is the employment of criminal gangs, the 'lumpen' element, for political purposes. It was these toughs, often led by Congress(I) politicians, who burned Sikhs in the streets of Delhi during the pogroms following Mrs Gandhi's assassination.³⁸ Rajiv Gandhi's resistance to an investigation of these killings does not seem to indicate a strong commitment to reducing the criminal element in politics.

The basic political question is whether the political leadership is indeed able and willing to reassert the autonomy of 'high politics' from the variegated elements of the dominant coalition in order to impose on them the costs of change. So long as that leadership depends on those same elements for resources, it depends for its power on the very system it now claims it is trying to transform. If the government is serious about trying to insulate itself from these alliances, it will need a political strategy for doing so.

One possibility has surfaced in a report (passed on orally by Pranab Bardhan) that, with the increased participation of multinationals in the Indian economy, the ruling party no longer needs the relatively small tributes it extracts from national capital. The international connection provides it with resources not tied to any domestic political actor. Mobilisation of external resources is, of course, a classic technique for creating state autonomy from domestic forces; it was key, for instance, to the creation of the developmentalist states in capitalist East Asia.

Another, more difficult, method is to create a carefully orchestrated series of domestic alliances, taking on one target at a time, combined with the mobilisation of popular support based on nationalism and resentment of the old corrupt authorities. This is how Deng Xiao Ping has proceeded in China since 1976. But the inexperienced Rajiv Gandhi has not shown the same resolve and political skill. Furthermore, the non-competitive Chinese political system does not provide the same opportunities for open opposition.

If the assault on corruption is not attempted, or fails, the liberalisation programme will turn into nothing but a higher level of

³⁸ For documentation, see the pamphlet published by the People's Union for Democratic Rights, 'Who are the guilty?' Part of it was published in the *Economic and Political Weekly*, 24 November 1984.

subsidy for the Indian dominant coalition. In this case violent protests will mount, and the buoyant mood of Spring 1985 could turn ugly. But this tendency is not ineluctable. With political skill, the new government's considerable reserves of support and freedom from serious challenge at the centre could enable it to impose costs more equitably. If the political leadership frees itself from black money and frees the public and private sectors from the wasteful deals they have bound themselves with, it could create a richer India. But it has yet to find the means or the will to confront the problems of the world's single largest population of the desperately poor.

Sudan after Numeiri

The downfall of Numeiri on 6 April 1985 this year was both long expected and long in doubt. Noted as one of Africa's great survivors, he really had had escapes which belonged more to a Frederick Forsyth novel than to the world even of African politics (though Forsyth's *Dogs of War* reportedly had links with reality); yet good fortune and Machiavellian ability had helped him to survive.¹ In the end the circumstances were predictable—food shortages and an additional IMF-induced price rise bringing riots at a time when civil war was escalating in the South—all set against a background of a near-collapsed economy and the worst drought in living memory. Yet the means by which it was accomplished were nevertheless somewhat surprising, for it was both a coup and more than a coup, leaving a sense of ambiguity which only time will resolve. It was only a coup in that the army acted in unison under its commander Siwar al-Dhahab; but it was more than a coup in that there had already been spontaneous disturbances over price rises for a week before the professional groups and trade unions called a general strike, and in the event it may almost have been an exercise in democracy by acclamation. It has been suggested that what finally convinced the army leaders of the need to act was the poorly attended lack-lustre demonstration of support for Numeiri's regime organised by the country's single legal party the Sudan Socialist Union on 2 April, which contrasted so unfavourably with the virtual explosion of support the next day on to the streets of the capital, Khartoum, behind the doctors, lawyers and academics who organised both their own illegal demonstration and the general strike already gripping the capital. Thus for the second time (the first was in October 1964) the Sudanese had accomplished the unusual feat of overthrowing a military ruler by peaceful action, but on this occasion the army itself decided to take the side of the people and thus it was not fully a civilian regime that took over as it had been nineteen years earlier.

Yet while the economic conditions were appalling, and war in the South was raging, these circumstances alone do not account for

¹ It was alleged that Forsyth's plot was based on an aborted plan to overthrow the regime in Equatorial Guinea. Numeiri was accorded the description of Machiavellian Prince in a noted recent work: Robert H. Jackson and Carl G. Rosberg, *Personal Rule in Black Africa: Prince, Autocrat, Prophet, Tyrant*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982.

Numeiri's downfall. There was also the isolation of Numeiri, a circumstance he had usually avoided with great skill hitherto, together with his resort to autocratic and repressive behaviour which was increasingly repulsive to the consensus of Sudanese culture.

The isolation of Numeiri followed the breakdown of relations with groups with whom he had hitherto had, for varying periods of time, significant relations. In part this must even include the army. Though it had ultimately been a military regime ever since 1969, the army could not be taken for granted.² In the early years especially there had been numerous attempted coups, and though internal pressures were less apparent in later years, this was partly due to the growing importance of the security apparatus, both military and civilian. In the end the mechanics of the 6 April coup consisted of the army turning against the civilian security apparatus which appeared in danger of being overwhelmed by the demonstrations and strikes.³ In addition the role of the army in policymaking appeared sharply curtailed following Numeiri's dismissal of his First Vice-President Abd al-Majid Hamid Khalil and other senior officers when they raised doubts with him in January 1982. Ominously they had been expressing concern at the necessity to use force against popular disturbances triggered by an earlier wave of price rises. The determination to use violence against the demonstrators in 1982, which left an official death toll of twenty-five, appeared to bury the longstanding myth, established by the success of the demonstrations and strikes in October 1964, that security forces would not in the last resort fire on large-scale and sustained popular protests. The political parties, too, were estranged. Though officially banned, certain of them, notably the former Umma Party, led by Sadiq al-Mahdi and the Muslim Brotherhood under Hasan al-Turabi, had been involved in National Reconciliation from 1977. Sadiq had already fallen out over the introduction of *sharia* (Islamic law) and was imprisoned from 1983 to the beginning of 1985; though Numeiri's attack on the Muslim Brotherhood came only weeks before his final overthrow. Meanwhile many Southern Sudanese, with whom Numeiri had so successfully made peace through the Addis Ababa Agreement of 1972

² For a fuller discussion of the Sudan army see Peter Woodward, 'Sudan: the retreat to military clientelism', in Christopher Clapham and George Philip (eds), *The Political Dilemmas of Military Regimes*, London: Croom Helm, 1985, pp 237-54.

³ The manner of this takeover led to rumours that it had been engineered by agreement between the new military leaders and civilian security, headed by First Vice-President Omer al-Tayeb, and may have been encouraged by the United States which it was alleged had already decided that Numeiri had become more of a liability than an asset.

(like the civilian overthrow of military leaders an unusual event in Africa) had also been alienated over the issues of the re-division of the Southern Region, the expropriation of oil and water resources, and finally the introduction of the *sharia*. He was left only with the security forces, themselves an offshoot of the military, who predictably would fall if Numeiri fell, and ultimately proved unable to hold the fort in his absence in Washington.

The autocracy and repression was emphasised by the introduction of *sharia*. Ideologically its introduction in 1983 had been defended by the Muslim Brotherhood, but many Muslims in the northern Sudan saw its harsh application as an attempt to legitimise repression in an increasingly shaky regime. An eminent Sudanese academic writing of the October Revolution of 1964 had described the Sudanese as unaccustomed to autocratic rule, and one might add possessing a tradition of revolt that goes back at least to Ahmed al-Mahdi one hundred years ago.⁴ The revulsion finally spilled over with the public execution in January 1985 of the 76-year-old Mahmoud Mohammed Taha, leader of the small but active Republican Brotherhood, on a charge of heresy. The instrument of repression had been the security forces, who had become increasingly differentiated from the army itself, and thus, with Numeiri, the losers in his overthrow.⁵

But through his isolation and repressive policies Numeiri was not only piling up opponents, he was also giving a measure of legitimacy to all who in any way could claim to have been involved in the events leading to his downfall.

His overthrow was thus both an opportunity for a huge demonstration of national opposition, but also meant that there were several groupings with some form of legitimate claim to power—the army, the professionals and unions, the banned political parties, and the Sudan Popular Liberation Movement (SPLM). All appeared to be offered a role—a Transitional Military Council (TMC) was established to hold ultimate authority, while a civilian cabinet was formed of non-party professionals, and at the end of the one-year transitional period the civilian political parties would ultimately inherit the kingdom. At the

⁴ Yusuf Fadl Hasan 'The Sudan Revolution of October 1964', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 5(4) 1967.

⁵ A spate of publications appeared shortly before Numeiri's downfall analysing the crisis of his regime. These included, Bona Malwal, *The Sudan: A Second Challenge to Nationhood*, New York: Thornton Books, 1985; Charles Gurdon, *Sudan at the Crossroads*, Wisbech: Menas Press, 1984; Mansour Khalid, *Numeiri and the Revolution of Dis-May* London: Kegan Paul International, 1985. Peter Woodward, *Sudan: Threats to Stability*, London: Institute for the Study of Conflict, 1985 (Conflict Studies No 173).

same time the new government put as its highest priority a negotiated settlement with the SPLM. The plan was announced of preparing a draft constitution which would be examined by the parliament elected at the end of the transitional period.

The intentions then were relatively clear, but it was obvious that Sudan was embarking on a very difficult tightrope towards a return to civilian rule and democracy. The first stages of that exercise involve the establishment of working relations between the major groups already mentioned.

The army

Like all armies in Africa it is harder to estimate the various influences within it than elsewhere amongst the politically important groups, yet it was both the initial hero of Numeiri's downfall and past villain; while within months some of the early enthusiasm for the army showed signs of fading. Clearly, Siwar al-Dhahab and his fellow senior officers are the same men who had long remained loyal to Numeiri, and furthermore comprised those who had not joined in the criticism of Numeiri's policies which led to the dismissal of two hundred of their colleagues in 1982. In addition the army includes men who were involved in the Military Corporations set up in the 1980s. The Corporations were involved in a fast-growing range of activities from farms to bus services; though explained as a contribution by the military to development, they were widely regarded as lucrative, corrupt diversions for the military away from the deteriorating economic and political conditions. It was also alleged that the senior officers only finally decided to throw their weight behind the popular revolt out of fear that junior officers, perhaps of more radical persuasion might act on their own, for talk of a Sudanese Jerry Rawlings had circulated for some time.

Yet even in these circumstances, the army's intervention could be supported as well as condemned. Radicals, such as SPLM leader John Garang, criticised the TMC as the continuation of Numeiri's rule, yet a lower-rank coup would also have been in the tradition of the coup of Numeiri and the Free Officers in May 1969. Like 1969 a new Free Officers' coup was less likely to have been a united commitment to radicalism than the start of a lengthy period of instability not only within the military, but involving groups outside it as well.⁶ The Sudan army confirms Bill Gutteridge's point that the 'military in Africa generally

⁶ A lengthy catalogue of attempted coups is given in D M Wai, 'Revolution, rhetoric and reality in the Sudan', *Journal of Modern African Studies* (17) 1979.

remain a less dominant and institutionalised body than in Latin America or Pakistan' and there are various ideological orientations which could have provoked factional conflict which might have been far more violent than the events which occurred in Numeiri's overthrow.⁷ These possible divisions could also have spilled over into other factions or parties in society at large producing a much more polarised and potentially violent situation in the northern Sudan.

However, the army is determined to have a 'moderator' role of a kind which it could not hold after October 1964 when it was the army itself which had been forced out of power, rather than state security which did not then exist on the same scale that it did in March 1985.⁸ The filling of such a 'moderator' role by the Transitional Military Council (TMC) will need careful judgement. From the outset there have been problems in relating the army intervention to the resistance of the Southern-dominated Sudan Popular Liberation Movement (SPLM), while other groups too may present difficulties. If the civilians do not make what the TMC regards as acceptable moves in the direction of creating a viable framework for civilian government there may be a strong temptation for the army to renege on its promise to quit after one year. Yet if the TMC does try to hang on to power it may find that it loses the sympathy of other political forces, especially the professionals, with whom cooperation is vital in tackling not only political problems but also the horrendous social and economic problems of a country in which up to half of the twenty million population are threatened with malnutrition and famine while its foreign debts stand at over \$9 billion.

Professionals and unions

Sudan's 'intelligentsia' has an honourable tradition of important, if necessarily somewhat intermittent, involvement in politics. In origin it owes something to the education system, especially the University of Khartoum (formerly the Gordon College); something to the strong influence of Cairo as a centre for Arab thinking in the last one hundred years; and something to the respect for learning inherent in Arab societies. Yet it has been constrained, both before and after independence, by political repression, whether under imperial or

⁷ William Gutteridge, 'Undoing military coups in Africa', *Third World Quarterly* 7(1) (January 1985) p 89.

⁸ On 'moderator' regimes see Clapham and Philip (eds), *Political Dilemmas*, *op cit*, Ch 1. The size and activities of state and military security appalled Sudanese after the coup. It was widely said that 40,000 people had been involved.

post-independence military regimes: while the political parties could mobilise the mainly illiterate rural population at election time by using the major Islamic sects, notably the Ansar (the followers of the Mahdi family), who overwhelmingly supported the Umma Party, and the Khatmia, who had backed first the National Unionist Party and later the Peoples' Democratic Party. The intelligentsia, though, were important in the secular nationalist movement—the first Prime Minister, Ismail al-Azhari, had taught mathematics at the Gordon College—and they played a leading role in the October Revolution and its aftermath. Under Numeiri they were once more repressed, while many left the country to gain both greater freedom for their views and more money, working mainly in the oil-rich states of the Gulf.⁹ But from the early 1980s, they began to flex their muscles and gain some successes. The strike of judges and lawyers in 1983 immediately preceded Numeiri's introduction of Islamic law, and may have helped to precipitate it. In 1984 there was a long doctors' strike which provoked an announcement of martial law, but also won a number of concessions. The decision to call a more political strike, and one linking the professional associations to the broader trade unions had been rumoured for April of 1985 even before the demonstrations against the price rises. The response to the call seemed to take even some of its organisers by surprise, but its success has renewed the legitimacy of the intelligentsia. The possibility remains that if circumstances demand it they may try to repeat the exercise and it could have further success. Moreover any government requires their active cooperation in tackling Sudan's huge problems since they have greater expertise to contribute than any other grouping.

From shortly after this coup the Cabinet was in their hands. The new Prime Minister, Gizouli Dafallah, was a devout Muslim and leader of the Medical Association, while most of the other sixteen ministers were professional men with only limited experience of government and mainly thought to be of fairly conservative outlook. Only three were southerners and though those selected, Deputy Prime Minister Samuel Aru Bol, Peter Gatkuoth and Oliver Albino, were more experienced than most of the other ministers, they were regarded with suspicion by the SPLM. Problems have also arisen with regard to the division of responsibility between the Cabinet and the TMC, with the latter proving reluctant to devolve as much policymaking to the Cabinet as many had anticipated. In part this may have been from fear, especially

⁹ Estimates of those who went abroad vary from 300,000 to 1,000,000. Undoubtedly this exodus served as a political safety valve helping Numeiri's long survival in power.

the possibility of charges being brought against former Numeiri-men closely associated with leading TMC members; but it was also because some areas of policy, most notably the future of *sharia* were fraught with danger. From the moment Numeiri introduced *sharia* it was clear that it would be politically difficult for any government to revoke it entirely and one of Siwar al-Dhahab's first pronouncements concerned its continuation albeit in a 'corrected' form. He promised though that there would be a later review of all Numeiri's laws. However, *sharia* has presented a stumbling block to negotiations with the SPLM. There were also major constraints facing economic policy in view of the impending negotiations with the IMF necessitated by Sudan's \$677 billion debt to it and the need for further support for the continuing balance-of-payments deficit, as well as the 'urgent need for food aid available only from the West'.

Political parties

As so often in Africa, the claims and aspirations of former political parties live on through the military regimes, and at least elements of them have continued their opposition, either internally or more often in exile, so that the downfall of the regime in power is greeted with great excitement by the parties. In Sudan, the parties have experienced this situation before, for after the October Revolution the old parties swarmed back onto the stage, and soon pushed aside the professionals to re-establish the *status quo ante*. Thus part of their current claim is that in some sense a multi-party system is the legitimate form of government for Sudan and just as the interlopers of 1958 were dispossessed in 1964, so April 1985 has restored those lawfully in power who were overthrown in 1969. This interpretation in its barest essentials seems to have been accepted by both the TMC and the professionals. The determination of Siwar al-Dhahab to hold elections after one year, and return the country to full civilian rule, appears to assume some form of liberal democracy in which political parties have had their legitimacy instantly restored by the new rulers.

This atmosphere has encouraged not just the resurrection of the old parties, but a plethora of new ones as well. Within weeks of the coup it was reported that over thirty parties had been formed and registered. Between them the parties represent a wide range in terms of experience, ideological expression, and regional support. Most conspicuous have been the older parties such as the Umma Party and the Unionist Party, with other 'middle-aged' parties such as the Sudan

Communist Party (SCP), and the Muslim Brotherhood also re-emerging. But there have also been numerous new parties, such as the Baathists, whose programmes and support are still very uncertain. From what is already known, there is obviously a wide ideological gap between parties such as the SCP and the Muslim Brotherhood, and no love lost between them in terms of past relations. The regional diversity of parties is also apparent, with some parties seeking to speak predominantly for particular regions, and others knowing that, though concerned essentially with national policy, their traditional support has come from specific areas. But there are great uncertainties at both the top and the bottom of the political parties. Few of the old generation of party leaders and managers remain, though one former Prime Minister, Sadiq al-Mahdi, is still very active. But many of the middle-aged middle-class groups who might be expected to provide leadership are either unavailable or lack support. Hundreds of thousands of professional and skilled Sudanese left the country in the 1970s, partly due to political frustration under Numeiri, but more often to earn the high wages paid in the Gulf; while internationally known figures prominent in the opposition in the last few years, such as Mansour Khalid and Khalid Osman, lack support within the country. Instead, many inexperienced newcomers are pushing themselves forward to create parties, rejoicing in a return to the freedom for which many have called, yet which few remember very clearly. Many of these parties are in reality only factions, and few have any significant base amongst the vast majority of the peoples of rural Sudan, who have as yet been little affected by the downfall of Numeiri. At the base there have been great changes in Sudanese security over the last sixteen years, and the capacity of the Islamic sects to mobilise voters for the parties as they did before 1969 is open to question. Indeed, the ability to conduct elections at all by April 1986 in a country where millions are affected by drought and famine must be in doubt. It is notable that the famine, though providing the context for Numeiri's downfall, has yet to impinge directly on Sudan's political life which instead has been dominated by the activities of the major groups, to the detriment of effective policymaking to alleviate and counter the immense human suffering.

However, there is concern too with the future of party politics, both in the army and amongst the professionals, as well as some of the more circumspect politicians. The parties rightly acquired the reputation of conducting parliamentary government in the earlier periods primarily for party, factional and even personal advantage. There was nothing

uniquely Sudanese in that, but its practice was such as to bring disillusionment with the whole system, and it prevented government from contributing effectively to economic development or regional problems such as the South. Whether what will inevitably be a parliament of inexperienced members can produce a more viable form of government thus remains to be seen, but it may encourage constitutional arrangements in which the former groupings play some institutionalised role. Another doubt is raised in that for all the opposition to Numeiri's regime now being voiced, all but the Unionist Party did at some time actively cooperate with Numeiri and some of them were even involved as individuals. His Machiavellian manoeuvres embroiled and in various ways damaged them all during his long period in power, and there has already been much casting up of the many skeletons to be found in virtually all the cupboards. Some of the new parties will of course be hoping to capitalise upon these tainted pasts.

The Sudan Popular Liberation Movement

The emergence of the SPLM over the last two years has been a notable achievement, especially on the part of its military leader John Garang de Mabior. A veteran of the Anya-Any guerrillas in the civil war in the 1960s Garang had been absorbed into the Sudan army following the Addis Ababa Agreement which ended the war in 1972, and later took a doctorate in economics in the United States. In 1983, following a mutiny, he was sent to Bor in the Upper Nile where he had formerly commanded the garrison. However, he went over to the mutineers and joined them in the bush in creating a new guerrilla army which in the last two years has greatly extended its activities in Upper Nile, where government forces are pinned down to only a handful of bases, while penetrating much of Bahr al-Ghazal as well. In early 1984 the SPLM also forced the suspension of work on the Jonglei canal project, which would have increased the volume of water available for irrigation in northern Sudan and Egypt, as well as creating new projects in the South, and on the newly discovered oil fields around Bentiu which have estimated reserves of 100 million barrels. These economic developments were indeed one source of hostility towards the government in Khartoum for it was felt that exploitation would not adequately benefit the region. In particular the decisions first to refine oil at Kosti in the North rather than at Bentiu, and later to build instead a pipeline direct to the Red Sea for the export of crude oil, were seen as

helping balance-of-payments and debt problems which were largely the fault of Numeiri's regime at the expense of the South. Another major grievance concerned the re-division of the Southern Region into three regional governments, Upper Nile, Bahr al-Ghazal and Equatoria. This was widely interpreted, especially in the former two, as an attempt to divide and rule, as well as unconstitutional in that the Southern Region had been enshrined in the permanent constitution of 1973. On top of these concerns came the introduction of *sharia* in September 1983. It was widely regarded in the South as morally repugnant, since any Islamic measure was viewed with mistrust by the predominantly Christian leaders and their supporters, while the harsh punishments exacted provoked revulsion. Initial ambiguity about the application of the law to non-Muslims did exist, and the severest punishments were not inflicted in the South, but nevertheless it served to promote the SPLM's cause. It was also regarded as a further unconstitutional act, to add to the tearing up of the Addis Ababa Agreement.

The growth of the SPLM and its success in the field put it in a different position to the professionals and unions and the parties in assessing the overthrow of Numeiri and his replacement by the army commanders. The SPLM had not played a direct part in the events preceding the coup (though it had been a major factor in plunging the old regime into its prolonged final crisis) and while the civilians in Khartoum could regard the security forces as their major enemies, for the SPLM the struggle was essentially with the army. Thus it was that Siwar al-Dhahab and his fellow commanders were swiftly condemned by the SPLM as no more than a continuation of Numeiri's regime, and it ordered only a seven-day cease-fire after which attacks were resumed when Siwar al-Dhahab predictably remained in office. The SPLM position was due not only to the greater hostility felt towards the army commanders, but was also ideological and tactical. The SPLM had adopted a radical neo-Marxist ideology and was far more radical in rhetoric than any southern movement hitherto. Some ascribed this to the support being received from Ethiopia, but many SPLM adherents may have had a deeper commitment. The Addis Ababa Agreement had essentially been a 'constitutional' step, the independence settlement the South had missed out on in 1956; and the 1972 settlement had not contributed as much as was hoped to the economic development of the region, even before the growing opposition to Numeiri, and thus a more radical ideology was very understandable. It was thought too that tactically a tough time would keep the pressure on the army commanders and help

to ensure progress, a move with which many of the SPLM's sympathisers in the North agreed.

Yet there were also political and military pressures on the SPLM which could encourage negotiation. Politically one of the SPLM's major foreign backers, Libya, was swift to declare support for the new government in Khartoum, and soon called on the SPLM to follow suit; but the other, Ethiopia, was slower, seeking to see the Sudanese attitude towards Eritrea and Tigre before exerting pressure. Garang's military position was harder to assess. Though successful in Upper Nile, where the two key projects lay, he was more exposed in Bahr al-Ghazal with long supply lines to sustain, while in the early part of 1985, his forces suffered setbacks when they sought to penetrate into Equatoria where ethnic tensions appeared to play a part in resistance to the SPLM. Some uncertainty also surrounded the solidity of the SPLM itself. It is much younger and less experienced than, for instance, the Eritrean Popular Liberation Front, and in the past has been prone to some factional unrest which would emerge once more if differences were to arise on the issue of responding to the new government in Khartoum. The situation appeared to invite exploration of mediation of the kind successfully undertaken by the World Council of Churches in the Addis Ababa Agreement of 1972.

With or without mediation, however, the search for peace will be more difficult in 1985 than in 1972. Firstly, the political situation is more complex than in 1972 when, following its break with the Sudan Communist Party, Numeiri's isolated government was unencumbered by other groups and in need of a success which would provide new political support. Secondly the Anya-Anyas were relatively united and the only significant movement in the South, whereas at present other voices as well as those of the SPLM will seek to have a say. Finally, in 1972 the issues were essentially constitutional, whereas in 1985 there are complicated economic issues as well: these involve not only vital matters of oil and water, but agriculture also takes on a new importance in view of the ecological destruction of large areas in the North.

The four main groupings—the army, the professionals and unions, the parties, and the SPLM—were not exclusive. In many ways the most enduring links are the close social ties of the riverine areas of the northern Sudan which have always permeated the elite and are currently apparent among the army, professionals and embryonic party leaders. Though this generally omits the southern leaders (who have no comparable relations amongst themselves either) the SPLM in

particular had ties, especially with those amongst the professionals sympathetic to their case and the Sudan Communist Party. It is notable that it was the professionals who established a group to try and mediate between the army leadership and John Garang. But it is precisely the rather cosy domination of Sudan by the Khartoum elite which the SPLM claims to oppose, and regularly encourages people of the western Sudan in particular to support them in what is proclaimed to be a revolutionary rather than a southern secessionist movement. As one broadcast put it, 'When we say liberation, we do not simply mean the vestiges of foreign colonialism, for there is also domestic colonialism burdening the Sudanese people. There are families and clans left by colonialism on the Sudanese people, controlling their affairs and destiny.'¹⁰

Yet while links already exist or may be built, all the major groupings are capable of fragmenting or of changing the current fragile balance. The most obvious ability to fragment has already been shown in the political parties. Many of those registering in the first flush of enthusiasm were new, but there were also considerable divisions even in the older established parties which carried many echoes of the past. Outstanding in this respect was the early split in the Muslim Brotherhood which left its former leader Hasan al-Turabi forming his own Islamic National Front. Strains were reported in the military even before the coup and there will be both ideological pressures of very different kinds as well as calls for and against a greater political role. As crucial will be the professionals and union leaders, for it was this group which wilted and was outmanoeuvred by the parties in 1964. Some of their leaders may move to the party scene, but there is greater awareness of the importance of maintaining a presence this time, and they may continue to be an important balance. Were they to decline and become disillusioned it would be a setback to implementing any kind of recovery.

The most immediate problems outside politics lie in the economic crisis. The famine and immense suffering of millions of Sudanese is not simply the result of poor rainfall but is compounded by the deeper structural problems of Sudan's economy. After failing for almost the first twenty years of independence to lift itself out of a typical colonial-style economy based around the export of cotton, Sudan embarked on an ambitious programme of investment in agriculture

¹⁰ *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, 13 May 1985.

designed to make it the bread basket of the Arab world.¹¹ Some of the schemes succeeded, such as the Kenana sugar plantation, but at great financial cost, and often to the detriment of other sectors of the economy—such as overloading Sudan's inadequate transport infrastructure. Others were only partially successful, such as the spinning and weaving factories; while some never worked at all, like the brewery at Wau in Bahr al-Ghazal. Nevertheless all the schemes contributed to Sudan's indebtedness which has grown steady from \$3 bn in 1978 to almost \$9 bn in 1985. At the same time agricultural and industrial output per capita has declined, and imports are running at three times the value of exports. On top of this Sudan hosts approximately 1 million refugees from Ethiopia, Uganda and Chad. A change of regime can do nothing in itself to alleviate this grim reality, but just as this deterioration contributed enormously to Numeiri's downfall, so the new rulers will in time be judged in part on their ability to reverse the decline.

However, the political and economic inputs which may help in this task will be derived not simply from the government in Khartoum reorganising Sudan, but from other countries as well, at both the regional and superpower level. It was one of the characteristics of the Numeiri years that Sudan became far more involved in international politics, partly due to the greater regionalisation of politics in north-east Africa, which owes as much to its relationship to the Arab as the African world, but also to Numeiri's use of regional antagonism to gain superpower support for his regime.¹² Libya's adventurous foreign policy had included support for attempts to overthrow Numeiri, and helped to encourage US backing for Sudan. So too did the proximity of Sudan to the avowedly Marxist regime in Ethiopia with its close links with the Soviet Union. Sudan also developed intimate ties with America's friends in the region, notably Egypt for whom Sudan became the main Arab supporter of Camp David, and with whom integration was planned, and the Gulf states, particularly Saudi Arabia.

However, Numeiri's deponents sought to reverse this polarisation in Sudan's international relations, while at the same time endeavouring to help improve the domestic situation. The early reopening of diplomatic

¹¹ Francis Lees and Hugh C Brooks, *The Economic and Political Development of the Sudan*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1977.

¹² Peter Woodward, 'Sudan's domestic politics and relations with neighbouring states', in *Post-Independence Sudan*, Edinburgh: Centre of African Studies, University of Edinburgh, 1981, pp 25–37.

relations with Libya was in part a step towards encouraging the SPLM to negotiate, and Libya was keen to cooperate. In return Qaddafi's Libyan opponents halted their hostile broadcasts from Sudan and rapidly left the country. Approaches were also made to Ethiopia, but here the issues were more complex. Ethiopian support for the SPLM had been given in part because of the freedom accorded to the Eritrean and Tigrean movements by Sudan. Sudan could restrict these movements, but only within limits. There has long been some sympathy within Sudan for the Eritreans in particular; the US sends food relief across the border through voluntary agencies, and Sudan requires US grain itself; while the frontier is long and the Eritreans are very resourceful. Thus no easy *quid pro quo* for Ethiopian pressure on the SPLM could be guaranteed. Meanwhile, understandable though these moves were, they excited concern in Saudi Arabia and Egypt. The former in fact released funds that had been delayed to Numeiri, perhaps hoping to counteract any blandishments from Libya, but Egypt which had once been the virtual military guarantor of Numeiri, became alarmed at the growing voice of Sudanese nationalism.

Concern with these moves was also shown in the United States. Under Numeiri Sudan had become the second largest recipient of aid in Africa, after Egypt, and had supported not only Camp David, but the Rapid Deployment Force as well. But the new rulers know that Western aid is essential for both relief and development, while if they prove capable of reversing the economic deterioration they will in turn make Sudan less of a bottomless pit than it has recently appeared to be. It was not therefore inherently anti-American to want to improve relations with America's enemies in the region, or with the Soviet Union.

Conclusion

Though the international context is important, it is amongst the groupings within Sudan that the way forward must primarily be found. As indicated it does involve keeping unlikely bedfellows together, at least in the short run—the army, the professionals, the parties and the SPLM; yet in the past elements at least of all four have been involved with each other, if not always at the same time. The military regime of Numeiri did make peace with the South, and peace was maintained for ten years; all but one of the old parties cooperated with the regime at some time or other, and many professionals were involved, especially when in the early 1970s the regime decided to elevate the 'technocrats' as some of the intelligentsia were dubbed. It may be that the draft

constitutional arrangements presented to the new parliament after one year will suggest institutional expression for this plurastic power structure, perhaps including a form of federalism; or it may be preferable, as some Sudanese already suggest, to prolong the transitional period, perhaps for three years. What is clear is that if in the future any of the major groupings is alienated the whole process of seeking a just, legitimate and stable government in Sudan will be seriously set back.

The alternatives that might result from a failure to establish a consensus should act as a salutary warning. There has been talk of Siwar al-Dhahab being Sudan's Neguib to be replaced in time by a 'Nasser': yet Sudan is too heterogenous to respond ideologically to anyone seeking to assume such a mantle, while it would also involve a return to elements of the repression so recently and joyously thrown off. But a weak inadequate multi-party parliamentary system might also in time invite a further coup and that way too a Numeiri-type regime could be restored. A return to a narrowly based military regime in Khartoum is likely also to lead to the continuation of the revolt in the South; while the drift into anarchy in the West already underway might lead to conditions there resembling neighbouring Chad more than the central Sudan. Thus by January 1986 Sudan could find itself celebrating thirty years of independence with major question marks over not only the stability of the government, but over the future of the state itself.

Consolidating civilian Brazil

Political transitions, as changes from one type of regime to another, are inherently complicated. Not only are the individuals and possibly some organisations (the armed forces, political parties, groups and associations) which were formerly in power replaced by others, but the very format of the regime is also transformed as is its legitimacy and bases of support. In the contemporary phase of transitions from dictatorship to democracy in Southern Europe and South America surely no country is more complicated than Brazil. Between May 1984 and March 1985 the process initiated by the military government in 1974 as a controlled opening from above has broken its bounds and now promises to result in liberal democracy with a new constitution and direct presidential elections in 1988.

Brazil's transition has been similar to Spain's inasmuch as the liberalisation was initiated by the government itself by granting civil and political rights to an emerging opposition, while at the same time retaining control of the timetable and extent of the political opening. This process is in contrast to the cases of Argentina, Greece and Portugal where defeat, or the prospect of defeat, in war resulted in the collapse of authoritarian regimes and the establishment of civilian democratic governments. Brazil's transition is, without a doubt, the longest in the current process, one which was begun by President Geisel in 1974 as a 'slow, gradual and sure' opening.¹ The last ten years have been characterised by periods of progress in areas of amnesty, censorship, civil rights and political organisation, but only slight improvement or stagnation in citizens' rights and the prospects for a transfer of power. By means of a wide variety of special measures—*casuísmos*—the government maintained power even while allowing a regular schedule of elections. The opposition, mostly centred in the Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (PMDB), negotiated and participated in the political game as some link to power, however tenuous, was better than nothing at all.

¹ On the analysis of political transition, see my 'Transition from authoritarian regimes: the contrasting cases of Brazil and Portugal', in Fred Eidlin (ed) *Constitutional Democracy: Essays in Comparative Politics*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1983, pp 470–90 and the literature cited there. Of particular relevance is the special number of *Government and Opposition* (London) 19(2) Spring 1984, dealing with the cases of Brazil and Argentina.

In 1984 the government of President Figueiredo lost control of the process of gradual transition. While his government was able in April to intimidate, threaten and finally muster enough votes in its Democratic Social Party (PDS) to defeat an opposition-supported constitutional amendment returning direct presidential elections for the first time since 1960, it did so at tremendous cost in public opinion and internal tensions in the PDS. Subsequently the party split which allowed the candidate of the PMDB, Governor Tancredo Neves, to be elected president by the Electoral College on 15 January 1985. Despite the PDS' hypothetical majority of 36 extra votes in the 686-member College, Tancredo received 480 votes to the PDS' candidate, Paulo Salim Maluf's 180, with 26 either absent or abstaining. Thus for the first time since the military coup of 1964 a civilian—and a civilian of the opposition PMDB at that—was elected president.

Yet at the very beginning of Tancredo Neves' 'New Republic', on the night before he was to take office as president on 15 March 1985, Tancredo was hospitalised. After five weeks of agony for the 74-year-old president-elect, Tancredo died on 21 April of intestinal problems and complications arising from seven operations for infection and internal bleeding. Brazil was traumatised by the personal suffering of Tancredo and his family, and the transition, which had earlier seemed so simple and sure, was in doubt. The vice-presidential candidate on Tancredo's ticket was José Sarney, who took the oath of office and on the president-elect's death assumed the presidency. Sarney, however, was identified with the military governments for most of the period since 1964, was president of the PDS from 1979 until June 1984 and had opposed the direct elections amendment which was *the* theme of the PMDB and politics in general in early 1984. Sarney had been put forward as vice-presidential candidate of the PMDB by the Liberal Front, a party formed of ex-members of the PDS, as part of an agreement whereby they would support Tancredos Neves in the Electoral College.

Since 21 April 1985, José Sarney has been president of Brazil; however, he finds himself in a very difficult situation indeed. Sarney does not head any political party, and in the almost fully democratic regime in Brazil today parties are becoming the principal instruments of power. He was president of the PDS, but left it to join the PMDB. The PMDB, while divided into many factions, has been a functioning party since 1965 and its president, Senator Ulysses Guimarães, is a strong administrator. It is unlikely that Sarney will gain much power within the

PMDB. Sarney is not from one of the larger, politically or economically more important states such as Minas Gerais (Tancredo's home) or São Paulo, but from the north-eastern state of Maranhão; it does not, in the context of the Brazilian federal system, provide much of a power base. Although Sarney is personally wealthy, he is not closely linked to the important economic groups of modern Brazil.² In effect, President Sarney is sadly lacking in most of the key political resources of Brazil. He is suspect in his present party, is considered a traitor in the PDS which he left, and ex-President Figueiredo would not meet with him or place the sash of office on him on 15 March 1985. Further to complicate matters, these are not easy times in Brazil. The external debt exceeds \$100 billion; the International Monetary Fund (IMF) suspended loan payments of \$1.5 billion in February because the 223 per cent inflation exceeded agreements with the Fund; and the country has been in a recession, its most serious since the 1930s, for four years. In this economic quagmire social problems have rapidly worsened and become highly visible under the military governments. With a civilian government, in the process of fuller democratisation, the social problems of poverty, misery and crime will inevitably be manifested in strikes, demonstrations, and other forms of social unrest. With the country's finances extremely constrained by the exigencies of the IMF and the creditor banks, there is little flexibility to meet the popular demands for improvement in salaries and basic human needs, and strikes have spread through key economic sectors in all parts of the country.

Sarney lacks the political and economic capital to confront these grave problems. Tancredo Neves would have also lacked the latter. He was, however, an acclaimed political magician, a genius, who could put together 'arrangements' or 'understandings' whereby agreements could be reached and consensus developed around policies. Sarney does not have Tancredo's gifts and lacks as well his popularity and standing. While the country was traumatised by the death of Tancredo, the government appears to be paralysed and has not acted in regard to appointments or the implementation of policies.

Despite the tragedy of Tancredo's death and the tremendous socio-economic problems to be faced by any government in Brazil, it seems likely that the political transition will continue and be

² Sarney acknowledged these three political weaknesses, as reported in *Expresso* (Lisbon) 20 April 1985, p 43R. I have relied extensively on the Brazilian weekly *Veja* (São Paulo) for many of the details in this article.

consolidated in a new constitution and direct presidential elections by 1988. The reasons for this positive, albeit tentative, opinion are based on comparative analysis of other cases of political transition applied to the Brazilian context. Of particular importance are political and economic factors, including the process of the transition itself; the stage it had reached by Tancredo's death; and the disposition of the political actors at the time of writing, one month after Sarney assumed office as President.

The old regime offers no option

In the case of some transitions from dictatorship to democracy there are fairly substantial sectors in society which look back with nostalgia to the stable and orderly times of the past regime, particularly in the context of the give-and-take of democratic politics. This tendency seems most pronounced in some Southern European cases; so far none have reverted to the predictable, if dictatorial, old regime, but in the contemporary cycle of transitions it is at least a hypothetical option.³ In Brazil such an option seems so remote as to hardly merit serious consideration.

The transition was begun in 1974 with President Geisel's 'decompression' or 'opening'. This was ten years after the initiation of the authoritarian regime by military coup, preceded the economic impact of the oil shock when economic growth was still a high 10 per cent, preceded President Carter's human rights campaign, and took place when a high degree of unity existed in the armed forces and in the regime more generally. In considering the various explanations as to the decisions taken to open the regime, it seems most likely that the government under Geisel was attempting to broaden its basis of support and rejuvenate itself. The opening followed the closed and dictatorial government of President Médici (1969–74) with its legitimisation through high rates of economic growth, grandiose projects, and the Doctrine of National Security. It thus became reasonable to broaden the support of the regime as the social costs of the economic miracle were widely appreciated by 1974; industrialisation and economic growth having been achieved, the authoritarian regime was less favoured by important economic groups, and there was even concern that the state was too

³ For analysis on this point, see Juan J Linz, 'Some comparative thoughts on the transition to democracy in Portugal and Spain', in Jorge Braga de Macedo and Simon Serfaty (eds) *Portugal Since the Revolution: Economic and Political Perspectives*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1981, pp 25–46.

large; and much of the middle classes and important institutions, such as the Church, were alienated by the torture and other obvious excesses of the government.⁴ The unpopularity of the government was highlighted by the results of the congressional elections in November 1974 which went against the government party, ARENA (precursor of the PDS). The MDB (precursor of the PMDB) won 16 of the 22 Senate seats contested and increased its representation in the Assembly from 87 to 160. President Geisel allowed the results to stand, but between 1974 and the end of his term in 1979 controlled the timing and the agenda of the opening in order to allow it to continue in the face of 'hard line' opposition from the armed forces, to avoid MDB control of the Congress and, more importantly, the Electoral College which the authoritarian regime utilised to certify the generals who became presidents after 1964.

Crucial to the control of the agenda was the government's utilisation of the *casuísmos*—arbitrary and individualised measures to protect the government's party—in effect, a rule for each case. The most important series of *casuísmos* were decreed in April 1977 in preparation for the 1978 elections, and in November 1981 and June 1982 for the 1982 elections.⁵ The combination of these many, and changing, controls were set up to rig the electoral procedures to maintain ARENA, and later PDS, control in the Congress despite the increasing popularity of the PMDB. President Geisel controlled the presidential elections internally in the armed forces and the government-controlled Electoral College certified Geisel's candidate, General João Baptista Figueiredo, as President with a commitment to continue the opening.⁶ Not precisely a *casuísmo* but serving the same purpose was the political party reform of November 1979, which abolished the two parties of ARENA and MDB and allowed the creation of more parties. The result was as intended: a proliferation of opposition parties whose role had hitherto been occupied by the MDB. The effect of the various *casuísmos* on the November 1982 election resulted in the PDS taking 12 of the state

⁴ Of particular utility in understanding the beginning of the transition are Luiz Bresser Pereira, *Development and Crisis in Brazil, 1930–1983*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1984; Walder de Goes, *O Brasil do General Geisel*, Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 1978; and the series of reports by Thomas G Saunders for the American Universities Field Staff Inc., Hanover, New Hampshire.

⁵ The work of David V Fleischer is very useful for understanding the impact of the *casuísmos*. See, for example, 'Constitutional and electoral engineering in Brazil: a double-edged sword 1964–1982' in D Nohlen (ed) *Wahlen und Wahlpolitik in Lateinamerika*, Heidelberg: Esprint-Verlag, 1983.

⁶ For the details of the internal process in the armed forces, see André Gustavo Stumpf and Merval Pereira Filho, *A Segunda Guerra: Sucessão de Geisel*, São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1979.

governorships, 41.5 per cent of the popular vote, and placing 359 members in the Electoral College. The PMDB took 9 gubernatorial seats (in the most important states), 44 per cent of the popular vote, and 269 members in the Electoral College. The other three opposition parties—Democratic Labour Party (PDT), Brazilian Labour Party (PTB), and the Workers' Party (PT)—placed one governor, took 14.5 per cent of the vote, and gained fifty-two members in the College.⁷ The government's PDS, then, enjoyed a comfortable majority in the Electoral College which was to select the next president in January 1985.

Between the elections in November 1982 and late 1984, three processes developed and interacted which ultimately defeated the planned opening envisioned by President Geisel and assumed by President Figueiredo. The economy deteriorated, resulting in a major recession with productive capacity hovering at a low 72–74 per cent utilisation, extremely high rates of inflation with 200–230 per cent per annum since 1983, and high rates of unemployment with industrial employment in São Paulo, for example, dropping by 25 per cent between December 1980 and mid-1984. Incomes for all but the very wealthy have fallen; for the year to June 1984, average wages for industrial workers in São Paulo declined by slightly more than 4 per cent.⁸ Social manifestations of the economic crisis were seen in riots in São Paulo in May 1983 and sackings of grocery stores in São Paulo and Rio in September 1983 as well as a sharp rise in crime. The second process was the opposition, composed of four parties as well as institutions (such as the Church) and groups (such as students, slum-dwellers, etc), demanding change and improvement. This demand was translated by the PMDB into a demand for democratic elections, direct presidential elections, and a government with the legitimacy to confront the grave socio-economic crisis. In October 1983, for example, the nine PMDB governors (including Tancredo Neves) declared, 'Only direct elections within the rules of modern democracy which include universal and secret suffrage can overcome the political and economic difficulties facing Brazilian society.'⁹ The initially

⁷ These figures are taken from Fleischer, 'Constitutional and electoral engineering', *op cit*, p 37.

⁸ The data on the economy in this article are taken from William G Tyler, 'Stabilisation, external adjustment, and recession in Brazil: perspectives on the mid-1980s', a paper prepared for the Conference 'The Crisis in Brazil', University of Florida, 15–16 November 1984. See also, for extensive data, *Brazil: Country Economic Memorandum*, Washington DC: World Bank (2 vols) 26 February 1985.

⁹ Quoted in Gilberto Dimenstein *et al*, *O Complot que Elegeu Tancredo*, Rio de Janeiro: Editora JB, 1985, p 71.

controlled opening had stimulated the rebirth of civil society in a rapidly industrialising and modernising Brazil, and the emergence of political parties was imminent; such parties were no longer willing to wait for what the government decided to grant but demanded a full and immediate implementation of democracy.

The opposition might demand, but President Figueiredo still possessed the power, and the Constitution stipulated indirect presidential elections in the Electoral College in January 1985. As early as November 1983, however, President Figueiredo began to demonstrate that he had lost whatever interest and talent he once possessed for politics. The third process centres around these considerations: Figueiredo's decreasing ability to control the timetable and agenda of the controlled political opening. Of the three processes this last seems the most timely; the President's apparent lack of interest, ambiguous statements and actions, and contradictory positions threw open the transition so that the opposition, and particularly Tancredo Neves, could capture the initiative in the time and nature of the transition.¹⁰

In November 1983, President Figueiredo stated that he personally was in favour of direct elections, that they should be reinstated, but that this was not possible as his party would oppose him. At the end of the year he turned over control of the presidential succession to his party, the PDS. Between early 1984 and the PDS convention in August 1984, the President equivocated on the selection procedure and the likely candidate of the party for the Electoral College. The result was that the most unscrupulous of the half-dozen potential candidates, ex-governor of São Paulo and Federal Deputy, Paulo Salim Maluf, tied up the convention and became the PDS candidate for the presidency. Reportedly not even President Figueiredo liked Maluf; he was also held in some disrepute by large sectors of society and the political elite for representing the worst political and moral excesses of the authoritarian regime. The choice of Maluf, and the equivocation and confusion involving the president, resulted in a major split within the PDS: fifty-two Congressmen left it and went on to found the Liberal Front, which subsequently became the Liberal Front Party (PFL). Among the founders of the PFL were Vice-President Aureliano Chaves, Senator Marco Maciel, and two ex-presidents of the PDS, José Sarney and Jorge

¹⁰ Dimenstein *et al.*, describe the details of the transition in this 247-page book compiled by *Jornal do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro) reporters. See also the very useful special number of *Veja* on 'A História Secreta de Sucessão', 16 January 1985.

Bornhausen, as well as other key figures in the Senate and Assembly. President Figueiredo and key elements in his government gave minimal public support to Maluf. The Electoral College results on 15 January 1985 of 480 for Tancredo and 180 for Maluf are indicative of the low level of political support where the party, which had 359 members from the November 1982 elections, was presumably controlled by Maluf who, in turn, was utilising a College supposedly controlled by the government of his colleague President Figueiredo.

By January 1985 the authoritarian regime was clearly politically bankrupt. Public opinion polls indicated that the level of popularity of the Figueiredo government had reached a new low, and Maluf could hardly appear in public without being booed and attacked.¹¹ Later, Maluf would criticise the government for its failure to support his candidacy and questioned its remaining legitimacy, presumably in order to distance himself from it for a possible future political career. President Figueiredo, in a televised interview in late January 1985 was bitter, frustrated and hurt; he asked only that the Brazilian people '*me esqueçam*' ('forget me').¹² In sum, the authoritarian regime as represented by the 1979–85 government is held in low esteem by much of the population and even by elements of the political elite who were directly involved in it during many years. As a consequence, it is not a viable alternative to the currently emerging democratic regime.

The inroads of democracy

Why did so many important members of the government's PDS desert the party, thereby ensuring the election of the opposition candidate in the Electoral College? The political transition had reached a certain momentum, and many politicians felt that liberal democracy would likely emerge sooner rather than later. In a democracy votes are the principal means for selecting rulers, and votes require popularity among the public.

It should be recalled that the Brazilian authoritarian regime never fully closed the Congress and never eliminated elections; they were constrained and controlled, but not eliminated. The theme of democratic legitimacy was maintained, but its full implementation through direct elections and an independent Congress was held in abeyance while economic and security problems were to be resolved. By the late 1970s there was no longer a security problem and the

¹¹ On a public opinion poll, see *Veja*, 20 March 1985, p 53.

¹² The interview is summarised in *Veja*, 30 January 1985, pp 28–9.

economy was proving intractable; the situation was worse than when the military took over in 1964. The government was able to win elections and push their measures through Congress and the Electoral Congress only by the most blatant form of institutional innovation in the *casuísmos*. The massive campaign led by the PMDB in early 1984 in favour of the direct elections for president, the '*diretas já*' campaign, brought more than one million people out on the streets in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo with commensurately large crowds in other important cities; these were the largest demonstrations in the history of the country. The amendment for direct elections fell twenty-two votes short of the required two-thirds in the Assembly; in any case, it would not have passed in the overwhelmingly PDS-controlled Senate. However, of the 298 votes in favour, some 54 were from the PDS as the party was already splitting or 'imploding' in the face of popular pressure for the completion of the transition. The party's unpopularity became obvious to José Sarney and others in June 1984 with the local elections in Santos, SP, in which—in the first direct elections for mayor in many years—the PDS candidate came in last with only 3 per cent of the vote.¹³ If a politician was going to have a future in a more democratic Brazil, it was not going to be with the PDS and its unpalatable candidate, Paulo Salim Maluf.

By late 1984 it became almost untenable for the government to justify the continuation of indirect elections; in effect, the *casuísmos* had arranged 686 votes in the Electoral College to represent some 55 million voters. Even so, the PMDB utilised this instrument to have Tancredo Neves elected President, giving the argument that the arbitrary and unfair system symbolised by the *casuísmos* would be dismantled. Tancredo promised a four-year, rather than a six-year, term of office, as well as a constituent assembly to change the Constitution and establish a full liberal democratic regime. President Sarney shares this same commitment. Sarney, and the regime that is emerging with him, can thus develop what Giuseppe di Palma has termed 'backward legitimisation'¹⁴—contrasting itself with the poorly-regarded authoritarian regime—and a 'forward legitimisation' based upon the promised new Constitution and a four-year presidential term of office with direct elections.

¹³ On the impact this election had on Sarney and other PDS politicians, see *Veja*, 8 August 1984, p. 24.

¹⁴ See Giuseppe di Palma, 'Left, right, left, right—or centre? On the Legitimation of Parties and Coalitions in Southern Europe', IPSA Conference on Mediterranean Europe, Athens, May 1978.

The military in the transition

The authoritarian regime in Brazil has been more institutionalised and less personalised than regimes in other South American countries, such as Argentina and Chile. There has been a set term of office for each general-president, and the armed forces have remained fairly unified during the last twenty years. Since President Geisel committed himself and the regime to an opening and arranged, against some opposition in the army, for General Figueiredo to carry it on, there have been no major setbacks in the process. With the loss of control over succession in 1984, some indications of discontent surfaced within the armed forces over the pace of the transition, radicalisation, and the potential for revenge over human-rights violations committed during the height of dictatorship between 1969 and 1974.¹⁵ It appears that these problems have now been resolved.

A general amnesty for political crimes was implemented from 1979, and exiles who had been involved in guerrilla movements and affiliated with parties of the left have for the most part returned. The opposition, however, has been remarkably responsible and the transition peaceful. The greatest threats of violence during the past year have involved demonstrations against Maluf. There is some basis for an argument that the greatest potential for violence, and thus a justification for intervention by the armed forces, would arise if Maluf were elected president. Tancredo Neves met with ex-President Geisel to discuss the transition and in November 1984 had a series of meetings with General Walter Pires, Minister of the Army. An understanding was apparently worked out whereby there would be no revenge, as in Argentina, for the excesses of the military, and the armed forces would not impede the election of Tancredo. Of the half-dozen potential PDS candidates there was one retired officer, Mário Andreazza, Minister of the Interior, but he received little support from within the military or from President Figueiredo for that matter. By this time the military as institution wanted out of direct political involvement.¹⁶

By late 1984 the obvious hard-line elements in the military, such as General Newton Cruz, Chief of the Military Command of the Planalto (Brasília), had been transferred to positions without troop commands, and Tancredo had put together a group of supporters in the armed forces. The lack of spirit within the armed forces to contest the

¹⁵ The discontent in the military and Tancredo's plans for dealing with it are discussed in Dimenstein *et al.* and *Veja*, 16 January 1985.

¹⁶ For some details, see Dimenstein *et al.*, p 25. See also *Veja*, 16 January 1985, p 42.

transition was obvious by September of that year. In response to the Air Force Minister, General Délio Jardim de Mattos, insinuating that the PDS dissidents who were supporting Tancredo were traitors, the ex-governor of Bahia, Antônio Carlos Magalhães, stated that those who supported a corrupt politician for president were themselves traitors. The military did not respond; this demonstrated that its power, or at least its interest in using power for campaign purposes, had vanished. By 15 January 1985, Tancredo had the support of the armed forces for his presidency. On his death the military ministers, selected by him, made statements in favour of the Constitution and Sarney's continuation in office in fulfilment of this Constitution. Barring some social cataclysm it seems unlikely that the armed forces will directly intervene to impede the continuation of the transition to a new Constitution and direct presidential elections.

The presidential system and political parties

The governmental system in Brazil, as in the rest of Latin America, is of a presidential rather than parliamentary format. Sarney, as Vice-President, became President on the death of Tancredo. According to the present Constitution he has a six-year term of office although he, as Tancredo, has promised elections in 1988. He does not rely on Congress for continuation in office, although by two-thirds majorities the Congress could change the date of the next election and shorten the term accordingly. Political parties in Brazil have never been highly structured or coherent; rather they have been personalistic and flexible.

The present party system dates from 1979 and the law of party reform which was formulated by the military government. Since that time the PDS has split and suffers from problems inherent in being identified with the military governments, for which it was an instrument, and with the defeated Maluf. The PDS is obviously in a process of transition and is in no position to oppose the present political transition; indeed, it has no reason for so doing if it intends to continue to function as a party. The single largest party is the PMDB which is fully committed to a democratic regime; it should be the central actor in the immediate future. It must be stressed that extensive negotiation was required between Tancredo and the president of the PMDB, Ulysses Guimarães, to work out an agreement for support in the Electoral College once the amendment for direct elections was defeated on 15 April 1984. Guimarães is also negotiating with President Sarney, and it is significant that Sarney did not initially change the composition of the government

on assuming office on 21 April 1985. The PMDB has thirteen members in the present government, and the PFL and PDS dissidents four. The other parties have small representation in Congress (two senators and forty-four deputies from the 1982 elections) and are not in a position to have an impact on policy but can influence public opinion. It seems likely that the party system will change in the near future. On 9 May 1985 a series of proposals was unanimously passed in the Congress to change the most flagrant *casuísmos* of the military governments. Three of these will have a particularly large impact on the party system. One ends the requirement of party fidelity of following the orders of the leaders and losing elected positions if a move is made from one party to another. Another ends the *sublegenda* or means whereby competing factions could remain within a party. And the third decreases the requirements for recognition of political parties. With the likely ebullience resulting from these changes, in combination with the transition and the problems in the PDS, it is unlikely that Sarney will be faced with any kind of unified opposition. This by no means guarantees effectiveness or smooth cooperation, but agreements seem possible even without Tancredo, the consummate politician.

Dialogue and conciliation

A tremendous amount of dialogue and conciliation was required to bring the political transition to a point of readiness in early 1985; these were the defining characteristics of Tancredo. This has been a negotiated transition which continued to be worked out, among different actors, when President Figueiredo abdicated responsibility for presidential succession. The death of Tancredo traumatised the nation, and there was a tremendous amount of sympathy for him and an appreciation of his political skill in furthering the transition. Sarney, more than any other single political figure, can profit from this sympathy and appreciation by the mere fact that Tancredo, at the age of 74, accepted him as his vice-presidential running-mate. With the great emphasis placed at this stage of the transition on the constitution and legality, it is obvious that barring the unforeseen, Sarney must continue as President to consolidate the transition.

Sarney has been extremely diffident so far. He was in the background in the PMDB convention in August 1984, did not manifest himself much during the campaign, did nothing during Tancredo's hospitalisation to suggest he was prepared to assume the role of president, and his initial measures since assuming office on 21 April have been strictly in line

with Tancredo's plans and commitments. In order to propel Sarney to fully accept his role as president it required the serious encouragement of Ulysses Guimarães and José Fragelli, presidents of the Assembly and Senate, respectively. The initial measures, on 9 May 1985, which included the abolition of nominated mayors and the return of direct elections for all elected officers were in line with a general trend towards democratisation and participation, as was the creation of a Commission on Constitutional Reform, which will formulate a draft charter in mid-May. Sarney's few speeches to date have indicated that the powers of the presidency will decrease and the autonomy of the Congress increase; these are, after all, within the general trend of the transition since the early 1980s. So far public opinion is overwhelmingly in favour of him, and he has the support of important social and political groups.¹⁷

Regardless of the initial means used to promote it, the transition reached a stage by early 1985 where procedures rather than results were emphasised. This may be only in the short term, but this article stresses precisely those factors: emphasis in on the constitution, democratic legitimacy, and procedures for expanding the democracy. This democracy, as seen by all but a few minor groups, is a liberal democracy which favours procedures and not necessarily socio-economic results. Obviously, due attention must be given to the social situation, and this commitment has been stated by Sarney since his first important speech on 1 May 1985 which promised an improvement in working class salaries; in the immediate future, however, the key area will be political consolidation. The stress so far is on forward legitimacy which relates to the campaign for direct elections and culminates in the political reforms of 9 May 1985 which provided the basis for Tancredo's New Republic.

The economy—disastrous but not serious

The most obvious problem in Brazil for most foreign observers, and, certainly, in the day-to-day living for all Brazilians, is the disastrous situation in the economy. The debt, austerity, unemployment, recession, and inflation are incredibly difficult problems for any government—let alone an incoming civilian government, lacking a coherent party and governing team. The daily manifestations in terms of strikes and demonstrations are obviously politically significant facts. It should be noted, however, that the current cycle of political transitions in Southern Europe and South America is contemporaneous

¹⁷ On a public opinion poll and statements of support, see *Veja*, 24 April 1985, p 29.

with a world recession, external debt, and high rates of unemployment; indeed, it is quite possible that the recession has much to do with decreasing the legitimacy of authoritarian governments which used economic growth instead of democratic legitimacy for justification. So far, and this may well be temporary, none of these countries have returned to dictatorship.

What is particularly relevant in Brazil is the general awareness that the economic crisis came about before the political transition. Tancredo and Sarney are not responsible for the economic shambles; the fault lies with the military governments and their economic planners. The situation is more serious now than in 1964 when the military took power, if only because the country is far more urban, industrial, and integrated in the world economy. It is not difficult to point to areas of economic mismanagement or poor planning, including the decision to maintain growth despite the oil shocks of 1973 and 1979 which changed Brazil's terms of trade, the fascination with huge projects which required equally large loans and created few jobs, and the 'cat and mouse game' with the IMF of making agreements with unrealistic goals.¹⁸ Symbolic of this obsession was the consistent support given by President Figueiredo to the Minister of Planning and virtual economic czar, Antonio Delfim Netto, despite obvious problems with the economy and the unpopularity of certain individuals and the regime itself as the recession continued. In sum, for a number of years the new government can effectively blame past governments for the country's economic and social problems. In effect, there are extremely grave economic problems facing the country, but they need not have a direct political impact. Furthermore, there are some indications, albeit contradictory, that some improvement in the economy is at hand.¹⁹ It may well be possible to continue to blame the problems on the past and gain the benefits of the present.

Conclusion

This discussion may appear over-optimistic, particularly as the initial indications of Sarney's leadership and coherence of the government

¹⁸ For many of the policy problems see Tyler, 'Stabilization', *op cit.* For another recent analysis, see Persio Arida, 'Economic stabilisation in Brazil', Latin American Program, The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington DC, 1 November 1984. For a historical review and analysis of the key areas and problems, see Werner Baer, *The Brazilian Economy: Its Growth and Development*, 2nd revised edn, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1983.

¹⁹ Indications of improvement in the economy are reported in the Banco de Boston, *Newsletter Brazil*, 14 January 1985, as well as in *Info Brazil*, Center for Brazilian Studies, Johns Hopkins University, Washington DC, October 1984.

have been anything but impressive. However, based on analysis of other cases of political transitions and the nature of the process in Brazil, the stage it has reached, and the initial behaviour manifested by Sarney and the leaders of the PMDB, I am guardedly optimistic about the future. Political scientists have no particular clairvoyance, particularly in a case as complicated and dynamic as Brazil. One year ago it seemed that Maluf would be the next president of the country, a prospect that provided little room for optimism. Today, he, and the party he came to symbolise, are in disrepute. Democracy, even when reached by tortuous paths, holds a popular appeal and those currently involved in the political transition are identified with it. The appeal should last at least until a new Constitution is approved in 1987 and direct presidential elections are a reality in 1988.

Crisis and ethnicity: legitimacy in plural societies

A wise prince, when he gets the chance, craftily fosters some enmity against himself, that by crushing it he may make his power greater.
(Machiavelli)

Governments cannot choose freely the type of problems which arise in society and with which they have to deal. Nevertheless, they do have discretion as to how to react. They presumably seek responses which are compatible with, and if possible contribute towards, the pursuit of their contemporary policy goals; and they have some choice as to how to diagnose the problems, who to blame, and how much attention to direct to them. One well-known strategy is for government leaders to invoke externally based threats or crises of internal subversion; furthering their own political dominance and enhancing their legitimacy by promoting a sense of siege. The problems they face are then depicted as symptomatic of a potential Armageddon which they alone can prevent.

Certain politicians may favour such a strategy more than others because it accords with their particular style of leadership, but clearly both the extent of the strategy's employment and its actual impact on domestic politics depend primarily upon the social and political environment in the state concerned. It will be argued here that there are particular features of the ethnically pluralistic Third World states which are especially conducive to the employment of siege strategies.

Numerous Third World governments have made political capital by dramatising, exaggerating, or even inventing problems. In the case of Africa the most dramatic example was provided by Sekou Touré's Guinea where an isolated and insecure regime survived for over twenty-five years by maintaining a 'permanent plot' atmosphere in which fear and anxiety were generated so as to justify purges against opponents. In both Togo and Ghana the particular problems posed by the bifurcation of the Ewe ethnic group have repeatedly been translated into political crises by regimes concerned to promote both national unity and their own legitimacy. In the case of Asia, examples would include

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both President Marcos's dramatisation of 'rebellions of the left' so as to legitimate his imposition of martial law in 1972 and thence perpetuate his power; and President Sukarno's manipulation of the issue of Indonesia's confrontation with Malaysia in the mid-1960s in order to detract attention from both economic and regionalist unrest and thereby buttress his own image as a nationalist leader.¹

Not all threats, dangers, or crises are of equal utility for a government leader wishing to mobilise support. The spectre of Armageddon which they raise must have both an internal and an external dimension, and must be credible not only as a threat to the leader's own position, but also to the unity and stability of the society.

The external dimension is crucial since it is the assertion of the need for strong defence against some alien enemy which gives force to the demand for internal unity; though it should be noted that the postulation of a nebulous enemy such as neo-colonialism or unnamed foreign powers often seems to do the job just as well as more concrete external enemies. The significance of the internal aspect of the threat is in giving dramatic immediacy to the external danger; it involves the assertion that there is some 'Trojan horse' or 'fifth column' within the society which, either consciously or unwittingly is weakening the society's ability to defend itself. The fact of ethnic pluralism in the Third World states of Africa and Asia thus becomes relevant. If a leader is able to characterise internal dissent and criticism of his regime as arising from and reflecting competing ethnic interests within the society, then he will be able to equate political dissent with communal disunity and to argue, in turn, that communal disunity is incompatible with national loyalty. A connection is therefore made between the 'communalists', 'chauvinists', 'tribalists', etc within the society, and the external enemy; with the former now exposed as the possibly unwitting agents of the latter.

Having linked external and internal elements so as to generate a spectre of social disaster, a government leader can then hope to convince the populace that the society is a garrison under siege which must now rally behind its leader if it is to survive. The proclamation of such a crisis thus justifies the argument that criticism of the regime must now be suspended. Commitment to the society and its survival are thereby equated with support for the government.

¹ On the Togo and Ghana cases see David Brown, 'Sieges and scapegoats: the politics of pluralism in Ghana and Togo', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 21(3) 1983. On the Indonesian case see Donald Hindley, 'Indonesia's confrontation of Malaysia: the search for motives', *Asian Survey*, 4(6) June 1964.

Where such a strategy is maintained successfully it constitutes a distinctive basis for governmental legitimacy. Support is not based simply on moral obligation and loyalty towards the national community; nor does domination rest solely on the leader's power to suppress opposition. Such normative and coercive elements are present, but the effectiveness and distinctiveness of siege legitimacy derives from the citizens' perception that the only options available are compliance on the one hand, or disaster on the other. Faced with such a choice the people must commit themselves to support the leader despite any reservations they may have. It is in the nature of a siege that those inside the garrison believe themselves to be trapped, so that they must align themselves with the incumbent leader who alone is in a position to ensure the survival of the community.

Clearly both the character and the impact of siege legitimacy will depend upon the environment in which it operates; and in order to develop the discussion further two particular cases will be briefly examined, those of Singapore and Malaysia. These two cases are chosen not because they are in some way typical; but rather because siege legitimacy seems to have contributed, in both countries, to a rather unusual record of political stability. They provide, therefore, a rare opportunity for examining the role of siege legitimacy over a relatively long period.

Malaysia

Malaysian politics used to be characterised, in the 1960s, in terms of its relaxed liberalism, epitomised in the character of the then Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman; and the accommodationist stance towards ethnic pluralism, institutionalised in the governing Alliance between Malay, Chinese, and Indian political parties.² From 1969 onwards, however, the formally consociational government contained increasingly overt and extensive elements of Malay domination; and the tone and style of government, especially under the present Prime Minister, Dr Mahathir, became noticeably more strident. These processes have accelerated dramatically during the 1980s with the clear

² The ethnic composition of peninsular Malaysia is 53 per cent Malay, 35 per cent Chinese, and 11 per cent Indian. Pre-1969 Malaysia is used by Lijphart as an example of a 'reasonably successful consociational democracy', and was also treated in this light by Ratnam. See Arendt Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979, pp 150-61; K J Ratnam, *Communalism and the Political Process in Malaya*, Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1965.

weakness and disunity of the major Chinese partner in the government, the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA); and the shift of the United Malays National Organization (UMNO), led by Dr Mahathir, towards a pro-Islamic stance. That the government has so far managed to change the balance of Malaysian politics without provoking Chinese political opposition, or losing ground to the increasingly militant Islamic party, Partai Islam Se Malaysia (PAS), is explainable partly in terms of the government's employment of siege imagery.

When the Alliance was first formed, in 1955, it could rely on getting widespread support partly on the basis of ethnic patronage, with each of the three ethnic parties acting as the channel for resource distribution to their ethnic clienteles. Partly also, it obtained support on the 'bandwagon' basis that it was from the outset the only viable contender for power at the Federal level. Nevertheless, despite its strong position, there have been few occasions when the leadership of the Alliance, or of its successor the Barisan Nasional, have appeared complacent.³ The government leaders have repeatedly supplemented their arguments that they can deliver the goods and that they are the only party with a chance of winning, with the argument that their continued dominance constitutes the only safeguard against 'disaster' and should therefore be supported even by those who may have reservations about their policies.

In the 1950s the Alliance had succeeded in getting the strong support of the Malays at least partly by tapping their suspicions of the Chinese; and to a lesser extent they could get the support of Chinese moderates by stressing the link between the communist insurgency and Chinese 'extremism'.⁴ It was, however, the issue of confrontation with Indonesia

³ The main exception being the election of 1969, see below.

⁴ It was Malay suspicion of the multi-communal Independence of Malaya Party, and its policy of giving easier citizenship to the Chinese, which led to the formation of the Alliance between UMNO and the moderate Chinese party, the MCA. The Malays formed 84.2 per cent of the electorate in 1955 and were concerned to guard their dominant position, through an Independence settlement, against the Chinese communist insurgents and their sympathisers. The MCA, for its part, represented the interests of those with a stake in the economic prosperity of Malaysia, and they also saw a negotiated Independence as the solution to the insecurity, and the suspicion of the Chinese, provoked by the Emergency. The Alliance succeeded in mobilising 81 per cent of the vote.

The context in which the Alliance was formed is outlined in Karl Von Vorzys, *Democracy without Consensus: Communalism and Political Stability in Malaysia*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1975.

By the 1959 election most Chinese adults were eligible to vote so that the Malays were now only a bare majority of the electorate (56.8 per cent). The Alliance sought to capitalise on the resultant fears of inter-ethnic rivalry by portraying its opponents as ethnically particularistic, and itself as embodying inter-ethnic harmony and unity. This argument was however weakened by the dispute between UMNO and MCA over the allocation of seats, and MCA's defeat on this issue led to its poor showing in the polls; and the Alliance itself got only 51.8 per cent of the vote.

which provided the Alliance with its most effective mobilising argument. This was made into the dominant issue of the 1964 elections and the Alliance 'very adroitly' identified itself as the symbol of national unity and defence against the Indonesian threat; while portraying the opposition parties as Indonesia's subversive allies.⁵ It was this use of the confrontation 'crisis' which produced a major improvement in the Alliance's electoral support, especially amongst the Chinese; and it was precisely the failure to generate any such sense of crisis in the late 1960s which led to the politically crucial decline in the Alliance's support at the time of the 1969 elections.⁶ To be sure, the Alliance leaders did again seek to associate the opposition parties with the threat of inter-ethnic violence, but they failed to follow this up either by finding any external threat which could provide an imperative for unity, or by identifying themselves with such unity. Moreover, the Alliance leaders evinced a general air of 'never had it so good' complacency which effectively belied their warnings of ethnic tension, and was at variance with the actual feelings of ethnic insecurity amongst the voters themselves.⁷ The result was that the voters felt free to indulge their particularistic ethnic interests rather than rallying behind the Alliance as the defender of the national garrison; and given the grievances amongst both the Chinese and the Malay populations which had been generated by government policies regarding the economy and the language issue, the result was a drift away from the Alliance, with Chinese going towards the Democratic Action Party and Malays towards the Islamic party, PAS.⁸

The inter-ethnic rioting which occurred in the aftermath of the 1969 elections is invariably depicted as a turning point in Malaysian politics. It precipitated the collapse of the Alliance and ushered in a more overtly and more militantly pro-Malay regime. This shift has certainly not been particularly popular amongst the Chinese voters, more than half of whom have continued to vote for the opposition DAP. Nevertheless

⁵ R S Milne and Diane K Mauzy, *Politics and Government in Malaysia*, Singapore: Times, 1980, p. 160.

The fullest discussion of how this issue was employed in the election campaign is in J Ratnam and R S Milne, *The Malaysian Parliamentary Elections of 1964*, Singapore: University of Malaya Press, 1969, Ch 6.

⁶ This is the only occasion to date when electoral support for the Alliance (or the Barisan) has fallen below 50 per cent: it got 48.4 per cent of the vote compared to 58.4 per cent in 1964.

⁷ On the complacency of the Alliance leadership see, eg Von Vorys, *Democracy without Consensus*, *op cit*, pp 251-9; 265-8.

⁸ Malay discontent with the Alliance's failure to achieve economic redistribution in their favour was paralleled by Chinese apprehension over the threats to their position posed by the Government's National Language Act and its pro-Malay education policy.

one of the most striking features of Malaysian politics in the 1970s and 1980s has been the limited extent of their overt alienation in the face of the government's pro-Malay and Islamisation policies, which effectively make second-class citizens of the Chinese.⁹

As regards the Malays, it might have been expected that the main beneficiary of the Islamic revivalism which has been evident in Malaysia since the late 1970s, would have been PAS, since as an Islamic opposition party it has been unconstrained by the pressures towards compromise and ambiguity implied by involvement in a government coalition. Despite the apparently increasing popularity of its goals however, PAS has so far failed to mobilise corresponding political support in recent elections, enjoying somewhat less electoral support than it did in the 1960s.¹⁰

Faced with the prospect of losing support from both of the dominant ethnic groups, the Barisan has in fact managed to maintain its dominance; and this has been facilitated by the way in which the Barisan leaders have successfully focused attention upon and politicised two images of disaster which have complemented and reinforced each other: the spectre of ethnic violence as symbolised in '13 May 1969'; and the spectre of an Iranian-style Islamic dictatorship.

The 1969 riots were used explicitly to justify the suspension of democracy between 1969 and 1971, and to legitimate the formation of a new governing coalition, the Barisan Nasional, which was identified by 1974 as the new guarantor of a 'strong, united, multi-racial Malaysia'.¹¹ Thereafter, as Chandra Muzaffar has noted regarding the 1982 elections:

As in other elections since 1969, fear played a part. The ruling party did not

⁹ In the 1978 and 1982 general elections the MCA received 14.95 per cent and 18.25 per cent of the vote respectively. This is similar to its showing in 1959 and 1964 (14.8 per cent and 18.7 per cent). The MCA's obviously subordinate position within the Alliance/Barisan has inhibited its ability to mobilise the Chinese vote, and Chinese support for the opposition DAP has remained higher than that for the MCA both in the general elections and in the by-elections in 1982 and 1983. With the resignation of its President, Lee San Choon, in June 1983, the MCA was plunged into a factional dispute. Despite this, it polled 41.5 per cent of the vote in the Seremban by-election in November 1983, compared to the DAP's vote of 58.4 per cent. The point, then, is not that the MCA has been consistently weak, but that the Barisan's espousal of pro-Islamic policies has not apparently produced any corresponding sharp decline in its level of Chinese support.

¹⁰ PAS had got 21.27 per cent of the vote in 1959; 14.45 per cent in 1964; and 23.75 per cent in 1969. In 1978 its share of the vote was 17.48 per cent falling to 16.15 per cent in 1982, though this fall was due to its contesting fewer seats rather than to a loss of popularity: indeed PAS increased its vote slightly in the four Malay-majority states. In the January 1985 Kedah (Padang Terap) by-election UMNO defeated PAS by a similar margin to that in the 1982 general election.

¹¹ Diane K Mauzy, *Barisan Nasional: Coalition Government in Malaysia*, Kuala Lumpur: Marican, 1983, p 75.

hesitate to invoke the spectre of 'May 13'. The electorate was reminded in a prominent advertisement of how the ruling party had saved the nation from the May 13 incident and why the voters should therefore not gamble with their children's future. By reviving memories of the May 13 riots which the government had always argued was caused partially by opposition excesses, voters would think twice about supporting opposition parties.¹²

The spectre of inter-ethnic violence is thus politically useful for the leaders of the Barisan because of the link which they have made between such violence, ethnic extremism, and the opposition parties, especially the DAP and PAS. It is the assertion of such a linkage which allows the Barisan to use the threat of Islamic fundamentalism (which had nothing to do with the 1969 riots) to mobilise support for itself from those who would favour the trend towards Islamisation, but who would not wish a return to 1969.

UMNO leaders have accordingly highlighted the dangers posed by the recent activities of 'political enemies who wear the mask of religion and ride the horse of communal chauvinism'.¹³ This had become the central focus of politics in Malaysia by November 1984 with the government's publication of its White Paper on religious extremism. PAS is portrayed as linked with various politically extremist Islamic groups; as advocating 'rule by mullahs'; as promoting disunity amongst Malays by labelling UMNO supporters as 'kafir' (infidels); as furthering the cause of the Communist Party of Malaya; and as endangering national security and stability. To this list is added the emotive charge that PAS constitutes a threat to the sanctity of marriage and the family.¹⁴

The political import of this attack on PAS is to warn UMNO Youth,

¹² Chandra Muzaffar, 'The 1982 general election: an analysis', *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, 4(1), June 1982, pp 100-1. See also H Crouch, K H Lee and M Ong, *Malaysian Politics and the 1978 Election*, Kuala Lumpur, Oxford University Press, 1980, pp 162-5; and Ismail Kassim, *Race, Politics and Moderation: A Study of the Malaysian Electoral Process*, Singapore: Times, 1979, pp 42-5. For an example, see Musa Hitam's speech in the 1982 election campaign reported in *Far Eastern Economic Review (FEER)*, 16 April 1982, p 8.

The partial exception was the 1974 election when the Barisan won partly, because of the 'vacuum in the world of Malay opposition' caused by the inclusion of PAS within the Barisan. Nevertheless a 'sense of siege' was not entirely absent since the Prime Minister, Tun Razak, repeatedly urged the Chinese to support the Barisan by threatening them that failure to do so would merely lead to the formation of an all Malay government in which their interests would not be represented: they really had no choice therefore but to support the Barisan even if they were critical of it. See P Chandrasekaran, *The 1974 General Elections in Malaysia* Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Occasional Paper No 25, 1974, pp 8-10.

¹³ Speech by Deputy Prime Minister Musa Hitam at the National Conference of the Gerakan Party, 29-30 September 1984; reported in *FEER*, 18 October 1984, p 18.

¹⁴ On the UMNO campaign against PAS, and an outline of the White Paper, see *FEER*, 18 October 1984 pp 16-18; and *Sunday Times* (Singapore), 11 November 1984, p 8.

Malay students abroad, and others impatient for faster Islamisation, that the government is moving as fast as it can; and that the advocacy of more radical policies would merely provoke Chinese unrest, help PAS, divide UMNO, provoke the collapse of the Barisan, and lead to ethnic conflict *à la* 1969. The attack on PAS is also directed to the Chinese; reassuring them that the government's shift towards Islamisation is not a deliberate ethnocentric policy away from inter-ethnic accommodation and towards Malay dominance; but rather is a moderate and realistic response to circumstances, dictated not by anti-Chinese sentiment but rather by a concern to maintain stability. The policy is thus worthy of Chinese support since any rejection by the Chinese of the Barisan government would have the effect of strengthening the extremist PAS, thus directly threatening the position of the Chinese in Malaysia.

The success of the UMNO leaders in maintaining their own dominance, and the political stability of their ethnically divided state over a thirty-year period, is indeed remarkable. To do so they have relied increasingly on exaggerating rather than minimising the dangers they have faced. The major factors underlying their dominance are probably still their effectiveness as a source of patronage able to channel resources through the ethnic parties; and their 'aura of success' which ensures a bandwagon of support. Nevertheless the government leaders have repeatedly built upon their position of dominance by arguing that they alone can defend the nation; while their political opponents are in fact threats to the nation. This element of siege legitimacy has been increasing since 1969, and is now apparently a central feature of Malaysian politics; with the depiction of Islamic extremism as the spectre of disaster employed, paradoxically, to rally support for a regime which is itself clearly moving decisively towards Islamisation.

Singapore

The political leaders of Singapore have in the past faced numerous situations where they had good reason to feel 'under siege', so that both their own political survival and that of their small island community depended upon a high level of vigilance and commitment. The 1950s and 1960s were characterised by several tensions, most notably the prolonged confrontation between the present moderate People's Action Party (PAP) leadership and the more radical and communist elements; the communal conflicts between Chinese and Malay; and the tensions underlying both the above, arising from political alienation of

the poor and unemployed in an economy which had all the problems typical of underdevelopment. These internal issues were supplemented by uncertainties associated with Indonesia's confrontation with Malaysia, Singapore's subsequent ejection from the Malaysian Federation, and the fear that anti-Chinese incidents in Indonesia might spill over into Singapore.

Against such a background, Singapore's present situation appears exceptionally stable and secure; and this is generally attributed to the skilful, pragmatic and realistic leadership of Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew. A high level of economic growth has been maintained, despite the world trade slump, with low unemployment and inflation. Politically, the government retains widespread support (63 per cent of the total electorate in the December 1984 elections) despite its often abrasive style and unpopular policies; and opposition remains both limited and moderate. Inter-ethnic tensions have also ceased to constitute a real political threat; a degree of Malay discontent does persist, but the government has been well able to contain, inhibit, and direct its political articulation.¹⁵ Externally also, relations with neighbouring states are good, and any dangers associated with a spread of communism from Indo-China, or an upsurge of anti-Chinese sentiment in either Indonesia or Malaysia, are potential or hypothetical dangers only; they pose no threat which is either immediate or intense.

Given this contemporary situation it might have been expected that the political culture of Singapore would have become correspondingly more relaxed, confident, and liberal. This is not however apparent. A perusal of government policies towards such issues as development, defence, and political opposition; a study of the mass-media campaigns conducted by government; and the tone and content of most of the

¹⁵ A degree of resentment exists amongst the Malay minority, arising primarily from a perception that they have to some extent 'missed out' on Singapore's economic miracle. According to a 1980 Labour Force survey, 90.3 per cent of Malay employees earned a monthly salary of less than S\$600, and 4 per cent had post-secondary and tertiary education. This compares with corresponding figures for the Chinese of 75 per cent and 13.3 per cent and for the Indian work force, of 80.4 per cent and 11.6 per cent. While the Malays constitute 14.27 per cent of the work force (1980 census), they comprise only 1.16 per cent of the country's university students (as of 1983).

The government's general policy is to play down the significance of ethnicity as a factor, though this stance is modified by a concern to show awareness of the special needs of the Malay community. It has established and channeled funds through a Council for the Education of Muslim Children (Mendaki) and a Muslim Religious Council (MUIS); but the decline of the PAP vote in the 1984 elections prompted a realisation that Malay discontent persists; and a parliamentary task force has now been set up with a view to creating a 'high-powered' statutory board to try to 'bridge the gap between Muslims and the other communities'. See *Straits Times*, 7 January 1985, p 1; and 16 January 1985, p 1.

speeches made by the leaders; all reveal a sense of anxiety and insecurity which is pervasive, and which is effectively communicated so far as one can judge, to the wider populace.

The anxiety is evident in the government's campaign to promote a 'total defence' mentality by warning that 'What took 25 years to build can be destroyed in two minutes'. It emerges in the Prime Minister's repeated warnings that 'Singapore has only one chance, and that is to go up, tighter, more disciplined, up the ladder. We've got one little island. You unwind this, . . . and its kaput'.¹⁶ The imagery varies but the message is always that any relaxation will lead inexorably to total disaster. The Senior Minister, S Rajaratnam, explained it recently by saying that every silver cloud has a dark lining. The darkness was hardly visible as yet, but:

The happy combination of unexpected events, lucky mistakes by our enemies, and fortuitous circumstances which all contributed to Singapore's success can never happen again . . . For Singapore it is a one-way journey either up or down. Once you are down you stay down for good.¹⁷

This formulation of the political options in terms only of support for the PAP policies, or disaster; and this stress upon the fragility of the country's prosperity and stability, reflect the view that the country owes its success to deliberate social, political and economic 'engineering' on the part of the government, which has erected, as it were, a scaffolding which needs to be constantly maintained by inculcating a sense of discipline, commitment, and vigilance into the population.

In some cases these exhortations are backed up by reference to specific dangers or threats, but most frequently the nature of the consequences which would follow from complacency are left unstated, or indicated only by references to unspecified foreign invasion or internal subversion. Whereas regimes employing siege legitimacy in other states often pinpoint the external enemy, in Singapore's case it is sufficient to mention merely the island's smallness and lack of natural resources, thus indicating its general vulnerability to 'each wind that blows'. The outcome of the threatened disaster is depicted as a reversion to the political turmoil and relative economic deprivation of Singapore in its pre-independence days; an image of the past which is consciously and carefully fostered through the mass media.¹⁸

¹⁶ Quoted in *Time*, 25 January 1985, pp 21-2.

¹⁷ *Straits Times*, 19 June 1984, pp 1 and 8.

¹⁸ See for example the 'Making of a Nation' television series broadcast in 1983.

The dangers highlighted by the Singaporean political elites are not imaginary. Nevertheless it seems clear that they do choose to dramatise and exaggerate the threats to their state; so that the general sense of anxiety which pervades Singaporean politics cannot really be explained solely by reference to the actual problems which exist, but arise in part from the ideological perspectives generated by the government.

One of the most likely reasons for this state of affairs is the background of the present PAP leadership. They gained their early political experience and developed their attitudes and values in the context of the struggle against the more radical and apparently stronger Chinese-educated faction of the PAP; and in the circumstances of their humiliating ejection from Malaysia. It was therefore quite natural that they should develop a somewhat combative and authoritarian approach to politics; and should see their role as that of protecting the small, vulnerable city-state from encroaching dangers.¹⁹

The development of this siege mentality on the part of the political elite has shaped the whole character of contemporary Singaporean politics. It does not conform to a repressive one-party state model since compliance and support are achieved without explicit or widespread coercion. Neither does it conform to the Western liberal-democratic model. The majority of Singaporeans support Lee Kuan Yew because they have been persuaded of the fragility of unity and stability; and by maintaining this sense of insecurity the government is able to rally support for the numerous policy initiatives which its predisposition towards governmental engineering implies.

The focus of this governmental engineering, and thus of the government's ideological mobilisation, is the issue of ethnic identity in Singapore. Siege legitimacy implies the need to point, not just to external threats, but also to particular internal cleavages which constitute potential sources of disunity and vulnerability. Despite the moderation and low political salience of inter-ethnic tensions in contemporary Singapore, the government repeatedly seeks to generate anxieties about ethnic identity; but it does so in the process of pursuing a policy designed to remove ethnic issues and alignments from the political arena. In other words, the attempts which have been made to

¹⁹ The circumstances of the PAP's rise to power are carefully outlined in John Drysdale, *Singapore: Struggle for Success*, Singapore: Times, 1984. The impact upon Lee Kuan Yew's style of leadership is discussed, colourfully and less flatteringly, in T J S George, *Lee Kuan Yew's Singapore*, Singapore: Deutsch, 1973.

modify ethnic identities in Singapore serve two purposes; to exacerbate the sense of insecurity which the government seeks to sustain; and to promote political depluralisation.

This concern with depluralisation arises from various sources. The Singapore government's experience of inter-ethnic rioting in the 1950s and 1960s led them to see both Chinese 'extremism' (in the form of communism, blamed for the 1955 Hock Lee riots), and Malay 'extremism' (instigated from Malaysia and then Indonesia and blamed for the 1964 communal riots) as sources of potential political instability; not least because of Singapore's geopolitical position. Singapore is a predominantly (78 per cent) Chinese state surrounded by the Malay-dominant states of Indonesia and Malaysia. It is thus believed that any attempt by the Singaporean Chinese to discriminate against the Malay minority on an overtly ethnic basis would provoke an anti-Singaporean reaction from these states. Thus the Chinese elite in Singapore must maintain their political dominance, and must mobilise support from the Chinese masses, in ways which do not alienate the other ethnic groups and which do not point attention to ethnicity as the basis for such domination. The governing elite is a highly Westernised, English-educated group which has accordingly de-emphasised its Chineseness and has, since the early 1970s, proclaimed its concern to generate a 'Singaporean national identity' distinct from the various communal identities upon which political loyalties had focused in the past. While encouraging the various Indian, Malay and Chinese communities to preserve their distinctiveness at the level of high culture, the government has effectively depluralised the political area, which is instead depicted as an ethnically blind meritocracy.

The other major reason for the political depluralisation policy arises from the fact of ethnic diversity within the Chinese community. Political opposition to the PAP government has in the past been strongest amongst vernacular-speaking Chinese groups, those speaking mainly Hokkien, Teochew, Cantonese, or Hainanese. These groups were largely insulated by both language and culture from the political mobilisation activities of the better-educated and English-speaking elite. The PAP's solution has been to use the educational system to change the languages of the Chinese masses, promoting English as a major universal language and Mandarin as a common Chinese language lacking the politically suspect connotations of the 'dialects'. This policy has been backed up by housing policies which have eradicated slums by relocating the mono-ethnic communities suspected of political

alienation into new multi-ethnic housing estates dispersed throughout the island.

The government's pursuit of such goals has involved them in a high degree of intervention in people's lives, which has clearly brought considerable inconvenience to many; but the rehousing, the shifts in school language, curriculum and entrance policies, the closure of the Chinese university and Chinese newspapers, have all been accomplished without generating major discontent. The explanation lies partly in the skill and timing of the moves, but a more fundamental factor relates to the way in which government decisions have been explained and justified to the public.

Singaporeans are subjected to a surfeit of governmental campaigns designed to inform, educate and persuade them as to the rationale behind government policies. It might be expected therefore, that as part of this, great care would have been taken to explain the merits of each move in relation to the available policy alternatives. However as several observers have noted, such specific public debate has been largely absent. Discussion tends to be restricted to areas of implementation rather than policy options, and this conscious restriction on public debate arises from 'the belief that in plural societies sensitive issues such as language and religion should be depoliticised by fiat'.²⁰ Rather than providing specific explanations for each policy initiative the government favours a generalised argument in which each move is justified by the assertion that it is government policy and is thus invested with the authority of the government's 'aura of success'; and also by the claim that each initiative is dictated by 'the logic of the needs of a developing Singapore';²¹ merely a common-sense, practical and pragmatic response to the obvious and essentially economic needs of the country. The result is that Singaporeans inconvenienced by government policies tend, instead of objecting, to accept resignedly that one must not stand in the way of progress.

One implication of this tendency is that government is particularly suspicious of criticism. Since its policies are dictated by pragmatic common-sense, then it would seem to follow that those who question them have either failed to properly comprehend the policies, are

²⁰ Chan Heng Chee, 'Language and culture in a multi-ethnic society: a Singapore strategy', Paper for MSSA Conference on Modernization and National Cultural Identity, Kuala Lumpur, January 1983, p. 12. See also Chua Beng-Huat, 'Re-opening ideological discussion in Singapore: a new theoretical direction', *Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science*, 11(2) 1983, pp. 31-45.

²¹ G. G. Thompson, 'The Political Elite in Singapore', in S. J. Chen and H. D. Evers, *Studies in ASEAN Sociology*, Singapore: Chopmen, 1978.

ideologically biased in some way, or are ethnic chauvinists promoting political instability.²²

The economic and political success of Singapore has not, therefore, generated the type of complacency and liberalisation which might have been expected. Nevertheless the present political leaders are undoubtedly worried that this might indeed become the mood of the next political generation; and so they continue to depict 'success' in terms primarily of struggle and challenge. Thus the siege legitimacy which has developed in Singapore is not one which implies a static or defensive view of politics; indeed much of the uncertainty which threatens arises precisely from the activist, interventionist approach to political engineering which is such a central feature of Singapore.

Siege and ethnicity

While the articulation of siege legitimacy is peculiar to each country, these sketches of the situation in Singapore and Malaysia do illustrate the type of factors promoting the employment of this strategy in Third World states, and its implications for the politics of ethnicity.

At a very general level it may be stated that siege legitimacy tends to be employed most in those societies where unifying historical myths are in short supply. In the ethnically plural states it is frequently the case that each ethnic segment has its own historical myths relating to a period of dominance over, or autonomy from, its ethnic neighbours; so that there is no common symbol which can be used by political elites seeking to promote national unity. This applies both in states which are regarded as the homeland of one of the ethnic segments, like Malaysia, and in immigrant states like Singapore. Sometimes the only unifying myth available in such cases is the portrayal of decolonisation as a successful anti-colonial nationalist movement, but even this is not really available in Malaysia where nationalist politics was divided between the armed struggle of the Chinese communists and the constitutional negotiation politics of the Malays. Nor is it available in Singapore, where the contemporary salience of the communist/non-communist split has inhibited the government's ability to use their period of cooperation against colonialism as a unifying myth.

Faced with a paucity of unifying historical myths, the regimes of such states must try to make good use of the fact of their disunity. Given the

²² See for example the case of Ho Juan Thai, the Workers' Party candidate in the 1976 election who fled to the UK. *Straits Times*, 14 and 19 October 1982.

almost universal preconception that history is about progress; that the present is more developed or enlightened than the past; the history of most states may be relatively convincingly presented as one of past backwardness, disunity and poverty when compared with contemporary reality. If the historical past can also be presented as one in which attachments to ethnic groupings were stronger than attachments to the state, then it is a short step to arguing that it was the ethnic attachments which caused the dilemmas and crises of the past; that political instability and backwardness were caused primarily by ethnic conflict. If a regime can propagate such a view of history, then it is already halfway to arguing that the present state, nation and regime represent a hard-won victory which must be defended or else the garrison may collapse and the earlier chaos return.

The credibility of such a view of history in ethnically plural societies is promoted by certain characteristics of ethnic consciousness. Ethnic identity is not as fixed, innate and primordial as the official censuses and documents listing the ethnic composition of the world's states would seem to indicate. Ethnic identities develop and shift in response to the changing situations faced by the groups concerned; and it is the perception of some 'other' with whom the group is in rivalry or conflict which indicates both the level and the intensity at which the 'in-group' consciousness of an ethnic community develops.²³ The portrayal of the 'others' in terms of ethnic stereotypes has two implications. First, it is conducive to the mobilisation of a garrison mentality. The identification of a distrusted out-group as the threat against whom all must rally can be used to promote either sub-national/communal loyalties, or national unity against a foreign enemy. This helps to explain why societies divided by apparently deep and pervasive ethnic hostilities can quite suddenly unite and display the characteristics of cohesive nationalism. The relationship between the two states of affairs is not so dichotomous as is often suggested, since the process of communal identity formation is the same in both situations and the very awareness of inter-ethnic tensions which may be used to promote ethnic rivalries can be developed into a fear of inter-ethnic bloodshed which, when linked to the identification of a foreign-based threat to the whole society, can provide the basis for national cohesion. This is what occurred, for example, in Nigeria in the early 1970s, when the civil war against the Ibos gave way, not to a wave of genocide, but rather to a phase of national cohesiveness

²³ This is discussed in Crawford Young, *The Politics of Cultural Pluralism*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1976, pp 41-7.

generated on the basis of a revulsion against the bloodshed of the war, combined with a tide of anti-Americanism and opposition to neo-colonial interference.

The second implication of the nature of ethnic consciousness arises from its connection with 'scapegoating'. Each ethnic group develops images of the others which contain a degree of (positive or negative) caricature; for example the images of the lazy Malay and the industrious Chinese in Malaysia. Where this becomes widespread it is easy and convenient for political activists to make use of it by putting the blame for whatever problems exist upon a group which is already negatively stereotyped in the society. In some cases the scapegoat group might be non-ethnic and external; and there are obvious and clear dangers involved in alienating a whole ethnic segment in the society by using them as scapegoats. Nevertheless, there are ways in which governments can take advantage of the tendency towards ethnic caricaturing. The simplest route, where available, seems to be the identification of a small and foreign group as the scapegoats against whom all can unite, like the periodic campaigns against 'Lebanese' in various West African states, 'Asians' in East Africa, or the small overseas Chinese communities in various parts of Southeast Asia. But where this is not available, suspicion of indigenous ethnic groups can be tapped by putting the blame not overtly on the whole group, but rather on a minority within the group, identified as misguided troublemakers, who can be portrayed as attempting to dupe the ethnic group as a whole and instigate them to anti-national behaviour. The scapegoat ethnic group is thus portrayed as innocent of all but naive gullibility and can thus be expected to turn, not against the rest of the society, but hopefully against their own co-ethnic 'extremist' political activists.

In contemporary Singapore and Malaysia it is noticeable that it is the 'extremism' of those within the dominant community which is given prominence as a political threat; while those communities which might claim a degree of discrimination against themselves, Malays in Singapore and to a great extent, Chinese in Malaysia, are in fact treated much more judiciously at the level of political ideology, if not in resource allocation.²⁴

These aspects of ethnic consciousness, which facilitate the use of siege legitimacy by governments, are reinforced in many Third World states

²⁴ This was not of course the case in the 1950s and 1960s when the circumstances of decolonisation ensured the political salience both of Malay 'extremism' in Singapore, and of Chinese 'extremism' in Malaysia.

by various features of the governmental structures which, while not intrinsically linked to the fact of ethnic pluralism, are nevertheless influenced by the type of politics which ethnic pluralism produces.

One response to the politics of ethnic pluralism has been the construction of coalition governments comprising representatives of the various ethnic groups in society, often according to numerical strength. Malaysia has many of the attributes of such a consociational system. Such governments are vulnerable in that they depend on the willingness of ethnic elites to seek mutual accommodation, despite the absence of shared cultural norms and despite the presumably particularistic demands of their respective ethnic clienteles. In these circumstances the dominant stimuli to elite accommodation are the spectre of inter-ethnic violence and the spectre of the external enemy against whom all must rally.²⁵ Consociational systems therefore tend to promote such images; used both to maintain intra-governmental unity and to try to counteract tendencies to ethnically particularistic outbidding by those outside the government. Moreover, as was seen in the Malaysian case, it may well be that the form of consociationalism is crucial in helping to legitimate the reality of ethnic (Malay) domination; and the siege argument becomes crucial in containing the tensions between these two facets of government.

One other feature of government which is prevalent in Third World states is the populist and personalist character of political leadership. Although rather few such leaders could be accurately labelled 'charismatic' there have been several instances where they have adopted the strategy of seeking to generate charisma 'from above' by promoting an image as a hero figure; a moral leader distinguished by his ability to defeat immoral enemies. There are strong elements of this in Singapore, where Lee Kuan Yew is presented as a leader with a combination of superior intelligence, experience and wisdom which puts him above and beyond ordinary politicians. His image is not so much that of a Weberian charismatic hero inspiring love and devotion; but rather that of the strict Freudian father-figure evoking admiration, fear and awe. He is credited with having single-handedly achieved,

²⁵ Lijphart notes that 'There are three factors that appear to be strongly conducive to the establishment or maintenance of cooperation among elites in a fragmented system. The most striking of these is the existence of external threats to the country . . . In all cases, external threats impressed on the elites the need for internal unity and cooperation. External threats can also strengthen the ties among the subcultures at the mass level and the ties between leaders and followers within the subcultures.' Arendt Lijphart, 'Consociational democracy' in K McRae (ed), *Consociational Democracy: Political Accommodation in Segmented Societies*, Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974, p 80.

against all odds, Singapore's 'miracle' of survival, development and unity.

One of the essential elements in the generation of charisma is the attempt to mobilise support on the basis of absolutist moral values associated with the personality of the leader. If he is portrayed as embodying, as in Singapore, virtues of discipline, far-sightedness etc, then it follows that his critics must be portrayed as tainted with degeneracy, foolishness, or opportunism: 'a group of irresponsible, brainless and witless people with no new ideas'.²⁶ The externalising of such moral failings onto political opponents or enemies and the related assertion of the moral purity of the community and its leader, are intrinsic to attempts to generate charisma.²⁷ This complements and facilitates the trend towards scapegoating which is inherent in the promotion of siege legitimacy.

The charismatic tendency probably reached its peak during decolonisation when nationalist leaders could claim the status of anti-colonial dragon-slayers; though in both Singapore and Malaysia it was perhaps communism rather than colonialism which was seen as the prime enemy. The absolutist language of this decolonisation period was transferred by leaders like Nkrumah and Sukarno, and also by Lee Kuan Yew, into the arena of internal post-colonial politics; so that the momentum of their early dominance might be maintained by exposing and defeating new enemies. Thus the type of political imagery associated with charisma has become established in the language and symbolism of politics in these states.

Singapore and Malaysia have been unusual, amongst Third World states, in avoiding military coups in which new leaders, having taken power by force, are suddenly faced with the task of retrospectively legitimating their act. In such cases the new leaders invariably rely on appeals to siege legitimacy. If they can convince the populace that their non-constitutional accession to power served to save the country from an impending disaster, and that continued security can only be guaranteed by vigilance and obedience, then they can hope to generate immediate support. Siege legitimacy may thus act as a stop-gap until other forms of legitimacy can be developed. This has been the case with

²⁶ Lee Kuan Yew's comment on the opposition candidates, prior to the 1984 election in Singapore. *Straits Times* 21 December 1984, p 1. See also his speech to the PAP biennial conference of September 1984, in *Sunday Times* (Singapore), 14 November 1984, pp 16-17.

²⁷ The moral purity of the leader, and his position as the personification of the whole community, serves to 'absolve people of blame and project it on to agents external to them'. A R Willner, *Charismatic Political Leadership: A Theory*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968, p 47.

each of the frequent military coups experienced in Ghana. The siege argument was also used in this way in Malaysia in 1969–70, despite the fact that the change of regime did not really constitute a coup. When the government of Tunku Abdul Rahman and the Alliance was replaced by the National Operations Council under Tun Razak, and later by the Barisan Nasional, the new regime legitimated itself by discrediting its predecessor by associating it with the 13 May breakdown of order, and identifying itself as the new defence against such instability.

In certain cases leaders who have generated siege legitimacy to tide them over the immediate post-coup period have been faced with the fact that they had no replacement for it when the sense of crisis associated with the successful coup declined. They therefore sought to revive the sense of siege by discovering and dramatising new counter-coup plots, such that siege legitimacy might be maintained indefinitely. This has been the case in Togo where General Eyadema has relied heavily on the discovery of repeated coup plots in order to consolidate his regime.²⁸

The various factors conducive to the generation of siege legitimacy ensure that it is a widespread phenomenon in Third World states, but it clearly varies greatly not only in its character and intensity but also in its impact. The extent of political instability in Third World states would certainly seem to indicate that it is not always an effective basis for regime legitimation. One danger is that once ethnic cleavages have been exaggerated and politicised by a regime, it may lose control of the process and thereby provoke ethnic tensions and the type of political instability which it had adopted the strategy precisely to avoid. Siege legitimacy may also fail if the particular internal or external groups which are identified as the 'enemies' are not sufficiently credible in this role, or visible, to the populace. This may well be the case in Ghana where the repeated attempts to identify the Ewe ethnic group as scapegoats have met with apparently little public response.²⁹

The Singapore and Malaysian cases must therefore stand out as unusually successful in their utilisation of siege legitimacy. Even in these cases, however, the strategy has implications which appear as potentially destabilising. The problem is partly that regimes employing siege legitimacy seem to be easily convinced by their own ideologies and thus to become blind to the possibility that alternative views of reality may be subscribed to by other sections of the populace. The assertion

²⁸ Brown, 'Sieges and scapegoats', *op cit.*

²⁹ *ibid.*

that the only alternative to support for themselves and for the status quo is the advocacy of chaos and disaster can, when sufficiently reiterated, appear to be no more than a common-sense description of reality; especially since critics who are publicly labelled as extremists or subversives may well have little choice but to act as such.³⁰ It is quite clear that the PAP leaders in Singapore took it for granted, prior to the December 1984 election, that no sensible voter would support the opposition parties which had been portrayed by the PAP as misguided and incompetent. They were fundamentally shocked and frightened to find that the opposition attracted 37.1 per cent of the vote. The Singapore government may choose to respond to this situation either by liberalising or by escalating the siege strategy; if they select the latter course, then such miscalculations of the popular mood might well be magnified in future.

The employment of siege legitimacy also poses problems concerning the extensiveness of the state's activities in the area of ethnic identity. In the Singaporean case, government interventions in the ethnically relevant areas of language, culture, religion and residence arise from its concern to deppluralise the political arena. In Malaysia the government intervenes to define the distinction between the legitimate version of Islam which can be incorporated within the notions of Malay-ness and Bumiputra; and the non-legitimate extremist versions of Islam associated with PAS and its allies. This kind of close involvement of the state in defining ethnic identities means that governments inevitably intervene in areas of social life which in other states might be regarded as the private domain. They must limit and define the range of public debate in this area by constitutional or other legal means, as is done in both Singapore and Malaysia.³¹ The specific limits to discussion are indicated by the logic of the siege which dictates, in effect, that any questioning of the government's interpretation of ethnicity may be classified as subversive since it weakens the society's unity and thence its capacity to survive. There are clearly tensions, therefore, between the norms of liberal-democracy and the implications of siege legitimacy; so that the parliamentary systems of both Singapore and Malaysia function

³⁰ The perception of a dominant group's ideology as common-sense is the defining characteristic of ideological hegemony as described by Gramsci. For a characterisation of Singapore politics in these terms, and a criticism of those political scientists who have described the PAP government as pragmatic and non-ideological, see Chua Beng-Huat, 'Re-opening ideological discussion in Singapore', *op cit.*

³¹ In the Malaysian case the restriction on discussion of the privileged Malay position, language and citizenship is enshrined in the constitution. In Singapore the prohibition against the politicisation of ethnic issues relies primarily on the Internal Security Act.

in what from the liberal-democratic perspective appears to be a decidedly authoritarian manner. The limits to democracy are clear. The Malaysian Prime Minister recently expressed the position:

We may be moderate but there are also limits to our tolerance . . . If you go beyond limits we will take action and many people will feel the bitterness of it . . . We don't want to see another May 13 1969, but if there are demonstrations and so on we will take action that will be effective . . . We want to be a model of democracy.³²

Once government equates the maintenance of social and political stability with its own dominance and legitimacy, then the concept of democracy becomes redefined so that it begins to refer, in effect, merely to the degree of public acquiescence of government and its policies, as secured by the sense of siege.

It is clearly relevant to an understanding of politics in ethnically plural states to distinguish between those that adopt depluralisation strategies and those that opt for accommodation or ethnic domination; but where the governments attempt to promote siege legitimacy these distinctions as to strategy do become rather blurred. In all cases the siege argument stresses the value of cohesion for the whole national community, against the threat posed by external enemies and internal extremists; so that the sub-national ethnic identities are treated as in some way subordinate to a potentially stronger national bond. On the other hand, the siege argument also stresses that it is ethnic disunity which is the main source of danger, and it thus focuses attention on ethnic cleavages as being real, strong, and potentially stronger than ties to the state. The result of this ambiguous view of ethnicity is that, whichever strategy is adopted towards ethnic relationships, the use of siege limitation implies a degree of incompatibility between the claims of state and ethnic group. Both are seen in moral absolute terms, rather than as amenable to compromise and negotiation. Such a view of ethnicity clearly inhibits attempts both at depluralisation and at ethnic accommodation, and thus introduces an element of incoherence into such government policies.

The implication is that states like Malaysia and Singapore which have been exceptionally politically stable, have achieved this partly by generating a sense of anxiety regarding communal identities. This in turn implies a potential for distrust and confrontation; caused not so much by objective problems, but rather by the sense of siege prevalent in the societies.

³² *Straits Times*, 27 December 1984.

North-South Monitor

THE UN SYSTEM

▲UNCTAD Trade and Development Board (TDB)
Thirtieth Session
Geneva, 18–29 March 1985

■The TDB continued discussions on the interdependence of problems of trade, development finance and the international monetary system, and addressed the debt and development problems of the poorest developing countries, and the role of UNCTAD. Disappointment was expressed by Hortencio J Brillantes of the Philippines, on behalf of the Group of 77 (G77), that no significant conclusions had been reached on the pressing issues of debt and interdependence. Decisions were taken, however, in three areas: services; protectionism and structural adjustment; and new and emerging technologies.

The debate on the interdependence of the problems of trade, development finance and the international monetary system reflected the divergent views of developed and developing countries. A G77 statement, listing twenty-one issues on the UNCTAD agenda on which the group believed further action was required, formed the basis for much of the debate. In the view of Muchkund Dubey of India, speaking for the G77, reform in the trading system, and in particular an increase in access for developing country exports to the markets of the developed countries, was the most immediate issue of concern to the TDB. However, the US and other developed countries attempted to defend some of their protectionist moves, on the basis that their economic recovery would help the developing countries to boost their own trade and development.¹

As a means of easing the debt problems of the poorest developing countries, S Hasan Ahmad of Bangladesh, speaking for G77, advocated the conversion into grants of all outstanding bilateral ODA loans to the least developed countries; the provision of cash grants to provide balance-of-payments support; and the payment of all or part of ODA debt service in local currency. No agreement could be reached on these issues.

Discussion of the role of UNCTAD also reflected the differing approaches of developed and developing countries. Muchkund Dubey deplored the crisis in multilateral development cooperation facing the organisations within the UN system, while Richard Kauzlarich of the US insisted that the internal rather than the external environment provided the true framework for development. Expressing the view that 'development comes from the bottom up', he asserted that domestic economic policies were the key determinants of growth and development.

The decision of the TDB on trade in services cleared the way for more intensive work by UNCTAD in the field, but was accepted in a gesture of compromise by the G77, whose spokesman noted that it did not fully accord with their views. The TDB reaffirmed previous commitments of developed countries to the standstill and roll-back of protectionist measures, while a further decision mandated UNCTAD to follow up its preliminary work on the economic, commercial and developmental

North-South Monitor

aspects of new and emerging technologies, through a study of the development and trade-related issues arising from these technologies.²

● 'If today UNCTAD is in not too happy a state, it is because it has become the victim of the crisis facing almost all multinational organisations within the UN system. It is a crisis of the general decline of international development cooperation and general retreat from the ideals of, and consensus formed in, the immediate post-war years. It is essentially a crisis of the political will of Governments to implement agreed measures and move ahead in new directions. Confidence in UNCTAD will be revived simultaneously with the restoration of confidence in international development cooperation and in the UN system as a whole.' Muchkund Dubey, on behalf of G77.

'More than ever before I worry that, like the room we are meeting in, UNCTAD has no windows to the real world outside. UNCTAD is at a crossroads—make no mistake about it. We can continue to dwell on the past two decades—or challenge ourselves to deal with the present and the future. Will UNCTAD continue its pursuit of artificial resolutions and decisions that chase the myth of global solutions to global economic problems? Or will UNCTAD reorient itself and seek to foster an environment that is pro-growth and pro-development?' Richard Kauzlarich of the United States. *UNCTAD Bulletin* (Geneva) No 211, April 1985.

▲ General Assembly Thirty-ninth Session 12 April 1985

■ Following its decision of 18 December 1984 to continue with informal consultations aimed at reaching a consensus to launch global negotiations on international economic cooperation for development,³ the General Assembly heard a statement from its president on the results of his consultations. He told the Assembly that no further substantive progress had been made in recent months towards reaching agreement, but that the issue was still 'very much alive' and that he had yet to consider some suggestions and ideas he had received whilst visiting the Gulf region and Yugoslavia.

The Egyptian Ambassador, who is the current chairman of the Group of 77, expressed the developing countries' disappointment with the lack of progress on the issue and emphasised that the group had been doing what it could to get the negotiations launched as soon as possible. The spokesman for the socialist countries told the Assembly that his group also wanted global negotiations to begin as quickly as possible. The US representative said that his country would continue to play a full and active role in the informal consultations.

The Assembly decided, as it had done in December 1984, to continue the informal consultations and to reconvene at short notice if any decision or agreement emerged from the informal contacts.⁴

North-South Monitor

▲ International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

Meeting of Member Countries and Special Session of the Executive Board
Rome, 16-17 May and 18 May 1985

■ The eighth round of consultations on the budget for the third triennium of IFAD was suspended after the United States refused to commit itself to contributing funds on the basis of a prior agreement.

At a meeting of IFAD members at the end of February 1985, and in the face of declining OPEC support as a result of falling oil incomes and the Gulf war,⁵ there had been conflict between OPEC and the United States over the relative budget contributions of OPEC states and the industrialised countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). A compromise solution had been reached to the effect that IFAD should operate at a reduced budget, rather than allow the dispute over burden-sharing to destroy it. Contributions were fixed in terms of figures, with the second replenishment of the fund (covering the period 1985-7) amounting to between \$500 m and \$650 m. The effective ratio of OECD to OPEC contributions for these figures was 60:40, as opposed to the original ratio of 58:42.⁶ It was hoped that voluntary contributions from industrialised countries would help to maintain IFAD's level of operations, despite the drop in its resources,⁷ and allow it to continue providing concessional loans to the rural poor and landless, and encouraging the long-term development of Third World agriculture which has been its recognised achievement since its inception in 1977.⁸

At the May 1985 meeting, however, the US refused to accept the February compromise, arguing that the new ratio constituted an unacceptable erosion of the OECD-OPEC partnership on which IFAD was originally established. In its preoccupation with a 2 per cent funding difference in an already halved budget, the US was, however, isolated from the other nineteen OECD countries, as well as the twelve OPEC and 107 Third World states, all of which were prepared to pledge funds at the higher levels of the variants suggested in February.⁹ Under IFAD's required terms of unanimity, however, without a US commitment to contribute its \$90 m share of the \$360 m OECD total, the other states are unable to formalise their pledges.

IFAD's President, Idriss Jazairy, plans to reconvene the suspended meeting after a period of 'persuasion and quiet diplomacy'. Meanwhile, he is reported to be considering the possibility of commercial borrowing to supplement IFAD's rapidly dwindling resources.

The launching by IFAD of a Special Programme for 23 sub-Saharan African countries most severely affected by drought and desertification was unanimously approved by a special session of IFAD's Executive Board. The decision enables IFAD to initiate a fund-raising campaign to mobilise at least \$300 m over the coming four years. The purpose of these supplementary funds is to increase smallholders' production of traditional food crops, as well as developing small-scale irrigation systems and environmental protection schemes.¹⁰

● 'This attitude is part of the US conspiracy against multilateral cooperation developing for the last four years.' Gonzales Pula Hoyos of Colombia, speaking with reference to the US decision to withhold its commitment to contribute.

'We like IFAD, but we also think we spend money well through the Agency for International Development.' Richard Derham, Head of the US delegation at the Rome meeting. Inter Press Service (Vienna), *North-South News Service*, No. 069/85, 21 May 1985.

North-South Monitor

▲ World Food Council (WFC)

Ministerial Session

Paris, 10–13 June 1985

■ The world's failure to avert the current famine in Africa, or to make significant progress towards the global eradication of hunger, since the World Food Conference in 1974, were the central concerns of the WFC's eleventh Ministerial Session.

The WFC,¹¹ established in 1974 to coordinate political action in carrying out UN General Assembly food directives, and to monitor food problems and mobilise aid, has no executive authority. Nevertheless, it was severely critical both of African countries themselves, and of European and North American states, in five outspoken WFC reports.¹²

African governments were accused of failing to back their avowed high priority for food production with a corresponding allocation of public spending and personnel. At a time when emergency aid is beginning to dry up, the Council warned that if African countries were not sufficiently aided to overcome the present crisis and to rebuild their damaged economies, their medium and longer-term food strategy objectives would recede. However African countries were advised to be selective in their acceptance of aid, and to ensure that it fits their own overall development strategies and priorities, rather than those of development agencies, and that short-term crisis-management is not permitted to hinder or postpone the ultimate goals of development and self-sufficiency.

A four-phased approach to the elimination of world hunger by the year 2000 was outlined in the light of the poor progress made since the 1974 world food crisis. It recommended the four main goals of famine prevention and contingency planning; the reduction of infant mortality; the alleviation of undernutrition, with special reference to low-income families; and the reorientation of development objectives towards growth, productivity, self-reliance and 'equity'.

International economic factors constraining food production in the developing countries were also cited as contributing to global hunger and malnutrition. They include external debt problems, high interest rates, weak international commodity markets, worsening terms of trade, protectionism in industrialised countries, and a scarcity of international funding for development. The issue drew a sharp division between industrialised and developing countries, and the final communiqué specifically castigated European and North American countries, on the grounds that their agricultural subsidy programmes dump surplus cereals and other crops on to world markets, thus helping to erode the farm incentives crucial for stable Third World agricultural production and growth.¹³

● 'International markets are subject to aggressive and protective actions by industrial countries which have sufficient resources to intervene with production for export subsidies and import restrictions. Such practices are hampering many developing countries' potential to expand exports and weakening investment opportunities in their agricultural sectors.' Maurice Williams, Director of WFC. *Financial Times* (London) 13 June 1985.

North-South Monitor

▲ Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)

Eleventh Ministerial Conference

Addis Ababa, 25–29 April 1985

■ As preparations for the Organisation of African Unity's (OAU) July economic summit gathered pace, ministers of economic planning and development from fifty ECA member countries met to hold discussions under the theme of 'African Economic and Social Crisis: review, prospects and perspectives.' The conference was one of several held under the auspices of the ECA, the decisions of which will be submitted to the OAU summit for final approval, thus reflecting a greater degree of cooperation between the two organisations. Among the more important recommendations to stem from these meetings was a proposal to establish an African monetary fund and a recommendation that African governments allocate a quarter of their budgets to agriculture to overcome the current food crisis.¹⁴

The ministerial conference chiefly focused on the economic issues on the draft agenda for the OAU summit and on a special memorandum to be addressed to the second regular session of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) meeting from 4–26 July 1985.

Ministers agreed a series of resolutions aimed at tackling the main aspects of the current economic crisis. They stressed the need to end Africa's practice of relying mainly on exporting raw materials and for African countries to develop their own abilities to use their abundant natural resources for their economic development and only to use outside 'contributions' to supplement these efforts. They emphasised that this policy would require Africa to have its own strategy for development and that it actively implement that strategy. It was suggested that the economic summit should adopt practical proposals aimed at fulfilling the programmes of action adopted at previous summits. At the same time, special plans for agricultural development should be formulated. Policies aimed at food self-sufficiency and at curbing desertification and drought were given prominence, reflecting the general consensus that it is essential that these problems are tackled if the continent is to begin to emerge from its crisis.

Considerable criticism was voiced over the failure of industrialised countries to deal adequately with the debt crisis facing Africa. The continent was experiencing a steady increase in interest rates combined with declining prices for its commodity exports. A significant number of delegates advocated that a collective approach to debt negotiations should be adopted by the OAU.¹⁵

The increasing plight of Africa's twenty-six least developed countries (LDCs) was the subject of much concern at the meeting. A resolution proposed by the ministers of these countries expressing their considerable disappointment at the failure of developed and other countries to keep the commitments they had made in the Substantial New Programme for Action agreed at the 1981 LDC Conference in Paris,¹⁶ was endorsed by the Conference. Ministers also urged the LDCs to increase their agricultural production in order to reduce their dependence on food imports and called on the international community to provide the appropriate technical and financial assistance for agricultural and rural development in these countries.

In a special memorandum entitled 'International Action for Relaunching an Initiative for Long Term Development and Economic Growth' to be presented to

North-South Monitor

ECOSOC, ministers criticised the level of financial support coming from industrialised countries for Africa's long-term development. They called for more economic aid and support to be given in the following priority areas: population, food and agriculture, industrial development, infrastructure and finance, the development of natural resources, tackling desertification and drought, science and technology and the development and use of human resources. They also expressed their appreciation, however, of the international response to the drought and famine in Africa as well as the hope that international efforts to ensure adequate aid to the countries affected would continue and that these countries would be assisted in the task of revitalising and reconstructing their economies.¹⁷

● 'Africa can no longer afford to be the economic underdog in the world.' ECA Executive Secretary, Adebayo Adedeji, to the conference, UN Office for Emergency Operations in Africa, *Africa Emergency*, June 1985, p 2.

▲ Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)
Committee on World Food Security
Rome, 10-17 April 1985

■ At its tenth annual review of world food security, the committee had before it for adoption a 33-page report by the FAO secretariat assessing the situation and suggesting recommendations designed to alleviate current food shortages and prevent their recurrence. The Committee, which is open to all UN member states, consists of representatives from 101 countries.

The FAO report described the food situation in 1984-5 as one in which, on the one hand there was hunger and widespread lack of food with production in many low income countries failing to keep pace with population growth, while, on the other hand, world staple food production in 1984 had increased by almost 10 per cent over the previous year and stocks of staple foods were building up, mainly in the industrialised countries.

According to FAO estimates, the staple food production of low income countries had declined 3 per cent since 1978 yet basic food stocks would reach 298m tons—18 per cent of expected world food consumption in 1985. The cereal imports of LDCs in 1984-5 was likely to be even higher than the 36m tons forecast. However, many developing countries would lack the foreign exchange with which to buy sufficient basic foods on world markets and per capita staple food consumption was expected to drop in half of the sixty-five poorest countries in 1985. Developing countries' policies to raise food production and establish domestic food stocks were frequently hampered, argued the FAO, by macro-economic problems and a lack of technical and financial resources. The situation was particularly serious in Africa, and Mr Edouard Saouma, the organisation's Director-General described it at the meeting as 'the greatest current challenge to world food security'.

To respond to the situation, the FAO proposed the adoption of a 'world food security compact' which would not be a legally binding agreement, but a moral commitment by governments to take action aimed specifically at stimulating food production, stabilising food supplies and ensuring access to food by those needing it.

North-South Monitor

Pointing out that over 100 countries were now receiving food aid totalling about 10.4m tons but that food aid needs remained well above these levels, considerable emphasis was put on food aid as an element in ensuring better world food security. The report stated that food aid was in general better managed and involved fewer risks than thirty years ago but it warned that success or failure in the promotion of food security depended on how it was provided by donors and used by recipient countries. New measures were proposed to improve its use as well as its supply. It was suggested that its contribution to food security would increase if it was linked to other forms of assistance, especially aid for agricultural development. The report stated that food aid could, if properly handled, greatly assist in supporting other policies aimed at achieving long-term food security. Developing countries were urged to look upon food aid as an additional resource which could release foreign exchange or local currency for agricultural development and to integrate food aid with other aspects of their food policy. It was suggested that recipient countries should create 'national food units' to facilitate integration, develop national 'preparedness plans' and set up early warning systems to monitor crop conditions and linked, if desired, to the FAO's Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture. They were also urged to allocate adequate resources to food and to improve their storage and distribution systems.

The report suggested that donor countries would make food aid more effective if they planned ahead and responded to situations in a more predictable, timely and coordinated manner. They were urged to adopt multi-year programming for food aid and to pre-position food stocks and/or ship food into disaster-prone areas well in advance of possible emergencies. They were advised to set up a commodity exchange system whereby goods could be sent to a third developing country exporter in exchange for local products to be sent to designated recipient countries. The study also recommended that the 1980 Food Aid Convention (FAC) due to expire in 1986, should be renewed and urged all donor countries who were not members of the convention to join.¹⁸ It proposed that the new FAC should have increased funds and a larger amount of food aid than the 10m ton target agreed at the World Food Conference in 1974. Furthermore, it suggested that under the new agreement, food aid to low income countries should be in grant form, thus easing the burden of long-term credits for food purchases, and that there should be a separate food-financing fund aimed at increasing the role of food aid in encouraging local food production.

Particular attention was devoted in the report to the situation in Africa and to the central role of food aid in relieving famine. The FAO estimated that the cereal import requirements of the twenty-one African countries which were experiencing drought was 12.2m tons and that their commercial imports were expected to total 5.3m tons in 1984-5, thus leaving almost 7m tons required in food aid—almost double the total amount received last year. The study requested that considerable efforts be made immediately to increase food aid pledges by 1.2m tons to meet emergency needs, that deliveries of food aid already pledged be speeded up¹⁹ and that special assistance be given to overcome logistical constraints preventing the aid from reaching those needing it most. In addition to food aid, the study also emphasised the need for countries affected by famine and drought to be helped to rehabilitate their agricultural sectors, in order to avoid the recurrence of emergencies. In this

North-South Monitor

connection, Mr Saouma told participants at the meeting that the initial response from donors to the FAO's rehabilitation projects for 20 countries amounting to \$108m had been very constructive.²⁰

Delegates agreed with most of the proposals put forward in the FAO study which was adopted at the meeting. They endorsed the suggested three-part framework for achieving world food security. They also accepted the proposal for tripartite transactions involving a commodity exchange system on the grounds that it would enable food which was compatible with the traditional diets of recipient populations to be sent and that it would solve the problem of shortages of cash required to purchase food aid—a problem which had limited tripartite transactions in the past.

However, the need for multi-year programming of food aid was questioned by several countries as was the proposal that food be stockpiled in disaster-prone areas or other strategic locations for quick and easy access in the event of an emergency. Japan and Canada along with some other countries doubted the wisdom of the latter idea on economic, political and logistical grounds and requested that the FAO develop the proposal further for consideration at a future date.²¹

▲ Commission on Transnational Corporations (TNCs) New York, 10–19 April 1985

■ The eleventh session of the Commission at which thirty-nine of the forty-eight member-countries were represented, focused on the activities of TNCs in South Africa and Namibia, the organisation of public hearings on these activities, the work of the UN Centre on Transnational Corporations and on recent developments relating to TNCs and international economic relations. There was no substantive discussion of the draft code of conduct on TNCs which was expected to be the subject of a reconvened special session of the Commission in the second half of June 1985.²²

Four draft resolutions and one draft decision were considered at the meeting of which one resolution and the decision related to work being done on international standards of accounting and reporting. On the issue of TNC investments in Southern Africa, the chairman of G77 had tabled a draft resolution calling on companies to end their involvement in the region and 'all forms of collaboration with the racist minority regime'. It called on the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to confirm that the activities of TNCs in South Africa 'reinforced the racist minority regime in its perpetuation of the system of apartheid and its illegal occupation of Namibia'. It also welcomed as a positive first step, measures already taken by some governments to restrict further investments and bank loans to South Africa by TNCs under their jurisdiction.

Most of the delegates had already condemned the continuing investment activities of TNCs in the region in an earlier debate and had called for the arms and oil embargoes against South Africa to be implemented as well as General Assembly resolutions on disinvestment from South Africa. They had also urged countries in which the headquarters of TNCs were located to take an active part in ending investments in South Africa. A few representatives had, however, taken the position that some foreign investment could have a positive influence on eliminating apartheid and had pointed out that an increasing number of companies were

North-South Monitor

observing national or regional codes of conduct on TNC activities in South Africa.

Several countries, therefore, expressed opposition to the resolution which was put to the vote and finally approved by thirty countries, with four against and five abstaining. The United States delegate who voted against it said that the wording was unacceptable and that more flexibility was required on the issue. West Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, France and the United Kingdom also did not support the resolution arguing that the EEC code of conduct for TNCs in the region would help to eradicate apartheid and encourage peaceful change. West Germany, Switzerland and the United Kingdom voted against the resolution, and France, Italy, Japan and the Netherlands abstained.²³

G77 also put forward a draft resolution on the organisation of public hearings on the activities of TNCs in South Africa and Namibia which were being prepared by an *ad hoc* committee. It called for ECOSOC to approve the *ad hoc* committee's report on the preparations as well as the proposed publicity programme for the hearings and to invite all member-states to cooperate with the UN in order to ensure that fair, balanced and objective hearings were held with the aim of ending apartheid. In its report, the *ad hoc* committee recommended that the hearings be held at the UN on 16–20 September 1985 and that they aim to promote special measures including follow-up measures. It suggested that the hearings be conducted by an 11-member panel of suitably qualified international personalities. The resolution was approved by 30 votes and the United States was the only country to vote against it.

A third resolution, sponsored by Canada, West Germany, Italy, Japan and the Netherlands, called for the UN Centre on Transnational Corporations to prepare a report on the activities of state-owned enterprises and their impact on economic development, particularly in developing countries. It also requested the Centre to include this topic in its future activities. The Commission decided however to postpone consideration of the resolution at the suggestion of the G77. Instead, it was decided that ECOSOC should look at the issue and decide that the matter should be considered after the Commission's special session in June 1985.²⁴

▲ Conference on an International Code of Conduct on the Transfer of Technology Geneva, 13 May–1 June and 5 June 1985

■ The prospects of completing an international code of conduct on technology transfer in the near to medium term suffered a severe setback when delegates from some 100 countries failed to make any substantial progress towards settling the main outstanding chapters of the draft agreement.

The sixth session of the Conference had been convened by the UN General Assembly in December 1983 in order to complete the Code by the first half of 1985. The Conference has been conducting negotiations on the draft code since 1978 and agreement has been reached on most of its sections. As it now stands, the Code comprises basic guidelines on the transfer, acquisition and development of technology. There are specific provisions relating to the measures and criteria to be used in adopting national instruments on technology transfer, to the responsibilities and obligations of parties and on international collaboration, for which there are special provisions for developing countries. An international institutional structure

North-South Monitor

has also been agreed. However, substantial differences remained on two key substantive issues: the treatment of restrictive business practices in transactions involving technology transfer (chapter 4 of the Code) and the choice of law to be used in relation to contracts and the settlement of disputes.²⁵

The extent to which the provisions of chapter 4 on restrictive business practices would apply to transactions within transnational corporations proved to be the main point of dispute at the Conference. However, according to one source, there was also a general lack of motivation to conclude negotiations among many delegates, with some feeling that the Code was pointless and irrelevant in the current climate. Others from countries such as the US and the United Kingdom, which are net exporters of technology, as well as from the more developed Third World countries, were unwilling to negotiate an agreement which could limit their options in an important economic sector.²⁶

The developed countries in Group B wanted provisions in the Code whereby independent partners to international transactions involving technology transfers would have to abide by the agreed list of prohibited restrictive practices, but transactions between a parent company and its subsidiary would be exempt from such restrictions. This was rejected by the G77.

Following lengthy negotiations and little time in which to reach an agreement, a compromise was worked out stating that the restrictive practices set out in chapter 4 would not be considered 'inappropriate' between 'related parties' provided they complied with the national laws and development policies of the country into which the technology was to be imported. However, several Group B countries, in particular the US, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands made it clear that they would not accept any provisions that required transnational companies to abide by the national laws and development policies of countries acquiring the technology.

The Conference decided to refer the issue back to the General Assembly and it asked UNCTAD's Secretary-General to send the draft code in its unfinished state to the UNGA.²⁷

▲ UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

Preparatory Commission for the International Sea-Bed

Authority and the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea

Third session

Kingston, Jamaica, 11 March–4 April 1985

■ One hundred and thirty-eight countries were represented at the session, including observers from the United Kingdom and West Germany, neither of which has signed the Convention because of serious objections to the provisions for sea-bed mining. The Commission resumed its examination of draft proposals on rules and procedures governing sea-bed mining operations. 158 countries together with the Council for Namibia have signed the agreement. Sixty ratifications are needed before it can come into force. At the time of the meeting, about fifteen countries and the Council for Namibia had ratified it.

The four special commissions of the Preparatory Commission continued their

North-South Monitor

work on various specific aspects relating to the operations of the treaty.²⁸ Special Commission 1 which was examining problems which might arise for land-based mineral-producing developing countries as a result of sea-bed mining, announced at the end of the session that it had come closer to identifying the countries that were likely to be the most seriously affected, the possible effects upon them, and the remedial measures that might be required. It was generally agreed that the criteria for identification of countries would be based on the extent to which a particular country was dependent on the contribution of one or more of the four minerals concerned—copper, nickel, cobalt and manganese—to their export earnings or to their economies before sea-bed production of these minerals began. The Commission decided that there would be a need for additional measures to help some of the land based mineral producing developing countries to make the necessary adjustments that would be required following the onset of sea-bed production. The need to have up-to-date information and projections on the production of and the demand for the four minerals as well as on possible remedial and other measures of assistance and on specific trade agreements, especially bilateral ones, was emphasised.

Special Commission 2 which is concerned with setting up the Enterprise—the sea-bed mining organ of the International Sea-bed Authority (ISA)—focused on the training of personnel. Agreement had been reached on the need to have a detailed understanding both of the requirement of the Preparatory Commission for designating personnel for training and of the nature and scope of the training obligations of registered pioneer investors in sea-bed mining. On the former, the Commission requested that the Secretariat seek information from the four member-states of the Commission which were also applicants for pioneer investor status, namely India, Japan, the Soviet Union and France, as well as from other country delegates, with a view to elaborating a basis on which personnel would be chosen for training.

Special Commission 3, which is involved in preparing the rules and procedures for the sea-bed mining code on the prospecting, exploration and exploitation of mineral nodules in the deep sea-bed, concentrated on the draft provisions on prospecting. The main issue discussed concerned the degree of control which the ISA should have over prospecting activities. However, no consensus could be reached on the matter. Some delegates argued that in order to encourage prospecting, the ISA's control should be limited to verifying undertakings to abide by the Convention's conditions on training programmes and the protection of the marine environment. Others argued that the ISA should have greater control of prospecting activities and that prospectors should have to apply for permission to prospect, give notification of the areas involved and that their activities should be checked. A third view recognised the need for freedom in prospecting but thought that the ISA should be able to assess the activities of prospectors.

Special Commission 4 continued its detailed examination of the draft rules of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea.

In the Preparatory Commission, delegates began a second reading of the draft rules of procedure of the Assembly which will be the highest organ of the ISA. Provisional approval was given to rules on such issues as the date and location of session, special sessions and their provisional agenda, time limits on speeches and the adjournment and closure of debates. However, the Commission was unable to agree

North-South Monitor

on two issues, one concerning the status of observers and the other the establishment of Assembly committees.

Whilst there was broad agreement on the need to promote the universal nature of the Convention and to give observers the opportunity to participate in a 'meaningful' way in the Assembly, there were differences over what this would in fact involve, with delegates divided on such issues as whether giving full rights to non-member-countries would encourage ratification of the Convention and on the financial implications of non-member-countries having such rights.

The session heard a report by its chairman on overlapping sea-bed claims by France, Japan and the Soviet Union for mineral prospecting rights in areas of the North Pacific. These were in the process of being resolved under the ISA's rules. He told the meeting that Japan and the Soviet Union had managed to reach a provisional understanding. He said that France and the Soviet Union could resolve the conflict between their respective claims but that they had come up against problems in complying with Resolution 2 governing preparatory investment in pioneering activity.

A review draft resolution (to be dealt with at a later date) was introduced at the meeting by the East European countries. It stated that the Provisional Understanding Regarding Deep Seabed Mining concluded by Belgium, France, West Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the US in August 1984 was 'wholly illegal'.²⁹

It was agreed that the Commission would resume its session in Geneva on 12 August 1985.³⁰

▲UNCTAD TDB

Fourteenth Session

Geneva, 10-14 June 1985

■ At a special session of the TDB, a decision on establishing a new financial facility to compensate for shortfalls in the export earnings of developing countries was postponed until 1986. The creation of such a facility had been recommended in a report adopted unanimously by an expert group, which considered that fluctuations in export earnings were due more to the phenomenon of supply instability than to the specific problem of price fluctuation, tackled by price stabilising commodity agreements.³¹ The object of the new facility would be to tackle one of the causes of export earnings shortfalls by helping to ensure regular commodity production, thus complementing existing IMF and World Bank facilities and commodity pacts. The postponement of the decision constituted a compromise, however, between Third World countries, which welcomed the report, and the developed countries, which declared their continuing scepticism about the need for any additional facility.³²

North-South Monitor

COMMODITIES

▲International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO)

Meeting of the Council

Geneva, 17–28 June 1985

■Delegates of thirty-one producing and consuming countries which had joined the International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA), adjourned their first meeting having failed to reach agreement on a location for the headquarters of the new organisation.

The ITTA, which was concluded in 1983, came into force provisionally on 1 April 1985 when it narrowly managed to fulfil its membership requirements, following a rush of last-minute applicants. By the 31 March 1985 deadline the agreement had secured the ratification, acceptance or agreement of provisional application from eleven producing countries accounting for 588 of the 1000 votes assigned to producers (against the required minimum of ten producers with 500 votes) and from fifteen consuming countries accounting for 650 of the 1000 votes allocated to consumers (the minimum was for fourteen consumers holding 650 votes in all). By the time of the meeting, twelve producing countries, including all the major producers and accounting for about 90 per cent of world exports and resources, and nineteen consuming countries accounting for 90 per cent of imports, had joined the agreement. Two other countries, one producing and the other consuming, were also thought to be about to accede to the pact.³³

Unlike traditional international commodity agreements, the ITTA contains no price stabilisation provisions but focuses on the development of resources and contains ecological as well as trade provisions. It seeks to provide a framework for cooperation and consultation between producing and consuming countries. It also aims to promote the expansion and diversification of international trade in tropical timber and to improve structural conditions in the tropical timber market. Its activities in pursuit of these goals will, however, rely on money from the Second Account of UNCTAD's Common Fund for Commodities once it is operational, as well as on voluntary contributions and on finance from international institutions.³⁴

Besides being asked to reach a decision on a location for the ITTO's headquarters, the meeting was due to adopt its own rules of procedure, as well as the ITTO's financial rules and staff rules and regulations, to appoint an Executive Director, to agree arrangements for the setting up of a secretariat and its size and structure, to approve an administrative budget and to establish conditions of accession to the ITTA.

However, the question of the location of the headquarters of the organisation proved so contentious that it impeded the Council's other work. The result was that no decisions were reached on other substantive issues such as the appointment of an Executive Director for which there were two candidates—from Malaysia and Gabon.

Eight countries—Japan, Belgium, France, Greece, the Netherlands and the UK from the consuming countries and Indonesia and Brazil from among the producers—had originally offered to host the body. At the meeting, the list was reduced to four serious contenders—the Netherlands, Indonesia, Brazil and

North-South Monitor

Japan—each vying with the others to offer better financial inducements in order to improve their chances of being selected. But none of them was able to command the required combination of votes, consisting of over half those of producers along with over half those of consuming countries.

Having decided to adjourn the meeting, the Council agreed to ask UNCTAD's Secretary-General to arrange for its resumption sometime during November 1985.³⁵

▲ International Coffee Organisation (ICO)

Council Meeting

London, 15–19 April 1985

■ The long-running problem of rapidly increasing coffee sales to non-ICO member-states at prices well below those maintained by the International Coffee Agreement (ICA) was the main topic of the meeting. Non-ICO members—mainly countries in Eastern Europe and the Middle East and North Africa—account for about 15 per cent of the world coffee trade. The problem, which is considered by some observers to have been the ICO's biggest in recent years, had led some importing member-countries of the ICO to question the value of membership of the pact. The vast majority of producing countries, particularly Brazil and Colombia, had also expressed their concern at the threat the issue posed to the future effectiveness of the ICA.³⁶

At their talks in London prior to the Council meeting, representatives of the fifty producing countries had discussed the matter along with another problem, namely that of ensuring that coffee sold to non-ICO countries did not find its way to ICO member-states and thus undermine the ICA's system of export quotas and price range. By an overwhelming majority, the producing countries decided to propose that the Council pass a resolution stating that there should be no difference in price between coffee sold to ICO and non-ICO members, and setting up a committee to monitor the situation with the power to recommend penalties to the Executive Board for countries which defied the resolution. Indonesia³⁷ and a small number of other producing countries opposed this proposal. Producers also agreed to suggest that the Council adopt tighter controls on exports to non-ICO countries.

At the Council meeting, delegates adopted a resolution based on the producing countries' proposals. This stated that from 22 April 1985, no producing country would accept sales contracts for coffee exports to non-ICO member countries at a price lower than for coffee of the same quality sold to an ICO member. They agreed to set up a special committee of members of the ICO Executive Board to monitor compliance with the decision and penalties for non-compliance (ranging from export quota cuts to expulsion from the ICO in serious cases) were also fixed. The resolution was greeted with some scepticism by London coffee traders.

There was much less agreement on another major source of complaint by consuming countries concerning the extent to which exporters were fulfilling their export quota entitlements. Consuming countries had been arguing that the growth in coffee sales to non-members had been at the expense of exports permitted under quota to members. Figures presented to the opening session had shown that coffee

North-South Monitor

exports to importing ICO members in the six months to the end of March 1985 had fallen short of the ICO allocation by 3.7m bags at 26.8m bags, whilst exports to non-members had risen by 5.5m bags. Exports in the same period of the previous coffee year had amounted to 28.1m bags to members and 4.4m bags to non-members.

Producing countries undertook to limit their sales to non-members, although no limit was specified. But they opposed the two suggestions put up by consuming countries, aimed at increasing supplies under quota. Consumers proposed that exporting countries that seriously under-fulfilled their quota should have their quota reduced by the amount involved which would then be given to countries which had adhered to their quota and had coffee to export. They also suggested that the global quota should be increased from 60m to 60.7m bags by giving eight relatively small exporting countries the quota increase that they had requested. Producing countries rejected the first proposal on the grounds that it equated under-shipment with quota shortfalls. The latter arises when a country is unable to meet its quota because it has not produced enough coffee and must be reported to the ICO so that the shortfall amount can be redistributed to another country. They also argued that under-fulfillment of quotas often reflected a lack of demand either due to stocks in consuming countries or because the global quota had been set too high.³⁸

▲ International Coffee Organisation (ICO)

Executive Board Meeting

Guatemala City, 20-24 May 1985

■ The 16-member board focused on issues relating to coffee exports to non-ICO member countries and decided to tighten procedures for sales to those countries.

The board noted the large number of sales contracts entered into with non-ICO members prior to the introduction on 22 April 1985 of the Council's resolution raising the price of coffee to non-members to the same levels as those being paid by ICO member-countries. Statistics showed that ICO exporters had contracted to sell nearly 5m bags to non-members ahead of the April deadline. A substantial quantity of this coffee was apparently contracted in the time between the formulation of the proposal calling for price parity by producers and its formal adoption by the ICO. Delegates estimated that if all of the contracts were fulfilled, exports to non-member-countries during the coffee year ending on 30 September 1985 would be well in excess of 10m bags, compared with 9.9m bags in the previous coffee year. It was decided that a special committee appointed by the Council, should look into the matter as soon as possible.

Delegates discussed the problem of coffee exports to non-ICO members being diverted to consuming member-countries. 3m bags of coffee exported to non-members were still unaccounted for in the period from November 1983 when the requirement to provide evidence of arrival had been introduced, to the end of 1984. It was agreed that the monitoring of proof that coffee cargoes had reached non-ICO members should be more thorough³⁹ and that penalties should be applied in cases where exports had not been shown to have been imported by a non-member or where it could not be proved that they were in a port of transshipment.

North-South Monitor

It was decided that penalties, the nature of which were not fixed at the meeting, should be applied against producers selling coffee to non-members in violation of ICO resolutions. It is expected that they will be applied before the end of September 1985. Indonesia was the only board member to oppose the sanctions.⁴⁰

● 'These are slow steps and in September the ICO will make the big step. If we don't do it, we can forget about the [international coffee] agreement.' Karlos Rischbieter, President of the Brazilian Coffee Institute, *Reuter Coffee Newsletter* 29 May 1985.

'With excess stocks, the temptation is very strong to sell to non-members at a lower price. The ICO must therefore come out with a stock policy that would take into account the quota allocation to producing countries.' Alexandre Beltrao, ICO Executive Director, *Reuter Coffee Newsletter* 29 May 1985.

▲ UN Conference on Natural Rubber Geneva, 22 April–8 May 1985

■ The three-week session to negotiate a new International Natural Rubber Agreement (INRA) ended inconclusively after fundamental disagreements between exporting and importing countries over the terms of a new pact. The current agreement, adopted in 1979 and the first for rubber, came into force in 1980, to expire in October 1985.⁴¹

At the conference, producers such as Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand were pushing for a substantial rise in the target price range, which the pact seeks to defend, to take account of steeply rising costs of production. Natural rubber prices should, they believed, be high enough to cover costs, while remaining competitive with synthetic rubber. They also argued that one of the objectives of the original pact—the guaranteeing of an adequate supply of rubber to consumers—would be jeopardised unless the price range took account of the opportunity cost of production.⁴² Producers also suggested an increase in buffer stock funds, and additional price control mechanisms, such as export quotas.

The view expressed by Ahmad Farouk, the Malaysian spokesman for exporters, that prices should be remunerative and 'just' for exporters, including small producers who account for the bulk of the world's rubber output, brought exporters into direct conflict with consumer countries. These countries, which include the US, China, the USSR, Japan and the EEC, were united in their satisfaction with the working of the current INRA, in their unwillingness to see substantial changes in its terms, and in their firm rejection of the principle that higher costs justify higher support prices. The US, meanwhile, saw the objective of the pact as the stabilisation of prices around existing market trends, rather than the distortion of the market through artificially high prices or the anathema of supply restraints.⁴³

The Conference, in which both sides stated their positions but had no formal discussions on the major issue of a price rise, is due to be reconvened early in 1986.⁴⁴

● 'If an international agreement is only to perpetuate market forces, we do not need all these costly agreements.' Ahmad Farouk, addressing the final plenary session of the Conference. International Foundation for Development Alternatives, *Special United Nations Service* (Geneva) No. 1243, 10 May 1985.

North-South Monitor

▲International Natural Rubber Organisation (INRO)

Council Meetings

Kuala Lumpur, 2-4 April and 4-13 June 1985

■The 32 INRO members, meeting in June 1985, extended the International Natural Rubber Agreement (INRA) for the permitted two-year period, after Malaysia's unexpected deferral of the decision at the April 1985 meeting. Malaysia, the largest natural rubber producer, was believed to have been awaiting the outcome of the Geneva talks later in April, on a new INRA. The final decision to extend INRA in its present form, as consumers had been advocating, was probably influenced by the current depressed state of the rubber market. Low prices had meant that producers were in need of the support of the pact to prevent prices falling even further, at a time when costs are rising faster than demand.

At the June 1985 meeting, Harvey Adams agreed to remain as buffer stock manager for another four months, until the end of November, following a deadlock over the appointment of a new manager. The post is tacitly understood to be reserved for an American, but at the April and June Council meetings, consumers and producers repeatedly rejected the two US nominees.⁴⁵

▲UNCTAD Committee on Commodities

Third Special Session

Geneva, 3-7 June and 11 June 1985

■The special session which had been mandated at UNCTAD VI (1983) to examine, in close cooperation with international commodity organisations (ICOs), the role of international commodity agreements (ICAs) in achieving the aims of UNCTAD's Integrated Programme for Commodities (IPC), ended without any conclusions having been reached. Representatives from seven ICOs attended the meeting.

Launched in 1976 at UNCTAD IV, the IPC aims to stabilise commodity prices for eighteen commodities of significance to developing country exporters and to increase the commodity export earnings of developing countries as well as their processing, marketing, distribution and transport facilities for commodity exports. The two main mechanisms for achieving these aims were to be ICAs which would largely act to regulate prices and a \$750m Common Fund for commodities which would help to finance buffer stock operations and long-term development plans for selected commodities. Negotiated in 1980, the Common Fund has yet to come into operation. The agreement requires the ratification of ninety countries accounting for two-thirds of the \$470m which is to be directly contributed. Whilst eighty-seven countries had ratified it at the time of the meeting, it had become clear that the capital requirement could not be met unless either the United States or the socialist countries were prepared to accede to or ratify the agreement. In both cases this seemed unlikely.⁴⁶

In considering the efficacy of ICAs, delegates had before them a study prepared for the meeting by UNCTAD's secretariat on ten ICAs covering seven commodities as well as reports by the ICOs on their activities. The UNCTAD study concluded

North-South Monitor

that the operations of ICAs had been mixed in terms of stabilising prices and had achieved little or nothing towards meeting their longer-term objectives of improving the export earnings and processing and distribution capacities of developing countries. Of the seven commodities surveyed—tin, wheat, rubber, coffee, cocoa, sugar and olive oil—UNCTAD decided that the ICAs covering the first four commodities listed had been only relatively successful in stabilising prices. The operations of the cocoa and sugar pacts had largely been undermined by the absence of major producers and consumers and the olive oil agreement was a special case as it contained no specific price stabilisation measures. The study also underlined the importance of ICAs containing realistic price ranges from the outset. Its views on the ICA's success in ensuring price stability was echoed by the heads of the ICOs, although the head of the International Cocoa Organisation estimated that the activities of the International Cocoa Agreement had led to an increase in export earnings of the ten major cocoa producing countries of between \$1.01bn–1.202bn between 1981–2 and 1983–4.

The positions of individual countries and country groups towards the Common Fund and ICAs were widely aired during the meeting. The chairman of the G77 called on developed countries to adhere to their earlier commitments to stabilise commodity markets and to ensure remunerative prices for commodity producers. He stressed that the G77 attached considerable importance to the economic provisions in ICAs as they had a direct impact on their export earnings, as well as to commodity development provisions such as research and development, diversification measures and those aimed at increasing commodity processing, marketing and distribution. He also urged that action be taken to strengthen ICOs, to realise the objectives of the IPC and to bring the Common Fund into operation.

The G77's call for action to bring the Common Fund into operation was taken up by several industrialised countries such as the EEC and Nordic countries as well as by the heads of the International Cocoa Organisation, the International Jute Organisation (IJO) and the International Olive Oil Council. The directors of the latter two organisations pointed out that both their organisations had developmental projects for which a source of finance was required. The US representative made no mention, however, of his government's attitude towards the Common Fund, neither did delegates from the socialist or EEC countries.

Discussion of the role of ICAs provoked a greater degree of disagreement between delegates. The Director of the IJO complained to the meeting that there were from time to time violent fluctuations in the price of jute and jute products which urgently required remedial measures which the IJO was precluded from taking. The Italian representative, on behalf of EEC countries, said that ICAs had produced some encouraging short-term results and that extraneous factors such as instability in the international monetary system had reduced their ability to achieve their long-term objectives. The Nordic countries' representative stressed the need for ICAs to be flexible in order to be effective in stabilising prices, but also drew attention to other mechanisms which could help to achieve the IPC's objectives (as did the OECD spokesman). The socialist countries called for UNCTAD's role in the commodity sphere to be increased so that it could ensure that the ICA's functioned effectively. The US delegate on the other hand argued that UNCTAD had exaggerated the importance of ICAs in promoting the IPC's aims, at the expense of the role of other

North-South Monitor

institutions like the IMF, GATT and development banks and that the US Administration considered that market intervention by means of ICAs and by governments only aggravated long-term problems. In its view, less intervention, not more, was required. Canada also expressed some scepticism over the impact of the ICA's price stabilisation efforts on the market.

No conclusions or recommendations were negotiated at the meeting, in part, it seems, because there were considerable differences between the G77 and the developed countries about the goals of the meeting.

The G77 had tabled a set of draft recommendations for adoption which called *inter alia* for flexibility in designing and applying mechanisms for ICAs, for the careful formulation of provisions on such mechanisms, for ICA price ranges to be set which were compatible with market conditions and in particular with the cost of production of the commodity concerned, for set procedures to be agreed for dealing with disagreements on price range revisions and for universal participation by consuming and producing countries in ICAs as well as for provisions to meet the problem of non-ICA countries benefiting from agreements.

But developed countries were not prepared to make the G77 proposals the basis for negotiations. They tabled a set of draft conclusions which were more by way of a summary on the last day scheduled for the meeting. Although, in their view, the price stabilising mechanisms of ICAs could only solve a limited number of problems faced by a commodity producing country because of the impact of external factors on the workings of ICAs, they concluded that on the whole ICAs had made 'useful contributions' towards achieving some of the IPC's objectives. A number of elements were identified as contributing to the success of ICAs, such as realistic and market-related price ranges, adequate provisions for adjusting price ranges according to shifts in market trends, effective economic provisions in those ICAs which included price stabilisation measures, and the need for as many producing and consuming countries as possible to participate in the agreement.

On the Common Fund where there was clearly less than unanimous agreement among industrialised countries, the draft merely stating that members who had already ratified the agreement urged other members to take steps to do so so that the agreement could become operational as soon as possible.

As there was no time for delegates to negotiate a final document, the G77 and developed countries' drafts were expected to be discussed at the next regular session of the Committee in December 1985.⁴⁷

● 'It is the firm political commitment by governments to the objectives of the ICAs and the IPC in all its key elements which could play the major role in tackling commodity problems and could make the ICAs more effective and instrumental in the development process.' Dr Magdy Hefny, Egyptian spokesman for the Group of 77 to the meeting, International Coalition for Development Alternatives, *Special United Nations Service*, 6 June 1985.

The UNCTAD study does not address the proposition that long-term government intervention 'carries with it the risk of complicating or exacerbating problems rather than resolving them.' Ms Joan Plaisted, US Delegate, *Financial Times* (London) 6 June 1985.

North-South Monitor

▲ International Sugar Organisation (ISO)

Council Meeting

London, 21–23 May 1985

■ No progress was made towards reaching agreement on a strategy to deal with the crisis facing the sugar market. Delegates from ten importing and forty exporting countries, accounting for most of the world's trade in sugar, met as prices slid to an all-time low in real terms of about 3¢ a pound. This is generally considered to be about a quarter of the level which is profitable. The ISO Secretariat, in its review of market developments, warned that an early return to 'reasonable' price levels was unlikely.⁴⁸

Prices have been hit by excess production since 1981, leading to record stocks. While consumption has been decreasing or stagnant in many developed countries as alternative sweeteners grow in importance and dietary habits change, production has shown no signs of responding to the situation. Negotiations for a new International Sugar Agreement (ISA) to replace the 1977 one which expired at the end of 1984, ended in failure in June 1984 because producing countries were not able to agree on measures to limit exports.⁴⁹ Since the beginning of 1985, the ISA has operated merely as an administrative device enabling exchanges of information and opinions to take place.

Delegates discussed two possible strategies to deal with the situation. The first one, which was strongly advocated by Brazil and Australia—both major producers—was that there should be renewed efforts to negotiate a new ISA which would regulate exports. The second suggestion, which was seen as an alternative to the first, was for exporting countries to take coordinated action to restrain production. This latter proposal, apparently promoted by the ISO Secretariat, was widely favoured by experts as a necessary prelude to resumed negotiations on a new ISA on the basis that a better balance between production and consumption was required before an ISA could be effective in raising prices to acceptable levels and in keeping them there.

There appeared to be little enthusiasm for trying to negotiate a new ISA with regulatory provisions so soon after the failure of the last attempt. There was also continuing reluctance on the part of producing countries to cooperate in reducing output. The Council decided to extend the time limit for ratification of the current ISA until 31 December 1985. The new agreement came into force on 1 January. The EEC which did not belong to the Seventh ISA, is a member.

It was also agreed that the ISO Secretariat's role in providing statistical assessments of the world sugar market should be improved.⁵⁰

▲ International Tin Council (ITC)

Thirteenth Session

London, 12–13 June 1985

■ It was decided that tin exports should continue to be restricted to a total of 22,000 tonnes during the period 1 July–30 September. Country allocations were left unchanged from those agreed in September 1984.⁵¹

Indonesia's announcement that it intended to contribute a further \$5m to the

North-South Monitor

buffer stock was welcomed by the meeting. The offer follows similar voluntary contributions from three other major ITC producing countries—Malaysia, Thailand and Australia—in the previous eighteen months. This brought the combined buffer stock capacity of the current and previous tin agreement to just short of 64,000 tonnes.⁵²

Delegates received a report from the Preparatory Committee set up at the last ITC session to prepare a draft Seventh International Tin Agreement (ITA). Not as much progress as had been expected had been made at its last meeting and it was reported that its work on a draft text would not start until after its next meeting in September 1985. The UNCTAD negotiating conference on the Seventh ITA is due to take place from 13–31 January 1986. However, if no agreement can be reached on a new ITA, the current one which expires in June 1987 can be extended for a period up to two years.⁵³

▲ Group of Latin American and Caribbean Sugar Exporting Countries (GEPLACEA)

Mexico City, 3–6 June 1985

■ Delegates of the 21-member group⁵⁴ which accounts for some 55 per cent of world output, discussed ways of stemming declining sugar exports from the region. They also considered the problem of sliding world prices which threatens the future of many of the area's seventy major refineries. Hit by the protracted slump in sugar prices caused by falling world demand and overproduction, GEPLACEA countries' sugar earnings have also been adversely affected by import barriers in developed countries designed to protect domestic sugar industries.

There was general agreement that GEPLACEA was not in a position to increase world sugar prices by imposing unilateral limits on member-countries' outputs. It was argued that any attempt to impose a regional solution would be fraught with enormous political problems. In addition, many member-states relied heavily on sugar export earnings—which are expected to reach barely \$1bn this year compared with \$44bn in 1980—to finance their large foreign debts. The consensus was that the ideal outcome would be to negotiate a new international sugar agreement which would raise and stabilise prices and there was some discussion about how this could best be achieved. However, most delegates were pessimistic about the chances of such a pact being established in the short to medium term.

Delegates expressed concern at the halving of exports from the region to the group's biggest customer, the United States, since 1981. They were particularly preoccupied by the increase in April 1985 of the import tax the US imposes on the fixed amounts of sugar it purchases from GEPLACEA countries. The new charges are expected to result in an additional loss of \$93m in the region. A large part of the meeting was taken up with discussing how the group might best persuade the United States to liberalise its import quota system for sugar; delegates generally took the view that greater access to the US sugar market would not only benefit their countries' economies, but would have a favourable impact on world sugar prices.

Ways of exploiting the potential of sugar as alcohol fuel were also discussed at the

North-South Monitor

meeting. The United States is seen as a large potential market for such fuel now that it is taking steps to reduce the lead content of gasoline.⁵⁵

● 'Reducing US protectionism is one of our main aims.' GEPLACEA Executive Secretary, Eduardo Latorre, of the Dominican Republic to Reuters, *Reuter Sugar Newsletter*, 4 June 1985.

DISARMAMENT

▲ Soviet Union-United States

Arms Control Negotiations: First Round

Geneva, 12 March-23 April 1985

■ Fifteen months after the Soviet Union broke off arms control talks in protest at NATO's first deployment of Pershing II and land-based Cruise missiles in Europe, a new round of negotiations began, on the basis of an agreement reached in January 1985.⁵⁶ Reports on the first round of talks suggested that no progress was made beyond an outlining of negotiating positions, and that the major obstacle had been the issue of the US Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI).

It had been agreed in January 1985 that talks on three groups of weapons—intermediate nuclear forces in Europe; strategic forces; and defensive and space weapons—would be considered under one 'umbrella'. Differences in the two sides' views of the relationship between these groups, however, reflected their differing priorities in the talks as a whole. The Soviet Union, viewing curbs on SDI as a virtual precondition for progress in the other areas of negotiation, saw the talks as a unity. The US, meanwhile, intent on deep cuts in Soviet strategic and intermediate nuclear arms; on the upholding of existing arms control agreements;⁵⁷ and on the non-negotiability of SDI, wanted progress in each set of talks to be entirely independent. Only at the fourth plenary session of the talks, on 21 March 1985, was the three-tier structure of negotiations endorsed, and separate negotiating committees brought into operation.⁵⁸

Notwithstanding an agreement of confidentiality on details of substance between the US and the Soviet Union, facts about negotiating positions gradually emerged. On 22 March 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev publicly repeated Soviet calls for a mutual freeze on the deployment of nuclear missiles in Europe.⁵⁹ On 7 April 1985, he announced the introduction of a unilateral Soviet moratorium on the deployment of intermediate-range missiles, and the suspension of implementation of other measures to counter the US deployment of missiles in Europe, with effect until November 1985.

Beyond that date, continuation of the freeze, he said, would depend on a US decision to match the move. Gorbachev also proposed a moratorium on the research, testing and development of space weapons, and on the deployment of strategic nuclear weapons, to last for the duration of the talks.⁶⁰ Reports of the US response suggested that the moves were dismissed on the grounds that a moratorium would freeze in place a 10-to-1 Soviet advantage in intermediate-range missiles; that it would prevent continued US deployment of MX missiles, to counter a Soviet

North-South Monitor

advantage in land-based strategic arms; and that a ban on space research would be unverifiable.⁶¹ Paul Nitze, the US senior arms control adviser, added the objection that Soviet plans specified only missiles in Europe, not those aimed at Japan or China, in Asia.⁶² On 26 April 1985, remarks made by Gorbachev at a reception following the renewal of the Warsaw Pact for twenty years, suggested that a mutual 25 per cent reduction in strategic Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) had been proposed by the Soviet Union, in return for a moratorium on SDI, by way of an opening move at Geneva. The declaration was accompanied by a warning that if the US persisted with SDI, the Soviet Union would be obliged to take counter-measures by strengthening its offensive capability. The US insisted, however, that neither a new Soviet proposal for reducing strategic arms, nor a resubmission of 1982-3 START proposals had been made at the Geneva talks.⁶³

US proposals were disclosed by Edward L Rowny, special adviser to President Reagan. He suggested that the US had offered a ceiling of 8,000 on air-launched Cruise Missiles if agreement were reached on a mutual limit of 5,000 strategic nuclear warheads; that the US had dropped its previous insistence on a Soviet reduction in the 'throw-weight' or destructive power of its arsenals; and that the US would agree to deploy fewer intermediate-range Cruise and Pershing II missiles than Soviet SS-20s, on condition that agreement were reached on global parity of intermediate-range weapons, with the Soviet Union destroying some of its SS-20s, not simply shifting them to Asia. These points Rowny termed 'important nuances' in the US negotiating position.⁶⁴ The Soviet Union, however, remained uncompromising on the precondition that SDI be terminated. In a speech on 23 April, at the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Central Committee meeting, Gorbachev accused the US of violating the January 1985 agreement which proposed negotiations 'aimed at preventing an arms race in space and terminating it on earth', by refusing to negotiate space weapons.

The second round of the negotiations was to last eight weeks, beginning on 30 May 1985.⁶⁵

● 'There is an impression that the American side would like to discuss at the talks not the question of ensuring peaceful outer space, of prohibiting deployment of strike space weapons, but to lecture on the alleged benefits of the American "Star Wars" concept, which is in essence directed at making outer space a source of military threat to mankind.' Remarks made by Viktor Karpov, Soviet chief negotiator, on Soviet television. *Xinhua News Agency* (London) 18 March 1985. 'If preparations for SDI continue we will have no other choice than to undertake countermoves including, of course, the strengthening and upgrading of nuclear arms.' Mikhail Gorbachev, at a meeting of the Warsaw Pact countries. *International Herald Tribune*, 27-28 April 1985.

'It's impossible to tie progress in arms control to a strategic research programme, which is eight to ten years out. We want to concentrate on the here and now.' Edward L Rowny, special US adviser on arms control. *International Herald Tribune*, 18 April 1985.

North-South Monitor

▲ Soviet Union-United States

Ministerial Meeting

Vienna, 14 May 1985

■ US Secretary of State, George Schultz, and Andrei Gromyko, then Soviet Foreign Minister, held their second meeting this year in Vienna where they attended ceremonies marking the 30th anniversary of the treaty re-establishing Austria's independence after World War II. Few substantive details were given of the ministers' talks which lasted six hours. According to Mr Schultz, the talks concentrated on arms control issues and, in particular, the Geneva arms control talks between the two sides. The meeting was widely interpreted by Western sources as having been inconclusive.

A major point at issue in their discussions on arms control appears to have been the United States' Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) or 'Star Wars' programme. Mr Vladimir Lomeiko, a Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman, told reporters after the encounter that Mr Gromyko had emphasised to Mr Schultz that the success of the Geneva talks depended on the ultimate goal as set out in their joint statement in January 1985 being strictly adhered to. The declaration stated that the Geneva negotiations should aim for agreements to terminate the arms race on earth and prevent one in space.⁶⁶ Mr Schultz had apparently confronted Mr Gromyko with allegations of violations of existing arms control agreements, repeating the US Administration's charges that the Soviet Union had broken the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty.

Other issues raised included regional conflicts and human rights in the Soviet Union. Mr Gromyko reportedly told Mr Schultz that US interference and its attempts to impose its will on other countries was a major source of regional tension and his response to Mr Schultz's attempts to discuss human rights cases in the Soviet Union was the usual one: that such issues were solely domestic.⁶⁷

● 'I think this meeting is timely because, after the first Geneva meeting (on arms control), we can take stock.' Mr Schultz, US Secretary of State, prior to the meeting. *Xinhua News Agency*, 25 May 1985.

'The remarks made by Mr Schultz do not show a will to translate into practice the declarations made by the US Administration in support of curbing the arms race.' Mr Vladimir Lomeiko, Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman, *Le Monde* (Paris) 16 May 1985.

NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANISATION (NATO)

▲ Ministerial Council

Estoril, Portugal, 6-7 June 1985

■ The United States' SDI and the future of the SALT II treaty were said to have dominated the discussions held by the Foreign Ministers of sixteen NATO countries at their private meeting, although there was no mention of either of these issues in their final communiqué.

North-South Monitor

The US Secretary of State, Mr George Schultz, had come to the meeting to sound out his colleagues on whether they thought that the United States should continue to abide by the 1979 SALT II agreement with the Soviet Union. This treaty, which was never ratified by the US Senate but which each country formally undertook to abide by, puts numerical constraints on both country's nuclear arsenals.⁶⁸ It was due to expire at the end of 1985. Washington was taking an early decision on the future of the pact as it was about to deploy a new 24-missile Trident submarine in the early autumn of 1985 which would put it in violation of the agreement unless it took steps to retire one of its Poseidon submarines. The US Administration, arguing that the Soviet Union had already violated the treaty, was split on whether to continue observing it. President Reagan had decided to postpone his decision until the views of NATO ministers had been sought.

More important, however, to the US Administration was its need to obtain an explicit, formal statement of support for its SDI programme from the meeting in the final communiqué.⁶⁹ The consensus among West European countries and Canada which clearly emerged from the meeting, as well as from the many informal bilateral discussions which customarily take place at such ministerial gatherings, was that the United States should not abrogate SALT II as in so doing the whole arms control process would be undermined.

The Netherlands Foreign Minister is said to have told Mr Schultz that if the US ignored SALT II it would be even more difficult for his government to win support for the deployment of 48 Cruise missiles in the autumn. The British Foreign Minister said that nothing should be done which might undermine East-West disarmament or prevent a successful conclusion to the Geneva arms control talks. He stressed that it was important not to remove the very rules against which the Soviet performance in arms control could be judged or to give Moscow further propaganda opportunities. The West German Foreign Minister appealed to both the Soviet Union and the United States to respect SALT II as well as the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty in the interest of cooperation in arms control and of East-West relations generally. However, there was general agreement with the US position that the Soviet Union had violated both treaties.⁷⁰

Not surprisingly, particularly in view of France's known reservations on the matter,⁷¹ the ministers were not able to agree on a united statement of support for SDI. The West German and British ministers tried to persuade their French counterpart to accept a watered-down formula, but France was only prepared to go so far as to agree to a phrase in the communiqué acknowledging the existence of the programme. Mr Schultz took the position that in that case it would be better not to mention the SDI at all. Opposition to a statement of support for the programme also came from Denmark, Norway and Greece.⁷²

The US Administration was able to draw some comfort from the unanimous support which ministers gave in their communiqué to US efforts at the Geneva arms control talks with the Soviet Union in the three areas under negotiation—strategic weapons, intermediate-range weapons and defensive and space weapons. But, at the insistence of the French delegation, the communiqué referred only to US negotiating 'efforts' and not to US 'proposals' as other ministers would apparently have preferred. Ministers called on the Soviet Union to adopt a 'positive approach' to the Geneva talks. At the same time, they reiterated their determination to proceed with

North-South Monitor

the planned deployment of Pershing and Cruise missiles in Europe in the absence of an agreement limiting medium-range missiles.⁷³

Other matters discussed at the meeting included the Helsinki Final Act on European Cooperation and Security, cooperation between East and West Germany and the situation in Afghanistan.⁷³

● (The SDI research programme) will go on. Most people would feel that it would be downright irresponsible for the US not to undertake the research in the light of the fact that the Soviet Union has, for some time, been doing research in this field itself and has the only deployed anti-ballistic missile (ABM) and anti-satellite systems right now.' Mr George Schultz, US Secretary of State, commenting on the lack of a reference in the final communiqué to the SDI programme, *Financial Times* (London) 8 June 1985.

The collective security of nations in the nuclear age requires that 'existing treaties are respected and that what has been achieved through arms control should in any case be preserved.' Mr Hans-Dietrich Genscher, West German Foreign Minister, in his opening speech to the meeting, *Financial Times* (London) 7 June 1985.

WARSAW PACT

▲ Summit Meeting

Warsaw, 26 April 1985

■ At the first formal summit of the Warsaw Pact since the accession of Mikhail Gorbachev one and a half months previously as General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), the leaders of the seven Pact countries signed a protocol⁷⁴ extending the thirty-year-old military alliance for another twenty years with an option for a further ten years' prolongation. The pact was due to expire on 3 June 1985.

There were unconfirmed reports prior to the summit that there had been some disagreement among Pact members about whether changes should be made to the terms of the Warsaw Pact Treaty and particularly about the length of its renewal. Romania, reportedly supported by Hungary and the GDR, had apparently pressed for a shorter initial term for the extension and the Soviet Union had favoured the same 20-30 year time-frame as agreed in 1955. These differences were apparently resolved, or at least shelved, following extensive intra-bloc discussions.⁷⁵

The socialist leaders also discussed security issues. In their joint communiqué,⁷⁶ they emphasised the important role played by the Warsaw Pact in ensuring their collective security as well as in maintaining and strengthening world peace. Participants reiterated their opposition to the division of the world into opposing military blocs and their long-standing offer to dissolve the Warsaw Pact if NATO did the same. Turning to the danger of nuclear war, they stressed their commitment to ending the arms race, particularly in nuclear weapons and to preventing its extension to outer space as well as to disarmament.

Mr Gorbachev warned that the US SDI had destabilised international relations and that if preparations for the programme continued, the Soviet Union would have no

North-South Monitor

other choice but to take measures in response. These would include building up and improving its offensive nuclear weapons.⁷⁷

● 'The Warsaw Treaty has been in effect for almost one-third of a century and for the entire duration of that time it has acted as an initiator of constructive ideas directed towards détente and arms limitation, toward developing European cooperation. Its growing weight in international politics has a positive effect on the general climate in the world.' Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, at a reception in Warsaw in honour of the summit participants, *Soviet News* (London) 1 May 1985.

THE NORTH

▲ Western Economic Summit
Eleventh Annual Meeting
Bonn, 2-4 May 1985

■ For the first time, the seven leaders⁷⁸ gathering at Bonn failed to paper over their differences on key issues, those of a new round of trade liberalisation talks, and President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), or 'Star Wars'.

The first question at issue was not whether to endorse talks under the auspices of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), but when they should begin and under what conditions. The United States, with the support of Japan, had hoped for European agreement in setting a date for talks, not least to help to defuse the growing protectionist lobby in the US Congress, and to avoid a US-Japanese trade war. The US also wanted the scope of the talks to embrace agriculture, financial services such as banking and insurance, and high technology goods. It was thwarted by the refusal of President Mitterrand of France to agree to a starting date for the new round. His reasons were that only the agricultural sector would be prepared for such talks, that others should have time to prepare, and that Third World views were unrepresented at the Summit.⁷⁹ He also wished to protect the interests of French farmers, who benefit from the EEC's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), which would be placed on the GATT agenda. An earlier French demand that trade talks be made conditional on monetary reform to stabilise the exchange rates which distort competition, was later dropped, France joining the general agreement to defer decisions on monetary reform till the later meetings of the Group of 10 in Tokyo in June 1985, and the IMF Interim Committee, in Seoul in October 1985. Amidst speculation that President Mitterrand's public stance had been assumed with an eye to the 1986 French elections, and that his private attitude to negotiations would be less rigid, US spokesmen reiterated their stand that they would pursue talks with anyone who would consent to them, regardless of the absence of the EEC, in whose proceedings France has a veto. In a final communiqué,⁸⁰ the summit leaders expressed anti-protectionist sentiments, and endorsed the OECD Ministerial Council's agreement to begin a new GATT round as soon as possible, highlighting French dissent by adding, 'Most of us think that this should be in 1986'.

President Reagan's hopes for European pledges of participation, in the SDI at

North-South Monitor

Bonn were left unrealised by the generally noncommittal response. The final political communiqué, which endorsed the American position at the Geneva arms talks, made no mention of SDI. President Mitterrand was openly hostile to the project, announcing that France would not take part, and advocating instead the 'Eureka' proposal for Europe's own non-military, high-technology research.

Adding to the tensions over the two main issues, US economic sanctions against Nicaragua were announced on the day of President Reagan's arrival in Bonn. The other summit leaders, who had not been consulted beforehand (Chancellor Kohl of West Germany was reported to have received two hours prior notice), refused to endorse the move. No mention of Nicaragua was made in the final communiqués, and while Chancellor Kohl muted his known opposition to the sanctions, President Mitterrand was openly critical of them.

With regard to developing countries, summit leaders advocated increased world trade, lower interest rates, open markets, and continued financial flows, both through official development assistance and private investment. With regard to debt, a joint letter to the summit leaders, sent by the Uruguayan President, Julio Maria Sanguinetti, on behalf of the Cartagena Group of Latin American debtors, called for a political dialogue on debt problems in order to produce permanent and durable solutions and emphasised the necessity for the participation of developing countries in talks on world trade and monetary reform. The letter said that, despite the mistakes of Latin American countries, the international monetary system, the world economy, high interest rates, low commodity prices, and protectionism should bear some responsibility for the economic difficulties of Latin America. The Summit communiqué remarked that 'though far from solved', the problems of debtor countries were 'being flexibly and effectively addressed'. The seven leaders welcomed longer debt restructuring agreements between debtor countries and commercial banks, and stood ready to negotiate, where appropriate, the multi-year rescheduling of debts to governments and government agencies. They also expressed a willingness to discuss an increase in the resources available to the World Bank, which may be necessary in the future.

A French initiative to combat drought and famine in sub-Saharan Africa found some expression in the final communiqué, with promises being made to continue emergency food aid; to intensify cooperation with African countries to encourage long-term agricultural development by providing seed, pesticides and fertilisers; to improve existing early warning systems; to finance better transportation; and to create a research network on dry zone grains. Finally, an expert group was set up to prepare proposals on these measures, to be reported to Foreign Ministers by September 1985.⁸¹

● 'I occupy myself with France. I don't give myself the responsibility of protecting each country against itself.' President Mitterrand, when asked whether his blocking tactics on trade talks would unleash protectionist pressures in the United States; reported in *The Times* (London) 6 May 1985.

'We will keep pushing for it in 1986. If we don't get a new GATT round, we will simply sit down and negotiate with the countries that are ready to negotiate with us.' US Treasury Secretary, James Baker. *The Guardian* (London) 6 May 1985.

North-South Monitor

▲ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
Twenty-fourth Meeting of the Ministerial Council
Paris, 11–12 April 1985

■ Under growing pressure from the United States to agree to a new round of multilateral trade negotiations (MTNs) under GATT auspices beginning in early 1986, OECD Economic and Trade Ministers decided after extensive discussions to call for preparatory talks on the agenda for the negotiations to take place soon. The meeting took place amidst increasing trade disputes between the United States and Japan. Other matters discussed included the macroeconomic policies of member states, trade problems and the situation in developing countries.

US ministers explained to the meeting the US Administration's position that it was urgent that agreement be reached for GATT trade negotiations to begin early in 1986 as the international trading system was in difficulty and strong protectionist pressures were developing in the United States. It was argued that these could only be stemmed if access to major foreign markets was liberalised in the near future. The US Administration which wants trade in agriculture, services and high technology goods included in the new GATT round, had repeatedly warned that in the absence of an agreement within GATT to start the trade liberalisation talks soon, it would be forced to negotiate bilateral agreements to the same end.

The US proposal that preparations be begun for a new GATT round early in 1986 was supported by Japan, Canada, Sweden and the United Kingdom as well as by other countries. However, there was disagreement between the United States and several EEC countries, notably France supported by Italy, over whether the new round of trade talks should be accompanied by international negotiations to reform the world monetary system.

The French government has been arguing that the principal obstacles to trade had resulted not from protectionist barriers set up after the end of the last round of GATT MTNs in 1979, but from violent fluctuations in exchange rates and particularly in the value of the dollar, as a result of speculative activity. France therefore insisted at the meeting that trade negotiations be accompanied by talks on monetary reform within the IMF.

France received support from the EEC Commissioner for External Affairs, Mr Willy de Clerq. Stressing that the EEC agreed in principle to a new round of MTNs, he nevertheless stipulated three conditions for its support: that existing GATT agreements be implemented; that Japan commit itself to opening its markets and that there be 'parallel efforts and parallel progress' on monetary reform as well as on trade liberalisation. He suggested that the monetary talks could be held within the IMF's Interim Committee and that they should aim to ease fluctuations in the value of the dollar and the effects of high US interest rates on other countries. He also emphasised that before the new round could begin there would have to be an 'adequate' degree of consensus among participants, including developing countries, on their scope. However, in linking trade and monetary issues, it was clear that Mr de Clerq did not have the full support of all EEC countries, notably West Germany, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands.⁸²

From the outset the US Administration had made clear its opposition to trade talks being linked with monetary reform, but following a lengthy search for a compromise, the United States delegation came up with an unexpected and hastily put together

North-South Monitor

concession which enabled the meeting to reach a consensus. The US Treasury Secretary, James Baker, announced that the US Administration would be 'prepared to consider the possible value' of hosting a meeting of the major industrialised countries sometime after June 1985 to discuss ways of strengthening the international monetary system. He made it clear, however, that the proposed conference would base its work on the results of the studies being completed by the Finance Ministers of the ten industrialised countries making up the Group of Ten, which was likely to conclude that major reforms to the monetary system were not required. He suggested that the meeting would focus on such issues as the convergence of economic policies, exchange rate stability and IMF surveillance of national economic policies. The proposal brought varying reactions from participants given that the Reagan Administration had been deemed so far to have paid little attention to the international effects of its domestic policies.⁸³

France's Finance Minister welcomed the US proposal, as did several other European ministers. However, France wanted the monetary talks to include developing countries and it was evident that there were substantial differences in interpretation between the United States and France over how extensive the monetary reforms would be and on the nature of the conference.⁸⁴ Nonetheless, agreement was reached to support the US demand that talks on 'the subject-matter and modalities' for trade negotiations should take place before the end of the summer. As France was still not prepared to agree to a formal declaration setting early in 1986 as the target date for the negotiations to begin, ministers were only able to call for them to begin 'as soon as possible', with a parenthesis to the effect that some of them considered that they should start early in 1986.⁸⁵ Ministers also agreed that the active participation in the negotiations of a significant number of developed and developing countries was essential. No reference was made in the communiqué to the possibility of a conference on monetary reform. However the importance of increasing exchange rate stability was acknowledged as was the possibility that this might at times require coordinated intervention.

A wide range of other trade issues were raised at the meeting including export credits, problems in agricultural trade resulting from surpluses, the need for the liberalisation of trade in the high technology and services sectors and in computer communications. Ministers adopted a Declaration on Transborder Data Flows.⁸⁶ On protectionism, on which OECD had recently completed a study showing that the costs were substantial for the protecting country whereas the benefits if any were few, ministers resolved to continue to relax and remove restrictions. It was noted that by mid-October 1985 member-states were to have submitted proposals on restrictions which could be gradually phased out and that a report of the results would be sent to ministers in 1986.⁸⁷

On the problems facing developing countries, ministers acknowledged 'the responsibility of the OECD countries for assuring an international economic environment that facilitates the success of [developing country] policies' aimed at improving their economic performance.

It was agreed that greater trade access for goods from developing countries and especially for products of particular significance to them, was important for their economic development particularly given the heavy debt burdens many faced. Ministers therefore called upon developing countries to 'participate in the [trade]

North-South Monitor

liberalisation process in a manner commensurate with their stage of economic development'. The Council stressed the importance of concessional and non-concessional aid flows to Third World development. They agreed that direct investment in developing countries should be encouraged as it could 'under appropriate conditions' contribute to development in terms of providing capital and technological expertise. They urged the need to maintain and if possible increase the volume of aid and to improve its quality and agreed that given the 'development crisis' in sub-Saharan Africa priority for increased aid should go to that region. Noting that a consensus had emerged in favour of supporting agricultural and rural development, food security, institution-building and the development of human skills in sub-Saharan countries, ministers suggested that emphasis should be given to maintaining and restoring existing productive facilities.

Turning to the energy situation, ministers stressed the need to continue with long-term policies aimed at diversifying energy supplies, using energy more rationally and to be in a position to be able to handle interruptions in oil supplies in spite of the slack oil market.

● 'Multilateral trade negotiations are only one element of a much wider picture. What is the point of more steps to open frontiers if trade flows are going to be disturbed by other factors? Mr Roland Dumas, France's Foreign Minister, *Le Monde* (Paris) 13 April 1985.

'The US intends to be in new trade negotiations next year with whoever will come to them.' Mr William Brock, US Trade Secretary, to a meeting of French industrialists, *Financial Times* (London) 11 April 1985.

▲ Group of Ten (G10) Meeting of Finance Ministers Tokyo, 21 June 1985

■ A one-day meeting of the Group of Ten major industrialised countries⁸⁸ endorsed the conclusions of a report on aspects of the international monetary system, commissioned at the Western Economic Summit Conference in Williamsburg, in 1983.⁸⁹ The report, based on a two-year study, concluded that there was no viable alternative to the current monetary system based on floating exchange rates (in operation since 1972) which 'remains valid, and requires no major institutional change'.⁹⁰ The meeting acknowledged the weaknesses of the system, in its tendency to cause short-term volatility in exchange rates, which can discourage trade and investment, but the report, with its eschewing of major reform, proved largely uncontroversial with the group. A particular counter-proposal, by France, for the setting up of 'target zones' for the exchange rates of the major currencies was effectively vetoed by the United States.⁹¹

Recommendations in the report for shoring-up the weaknesses in the system without abandoning it were taken up in the Ministerial communiqué. The ministers decided unanimously that greater stability of exchange rates and financial markets would be desirable, within the existing monetary system, but it required increased alignment of economic policies between the leading industrial powers. They agreed

North-South Monitor

that this alignment would be helped by a 'general strengthening of international surveillance' over national economies by the IMF, involving more detailed monitoring of all members; greater publicity for the IMF's annual assessments of its members' policies; and additional high-level consultations between the IMF and member-countries where economic indicators provide warning of mismanagement. The G10 also agreed on the need for closer cooperation between the IMF and the World Bank, endorsing the role of the IMF, contrary to France's advocacy of a softening of the conditions attached to IMF assistance. No accord could be reached, however, on a need for increased international liquidity.

The G10 report is due to be presented to the meeting of the IMF Interim Committee in Seoul, in October 1985.⁹²

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND AND WORLD BANK

▲ Mid-year meetings of the IMF Interim Committee, and the IMF/World Bank Development Committee
Washington DC, 17-19 April 1985

■ Despite frequent calls by developing countries for a global conference on debt,⁹³ the Spring meetings of the two principal policy-making committees of the IMF and the World Bank provided the setting for the first talks between creditor and debtor countries, designed to cover debt, development and the international economy, since the 1982 debt crisis. The Interim Committee met to consider the world economy in the near and medium term, while the Development Committee primarily examined trade policy and protectionism in the medium and long term, as well as considering reports on the World Bank's Action Programme for sub-Saharan Africa, and the future role of the World Bank.

Developing countries' proposals for easing debt problems had been specified in the April 1985 communiqué of the Group of 24,⁹⁴ but were largely ignored by the committees, in favour of a general endorsement of the policies of the IMF and World Bank.⁹⁵ The Group of 24 warned of the costs to countries servicing external debts of the economic adjustment required, which 'is having strong social and political consequences for many debtor countries, including a serious decline in their standards of living and a deterioration in their social fabric.' They advocated increased international liquidity through a new flotation of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs); an IMF subsidy account to protect debtors against rises in interest rates; an additional US\$3 billion for the International Development Association, the World Bank's concessional lending agency; more even-handed surveillance, to cover not simply the adjustment efforts of debtor countries, but the exchange and interest rates of industrialised countries; and the creation of a task force to study debt.

The Interim Committee conceded that the debt problems of a number of countries remained serious, and were exacerbated by high interest rates, and that IMF surveillance should cover all Fund members, including 'the policies of all those industrial and developing countries which have a significant impact on the functioning of the world economy'. The Committee, however, deferred

North-South Monitor

consideration of SDRs, on which it was not able to reach agreement, and was uncompromising in its assertion that adjustment in debtor countries was 'essential and, indeed, unavoidable'. Both Interim and Development Committees supported a case-by-case approach to debtor countries, and Multi-Year Rescheduling Arrangements (MYRA), where appropriate, but the Interim Committee proposed the use of resources from an IMF concessional Trust Fund to assist with adjustment in the poorest countries. The Development Committee, advocating continued adjustment in both industrial and developing countries ('within the limits of social and political tolerance') suggested that this adjustment should be supported by financial flows on appropriate terms, and improved access to markets. It also proposed to encourage private direct and portfolio investment through the establishment of a Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), to ensure against non-commercial risks, subject to approval by the IMF/World Bank annual meeting in Seoul, in October 1985. Increased ODA for low-income countries deserved the highest priority, and the Committee reiterated its request to the management of the International Development Association to conduct a mid-term review of IDA 7.

The Group of 24, seeking access for developing country exports in the markets of industrial countries, had cited the implementation of the terms of the 1977 Tokyo GATT round as a prerequisite of a new GATT round. The Development Committee, however, endorsed the idea of general participation in a new GATT round on which, it noted, a number of countries had decided to embark. It considered that a basis for full participation would be laid by 'serious efforts to carry forward the unfinished business from the 1982 GATT work programme,' and action to improve market access for developing countries. The Group of 24 was also anxious that the scope of the talks include 'trade in goods' only, despite the insistence of the United States that services and high technology goods should be included.

Another major source of conflict between the US and the developing countries was the 'Baker proposal', announced by the US Treasury Secretary at an earlier OECD meeting, for a conference of industrial countries to consider international monetary reform.⁹⁶ Both the participants and the agenda of such a conference were disputed, the Group of 24 insisting on the full participation of the developing countries, in a conference 'broad enough to cover all aspects of the international monetary system.' They strongly objected to monetary talks being confined to the forum of the Group of 10 industrialised countries.

Also at the Development Committee meeting, the World Bank's progress report on the 'Implementation of the Joint Programme of Action for sub-Saharan Africa' was reviewed. The Committee welcomed the World Bank's efforts to mobilise funds for the region, and the establishment of a \$1.2 billion Special Facility for Africa, but warned that the balance-of-payments problems of countries in the region, including difficulties in debt servicing exacerbated by falls in commodity prices, required urgent attention. The unpublished report commented that debt problems were interfering with reforms and the securing of new international funding, but identified five countries which could qualify for concessional aid from the Special Facility by virtue of their progress towards economic reforms: Ghana, Zambia, Madagascar, Senegal and Somalia. A further twelve countries, it reported, could soon carry out 'stabilisation programmes' qualifying them for aid.⁹⁷

North-South Monitor

The long-awaited study, 'Future of the Bank' was also released during the Committee meetings, and supported four main aims for the World Bank in the 1980s: increased World Bank lending for structural adjustment in debtor countries (which had previously been the domain of the IMF); the encouragement of private sector investment in developing countries, to increase capital flows without increasing official aid; the channelling of resources into sub-Saharan Africa; and increased direction by the World Bank of national economies.⁹⁸

NORTH-SOUTH

▲ General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)

Consultative Group Meeting

Geneva, 13-14 May 1985

Council Meeting

Geneva, 5-6 June 1985

■ Although senior officials of the eighteen member-states of the Group did not reach agreement to call a meeting in July 1985, in order to prepare for a new round of multilateral trade negotiations (MTNs), the developing countries represented at the talks did not oppose outright the idea of new trade talks as they had done previously.⁹⁹ The Consultative Group which represents a cross section of GATT's membership of some ninety countries, and includes Brazil and India as well as the United States, Japan and EEC member states, has the authority to set in motion the preparatory work for a new round of MTNs.

Many of the EEC countries' objections to US proposals for the new GATT round had apparently been overcome at or before the IMF's Interim Committee meeting in April. France's continuing misgivings centred on its reluctance to have the EEC's Common Agricultural Policy included in the negotiations.¹⁰⁰ The main disagreements at the meeting for and against the new round continued to be between industrialised and developing countries. The latter argued that the new talks as proposed by developed countries would distract attention away from outstanding and unresolved trade problems of greater importance to them than the new areas suggested for negotiations, such as the services sector. But their position was undoubtedly also motivated by a fear of the potential impact that the large banks and insurance companies of industrialised countries could have on the domestic markets of several developing countries.

Following detailed explanations from the US and EEC delegates of their plans for the new trade round and an assurance from a representative of the EEC Commission that the EEC would not oppose the inclusion of agricultural products in the negotiations, developing country delegates decided to reserve their position on the matter and to seek new instructions from their governments. Industrialised countries also undertook to take unilateral action to remove some trade barriers to developing country imports before the new round began.

However, at the GATT Council meeting there were few signs that developed and developing countries were any nearer agreement on the MTNs proposal although

North-South Monitor

developing countries themselves no longer seemed completely united on the issue. A group of twenty-three of them, which included Brazil and India, the most strongly outspoken critics of the new round, submitted a paper to the Council setting out their opposition to developed country proposals and listing preconditions for agreeing to a new round. Their position was that they would be prepared to agree to negotiations on trade in goods only. They called on industrialised countries to honour existing GATT commitments and to commit themselves to removing restrictive trade practices on such items as textiles and clothing, which were inconsistent with GATT's regulations and to improving access to their markets. But concurrently, member states of ASEAN issued a separate statement detailing their support for efforts to find a consensus on ways of moving towards genuine trade liberalisation.

As exasperation with the developing countries' position continued to grow on the part of the US Administration (which repeated threats that it might have to resort to bilateral agreements to liberalise trade if a consensus within GATT on new MTNs was not reached soon) a small amount of progress was made after Brazil submitted a compromise proposal to a two-day informal meeting of ministers of some twenty GATT member-states in Stockholm two days after the Council meeting. The Brazilian minister, supported by representatives from other developing countries, suggested that preparatory discussions on liberalising trade in goods should begin in September 1985, providing that there was no prior commitment to negotiate. He also proposed that the trade negotiations could be divided into two separate but parallel sets of talks one dealing with goods and the other—held outside GATT—with services.

Ministers agreed to ask GATT to set up a meeting of senior trade officials from member-states with a view to negotiating an acceptable agenda. It was thought that the meeting would take place before the end of September 1985. The Brazilian proposal for two-pronged negotiations was welcomed by the majority of ministers.¹⁰¹

● 'There are a great many problems to be solved but a certain procedure has been agreed upon and this is a step forward.' Mr Vishwanath P Singh, India's Finance and Commerce Minister, *Financial Times* (London) 11 June 1985.

'We feel that it is necessary to take part (in the trade negotiations) otherwise protectionism will increase in the developed world.' Sr Olavo Setubal, Brazilian Foreign Minister, *Financial Times* (London) 28 June 1985.

'We have argued until we are blue in the face and we get the impression that the developing countries are not all that interested in multilateral negotiations.' Mr Peter Murphy, Deputy US trade representative, *Financial Times* (London) 11 June 1985.

'There is no sense in scrapping the only car we have got just because its speed does not match our ambitions.' Mr Willy de Clerq, EEC External Relations Commissioner, *Financial Times* (London) 11 June 1985.

North-South Monitor

SOUTH-SOUTH

▲ South Asian Regional Cooperation (SARC)

Standing Committee Meeting of Foreign Secretaries and Meeting of Foreign Ministers

Thimphu, Bhutan, 10-11 May and 13-14 May 1985

■ The third meeting of Foreign Ministers of the seven SARC countries¹⁰² unanimously approved the creation of a new institution, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), whose first summit meeting of Heads of State and Government is to be held on 7-8 December 1985, in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

The Thimphu Conference was initially thrown into a crisis by a boycott on the part of Sri Lanka, which abstained from the Foreign Secretaries' discussions in protest at a remark made in the Indian Parliament by the Indian Foreign Minister concerning ethnic violence in Sri Lanka.¹⁰³ This protest occurred despite the explicit exclusion of 'bilateral and contentious issues' from the purview of SARC.¹⁰⁴ Sri Lanka's President, Junius Jayawardene, cancelled the boycott, however, after personal telephone calls from the Indian Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, and the Pakistani President, Zia-ul-Haq, and sent his senior adviser, Esmond Wickremasinghe, to head the Sri Lankan delegation.

The Conference endorsed a draft charter to be considered further at the next foreign ministers' meeting on 5 December 1985, and offered for adoption at the Dhaka Summit. The charter emphasises SARC's commitment to the principles of the UN Charter and the Non-Aligned Movement.

It provides for a biennial summit, and an annual meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers, the latter agreed as the highest decision-making body of SAARC.¹⁰⁵ The seven member-states agreed to increase their voluntary contributions to the integrated programme of action which includes economic, cultural, technical and scientific fields, but excludes trade and industry. A joint communiqué issued after the ministerial meeting affirmed their commitment to strengthened cooperation in international forums, on matters of common interest, and called for an increase in the capital of the World Bank and in IMF quotas, as well as in the allocation of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs); increased concessional funds from international organisations; the elimination of protectionist barriers in industrialised countries against developing country exports; and an international conference on money and finance for development, with universal participation. The communiqué made no reference to regional or political issues.¹⁰⁶

● 'We have witnessed how bilateral tension could cast a long shadow on the spirit of SARC.' Zain Noorani, Pakistan's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, addressing the Foreign Minister's meeting, on the initial Sri Lankan boycott of the meeting. *Dawn* (Karachi) 14 May 1985.

North-South Monitor

▲ Preferential Trade Area (PTA) for East and Southern Africa
Ministerial Meeting
Lusaka, 24-27 May 1985

■ Agricultural Ministers of the fifteen member-states¹⁰⁷ met to discuss agricultural cooperation. They approved a detailed programme of action for 1985-1990. Issues relating to soil and water conservation and to training and research in the agricultural sector were also discussed. It was agreed that all the member-states should cooperate on livestock and crop production as well as on pest control.

● 'What is more disturbing is that there has been between 1980 and 1985 a decline in cereal production and public spending on agriculture.' Zambian Prime Minister, Mr Kebby Musokotwane, criticising the agricultural production record of African countries and particularly their failure to achieve the agricultural growth targets in the OAU's Lagos Plan of action in his speech opening the meeting. *Xinhua News Agency*, 3 June 1985.

▲ Preferential Trade Area (PTA) for East and Southern Africa
Ministerial Meeting
Lusaka, 6-8 June 1985

■ At their first ministerial meeting since the PTA was established in 1981, Ministers of Transport and Communications of the fifteen member-states met to discuss and draft a five-year cooperation programme for transport and communications and to agree short and medium-term priorities in relation to the implementation of specific projects in these sectors.

Zambia's Prime Minister, Mr Kebby Musokotwane, told the opening session of the meeting that the development of intra-regional trade and economic cooperation among PTA member-countries would be impeded if inter-state road and railway links were not increased and air, inland water and maritime transport were not improved.¹⁰⁸

▲ Summit of Heads of State and Government of Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana and Libya
Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 27 April 1985

■ In a joint communiqué, Captain Sankara of Burkina Faso, Flight-Lieutenant Rawlings of Ghana, Benin's President Kerekou and the Libyan Chief-of-Staff, Major Jallud (representing Colonel Qadhafi) agreed to increase economic cooperation between their countries and to exchange information with a view to harmonising their policies on important issues and problems facing their countries. The drought in Burkina Faso was discussed as was the international economic situation, developments in Namibia and the conflict over the Western Sahara. According to one report, Libya's aid policies came in for severe criticism, causing the meeting to end prematurely.¹⁰⁹

North-South Monitor

▲ Ministerial Conference on Afro-Arab Cooperation

Tripoli, 15–18 April 1985

■ In a memorandum to the Arab League and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the Libyan government requested the postponement of the conference between the member-states of the two organisations until the problem of the attendance of Polisario delegates was resolved. Morocco had threatened to leave the Arab League if Arab states attended the meeting along with Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) representatives.¹¹⁰

▲ Mozambique-South African Joint Commission

Maputo, 9 May 1985

■ Matters relating to security along the border between the two countries, the high tension power lines running from South Africa to the Mozambique capital, and rail links were the main topics of discussions between the South African delegation led by Mr 'Pik' Botha, Foreign Affairs Minister and General Magnus Malan the Defence Minister, and the Mozambican delegation led by Jacinto Veloso, Minister of Economic Affairs for the Presidency and Minister of the Interior, Mr O Monteiro. Economic and agricultural issues were also discussed.

No specific details of the meeting were made available. A Mozambique government source said that his country hoped that the talks would produce practical results.¹¹¹

The meeting took place just over two weeks after Mr 'Pik' Botha had announced that both governments were to establish a joint operational centre from 1 May 1985 on their common border to deal with security matters and other issues of joint concern.¹¹² It occurred also amid growing disillusionment on the part of the Mozambican government with the workings of the Nkomati Accord.

▲ Mozambique-South African Joint Commission

Pretoria, 4 June 1985

■ A joint statement issued after the commission's ninth session which reviewed the Nkomati Accord said that the talks had been frank and open and that both sides had reaffirmed their continuing commitment to the aims of the Accord.¹¹³ Additional steps in support of the Accord were discussed.

▲ Angola-Zambia

Summit Meeting

Luanda, 7 June 1985

■ Presidents Kaunda and José Eduardo dos Santos and their delegations which included both Defence Ministers, held wide-ranging talks covering common problems and cooperation in the economic, defence and security spheres as well as the situation in Southern Africa.

North-South Monitor

They discussed the alleged attempt by South African forces to sabotage Gulf Oil's Malongo oil refinery in Cabinda towards the end of May 1985. Although South Africa's Foreign Minister, Mr 'Pik' Botha, had announced on 15 April 1985 that the country's remaining forces in Angola would be withdrawn within seven days,¹¹⁴ the Cabinda incident had led to an official statement by the South African authorities confirming that 'small elements' of its defence forces were still active in Angola.¹¹⁵

In a joint statement issued after their meeting, both Presidents expressed concern at the continued activity of South African troops within Angola and called on the international community to find a way of compelling the government in Pretoria to respect Angola's independence and sovereignty.

In the light of South Africa's announced intention of installing an interim administration in Namibia on 17 June 1985,¹¹⁶ the two Presidents expressed their countries' solidarity with SWAPO's liberation struggle in a joint communiqué. They insisted that UN resolution 435/78 provided the only basis for a peaceful solution to the problem of Namibia and condemned attempts to link moves towards Namibia's independence with the presence of Cuban troops in Angola.¹¹⁷

▲ Tanzania-Mozambique-Zimbabwe Summit Meeting Harare, 12 June 1985

■ President Machel of Mozambique, President Nyerere of Tanzania, and Zimbabwe's Prime Minister, Robert Mugabe, met ostensibly to discuss 'increased cooperation between states in the region.' However, a major topic of the meeting is believed to have been the deteriorating security situation in Mozambique resulting from increased rebel activity on the part of the Mozambique National Resistance (MNR) and the possibility of military aid to the Mozambican government to fight the MNR.¹¹⁸

The Zimbabwean government apparently considered such aid to be essential given the worsening security in the Beira-Mutare corridor the main communication link between Zimbabwe and Mozambique which is guarded by Zimbabwean troops.

No communiqué was issued after the meeting. President Machel was accompanied by his Foreign and Defence Ministers and other defence officials and officers.

At their March 1985 meeting, the six Frontline states had pledged their support of the Mozambique government in its fight to defend its territory against MNR insurgents.

▲ West African Economic Community (CEAO) Council of Ministers Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 14-16 May 1985

■ Ministers of the six member-countries—Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Burkina Faso and the Ivory Coast¹¹⁹—discussed details of their integrated development programme. This consists of a common agricultural policy, a programme for industrial integration and one for a common transport policy and the

North-South Monitor

extension of a programme on village water supplies. They endorsed the decisions taken at the first meeting of Ministers of Tourism and at the first meeting of ministers in charge of fisheries¹²⁰ as well as at the meeting of the *ad hoc* committee of legal experts on the admission of Benin to the organisation.¹²¹

▲ Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN)

Foreign Ministers meeting

Bangkok, 23 April 1985

■ The foreign ministers of Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand reviewed recent developments in Indochina at an informal meeting whilst in Bandung to attend the thirtieth anniversary commemoration of the Afro-Asian Conference. They agreed to back a Malaysian proposal that 'proximity talks' through a neutral intermediary should be held between the Heng Samrin regime and representatives of the three groups making up the Kampuchean resistance coalition (the CGDK) in order to try and resolve the conflict in Kampuchea. It was decided that senior ASEAN officials should prepare a report on the plan for the ASEAN foreign ministers' meeting to be held in Kuala Lumpur in July.¹²²

Following reports from Beijing that Prince Norodom Sihanouk had offered to resign his post as President of the CGDK, the ministers decided to appeal to Prince Norodom not to step down.¹²³

▲ Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

Ministerial Meeting

Riyadh, 14-15 May 1985

■ Finance Ministers attending the ninth session of the GCC's Economic and Financial Cooperation Committee, discussed a wide range of issues with a view to improving intra-regional trade in locally produced goods and increasing financial flows between GCC countries. These included the protection and development of certain national industries, a proposal to set up a transport company and the coordination of exchange rates in the six member-states.¹²⁴

In discussing measures to protect local basic industries from foreign competition, Ministers examined proposals for a 20 per cent tariff on GCC aluminium imports and a 30 per cent tariff on cement and iron pellet imports. It was decided that a group of specialists should be established to study ways of protecting locally produced goods in these and other sectors, such as the cement industry.

As the situation currently stood, certain goods could be imported tax-free without restrictions on volume and attempts were made to reach agreement at the meeting on the maximum level of tax-free foreign imports to be allowed in to the GCC.

Ministers agreed to look further into the possibility of forming a privately run land transport company to ease the flow of goods within the GCC.

On coordinating exchange rates in GCC member countries, Ministers agreed to

North-South Monitor

direct their central bank Governors to examine the proposal. They decided to meet again in late September 1985 to examine the feasibility of coordinating member states' tax and budgetary affairs.

Ministers also agreed to review ways of unifying public services charges, to introduce in September 1985 a new form of certificate of origin for GCC-produced goods which would reduce bureaucracy, to draw up regulations covering duties on the re-export of foreign goods within the GCC and to allow free movement of goods within the GCC without the need for agents in the importing country.¹²⁵

▲ Contadora Group—Central American Deputy Foreign Ministers Meeting
Panama City, 11–12 April 1985

■ Discussions between the Deputy Foreign Ministers from Costa Rica, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras and the four countries working together as the Contadora Group—Mexico, Venezuela, Panama and Colombia—focused on how to verify compliance with the security aspects of the provisions of the draft Contadora Act for Peace and Cooperation in Central America. The three US allies in the region—Costa Rica, Honduras and El Salvador—had rejected the draft treaty proposed by the Contadora Group in September 1984, and accepted by Nicaragua, demanding among other things that it include more stringent verification of compliance with its provisions, particularly those involving arms reductions.

At least two major suggestions for military verification were put to the meeting. El Salvador, Costa Rica and Honduras proposed that an international monitoring force be established. A Contadora Group plan which was not made public but which is believed to have been based on a Canadian offer of an inspection force to oversee treaty compliance was also put forward.¹²⁶ However serious differences between Nicaragua and the three Central American states prevented any substantive agreement. Nicaragua opposed the Contadora Group's proposal. Following a long discussion, the best that could be achieved was an agreement in principle that arms limitations should be monitored. It was decided that a Control Commission for Security Matters should be set up, but the precise manner in which the Commission would operate remained unsettled. The meeting also agreed that detailed plans for reducing military forces in the region should be drawn up.

The Central American countries also decided to set up two *ad hoc* committees to monitor compliance with treaty provisions covering political matters and refugees and commitments in the economic and social sphere.

In an 'Information Bulletin' issued after the meeting, the Contadora Group hailed the decisions as representing 'significant progress in the Contadora Act negotiations'.¹²⁷ In what was interpreted as a lukewarm response to President Reagan's peace plan on Nicaragua which he announced on 4 April 1985,¹²⁸ the Group went on to reaffirm its commitment to respect the principles of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other countries, to self-determination and to the peaceful settlement of disputes.¹²⁹

On the first day of the meeting, Nicaragua is reported to have proposed to Honduras that the two countries, assisted by the Red Cross and the United Nations, jointly disarm and relocate thousands of Contra rebels operating along their

North-South Monitor

common border in order to reduce tension between the two countries which had resulted in increased border fighting.¹³⁰

● 'This is a very difficult situation because there is a lack of desire to really move forward in the work we are doing.' Nicaragua's Deputy Foreign Minister, Victor Huga Tinoco, after the meeting, *Kayhan* (International Weekly Edition) (London) 14 April 1985.

'We have achieved a great deal.' Honduran Deputy Foreign Minister, Jorge Ramon Hernandez, in *Kayhan* (International Weekly Edition) (London) 14 April 1985.

▲ Meeting of Foreign Ministers of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras
San Salvador, 7 May 1985

■ On the initiative of Costa Rica's President Monge, the Foreign Ministers of Costa Rica, El Salvador and Honduras and the Deputy Foreign Ministers of Guatemala met to discuss the growing crisis in Central America and to coordinate their stand for the forthcoming meeting of the Contadora Group and Central American states in mid-May.

The Declaration released at the end of the meeting contained no direct reference to the trade embargo against Nicaragua announced by President Reagan on 1 May 1985. However, reference was made to the 'complex regional economic situation' which was aggravating the social and political crisis in the region.¹³¹

In their Declaration, the ministers stressed that peace and social justice in the region could only be achieved if all countries, including Nicaragua, took steps towards national reconciliation and pluralist democracy. They called for the Contadora peace process to continue on the basis of what had been agreed at the San José conference in September 1984.¹³²

● 'We support all measures that seek to achieve a democratic and pluralistic development in Central America as the most flexible means for achieving peace and social justice.' Excerpt from the San Salvador Declaration quoted in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* ME/7946/iii, 9 May 1985.

▲ Contadora Group—Central American Deputy Foreign Ministers Meeting
Panama City, 14–16 May 1985

■ Few details were released of the meeting which apparently discussed the main issues which continued to impeded progress towards finalising a regional peace agreement. These were the composition and operation of the mechanisms agreed in April 1985 to monitor compliance with treaty provisions covering such matters as the holding of free elections, limits on arms imports and the inflow of foreign troops and other troop reductions.

Although it was reported that differences between Nicaragua and the other four states had lessened, they were unable to reach agreement on issues relating to military controls and reductions.

North-South Monitor

There was no resolution on the United States' trade embargo against Nicaragua at the meeting,¹³³ which took place at the same time as an extraordinary ministerial Council meeting of the Latin American Economic System (SELA). It was convened at Nicaragua's request to discuss the issue and, following lengthy discussions and an initial resistance on the part of Nicaragua's Central American neighbours, SELA unanimously adopted a resolution condemning the embargo as a violation of international law and calling on the United States to lift it.¹³⁴

● 'Our Central American brothers are showing good-will in efforts to surmount obstacles and advance towards the finishing line: peace.' The Panamanian Foreign Minister, Mr Jorge Abadia Arias, commenting on the meeting, *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* ME/7954/D2 18 May 1985.

'The adoption of coercive measures against any member-state affects Latin America's economic security and contributes to accentuating tension in Central America.' From SELA's statement condemning the US embargo against Nicaragua, *Xinhua News Agency* 25 May 1985.

▲ Contadora Group—Central American Deputy Foreign Ministers Meeting Panama City, 19 June 1985

■ The Contadora Group's efforts to make progress on outstanding issues in the draft Central American peace treaty were temporarily thwarted when its meeting with the five Central American states broke up early as a result of a disagreement between the representatives of Nicaragua and those of El Salvador, Honduras and Costa Rica over the agenda for the talks.

The Nicaraguan Deputy Foreign Minister left the negotiations after the three Central American countries turned down his request that the agenda be changed to include a review of the situation in Central America following the United States' decision to give financial aid to the Contras.¹³⁵ The meeting had been arranged in order to discuss the unresolved problems of the draft peace agreement, including arms reductions, controls on foreign shipments of arms to the region and border security.

In their communiqué issued after the meeting had been suspended, the Contadora Group reaffirmed its commitment to finding a solution to the crisis in Central America. No mention was made of a date for the next meeting however.

It was subsequently announced by Nicaragua's Deputy Foreign Minister that the country's Vice-President would shortly be visiting the four Contadora countries to hold talks and to reopen negotiations with other countries in the region.¹³⁶

● 'It makes no sense to continue ignoring what is happening. It is not possible to be talking of peace when the US is planning war.' Nicaragua's Deputy Foreign Minister, Victor Hugo Tinoco, *Financial Times* (London) 21 June 1985.

North-South Monitor

▲ Caribbean Community (CARICOM)

Council of Ministers

Georgetown, Guyana, 11-13 April 1985

■ Following the failure of CARICOM countries to introduce the measures designed to reverse the decline in intra-regional trade by 1 January 1985 (as agreed at the organisation's July 1984 Nassau summit) ministers set a new target date of 1 June 1985. By that date, the thirteen member-states, with the exceptions of Belize and St Vincent and the Grenadines,¹³⁷ are to have dismantled protectionist barriers and raised or introduced common tariffs on a list of 'sensitive' goods from outside the region. The latter measure is intended to protect similar goods made within CARICOM and specifically those from the steel, cement and fertiliser industries.

The value of CARICOM trade dropped from \$555m in 1982 to \$481m in 1983 and, according to the CARICOM Secretariat, the decline continued in 1984. The decrease is attributed to the economic recession in the area and to protectionist policies adopted by some member-countries.¹³⁸

The initiative for a regional defence force promoted by the United States failed to command total support from ministers.¹³⁹

▲ Caribbean Community (CARICOM)

Foreign Ministers Meeting

Basseterre, St Kitts-Nevis, 9-11 May 1985

■ A wide range of issues was on the agenda for discussion including the international economic situation, the development of CARICOM-Latin American trade and economic cooperation,¹⁴⁰ the question of CARICOM obtaining observer status at the United Nations, the situation in Southern Africa, apartheid and the United States' economic sanctions against Nicaragua.

In a communiqué issued at the end of the meeting at which eleven of the thirteen member-states were represented, ministers referred to recent developments designed 'to address structural and developmental aspects of the global economy' and stated that these developments had failed to deal in a significant way with the overriding concerns of developing countries, particularly in the financial and monetary spheres. In their view, an international conference on money and finance for development should be held. On the question of how to tackle effectively the debt problems faced by developing countries, they emphasised the need to improve access to markets, for higher commodity prices, for inflows of new financial resources and for more rational and flexible rescheduling arrangements.

In discussing the conflicts in Central America, ministers reaffirmed their support for the Contadora peace process and called on the United States to lift its trade embargo against Nicaragua immediately. The consensus was that the embargo was likely to jeopardise the Contadora Group's efforts to negotiate a peaceful solution to the region's conflicts.

South Africa's announcement of its decision to take unilateral action to settle the problem of Namibia was strongly deplored.¹⁴¹

● 'We are simply opposed to the use of sanctions outside the United Nations

North-South Monitor

system . . . We believe there should be an immediate termination of sanctions and of any other activity that is likely to undermine the Contadora process'. Kennedy Simmonds, Prime Minister of St Kitts-Nevis and Chairman of the meeting, *Xinhua News Agency* 23 May 1985.

▲ Thirtieth Anniversary Celebration of the 1955 Bandung Afro-Asian Conference
Bandung, Indonesia, 24-25 April 1985

■ At Indonesia's invitation, representatives from some eighty countries in Africa and Asia gathered to commemorate the 1955 Bandung Conference which had helped to lay the basis for what was later to become the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).¹⁴² At least a dozen foreign ministers attended the meeting as did representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), SWAPO, the ANC and the Kampuchean anti-Vietnamese coalition (CGDK).

Participants unanimously adopted a nineteen-paragraph declaration¹⁴³ reaffirming their commitment to the Ten Principles of peaceful co-existence contained in the final communiqué of the 1955 conference, and dealing with economic issues and the dangers of the arms race.

Referring to growing insecurity and tensions in the world and to the risk of nuclear war, countries with nuclear weapons were urged to take steps to stop the nuclear arms race and to prevent it spreading into space by ending the testing and production of nuclear weapons and immediately beginning nuclear disarmament negotiations. The declaration also stressed the continuing need for 'abstention from the use of arrangements of collective defence to serve the particular interests of any of the big powers'. This quotation, from one of the Ten Principles, was reported as being included following a compromise agreement on a request from India that something be said about foreign military bases.

On economic issues, particular attention was given to the situation in Africa, developing country demands for a New International Economic Order (NIEO) and South-South cooperation. Participants called on governments and international organisations to take prompt measures to assist those countries in Africa that had been affected by drought and famine. They urged that increased aid be given to developing countries, that developed countries remove protectionist trade barriers and that a long-term solution be found to the debt problems of Third World countries. They emphasised that special measures were urgently required for the least developed countries. They also called upon the industrialised countries to join in negotiations on financial, trade and other economic matters aimed at restructuring the international economic order and in this context they stressed the importance of South-South cooperation in the technical and economic spheres.

Largely it seems because of political differences among the participants, but perhaps also because of the commemorative nature of the occasion, little mention was made of political issues in the declaration. Only four paragraphs were devoted to such issues. Two of these condemned the South African government's apartheid policies and its activities in Namibia and expressed support for the liberation movements in the region. Other countries were urged not to recognise or cooperate

North-South Monitor

with the new interim administration in Namibia. A third paragraph voiced support for the PLO's activities and condemned Israel's policies in the occupied territories and South Lebanon as racist and brutal. It urged that on-going conflicts in Asia, Africa, Latin America, Europe and elsewhere should be resolved on the basis of the UN Charter, the Ten Principles and the principles and objectives of the NAM.

The declaration also emphasised the importance both of developing cultural cooperation among developing countries and of preserving traditional national cultures and national identity. It called for greater effort to be put into achieving a New International Information and Communication Order.

Although regional conflicts and political differences between participating countries were side-stepped in the declaration, they were nonetheless much in evidence during preparations for the conference and at the gathering itself. Representatives of ASEAN countries were clearly displeased that the meeting had not issued a condemnation of Vietnam's activities in Kampuchea as a violation of self-determination. India's apparent influence over the contents of the draft declaration being prepared by Indonesia also attracted controversy. The Pakistan government reportedly showed its annoyance at India's success in blocking a statement in the declaration on the Soviet Union's presence in Afghanistan by not sending its foreign minister to the meeting. The news that Prince Norodom Sihanouk intended to resign as leader of the Kampuchean resistance coalition attracted intense speculation and interest from delegates, as did the presence of a Chinese delegation led by the Foreign Minister, Wu Xueqian. The Chinese minister was the first Chinese official to visit Indonesia in eighteen years. Indonesia had broken off diplomatic relations with China after accusing it of having supported a communist-backed attempted coup. Speculation at the conference centred on whether the two countries might now take steps to resume diplomatic relations.¹⁴⁴

● 'The brokerage of power through military economic temptation must be stopped.' Mr Khurshed Alam Khan, India's Minister for External Affairs, addressing the conference, *Hindu* (Madras) 25 April 1985.

The declaration is a 'unilateral act of the host country.' Sri Lanka's chief delegate Esmond Wickremasinghe, *Far Eastern Economic Review* (Hong Kong) 9 May 1985, p 18.

'Colonialism and racism come in many forms; it is important to oppose them all.' Thailand's Foreign Minister, Siddhi Savetsila, at the closing ceremony, referring to the situation in Kampuchea, *Far Eastern Economic Review* (Hong Kong) 9 May 1985, p 18.

▲ Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)

Extraordinary Ministerial Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau on the Question of Namibia

New Delhi, 19-21 April 1985

■ Representatives of eighty-three non-aligned countries attended the meeting which had been called to examine the situation in Namibia and to agree measures aimed at hastening the country's independence. Just over sixty of the delegates

North-South Monitor

represented member-countries in the Coordinating Bureau and over fifty delegation leaders were of ministerial rank. The leaders of SWAPO and the PLO were also present.

The meeting opened on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of SWAPO and just one day after President Botha of South Africa had announced that an interim government would be installed.¹⁴⁵ Delegates discussed South Africa's decision as a first priority. Following a proposal by India's Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, in his opening speech in which he argued that the decision challenged both the authority and the credibility of the UN Security Council which had produced an independence plan for Namibia in 1978 and declared unilateral measures null and void, the delegates unanimously agreed to send a telegram to the President of the Security Council. They expressed their profound indignation at the South African decision which they condemned as a violation of Security Council resolutions and called on other countries to condemn it and to refrain from recognising the proposed regime. They requested the Security Council to take immediate action against South Africa under the UN Charter, including, if necessary, mandatory sanctions, in order to prevent it from violating Security Council resolutions.¹⁴⁶

However, the main business of the meeting concerned the adoption of a Declaration and a Programme of Action both of which are contained in the Final Document of the meeting.¹⁴⁷

In the Declaration and the Programme of Action which were unanimously adopted at the meeting, ministers condemned South Africa's continued occupation of Namibia and its activities in the region. But they also criticised Western policy in South Africa and called for a two-pronged approach to the Namibian problem. On the one hand, they urged that greater diplomatic pressure be put on South Africa, chiefly under UN auspices. On the other, they called for increased financial and material assistance to be given to SWAPO.

On the UN's role, ministers took the position that the organisation had primary responsibility for Namibia under General Assembly resolution 2145 (1966) and it was therefore its duty to ensure that Namibia quickly gained independence. They confirmed their support both for the UN Council for Namibia as the current legal administering authority for the country and for UN Security Council Resolution 435 (1978) as the only basis on which a peaceful settlement of the problem could be reached. This resolution aims to implement the UN's plan for Namibian independence.

Ministers called on the Security Council to take immediate action to ensure that the plan was put into operation. It was agreed that a meeting of the Security Council was particularly imperative given South Africa's recently announced decision and that the Chairman of the NAM should request an urgent meeting of the Council to examine the current situation and how to obtain compliance with its resolutions, particularly Resolution 435 (1978). All NAM countries were urged to present an effective united stand on Namibia within the UN.

The exploitation by South African and other foreign companies of Namibia's abundant raw materials and particularly of its uranium, caused concern at the meeting. The activities of these companies was condemned as contravening UN resolutions and decrees aimed at protecting Namibia's raw materials. The UN Council for Namibia was urged to take legal action against the offending parties.¹⁴⁸ It

North-South Monitor

was also invited by delegates to help to implement the Programme of Action.

Delegates were highly critical of the activities of the United States and other Western powers in relation to Namibia and the situation in Southern Africa in general. There was disappointment at the lack of progress towards achieving Namibia's independence on the part of the Western contact group¹⁴⁹ which delegates alleged was such as to cast suspicion on the intentions of the group. 'Grave concern' was expressed at the fact that the Security Council had been prevented by several of its permanent Western country members from taking measures against South Africa. The economic, political, military and nuclear cooperation of major industrialised countries (and Israel) with the South African government was also deplored as undermining internationally agreed policies and helping to perpetuate South Africa's occupation of Namibia. The United States and EEC member-countries were urged to cancel free trade agreements with Israel on the grounds that they benefited the South African economy and undermined the UN's decisions.

The US policy of 'constructive engagement' with South Africa came in for particularly severe criticism. Delegates argued that it was 'in principle aimed at and is in fact strengthening and giving encouragement to the racist regime' and that it supported South Africa in its politics of intransigence and aggression in the region.¹⁵⁰ They called for the policy to be abandoned. Also severely condemned was the US support for a link between South Africa's withdrawal from Namibia and the pulling-out of Cuban troops from Angola which, delegates agreed, was aimed at making an East-West issue out of a decolonisation problem.

Turning to consider what the NAM could do to try and force the South African government to comply with UN resolutions on Namibia, the meeting agreed on the need for wide-ranging action in the diplomatic and economic fields. Support was given for moves to seek mandatory sanctions under the UN charter against South Africa with the rider that it was hoped that Western Security Council members would show sufficient political will and support them. In the meantime, however, ministers urged UN members and particularly non-aligned countries which had not yet done so, to abide by UN resolutions on Namibia and also to take voluntary measures to isolate South Africa. They proposed measures such as breaking off diplomatic relations, imposing an oil embargo, disinvesting and preventing new investments in the country, removing overflight and landing facilities to its aircraft and docking rights to its ships and banning all sporting and cultural contacts. Ministers also called for the UN's mandatory arms embargo and its resolution on arms purchases from South Africa to be strictly observed.

Agreement on economic and diplomatic sanctions was not reached without some disagreement among ministers. Several African countries, and notably Libya, had wanted to go further and threaten joint military intervention by non-aligned countries if South Africa refused to withdraw from Namibia in compliance with UN resolutions. The majority of delegates on the other hand considered that the situation had not yet reached the stage where such a drastic step needed to be considered.

Considerable praise and support for SWAPO's role in fighting for Namibia's independence was voiced. Rajiv Gandhi announced at the opening session that India was granting full diplomatic status to the organisation.¹⁵¹ In the final document, ministers reaffirmed 'the legitimacy of the freedom struggle of the Namibian people

North-South Monitor

by every means at their disposal including armed struggle' and called upon non-aligned and other countries as well as the UN to increase diplomatic, military and material aid to SWAPO 'with the aim of helping it intensify its armed struggle'. Calls were also made for increased contributions to the Non-aligned Solidarity Fund for Namibia, as well as for assistance to the Frontline States and to the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC).

The ministerial meeting also adopted an action plan to help to support agricultural development in Africa. The plan offers emergency and medium-term aid to help revive agricultural production in the poorest countries and will chiefly operate by means of specific programmes and projects designed to increase cooperation and to support countries in their efforts to overcome the crisis in food production. Assistance is to be focused on increasing production through soil conservation, irrigation and drainage and the use of special tools, fertilisers and seeds, developing supplementary infrastructure, providing access to credit facilities and marketing organisations and developing human skills and any institutions required.¹⁵²

● 'The issue now is whether a wronged and dispossessed people will be supported or deserted by the world body.' India's Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, in his inaugural address to the meeting, *The Hindu* (Madras) 20 April 1985.

North-South Monitor

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ *Xinhua News Agency* (London) 2 April 1985.
- ² *Xinhua News Agency* (London) 2 April 1985; UNCTAD *Press Releases* (Geneva) TAD/INF/1667 of 22 March 1985, 1668 of 25 March 1985, 1669 of 26 March 1985 and 1670 of 2 April 1985. For further details, see *UNCTAD Bulletin* (Geneva) No. 211, April 1985.
- ³ The General Assembly decided on 14 December 1979 that global negotiations should be held on international cooperation for development.
- ⁴ See *Xinhua News Agency*, 17 April 1985; *UN Press release* GA/7100, 12 April 1985; *UN Press Release* GA/7100, 12 April 1985; International Foundation for Development Alternatives, *Special United Nations Service* (Geneva) 16 April 1985.
- ⁵ Iraq, Iran and Libya had failed to make their contributions to the first budget replenishment of IFAD.
- ⁶ For details of the February meeting, see North-South Monitor, *Third World Quarterly* 7(3) July 1985, pp 697-8.
- ⁷ The original fund had been \$1 billion for 1978-80, followed by a first replenishment of \$1.1 billion for 1981-4.
- ⁸ A recent evaluation of IFAD by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) testified to its cost-effectiveness (its operational costs are only 5 per cent of its spending, and for every \$1 it spends, recipient countries contribute \$3 of their own) and to the value of its contribution to the alleviation of hunger and malnutrition in the poorest areas of the world. Since 1977, IFAD has provided \$1.8 billion for projects in eighty-four Third World countries, enabling 40 million of the rural poor to grow an extra 20 million tonnes of grain.
- ⁹ Thirteen LDCs were praised by IFAD's President, Idriss Jazairy, for making advance contributions to IFAD's second replenishment despite their very difficult situations. Half of the advance contributions announced by the end of the meeting had come from Third World donors. *Inter Press Service* (Vienna) No. 069/85, 21 May 1985.
- ¹⁰ IFAD *Press Release*. IFAD/263, 21 May 1985; *International Coalition for Development Action (ICDA) News* (Brussels) April 1985; *Le Monde* (Paris), 19 May 1985; *The Times* (London) 20 May 1985; *Financial Times* (London) 21 May 1985 and 17 June 1985; *UN World News Service*, 30 May 1985; *African Times* (London) 28 June 1985.
- ¹¹ WFC has 36 Member States.
- ¹² *Progress in Implementation of Food Plans and Strategies in Africa* (WFC/1985/2); report of a joint WFC/African Development Bank *Workshop on Accelerated Food Strategies Implementation in Africa* (WFC/1985/2/Add.1); report on the question of 'aid effectiveness' (WFC/1985/3); *Improving Access to Food by the Undernourished* (WFC/1985/4); *External Economic Constraints on Meeting Food Objectives* (WFC/1985/5). See also WFC *Press Release*, April 1985.
- ¹³ Implicit allusion was being made to the recent United States announcement of a \$2 billion cereal export subsidy, which threatens to stoke the US-EEC trade dispute evident in the corridors of the WFC meeting. See in general *Financial Times* (London) 10 June 1985; *The Guardian* (London) 10 June 1985; *The Times* (London) 14 June 1985.
- ¹⁴ See *West Africa* (London) 13 May 1985; *Xinhua News Agency*, 12 April 1985. According to the ECA Executive Secretary, the OAU Council of Ministers decided to involve the ECA Ministerial Conference in preparations for the OAU summit.
- ¹⁵ See *South* (London) July 1985, pp 31-40 on the African debt problem and p 32 for moves afoot in the OAU to establish a common front on debt repayments.
- ¹⁶ See *Third World Quarterly* 4(1) January 1982, p 25 and pp 125-43.
- ¹⁷ *Xinhua News Agency* 20 May 1985 and UN Office for Emergency Operations in Africa, *Africa EMERGENCY*, June 1985, p 2.
- ¹⁸ The Food Aid Convention is part of the International Wheat Agreement.
- ¹⁹ At the end of March 1985 only 42 per cent of the promised aid had in fact arrived in recipient countries.
- ²⁰ The FAO presented its rehabilitation projects to donors at a meeting at the end of March 1985. See *Financial Times* (London) 28 March 1985; *Le Monde* (Paris) 29 March 1985; and *UN Press Release*, FAO/3354, 29 March 1985.

North-South Monitor

- ²¹ See Interpress Service, *North-South News Service* (Vienna) 13 April and 25 April 1985; also UN Press Release, FAO/3356, 10 April 1985 and FAO/3355, 10 April 1985.
- ²² See International Coalition for Development Alternatives, *Special United Nations Service*, 18 June 1985. Also United Nations Press Release TNC/323, 8 April 1985 for the background to the meeting and details of reports before the Commission.
- ²³ UN Press Release TNC/330, 15 April 1985 and TNC/338, 19 April 1985.
- ²⁴ See also UN Press Releases TNC/335, 17 April 1985; TNC/336, 18 April 1985; TNC/338, 19 April 1985 and TNC/339, 19 April 1985.
- ²⁵ For background to the negotiation of the Code and details of the code, see *UNCTAD Bulletin* (Geneva), No. 211, April 1985, pp. 12–13. For the text of the draft International Code of Conduct as at the end of the 5th Conference in November 1983, see UNCTAD document TD/CODE TOT/42.
- ²⁶ *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (Zurich) 7 June 1985.
- ²⁷ International Foundation for Development Alternatives, *Special United Nations Service*, 4 April 1985.
- ²⁸ See *Third World Quarterly* 6(4) October 1984, pp 1062–3.
- ²⁹ The text of this Provisional Understanding is in *International Legal Materials* 23(6) November 1984, pp 1354–1365.
- ³⁰ United Nations Press Release, SEA/615, 3 April 1985 and SEA/616, 8 April 1985; *West Africa* (London) 25 March 1985.
- ³¹ The report is available in two UNCTAD documents: the text is in TD/B/1029, and an addendum is contained in TD/B/1029/Add.1. For a summary of the report, see *UNCTAD Bulletin* (Geneva) No. 211, April 1985.
- ³² *Reuter Oilseed Newsletter* 17 June 1985; *Financial Times* (London) 11 June 1985.
- ³³ The producer members of the ITTA are Brazil, the Congo, Ecuador, Gabon, Ghana, Honduras, Indonesia, the Ivory Coast, Liberia, Malaysia, Peru and the Philippines. The consuming countries are Belgium, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, West Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States and the USSR. South Korea, a consumer, and Papua New Guinea, a producer, also want to join.
- ³⁴ For full details of the ITTA see *Third World Quarterly* 6(2) April 1984, p 469; and *UNCTAD Bulletin* (Geneva), No. 211, April 1985, p 11.
- ³⁵ *Financial Times* (London) 4 April 1985, 18 June 1985 and 2 July 1985; International Foundation for Development Alternatives, *Special United Nations Service* (Geneva) 25 June 1985.
- ³⁶ *Third World Quarterly* 7(3) July 1985, p 695 sets out the arguments of the consuming countries at the last meeting. According to *South* (London) July 1985 p 99, the six main exporters of coffee to non-ICO member countries at cheap prices were Indonesia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Kenya and Mexico.
- ³⁷ The Indonesian Coffee Exporters' Association apparently asked the Indonesian government to consider withdrawing from the ICO after the proposal was accepted by the Council. *Financial Times* (London) 3 May 1985.
- ³⁸ On the producing countries' meeting see *The Guardian* (London) 15 April 1985 and *Financial Times* (London) 16 April 1985. On the Council meeting see *The Guardian* (London) 22 April 1985 and *Financial Times* (London) 23 April 1985.
- ³⁹ Producing countries had called for these procedures to be strengthened at an earlier ICO meeting. See *Third World Quarterly* 7(3) July 1985, p 695.
- ⁴⁰ For further details of the meeting and the issues involved see *ICO Press Release* PR-100/85, 31 May 1985; *Reuter Coffee Newsletter*, 29 May 1985, 31 May 1985 and 3 June 1985; *The Guardian* (London) 24 June 1985; and *South* (London) July 1985, p 99.
- ⁴¹ For the original negotiations, see *Third World Quarterly* 3(2) April 1981, p 213. The buffer stock has so far only made purchases, obtaining 270,000 tonnes of natural rubber at a cost of \$3 billion, but consumers claim that prices have been held down by the mere fact of the existence of the buffer stock, and of the possibility of holdings being sold.
- ⁴² Malaysia, the largest exporter of natural rubber and a high-cost producer, has already converted many of its rubber plantations to other, less labour-intensive, crops such as palm oil and cocoa.
- ⁴³ Such demands for supply restraints have apparently fuelled existing US suspicions that the Association of Natural Rubber Producing Countries (ANRPC) has since 1982 been encouraging its members to withhold rubber supplies unilaterally.

North-South Monitor

- ⁴⁴ *Financial Times* (London) 3, 22 and 23 April 1985; *The Guardian* (London) 13 May 1985; UNCTAD Press Releases, TAD/INF 1678 of 23 April, 1679 of 24 April, 1681 of 30 April, and 1687 of 9 May 1985. The main documents submitted to the Conference were UNCTAD Secretariat's, *Preparation of a Successor Agreement to the International Natural Rubber Agreement, 1979—some Policy Issues* (TD/RUBBER. 2/4); and the International Natural Rubber Organisation's, *A background paper on hisotirical development, status and operation of the Agreement* (TD/RUBBER. 2/3); *International Natural Rubber Agreement 1979: An Analysis of the Development and Effectiveness of the Agreement* (TD/B/C.1/260).
- ⁴⁵ *Financial Times* (London) 4 and 25 April and 13 and 14 June 1985.
- ⁴⁶ *Financial Times* (London) 6 June 1985.
- ⁴⁷ See *Financial Times* (London) 7 June 1985; *The Guardian* (London) 17 June 1985; International Foundation for Development Alternatives, *Special United Nations Service*, 6 June, 7 June and 11 June 1985; and Interpress Service, *North-South News Service* (Vienna) 7 June 1985.
- ⁴⁸ *Reuter Sugar Newsletter* 23 May 1985. See also *The Times* (London) 29 May 1985 for a resumé of an FAO study assessing the future of the sugar market, 'Sugar: Major trade and stabilisation issues in the eighties'. The study is available from the FAO Commodities and Trade Division.
- ⁴⁹ See *Third World Quarterly* (6)4 October 1984, p 1077-8 and *Financial Times* (London) 29 May 1985.
- ⁵⁰ *The Guardian* (London) 28 May 1985; *Reuter Sugar Newsletter* 23 May 1985; and *Xinhua News Agency* 3 June 1985.
- ⁵¹ *Third World Quarterly* 7(2) April 1985, p 417.
- ⁵² For details of the recent operatives of the ITA buffer stock see *Far Eastern Economic Review* (Hong Kong) 9 May 1985, p 94; and *Financial Times* (London) 17 May 1985.
- ⁵³ *Reuter Metal Newsletter* 13 June 1985; and ITC Press Communiqué 13 June 1985.
- ⁵⁴ The four major GEPLACEA members are Argentina, Brazil, Cuba and the Dominican Republic. The group embodies a wide range of interests as it includes both large and small producers.
- ⁵⁵ *Financial Times* (London) 5 June 1985 and 6 June 1985; *Reuter Sugar Newsletter* 3 June 1985, 4 June 1985 and 5 June 1985.
- ⁵⁶ For details of the January 'talks on talks' see *Third World Quarterly* 7(3) July 1985 pp 697-9.
- ⁵⁷ The US withdrew its allegations that the Soviet radar under construction at Kranoyarsk in Siberia contravened the 1972 Anti-ballistic Missile Treaty, on account of its being a 'battle-management' radar. Both Paul Nitze and George Schultz, US Secretary of State, stated unequivocally that it was an early-warning radar, which is permitted by the treaty. However, its location inland rather than at the edge of the country remained a contravention, though, they maintained. *IHT*, 17 April 1985.
- ⁵⁸ It was decided at the plenary session that the negotiators for each of the groups would meet twice a week, for 3-4 weeks, followed by a final plenary session.
- ⁵⁹ *The Guardian* (London) 23 March 1985.
- ⁶⁰ Gorbachev's comments were made in answer to questions from *Pravda*; see *Xinhua News Agency* (London) 15 May 1985.
- ⁶¹ Casper Weinberger, US Defense Secretary, is reported to have said that the Soviet Union is developing its own 'Star Wars' system and wants to maintain a monopoly in the field. *Xinhua News Agency* (London) 27 April 1985.
- ⁶² *IHT*, 12 April 1985.
- ⁶³ *IHT*, 29 April 1985.
- ⁶⁴ *IHT*, 18 April 1985.
- ⁶⁵ For Nitze's and Rowney's view of the talks, see *IHT*, 15 March 1985 and 29 April 1985.
- ⁶⁶ For the exact wording used, see *Third World Quarterly* 7(3) July 1985, pp 697-8.
- ⁶⁷ *The Times* (London) 15 May 1985; *Financial Times* (London) 15 May 1985, 16 May 1985 and 17 May 1985; *Le Monde* (Paris) 16 May 1985, *IHT* (Paris) 16 May 1985 and 18-19 May 1985.
- ⁶⁸ SALT stands for Strategic Arms Limitation Talks. For details of the SALT II treaty, see *The Times* (London) 7 June 1985.
- ⁶⁹ NATO Defence ministers had already given the SDI their support in March. See *Third World Quarterly* 7(3) July 1985, p 697. However, France does not participate in the meetings of Defence Ministers of NATO.

North-South Monitor

- ⁷⁰ *The Times* (London) 7 June 1985; *Financial Times* (London) 7 June 1985.
- ⁷¹ France apparently opposes deployment of the space-based defence system and research into its feasibility. It is concerned about the potential effect of the SDI programme on its independent nuclear deterrent.
- ⁷² The three countries have turned down the US invitation to participate in the research stage of the SDI.
- ⁷³ See *Le Monde* (Paris) 8 June 1985 and 9–10 June 1985; *The Guardian* (London) 6 June 1985, 7 June 1985 and 8 June 1985; *IHT* (Paris) 5 June 1985 and 6 June 1985; *Financial Times* (London) 6 June 1985; and NATO Press Service, *Press Communiqué* M-1 (85)11, *Final Communiqué*, 7 June 1985.
- ⁷⁴ For the text of the protocol see *Soviet News* (London) 1 May 1985.
- ⁷⁵ See *The Guardian* (London) 16 April 1985, 19 April 1985 and 20 April 1985; *The Times* (London) 16 April 1985. See also *The Times* (London) 25 April 1985, for an article assessing the internal state of the Warsaw Pact alliance.
- ⁷⁶ For the text of the joint communiqué issued at the end of the meeting, see *Soviet News* (London) 1 May 1985.
- ⁷⁷ Mr Gorbachev's speech is in *Soviet News* (London) 1 May 1985. See also *Xinhua News Agency*, 27 May 1985. On the meeting see *Financial Times* (London) 26 April 1985; also *Financial Times* (London) 3 May 1985; and *The Guardian* (London) 26 April 1985 for the background to and comment on the summit.
- ⁷⁸ The seven Western Economic Summit leaders are US President Ronald Reagan; Japan's Prime Minister, Yasuhiro Nakasone; West Germany's Chancellor, Helmut Kohl; France's President François Mitterrand; Britain's Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher; Italy's Prime Minister, Bettino Craxi; and Canada's Prime Minister, Brian Mulroney.
- ⁷⁹ The reservations of the developing countries concerning a new round of GATT talks had been aired at the previous April meetings of the Group of 24, the IMF Interim Committee, and the IMF/World Bank Development Committee. See *Third World Quarterly* 7(4) October 1985, pp 1040–2.
- ⁸⁰ There were two Bonn Summit Final Declarations, a political and an economic declaration. See *London Press Service*, Central Office of Information, 4 May 1985.
- ⁸¹ *Financial Times* (London) 1 and 7 May 1985; *The Times* (London) 2 and 6 May 1985; *IHT* 7 May 1985; *The Sunday Times* (London) 5 May 1985; *Far Eastern Economic Review* 16 May 1985; *West Africa* (London) 13 May 1985; *IMF Survey*, 13 May 1985; *Xinhua News Agency* (London) 10 May 1985.
- ⁸² *Financial Times* (London) 12 April 1985; *The Guardian* (London) 12 April 1985; and *IHT* (Paris) 13–14 April 1985.
- ⁸³ For arguments that there were signs that the US Administration was placing greater importance on the interaction between domestic economic growth and its policies and international trade and monetary developments, see *Financial Times* (London) 15 April 1985 and *IHT* (Paris) 15 April 1985.
- ⁸⁴ *The Guardian* (London) 13 April 1985; and *IHT* (Paris) 13–14 April 1985.
- ⁸⁵ OECD Press Release, Press/A (85)31 (Paris) 12 April 1985 gives the text of the Communiqué, as does *The OECD Observer*, No. 134, May 1985, pp 3–6.
- ⁸⁶ The Declaration on Transborder Data Flows is given in *The OECD Observer* No. 134, May 1985, p 6, or see OECD Press Release Press/A(85)30(Paris) 11 April 1985.
- ⁸⁷ See *Financial Times* (London) 10 April 1985, and the Communiqué for details of the study. The OECD Council subsequently approved an indicative checklist for the assessment of trade policy measures. See OECD Press Release Press/A(85)35 (Paris) 29 May 1985.
- ⁸⁸ The founder-members of G10 are Belgium, Britain, Canada, France, West Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United States. Switzerland became a member in 1984, giving G10 eleven members in reality.
- ⁸⁹ The report was commissioned by seven major industrial countries: Britain, Canada, France, West Germany, Italy, Japan and the US.
- ⁹⁰ *IHT*, 22–23 June 1985.
- ⁹¹ *Financial Times* (London) 21 June 1985.
- ⁹² *IHT*, 18 June and 27 June 1985; *Le Monde* (Paris) 22 June and 24 June 1985; *Financial Times* (London) 22 June 1985.

North-South Monitor

- ⁹³ For example by the Non-Aligned Movement, the Commonwealth Finance Ministers meeting and the Cartagena group of Finance and Foreign Ministers of Latin America. See *ICDA News* (Brussels) February 1985.
- ⁹⁴ The Intergovernmental Group of 24 on International Monetary Affairs met in Washington DC, on 16 April 1985. For the press communiqué issued at the end of the meeting, see *IMF Survey*, 29 April 1985.
- ⁹⁵ For the press communiqués released at the end of meetings of the Interim and Development Committees, see *IMF Survey*, 29 April 1985.
- ⁹⁶ See *Third World Quarterly* 7(4) October 1985, pp 1037-9.
- ⁹⁷ *The Guardian* (London) 19 April 1985.
- ⁹⁸ *Far Eastern Economic Review* 2 May 1985; *West Africa* (London) 15 April 1985; *South* (London) April 1985; *Finance and Development* June 1985; *International Coalition for Development Action (ICDA) News* (Brussels) February 1985; *Latin America Weekly Report* 26 April 1985; *The Sunday Times* (London) 21 April 1985; *Financial Times* (London) 15 and 19 April 1985; *The Guardian* (London) 16, 17 and 19 April 1985; *The Times* (London) 25 April 1985.
- ⁹⁹ See *Third World Quarterly* 7(3) July 1985, p 702-4.
- ¹⁰⁰ See *Third World Quarterly* 7(4) October 1985, p 1035; also *Financial Times* (London) 15 May 1985.
- ¹⁰¹ For the background to and details of the three meetings, see *IHT* (Paris) 10 June and 11 June 1985; *The Guardian* (London) 30 April and 20 June 1985; *Le Monde* (Paris) 12 June 1985; and *Financial Times* (London) 25 April, 13, 15 and 31 May, 7, 8, 11, 20 and 28 June 1985. According to EEC estimates, invisibles account for up to 30 per cent of world trade.
- ¹⁰² Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka.
- ¹⁰³ Khurshed Alam Khan made a remark to the effect that Sri Lanka's Muslims should realise that the Tamils there are fighting for their rights too. *Far Eastern Economic Review* 30 May 1985.
- ¹⁰⁴ SARC Charter, adopted in New Delhi, 1983.
- ¹⁰⁵ Following Sri Lanka's disagreement with the other six States on the proposed functions of the Ministerial Council, it was decided that the question be resolved in further consultations before the Dhaka Summit. *Xinhua News Agency* 25 May 1985.
- ¹⁰⁶ See also *Dawn* (Karachi) 15 May 1985; *The Hindu* (Madras) 10, 11, 13, 16 May 1985; *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* FE/7948/A3/6 11 May 1985 and FE/7952/A3/3 16 May 1985.
- ¹⁰⁷ The 15 PTA member states are Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Somalia, Swaziland, Tanzania (which joined on 11 April 1985), Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. See *Xinhua News Agency* 12 April 1985. For details of the establishment of the PTA in 1981, see *Third World Quarterly* 4(2) April 1982, p 246.
- ¹⁰⁸ *Xinhua News Agency*, 19 June 1985.
- ¹⁰⁹ Libya's level of aid had been strongly criticised at a preparatory ministerial meeting held in January 1985. See *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* ME/7937/ii, 29 April 1985; also *Xinhua News Agency*, 21 May 1985; and *Le Monde* (Paris) 30 April 1985.
- ¹¹⁰ *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* ME/7914/i, 1 April 1985 and *The Guardian* (London) 1 April 1985. According to *The Guardian*, this is the first time that the conflict over the Western Sahara has spilled over into the Arab League.
- ¹¹¹ *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* ME/7948/ii, 11 May 1985 and ME/7950/B/3, 14 May 1985. See also *Xinhua News Agency* 22 May 1985.
- ¹¹² *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* ME/7935/B/7, 26 April 1985.
- ¹¹³ *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* ME/7970/ii, 6 June 1985 and *Xinhua News Agency* 17 June 1985.
- ¹¹⁴ *Financial Times* (London) 16 April 1985 and *Xinhua News Agency* 21 May 1985. South Africa's Department of Foreign Affairs subsequently announced that the Angola-South African commission monitoring the withdrawal of South African troops from Angola and SWAPO infiltration from Angola had ceased its activities on 16 May 1985 following the South African withdrawal. Both countries would remain in contact through military channels: *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* ME/7954/ii 18 May 1985.
- ¹¹⁵ *Financial Times* (London) 24 May 1985 and *The Guardian* (London) 24 May 1985.
- ¹¹⁶ For details of the interim administration, see *IHT* (Paris) 18 June 1985. See also *The Times* (London) 1 June and *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, ME/7954/B/4, 18 May 1985 for information on the other steps taken by South Africa to support this move.

North-South Monitor

- ¹¹⁷ *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* ME/7973/B/6, 10 June 1985. See also *Financial Times* (London) 1 June 1985 and *The Times* (London) 1 June 1985, for the South African Foreign Minister's announcement that Angola had broken off US-mediated negotiations with South Africa on Namibia's independence and the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola following the alleged sabotage attempt in Cabinda; also *ibid.* for 'Pik' Botha's veiled warning that as a result, South Africa might go ahead with a unilateral independence settlement in Namibia.
- ¹¹⁸ See *The Guardian* (London) 13 June 1985 and 25 June 1985, and *Le Monde* (Paris) 14 June 1985 for details of the meeting, for the role of Zimbabwean and Tanzanian troops in protecting vital communication and power lines in Mozambique, and for details of the activity of the MNR.
- ¹¹⁹ CEAO was set up in 1974 by the six countries with the aim of coordinating their development policies and increasing economic cooperation.
- ¹²⁰ Ministers responsible for fisheries met at the beginning of May in Nouakchott and decided to set up a CFA 17.14bn joint fishing project involving nine ships, cold storage facilities, transport containers and other equipment. See *Xinhua News Agency* 11 May 1985.
- ¹²¹ *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* ME/W1340/A2/1, 28 May 1985.
- ¹²² On 29 May, senior ASEAN officials and representatives of the three CGDK factions discussed the proposal for 'proximity talks'. The CGDK representatives announced that they needed more time to consider the proposal before coming to a final conclusion. See *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* FE/7964/i, 30 May 1985. See also *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* FE/7940/A3/10, 2 May 1985.
- ¹²³ According to diplomatic sources in Beijing, Prince Norodom Sihanouk had offered to resign as CGDK President because of his ill health. He subsequently withdrew his resignation. See *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, FE/7936/A3/9, 27 April 1985, and *Xinhua News Agency* 17 May 1985.
- ¹²⁴ Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and the UAE.
- ¹²⁵ *Middle East Economic Digest* (London) 17 May 1985 and *Xinhua News Agency* 25 May 1985. For details of decisions taken at a GCC ministerial meeting in Kuwait on 22 April 1985 concerning the development and coordination of the electrical and electricity industries in the GCC member-states, see *Middle East Economic Digest* (London) 26 April 1985.
- ¹²⁶ *Financial Times* (London) 12 April 1985 and *IHT* (Paris) 12 April 1985.
- ¹²⁷ This is annexed to a letter from the Panamanian Representative to the UN Secretary-General, UN General Assembly, and Security Council: A/40/235, S/17103, 15 April 1985.
- ¹²⁸ President Reagan's statement on the plan is given in full in United States Information Service (USIS), *Official Text* (London) 9 April 1985.
- ¹²⁹ For the reactions of Contadora Group countries to the Reagan peace proposals for Nicaragua, see *IHT* (Paris) 15 April 1985; *Christian Science Monitor* (Weekly International Edition) (Boston) 26 April 1985; and *GRANMA* (Havana) 28 April 1985. President Ortega of Nicaragua made his views on the plan clear in a letter to 'The Presidents of the Contadora Group countries and Heads of Governments and political leaders of Latin America and Europe', the full text of which is in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* ME/7925/D/1, 15 April 1985.
- ¹³⁰ *The Guardian* (London) 16 April 1985.
- ¹³¹ The position taken by the ministers at a press conference when asked for their attitude towards the trade embargo against Nicaragua was that each country 'had its own views': *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* ME/7946/iii, 9 May 1985. See also *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (Frankfurt) 6 May 1985.
- ¹³² See *Third World Quarterly* 7(2) April 1985, p 422.
- ¹³³ *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* ME/7954/D/2, 18 May 1985.
- ¹³⁴ Twenty-four ministers attended the SELA meeting. Chile refused to participate, however. For further details of the meeting, see *Financial Times* (London) 16 May 1985 and *Xinhua News Agency* 25 May 1985 and 28 May 1985.
- ¹³⁵ For details of the US aid offered see *The Times* (London) 8 June 1985 and *Financial Times* (London) 8 June 1985 and 21 June 1985.
- ¹³⁶ See *Xinhua News Agency* 21 June 1985 and 26 June 1985.
- ¹³⁷ These countries have been given a longer time in which to implement the measures.
- ¹³⁸ On the economic problems threatening the organisation and for details of the summit's discussion of economic matters see *Financial Times* (London) 4 July 1984 and 9 July 1984, *IHT* (Paris) 9 July 1984 and *The Times* (London) 9 July 1984.

North-South Monitor

- ¹³⁹ *Latin America Weekly Report* (London) 10 May 1985.
- ¹⁴⁰ At their fifth summit in Nassau in July 1984, CARICOM Heads of Government adopted the Nassau understanding on Caribbean-Latin American relations in which they set out their interest in developing economic and trade ties with Latin American countries. Exploratory talks were proposed with a view to negotiating wide-ranging preferential trade and economic cooperation agreements. *Xinhua News Agency* 24 April 1985.
- ¹⁴¹ *Xinhua News Agency* 23 May 1985 and *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* ME/W1339/iii, 21 May 1985.
- ¹⁴² For details of the 1955 Conference see *South* (London) May 1985, p 42; *Hindu* (Madras) 24 April 1985 and *Dawn* (Karachi) 24 April 1985.
- ¹⁴³ The text of the declaration is in *Indonesian News* (Indonesian Embassy, London) 13(4) April 1985 as are the Ten Principles adopted at Bandung in 1955. It is also in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* FE/7936/A3/1-3.
- ¹⁴⁴ For further details of the conference see *Far Eastern Economic Review* (Hong Kong) 2 May 1985, p 12; *Financial Times* (London) 24 April and 26 April 1985; *IHT* (Paris) 22 April and 25 April 1985; *The Times* (London) 23 April and 26 April 1985; and *The Guardian* (London) 26 April 1985.
- ¹⁴⁵ See *Financial Times* (London) 19 April 1985 and *IHT* (Paris) 19 April 1985 for President Botha's announcement.
- ¹⁴⁶ The text of the telegram is in *The Hindu* (Madras) 20 April 1985.
- ¹⁴⁷ The text of the Final Document is in *Review of International Affairs*, (Belgrade) (36) 5 June 1985.
- ¹⁴⁸ The UN Council for Namibia subsequently announced that it was initiating legal proceedings against URENCO (the uranium consortium) in the Dutch courts on the grounds that the company was illegally exploiting Namibia's raw materials. See *West Africa* (London) 8 July 1985 and *Financial Times* (London) 2 July and 3 July 1985.
- ¹⁴⁹ The member countries of the Western Contact Group are the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Canada and West Germany.
- ¹⁵⁰ In what was seen as an attempt to refute NAM criticism of its policy towards South Africa, the US Embassy in New Delhi released the text of a speech by Secretary of State George Schultz explaining the US position during the meeting. *The Hindu* (Madras) 21 April 1985.
- ¹⁵¹ *The Hindu* (Madras) 20 April 1985. Iran later announced that it was following suit.
- ¹⁵² For further details see *The Hindu* (Madras) 17-22 April 1985; *West Africa* (London) 29 April 1985, pp 825-6; *The Times* (London) 20 and 22 April 1985; *The Guardian* (London) 20 and 22 April 1985; and IFDA, *Special United Nations Service* 24 April 1985. The UN Security Council, meeting at the request of African and the Non-Aligned countries, called for measures to be taken against South Africa unless it complied with UN efforts to obtain Namibia's independence. The United States and the United Kingdom abstained on the resolution. See *IHT* (Paris) 21 June 1985 and *The Guardian* (London) 21 June 1985.

Book Reviews

The titles reviewed are listed below with names of authors and editors

- Simons, J and Simons, R: **Class and Colour in South Africa 1850–1950**
 Hill, C R: **Change in South Africa: Blind Alleys or New Directions?**
 Kiernan, B and Boua, C (eds): **Peasants and Politics in Kampuchea, 1942–1981**
 Kiljunen, K (ed): **Kampuchea: Decade of the Genocide**
 Gerrard, C D: **Promoting Third World Agriculture: Lessons of Recent Experience**
 Aronson, J D and Cowhey, P F: **Trade in Services: A Case for Open Markets**
 Goldthorpe, J E: **The Sociology of the Third World: Disparity and Development**
 Pearson, C S: **Down to Business: Multinational Corporations, the Environment and Development**
 Bilsborrow, R E et al: **Migration Surveys in Low-Income Countries: Guidelines for Survey and Questionnaire Design**
 Gong, G W: **The Standard of 'Civilisation' in International Society**
 Salem, N: **Habib Bourguiba, Islam and the Creation of Tunisia**
 Crisp, J: **The Story of an African Working Class: Ghanaian Miners' Struggles, 1870–1980**
 Davidow, J: **A Peace in Southern Africa: The Lancaster House Conference on Rhodesia**
 Obudho, R A: **Urbanization in Kenya. A Bottom-up Approach to Development Planning**
 Eayrs, J: **In Defence of Canada. Indochina: Roots of Complicity**
 Tripp, C (ed): **Regional Security in the Middle East**
 Bidwell, R: **The Two Yemens**
 Kostiner, J: **The Struggle for South Yemen**
 Louis, W R: **The British Empire in the Middle East 1945–1951: Arab Nationalism, the United States and Post-War Imperialism**
 Kuo, E C Y and Chen, P S J: **Communication Policy and Planning in Singapore**
 Deyo, F C: **Dependent Development and Industrial Order: An Asian Case Study**
 Richards, P J and Thompson, A M: **Basic Needs and the Urban Poor**
 Roy, S: **Pricing, Planning and Politics: A Study of Economic Distortions in India**
 May, R J (ed): **Micronationalist Movements in Papua New Guinea**
 Strathern, A (ed): **Inequality in New Guinea Highlands Societies**
 TAPOL: **West Papua: The Obliteration of a People**
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 Puyana de Palacios, A: **Economic Integration among Unequal Partners: The Case of the Andean Group**
 Gandolfi, A: **Nicaragua: La difficulté d'être libre**
 Cabestrero, T: **Des prêtres au gouvernement: l'expérience du Nicaragua**
 Haq, K (ed): **Global Development: Issues and Choices**
 Haq, K (ed): **Crisis of the 1980s: World Monetary, Financial and Human Resources Development Issues**
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Ideological divisions over South Africa

Iain R Smith

Class and Colour in South Africa 1850–1950

Jack and Ray Simons

London: International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa. 1983.
625pp. £5.00

Change in South Africa: Blind Alleys or New Directions?

Christopher R Hill

London: Rex Collings. 1983. 207pp. £12.50

Ideological divisions are soon revealed whenever discussion about South Africa takes place. As a citadel of capitalism, as well as a society based on racial discrimination, South Africa challenges the later twentieth century world in two of its most sensitive spots. For Marxists, the racial discrimination in South Africa is a function of its capitalism, which could not survive without it. South Africa therefore becomes a case study in the struggle for socialism. The black nationalist revolution will pave the way for the socialist revolution. What is going on in South Africa is essentially a class struggle in a society in which divisions of class, race, and status all coincide. Non-Marxists do not view the situation in the same ideologically determined categories. They do not find in capitalism and the class struggle an adequate explanation for the present situation in South Africa; nor do they believe that a black nationalist revolt will necessarily lead to the overthrow of capitalism, the establishment of socialism, and the end of racial discrimination in the future. Marxists anticipate violent, revolutionary change. Non-Marxists, whilst they acknowledge that this may happen, continue to explore the possibilities of peaceful, evolutionary change. The two books under review represent these two, very different ideological approaches to the problems of South Africa.

The Simons' book is about the past. It is a reprint of a book, first published in 1969, by two prominent members of the Communist Party of South Africa who were banned by the South African government. It is not a straightforward history of labour relations and the growth of African political consciousness in South Africa. It is more a work of historical sociology interspersed, as its authors acknowledge, 'with comments and value judgements' stemming from their deep commitment to 'the Resistance', their disbelief in any 'hope of a peaceful revolution' and their conviction that 'the class struggle merges with

the movement for national liberation'. Non-Marxists are bound to find some of the sloganising of the book's 625 pages offputting. Yet on important subjects such as the Rand revolt of 1922, the emergence of a white working class which failed to develop class solidarity across the colour line, the growth of the African National Congress and the development of socialist and communist movements in South Africa, this book was of path-breaking importance sixteen years ago and remains a classic radical text on South Africa to this day. In their argument that South Africa presents a case of an industrialising society perpetuating pre-industrial social and racial attitudes through an increasingly authoritarian and repressive government, Jack and Ray Simons had more in common with some of the liberal critics of their day than they would have with the Marxist critics of today.

Christopher R Hill, who was until recently Director of the Centre of Southern African Studies at the University of York, is a liberal and well-informed commentator on present-day South Africa. His book is concerned with the changes which have taken place in South Africa during the past decade and their implications for the future. After an admirable airing of the issues which divide liberals and radicals, he surveys the most important changes since 1976. The growing recognition of the failure of the 'homelands' policy and the problem posed by the increasing African urban population; the advances in trade union organisation and recognition; the results of the Wiehahn, Riekert and Schlebusch Commissions—culminating this year in the new constitutional provisions for Indians and Coloureds—are all accurately and succinctly stated. A term spent at Stellenbosch University in 1980 yields some fascinating insights into the attitudes of Afrikaner academics and students. A case-study of an un-named South African company demonstrates some of the changes which have occurred in industrial and business life. A central preoccupation of the book is the changed attitudes within the white population, and especially amongst the *verligte* section of the Afrikaners led by the present Prime Minister Mr P W Botha. It is this group which, Hill asserts, 'provides the only route to peaceful reform open to South Africa at present' (p 182). He emphasises how greatly 'the limits of permissible thinking' have expanded, especially amongst Afrikaners, in recent years, and how readily ideas about the 'maximum effective decentralization' of the state, or of a federation or confederation of states in Southern Africa, have now come to be discussed. Yet the ideas which he discusses, eg the 'Lombard Plan' (1980) square ill with those of the Buthelezi Commission (1982) which stated that 78 per cent of all Zulus 'attached a very high priority to one man one vote in a unitary state' and declared that 'partition was the least attractive option of all' (p 204). And the banned African National Congress remains committed to 'a common society in a unitary state' and dismisses all the present experiments with moderate change as 'designed to adapt but retain apartheid, not remove it' (p 170). The white South African government may be looking for the

equivalents of Bishop Muzorewa with whom to do constitutional business, but they are likely to have increasing difficulty in finding any of sufficient authority and durability. As Hill points out 'no black leader . . . will dare take back to his people a constitutional blueprint which maintains white supremacy, in all but name, in those parts of the country which are attractive to whites' (p 194).

Having substantiated his case that considerable changes have recently taken place in South Africa, Hill concludes his book with some thoughts about further peaceful change in the future. He finds that 'the prospects of sufficient change being achieved to satisfy the majority of South Africa's population are slim, but they still exist' (p 197). Marxists will dismiss this as liberal eyewash and delusion and pursue their preoccupation with the 'class struggle' and 'national liberation' in a country where who or what constitutes the nation is difficult to define. Others may feel that Hill gives insufficient attention to the economy, the army, South Africa's weak but hostile neighbours, and the wider international dimension (which was given an incisive analysis by the late Professor Hedley Bull in *Daedalus* in 1982).

What remains is the fact that what is really going on in South Africa is a struggle for power. So far, the divided white minority in a very divided society has shown little sign of being prepared, of itself, to relinquish its power or lessen its control over such changes as are contemplated. These changes promise little likelihood of stability because they do not rest on the widespread support and consent of the majority of the population. They are also designed so that the white minority will retain effective dominance over the most important parts of South Africa. This offers no long-term solution to South Africa's situation. As in other deeply divided societies, neither minority nor majority rule is likely to have a liberal or truly democratic outcome. And the transition from one to the other is likely to be accompanied by a breakdown in law and order, considerable violence, and a multiplicity of struggles for power thereafter which may take a considerable time to be resolved.

Kampuchean crisis

Pao-min Chang

Peasants and Politics in Kampuchea, 1942-1981

Edited by Ben Kiernan and Chantou Boua

London: Zed Press. 1982. 401pp. £16.95. £6.95pb

Kampuchea: Decade of the Genocide

Edited by Kimmo Kiljunen

London: Zed Press. 1984. 126pp. £14.95. £5.95pb

Peasants and Politics in Kampuchea is a very useful collection of research findings covering the whole span of thirty years of social and political developments in Kampuchea. Part One contains excerpts from two academic theses dealing with the rural conditions in the mid-1950s and mid-1960s, respectively. Edited by two prominent Marxist intellectuals-politicians, the two papers present a quite illuminating picture of how the Kampuchean peasants during the first half of the twentieth century were already the victims of landlordism, usury, the incipient capitalist economy, and political exploitation, and how the progressive trend of land concentration and rural impoverishment was concealed under the apparent egalitarianism of the class structure. Part Two consists of six essays, four of which are written by one of the editors, Ben Kiernan; these deal with the origins and evolution of the Kampuchean revolutionary movement from the 1940s to 1970. They demonstrate how the Kampuchean revolution was rooted in the deteriorating social and economic conditions which began to polarise the Kampuchean political scene in the 1950s and 1960s. Three of the essays examine in detail the three major nationwide political protests which took place in 1942, 1968 and 1970, all of which are shown to have been triggered-off by the worsening domestic conditions, and in turn helped expand and solidify the revolutionary movement. In particular, Kiernan, in the second and third essays, attributes the rapid growth of the revolutionary movement in the late 1960s to the corrupt, repressive, and ruthless Sihanouk regime and argues that the 1970 peasant uprisings were mainly organised and led by the Khmer Rouge rather than being a demonstration of spontaneous support for the deposed king.

Part Three comprises three chapters contributed by Kiernan, including a long paper (ninety pages) which is also the major piece in the collection. It deals with the origins, evolution, and political impact of the ideological cleavages and political struggle within the Khmer Rouge during the 1960-78

period, and analyses in detail the rise of Pol Pot in the context of such internal conflict. This paper is followed by the testimonies of eight Kampuchean refugees on the life and conditions under the Khmer regime during 1975–8, which by and large support the trends identified previously. The book ends with Kiernan's own account of his impressions of the new Heng Samrin regime based on his three-month trip to Kampuchea in mid-1980.

Generally speaking, the book represents a very sophisticated and illuminating treatment of the plight of the Kampuchean peasants and the internal dynamics of Kampuchean politics in general and the communist movement in particular. It contains a wealth of information on the economic and political conditions of Kampuchea in a crucial period of its recent history. All the selections are written by people with first-hand experience in Kampuchea and are also well researched. The overall picture that emerges is that the Kampuchean communist movement was indigenously rooted and evolved and grew essentially in response to the growing social polarisation and political repression in Kampuchea, with little external support or instigation. In particular, the authors shed valuable light on the character and orientations of the Khmer Rouge and convincingly demonstrate the close relationship between the ascendance of Pol Pot to supreme power in 1976 and the radicalisation of Kampuchea's domestic and foreign policies in 1977–8. The book is indispensable to all those who have a research interest in Kampuchea.

However, paradoxically, the strengths of the book are also its weaknesses. The authors' preoccupation with the domestic roots of the Khmer movement renders the story of Kampuchea somewhat incomplete and the analysis lopsided. The selection of only Marxist-oriented writings at the very outset clearly sets the tone of the book. The resulting interpretations of Kampuchean society could not but have produced a dismal picture of glaring class contradictions. Yet a careful reading of the agricultural data presented reveal in fact that landlordism in Kampuchea was insignificant throughout the first half of the century, that there was less poverty and greater economic equality in Kampuchea than in other much more densely populated and land-scarce Asian countries, and that the country was far from ripe for social revolution before the late 1960s. All this raises the question of whether the internal causes of the communist revolution, though by no means unimportant, really constituted the sufficient ones. In fact, it is hard to believe that the political developments in a country that has been for decades, if not centuries, the bone of contention in regional power politics, can possibly be detached from its external environment in general and the policies of its immediate neighbours in particular. Yet no attempt is made by Kiernan in his seven papers to establish any linkage between the polarisation of the Kampuchean political scene and the radicalisation of the Khmer revolutionary movement on the one hand and such events as increasing CIA involvement in Kampuchean politics in the 1960s, the corresponding growing presence of the North Vietnamese in Kampuchea, the

subsequent expansion of the Vietnam War into Kampuchea, and, what is perhaps most crucial, the five years of sustained, devastating aerial bombing of the country carried out by the US during 1970–75, all of which had a definite and major impact on the character and direction of the Khmer revolution. Indeed, in view of its unpopular nature, the radical line of Pol Pot could not have gradually emerged as the dominant one in the 1970s had there not been growing consensus within the Khmer Rouge on the necessity of adopting a hard-line posture externally and weeding out the widespread Vietnamese influence within the revolutionary ranks.

Kiernan's failure to link the events and forces immediately impinging upon the survival of the Khmer revolution, however, is contrasted by his attempt to establish a Chinese connection in the rise of Pol Pot. If it is already far-fetched for him to argue that Pol Pot deliberately adopted a radical orientation as a strategy of political survival within the Khmer Rouge and refused to follow Hanoi's advice to negotiate a peace with the United States in 1972 in order to invite more intensive US bombing (pp 282–4), his attribution of the eventual rise of Pol Pot to the fall of the 'Gang of Four' in China is clearly arbitrary, for he could not logically argue that Pol Pot's radicalism was derived from his close links with the radical elements in China during the Cultural Revolution years (1966–76) and at the same time that the political eclipse of China's radicals directly contributed to Pol Pot's seizure of the supreme power (pp 287–94, 301–2). Also, China's anti-Soviet stand was clearly not a personal creation of Deng Xiaoping, nor pronounced only after 1977, or directed mainly against Vietnam, as Kiernan has argued.

Kiernan's apparent ignorance of Chinese foreign policy and his simplistic view of Sino-Kampuchean relations, which has led him to believe—with little evidence given—that China was behind Pol Pot all the time in the 1970s and wanted to keep Vietnam divided (p 301), is coupled with his consistent portrayal of Vietnam throughout the book as a peace-loving, well-disciplined, and benevolent but disinterested neighbour of Kampuchea. According to Kiernan, 'there is absolutely no evidence that Vietnamese leaders harboured such all-consuming ambitions [ie, the creation of an Indochina federation]', and Vietnam throughout the 1970s was 'prepared to leave Kampuchea alone, even a staunchly independent and pro-China Kampuchea.' (p 302). On the other hand, all Kampuchean regimes and political groups before 1979, with the sole exception of the pro-Vietnamese faction of the Khmer Rouge, are depicted in the book as harsh and savage, with no consideration given to the dilemmas faced by Sihanouk or the Khmer Rouge and to the options available to the Vietnamese. Indeed, in view of the traditional enmity between Kampuchea and Vietnam, one wonders how the Vietnamese in Kampuchea could have expected to exert any political influence without trying to cultivate popular support actively.

Kiernan's pro-Vietnamese stand becomes unmistakable in the final

chapter on the current situation in Kampuchea under the Heng Samrin regime, in which he describes how the traditional culture and way of life have been revived, how the people are enthusiastic about the new regime and the Vietnamese presence, and most importantly, how little the new regime is under Vietnamese control or influence. Kiernan therefore argues that the Pol Pot guerrillas 'though still active in many parts, received no support from the masses and did not have any political future.' 'A loss of political independence' is only 'a possible danger for the Kampuchean nation.' (p 380). After all, 'independence is not likely to mean much for the country' if it means the installation of a repressive regime. (p 383). Moreover, since 'nothing in the history of the Kampuchea-Vietnam conflict in recent years indicates that it was a result of Vietnamese aggression,' and since 'large numbers of Khmers are now prepared to accept the Salvation Front's close links with Vietnam', 'it is up to the West to try to ensure that all material support for Democratic Kampuchea from China and Thailand, as well as from Western sources, ceases.' (p 38). Whereas it is certainly true that a country at peace provides greater stability and order to the ordinary people, the evidence presented for a basic change in the Kampuchean's traditional perception of the Vietnamese and the degree of Kampuchea's political independence is at best flimsy and dubious, as it is based mainly upon interviews under restricted conditions. Developments since 1982, the year of the book's publication, also appear to contradict the editor's predictions, particularly with respect to the scope of Vietnamese colonisation and the strength of the resistance forces. At any rate, it is highly questionable whether the promise of peace and benevolence can justify a nation's conquest by a foreign power. If the Kampuchean indeed have all along been the masters of their own revolution as Kiernan has argued in the book, it certainly appears odd that he should have, in the end, favoured a Kampuchea dominated by Vietnam.

Kampuchea: Decade of the Genocide is a report made by a Finnish Inquiry Commission established in October 1980 to study 'as objectively as possible what really happened in Kampuchea in the 1970s.' Engaging an impressive number of research groups and academics in Finland, the Commission prepared the report on the basis mainly of secondary sources and data gathered from a one-month trip to Indo-China and Thailand. However, the title of the book is somewhat misleading. Instead of an intensive, systematic investigation of the human cost of the Kampuchean war as it suggests, the book is made up of eight short essays drafted by four different study groups covering a variety of aspects of the Kampuchean situation, including the society and history of the country, the civil war since 1970, the involvement of major powers, the media reaction in major countries that are interested parties, as well as the refugee problem.

Although slim in size and not without minor factual errors, the book is generally speaking a remarkably succinct, balanced and up-to-date treatment

of the major events in Kampuchea and the issues involved in the continuing conflict. It offers a handy reference for those who want to gain an overall picture of the origins and nature of the Third Indo-China War and both its domestic and international implications without getting bogged down by factual details. Although the first few chapters dealing with the historical background and evolution of the Kampuchean conflict up to and including the Heng Samrin period are mainly descriptive, they do underscore the close linkage between events in Kampuchea and the power politics among the great powers, and already begin to highlight the tragic effects of the Second Indo-China War. Particularly useful, however, are Chapters 6 and 7 on the humanitarian and legal aspects of the Kampuchean problem. Chapter 6 is an informative and exhaustive account of the huge relief operation mounted by the UN and other international and private agencies to help both the civilians in Kampuchea and the Kampuchean refugees in Thailand. It details, perhaps for the first time in an academic work, the nature and scale of such emergency aid covering the crucial years of 1979–81, as well as identifying the agencies and problems involved and the tangible impact upon the Kampuchean people. Containing a number of well-drawn maps and tables for illustration purposes, this chapter also shows how an almost impossible mission was put into operation in a chaotic situation and has actually benefited the Kampuchean people. Chapter 7 examines closely, from both the legal and historical perspectives, the controversy surrounding such issues as foreign intervention in Kampuchea, the legitimacy of the two rival regimes, and Kampuchea's UN representation. Divergent formulations are presented and analysed to show the complexity of these issues and the ambiguity of the prevailing rules of international law. While the authors do not challenge the majority view in the UN on the status of Democratic Kampuchea, they do suggest the possibility of alternative interpretations, thereby shedding valuable light on the legal aspects of an otherwise extremely complicated situation.

However, the overall picture of immense human suffering in Kampuchea does come through clearly after one finishes reading the book. The authors show, quite correctly, that the Kampuchean tragedy has been mainly caused by foreign intervention in Kampuchean politics that date back to the 1960s. In particular, the authors provide a timely reminder to the reader that the US expansion of the Vietnam War into Kampuchea in the late 1960s and its subsequent intense aerial bombing in the early 1970s in fact constituted the beginning of the human tragedy in Kampuchea. During those years, as many as half a million tons of bombs were dropped on Kampuchean soil, twice more than those dropped in Japan throughout World War II, and as many as 600,000 Kampucheans were killed and two million dislocated. The accompanying destruction of agriculture and the resulting severe famines also doomed the Khmer race to a perpetually uprooted and destitute life, leading to more deaths and sufferings. The total death toll for the 1970–81 decade is estimated to be two

million, or 30 per cent of the total Kampuchean population. The genocide, widely believed to be mostly of the Pol Pot regime's creation, was therefore actually committed by many parties and perhaps more a result of foreign intervention than of domestic social and political turmoil. The authors place the major blame on the big powers for the protracted conflict.

However, if *Peasants and Politics in Kampuchea* has given too much weight to the domestic determinants of the Kampuchean revolution, this volume somewhat exaggerates the influence of the great powers on the nature and course of the Vietnam-Kampuchea conflict. Both books overlook the fact that the Third Indo-China War is at least as much rooted in the history of the relationship between Kampuchea and Vietnam, and its continuation also cannot adequately be understood outside the context of the traditional Thai-Vietnamese rivalry over the control of Kampuchea. Hence the resilience of the resistance movement after five years of war. Thailand is also not, as the authors argue, interested in; much less benefiting from, the perpetuation of the conflict in order to gain greater leverage with the United States. In fact, the authors are apparently so concerned about the human cost of the protracted conflict that peace and stability for Kampuchea becomes for them the supreme value, even if it is attainable only at the expense of Kampuchea's political independence. Here, in spite of their proclaimed neutrality and their dispassionateness displayed throughout the book, the authors do not conceal where their sympathy lies and echo very much the official Finnish policy of not supporting the Khmer resistance movement. Convinced that the resistance movement has 'no possibility of militarily crushing Vietnam' and will not last, and that the international support for the movement is steadily dwindling (although actually the opposite is true), they are clearly in favour of accepting a *de facto* Vietnamese domination of Kampuchea.

Promoting Third World Agriculture: Lessons of Recent Experience

Christopher D Gerrard

Ottawa, Canada: North-South Institute. 1983. 64pp. \$6.00pb

This is a short report produced by the North-South Institute, Ottawa and aimed at the 'policy makers, interested groups and the general public to help generate greater understanding and informed discussion of development questions'. The author was commissioned by the Institute 'to undertake an extensive literature review related to agricultural development and international cooperation efforts of the past ten years'. The main conclusions of the author are that there is a growing realisation among Western development economists that the earlier (1950s and 1960s) strategy of development which emphasised rapid growth of per capita income and industrialisation has failed to achieve its stated purpose, particularly in relation to the rural poor. The 'trickle down' effect was not transferring income and resources to the rural poor.

Therefore, on the basis of the lead given by Robert McNamara, then Chairman of the World Bank and subsequently the ILO, development thinking and practice took a new direction in the early 1970s. The emphasis has now shifted from industrialisation to agricultural development, ensuring basic needs to the poor, particularly the rural poor, small-farmer-oriented strategy and so on. Under the influence of this new philosophy the resources of the international agencies are being increasingly directed towards the agricultural sector. In Gerrard's view, the shift in emphasis is a genuine one. However, the donors have found that broadly based agricultural developments are not easy to administer. Recipient countries often lack the administrative capacity to implement agricultural projects. Nor are such projects particularly favoured by commercial interests in the donor countries because they do not generate much demand for capital goods. Therefore, redirection of funds to agriculture during the 1970s was not all that impressive. In fact, in relative terms it has gone down significantly as compared to the mid-1970s. Notwithstanding these limitations, Gerrard views the shift in emphasis towards agriculture as the right one.

Superficially, the report mentions some genuine problems facing developing countries. A deeper analysis shows that the report has failed to achieve the two objectives (ie an extensive literature review, and helping to generate greater understanding and informed discussion) for which it was commissioned. The report is in no way a comprehensive literature review; it does not cover the major contributions made by Third World scholars. In fact, except for one or two authors here and there, almost all references are from North America. The author lacks awareness of the fact that the concepts of poverty and basic needs were already fully developed by Third World scholars much before the World Bank or the ILO jumped on the bandwagon.

Nor does the author really understand the issues involved. He, like many other Western development economists, harps on the theme that industrialisation was promoted at the expense of agriculture in developing countries. Strangely enough, during the 1950s and 1960s not many countries had even begun to think about industrialisation; they had neither the infrastructure nor the resources, both financial and human, for it. Of those who emphasised industrialisation many had a shortage of land, with traditionally a relatively high level of agricultural technology in the pre-modern sense, and a rapid rise in agricultural output depended on modernisation of agriculture. This required, as Gerrard himself concedes, infrastructure in terms of irrigation, transport, marketing network, research, extension, and a supply of modern inputs such as chemicals and so on. Given the resources base (ie supply of raw materials, large market, a reasonable degree of technical competence and know-how) countries such as India, China and Brazil emphasised industrialisation. The present level and the pace of diversification suggests that they were not necessarily wrong. It is because of the relatively developed stage of infrastructure and technical know-how that these countries have been able to gain significantly from the Green Revolution technology.

On the academic level, too, the report is a completely confused one. It is true that Sir Arthur Lewis recommended industrialisation for some countries (India for one) but he has always been an advocate of balanced growth and not industrialisation to the detriment of agriculture. There were other major economists, such as Kurt Mandelbaum and Ragnar Nurkse, who are not even mentioned. The real advocate of an unbalanced growth strategy was Albert Hirschman, but he is not mentioned even casually. The author depicts T W Schultz as a major contributor to the development

debate and the progenitor of the concept of a peasant 'as a rational decision-maker'. His work was important during the 1960s but anyone who had any idea of the history of developing countries and who was familiar with the writings of the colonial civil servants in European colonies (eg the British in India) could see that Schultz's contribution was not especially significant. He was stating a fact that was well known. After all, the commercialisation of agriculture in the nineteenth century all over the colonial world was not always the result of the efforts of the European planters. Much commercialisation resulted from peasant initiative when the market opportunity arose. By emphasising the predominance of 'price policy' at the expense of other instruments of development policy—a reflection of Chicago School, neo-classical orthodoxy—Schultz may have done a disservice to development thinking and humanity as such. In fact, his influence with the American development economists is one of the main reasons why the international agencies such as the World Bank give undue prominence to 'price policy' as an instrument for agricultural development. Current conventional wisdom that inappropriate price policy together with overvaluation of the exchange rate is the main cause of the agricultural débâcle in the African countries may have some truth in it, but a much greater truth is that the physical infrastructure such as roads, railways, irrigational facilities and electrification, as well as human resources in African countries, are less well-developed than agricultural modernisation requires. As Gerrard rightly suggests, agricultural development is a complex business; countries and regions have their own special features in terms of topography, soil, climate, historical traditions, property rights; therefore, easy replicability cannot be attained. Developing countries are at different stages of development, and particularly agricultural development. Any attempt to produce a generalised model and a standard policy mix is bound to end in failure. Development economists, particularly those from the West, through their influence with international agencies, have forced their half-baked ideas on the developing countries with disastrous consequences. The tragedy is that, for one reason or another, developing countries have not yet learned, in spite of the high cost in terms of human suffering, to say no to such ill-considered ideas.

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Trade in Services: A Case For Open Markets

Jonathan David Aronson and Peter F Cowhey

Washington DC: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research. 1984.

46pp.

The possibility of liberalising trade in services has become one of the most sensitive topics of discussion within the international trading community and, as well, is quickly emerging as a North-South issue. After years of American prodding, a consensus among most industrialised countries—and a handful of developing countries—is now taking form, and momentum seems to be building for the inclusion of services trade on the agenda for a new multilateral trade round. Considering the issue's growing political importance, it is not surprising that, after years of neglect, service sector activity in the global economy is now attracting the attention that it deserves from both academics and policy researchers.

The central thesis of this short volume is that services trade should be put at the top of the American trade policy agenda. (Indeed, the book is so one-sided in its perspective that its proper title should be 'An American Case For Open Markets'). Because of the dynamic interaction between the service and industrial sectors in the US, the authors argue that American competitiveness abroad, in both goods and services, would clearly benefit from freer trade in services. On efficiency grounds alone, then, the United States should urge its trading partners to follow in its footsteps, down the path of de-regulation, and simultaneously move to embrace services within the GATT framework.

Unfortunately, the authors, in building a case for their point of view, simplify the nature of the opposing arguments and in the process expose large gaps in the information provided. For instance, by dividing the opposition into two camps—those who fear US domination of international services trade on the one hand, and those who see any policy that gives the services sector precedence over industry as the first deadly step towards Britain-like decline—they ignore the many serious and complex concerns that have been raised by developed and developing countries alike. More important, perhaps, while the authors note that services trade has become *one* of the most debated issues within the GATT in the last few years, they fail to mention the others—agriculture, safeguards, dispute settlement, textiles and clothing, to name just a few. Significantly, it is the developing countries that want this group of old issues settled *before* embarking on any new initiatives.

In short, the book is much too ambitious for its size. This, combined with the authors' often myopic view of the issues, detracts from the discussion toward the end of the book of the obstacles that exist in getting the international community to accept their thesis, and of adapting the GATT framework to accommodate the effort. In the end, one is left feeling frustrated with the undeveloped arguments and proposals.

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The Sociology of the Third World: Disparity and Development

J E Goldthorpe

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1984. 320pp. £22.50. £8.95pb

'Facts come before theories': in such terms does Goldthorpe preface the new edition of his book in response no doubt to critical readers of the first edition of his text who felt that it lacked a coherent theoretical framework by which the mass of historical, especially African, material presented was to be interpreted. The grounds on which Goldthorpe justifies this naive empiricism are never articulated. Thus many sociologists who today believe that data are from the outset theory-informed will remain unconvinced by his approach to development studies. So, after discussing the concept of 'traditional tribal' society and noting its repudiation by (world system) 'radical underdevelopment' writers, Goldthorpe argues (p 181) that whatever you might like to say about it 'the reality is still there; it does not become something else when we decide to call it by another name, nor does it go away if we decide not to take it seriously.' What

constitutes the reality is of course what is at stake: 'traditional society' does *not* have a brute existence prior to its interpretation. Moreover, many readers will feel that Goldthorpe does use implicit theoretical frameworks not simply in order to 'make sense' of his evidence but also to constitute it in those chapters (1-5) which are ostensibly laying bare the simple 'facts', eg, in his discussion of the 'dual economy' and 'growth poles'.

This edition has however made a number of welcome changes, not least of which is the removal of sexist language. The text is more comparative, less reliant on examples from African studies and is more critical (but never 'radically' so) about the impact of colonialism and its long-term effects (Goldthorpe does not use the term 'neo-colonialism'). In the brief chapter that explores (without coming to any real conclusions) the various perspectives in development studies, Goldthorpe discusses Frank and dependency theory at greater length than in the first edition. Underdevelopment theory is rather narrowly defined however in terms of 'dependency', ignoring the recent debates about articulation and Warren's views on the progressive yet exploitative nature of capitalist imperialism. The chapters examining various institutions and their role in development (such as education, religion, the mass media) have been updated and make interesting reading.

The great weakness of the text is its lack of an explicit theoretical framework to give direction to the richness of his substantive discussion: hence, the book has no conclusion, leaving the reader suspended mid-air at the end of a chapter on aid. Goldthorpe has clearly much of value to say in this text but whether it can be said to illustrate a coherent sociology of the Third World is debatable.

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Down to Business: Multinational Corporations, the Environment and Development

Charles S Pearson

New York: World Resources Institute. 1985. 108pp. \$3.50pb

This study is an attempt to draw together the work produced from several parallel projects undertaken by the World Resources Institute (WRI) to examine the role of multinational corporations (MNCs) in environmental and natural resource management in developing countries. Pearson adheres strictly to an economic analysis of the cost-benefit issues raised for MNCs and their Third World host countries in trying to promote economic activity while avoiding or minimising environmental abuse. This is a useful endeavour, although many readers may feel that larger legal, and indeed moral, questions are thereby slighted.

After reviewing the recent evolution of thinking about MNCs and environmental and development problems, he considers the problem of 'growth versus environment', emphasising the importance of policies that promote 'sustainable development'. Asset-management over the long term is the critical factor here and it is particularly difficult for developing countries to get it right when they are faced with immediate and pressing economic and social needs that seem to require maximum utilisation of whatever resources can be brought on stream at the moment. He concludes:

'Developing countries have yet to integrate the concept of sustainable development deeply and thoroughly into economic planning and resource management.'

Pearson then examines the nature of MNCs against this background and reaches some interesting conclusions in the light of the Bhopal disaster. He believes that even when MNCs have global environmental policies, there is still the possibility of different standards in different countries, depending on such factors as the age and technology of production facilities, where variations are particularly likely to occur between MNC plant in developed and developing countries. Turning to what developing countries can do about this, he states strongly that the 'pollution haven' strategy, aimed at attracting foreign investment by lax environmental controls, 'appears to be a loser'. The difficulty, he believes, is that designing and enforcing tighter controls is a hard task for developing countries and therefore the job may in the end be better done through self-regulation by the MNCs themselves. But a climate in which this can happen satisfactorily must be created by the host governments and international organisations making clear through laws, codes, and guidelines what the ultimate goals of resource management are.

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Migration Surveys in Low-Income Countries: Guidelines for Survey and Questionnaire Design

R E Bilsborrow, A S Oberai and G Standing

London: Croom Helm (for the International Labour Organisation). 1984. 552pp. £14.95

Economists are often very lazy about generating new data with which to test their proliferating theories. In the West, it is easy to rely upon the masses of information generated by government censuses and household and business surveys produced at regular intervals, even when these data are inappropriate for the task at hand. In most of the Third World, social scientists have to work much harder to find the statistical evidence to resolve theoretical and policy debates. As a result, in some favoured fields, the quality of data can be higher (from the point of view of the 'end-users') in countries without a panoply of permanent statistical services. Any country which implemented all the suggestions contained in this ILO-WEP study would certainly collect an unparalleled wealth of knowledge about migration.

One problem facing the potential migration researcher is the discouragement produced by the enumeration in Chapters 2 and 3 of the shortcomings suffered by attempts to theorise about the phenomenon. For instance, Standing argues that the simple dichotomy between migrant and non-migrant fails to recognise the twenty different types of migrant he identifies! The authors make it clear that the relative worth of the many plausible suggestions about the causes and consequences of migratory behaviour cannot be assessed without much more detailed questioning not only of migrants, but also of the communities they leave and the residents of their destinations. The bulk of this study (Chapters 6-11) is concerned with the design of model questions

to elicit facts about particular aspects of migration (eg the impact on income distribution, land-holdings, and technological change), facts which will allow discrimination amongst theories (there are also chapters on survey and sample design).

The study refers to much previous work (there is a 37-page bibliography!), but does not explicitly review existing empirical findings. Its objective is to place future claims on a firmer foundation.

ALEXANDER BOWEN

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The Standard of 'Civilisation' in International Society

Gerrit W Gong

Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1984. 267pp. £19.50

The book deals with a timely topic. The 'North-South' dialogue of the deaf is largely due to historical and legal factors which are misunderstood. What role did the standards of civilisation play and whether, and if so, when they became a part of the international law are the central issues of the book.

In Part 2, Professor Gong gives an interesting account of the perception of, and the reaction to, the standards of civilisation by China, Japan and Thailand (then Siam). They are cases illustrating the non-Western approaches to a Western concept which the first part of the book explores through its historical and legal evolution.

While the first part covers an array of facts pertinent to the development of the concept in Europe, it is the second part which provides specifics revealing the real nature of the concept. On page 215 we read about the Anglo-French agreement of 1896 to gnaw at Siam in an orderly manner by designating each power's zone of influence. This is two years after the Aokia-Kimberley Treaty between Great Britain and Japan putting an end to the capitulation clauses.

The phenomenon of distinguishing one's own culture as 'civilised' and another's as 'barbarian' is universal and is of the domain of international political psychology. The confrontation of Christianity and Islam, for example, created such a dichotomy which lasted from the eighth century until the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire—and beyond.

The book, while providing the components for a political perspective, which would have clarified the historical and legal evolution of the standards of civilisation, does not sharply focus on it. By doing so, despite its more assertive tone in the later parts, it does not offend the Western reader—it may, however, fall short of the rhetoric of North-South dialectics.

The standards of civilisation developed along with the emergence of the European Christian sovereign states and their consciousness of that identity long before the nineteenth century. 'Statehood' and 'sovereignty' were norms of international law which they established for mutual recognition. With colonial expansion the need arose for a measuring rod for deciding who was and who was not the subject of that international law. At one end of an implied spectrum one could recognise the 'Civilised European Christian Sovereign States'; at the other end, people who did not qualify as any of these. The civilised would behave towards each other within the framework of

international law. In their relations with the uncivilised, whenever they decided that the uncivilised had behaved in an uncivilised manner they would teach the latter a lesson, with the potential consequences of penetration, occupation, domination and eventual absorption of the encountered culture.

Towards the middle of the spectrum were peoples who, while not European and Christian and hence not civilised, were political realities with organised governments. Such were the Ottoman, Persian, Chinese and Japanese empires. The question of the legitimacy of their sovereignty, however, could be posed. After all, until late into the nineteenth century, even after the consolidation of constitutional monarchies in Europe, the legitimacy of the sovereigns of the Holy Alliance was still based on a divine right bestowed by a Christian God. Encroachment on the non-Christian and the uncivilised was part of European expansion. For example, the secret treaties of World War I demonstrated, in retrospect, that the Treaty of Paris of 1856 was not really admitting the Ottoman Empire into the concert of Europe but providing an 'orderly' setting to avoid major conflicts among the European powers in dismantling it.

From being used as a measuring rod for double standards, the standards of civilisation evolved first into a quasi-moral concept towards the turn of the century and eventually into a legal assignment of the civilised nations in the context of the Covenant of the League of Nations—although not fully accepted by them all until after World War II. A number of factors contributed to that evolution. Among them, as Gong points out, the Japanese effort—at once naive, shrewd, persistent and eventually successful—to meet Western standards of civilisation which forced the hand of the Western powers to articulate those standards in specific terms.

Important also, however, were factors which were systemic to Western civilisation. The reference on pages 153–4 to the Reverend W A P Martin's translation of Wheaton's *Elements of International Law* in 1864 and the fear of some Western government agents that it might awaken the Chinese to Western extra-territorial privileges is a case in point. The main prongs of Western penetration into the non-Western world were commerce, religion and the politico-military power which at times cooperated and at other times quarrelled. Their conflicts revealed the nature of the double standards and helped the standards to evolve.

The divergence of these dimensions was further magnified by rivalries among the Western powers who, every now and then, pointed the finger at each other as uncivilised in their treatment of the indigenous people. Martin's activities in the Far East had their parallel in India where American missionaries were thorns in the flesh of the British political power. The United States' 'open door' policy was another factor which compromised the outright colonial expansions of the European powers. President Wilson's views on self-determination of the people were crucial in bringing the 'sacred trust of civilisation' into the Covenant of the League of Nations. These dimensions could have been used more systematically in the first part of the book. But then, it may have had to be a longer book.

On a couple of occasions some historical facts and dates are not accurate. For example, on page 107, with reference to the Ottoman Empire, we read: 'As early as 1193, the Sultan extended extraterritorial jurisdiction to European "infidels" who could not be expected to understand the religious codes which regulated the daily lives of the Sublime Porte's other subjects.' There was, of course, no Ottoman Empire in the twelfth century and the 'Sublime Porte' itself was not established until 1485.

The book is generally easy to read and except for a few misuses of words and idioms (eg, anathema without a 'thema'; misplaced *cause célèbre* or *par excellence*), it is well written. There is, at times, too much reliance on secondary sources: Voltaire as quoted by Denys Hay, Auguste Comte as quoted by W M Simon, Henry Thomas Buckle according to Fritz Stern etc. But, consider these criticisms as the nit-pickings of a reviewer. The book is a worthwhile effort and we need more of its kind for better understanding in the North-South dialogue.

A KHOSHKISH

Moorhead State University

Habib Bourguiba, Islam and the Creation of Tunisia

Norma Salem

London: Croom Helm. 1984. 270pp. £16.95

This is a complex and interesting book. To understand it, one has to be able to read English and French and to have some familiarity with Arabic. Also, the argument is uneven: at times verbose, even windy, it also contains penetrating insights and re-interpretations of material presented elsewhere. Its goal 'is to discover how religion plays a role in politics, at least to the extent that Islamic themes are used in Arab political discourse.' Salem's method for approaching this goal is 'a biographical study of how Habib Bourguiba . . . expressed himself on the relationship between religion and politics.'

The discussion begins with a familiar critique: Salem argues that concepts of modern social sciences (eg, class) are Euro-centric: they should therefore be re-examined before one applies them usefully to Middle Eastern (including North African) societies. She then defines her concepts of *religion* and *politics* and seeks to explicate Bourguiba's understanding of those terms.

The next three chapters present a narrative of the Tunisian nationalist movement and of Bourguiba's life. The movement began as a process of state formation and institution-building during the early nineteenth century, was transformed into a liberation struggle during the French Protectorate (1881-1956), and resumed several of its original concerns following independence. During the second phase of this process, Bourguiba was born into a 'provincial "upper middle" class' family, was educated first in Tunis and later in Paris, and ultimately led the liberation struggle. Salem's analyses of his family, native region, and the role of Franco-Arab schools in forming *interlocuteurs valables* ('culture brokers', in anthropological usage) are particularly perceptive. Useful also is her examination of the role of religion in political conflicts of the period, as when students at the Zaytuna religious university led repeated popular demonstrations against Protectorate authorities, or when those authorities organised a Eucharistic Congress to celebrate re-establishing the North African bishopric at Carthage. Finally, Salem articulates biography, the evolving nationalist movement, and religion by focusing on Bourguiba's takeover and direction of the Destour Party from 1934 onward. Apparently, he concluded that negotiations were the best way for Tunisia to gain independence; mass support was necessary to make the French negotiate in good faith;

and use of Islamic themes and Tunisian Arabic was the best way to obtain mass support.

But religion (and perhaps language) were more than means for mobilising followers: 'Bourguiba considers Islam—"la communauté des croyances" (*sic*)—as a basic component of the Tunisian "personnalité". . . . To comprehend this *personnalité*, Salem examines legal, historical, and charismatic dimensions of Bourguiba's thinking on political legitimacy. Her major insights here are three: first, Bourguiba's concept is tied to his French legal training, not to psychological or literary discourse; second, a Tunisian 'personality' existed before Islam, but it subsequently conditioned and was conditioned by that religion; and third, political action is required to express, adapt, and reproduce the 'personality' through time. Such a concept of political action, Salem feels, can be traced to both French and Islamic traditions.

The book concludes by considering religion and politics more generally. Salem reviews a spectrum of current Tunisian authors who agree that Islam has been a necessary dimension of Tunisian 'personality' but who disagree about what its political role has been or should be. She notes that the general strike of 1978 and the Gafsa attack of 1980 showed that, for many Tunisians, government efforts toward social equality and economic independence have not sufficed. This insufficiency, in turn, has maintained Islam as the major source for themes legitimating political action.

This book has several strengths. Besides those mentioned above, it also shows foresight: Salem's analysis of popular dissatisfactions applies well to the bread riots of early 1984, when her book was apparently in press. However, the study also manifests weaknesses. An important one concerns class: while Salem's critique is generally well taken, she does not present an explicit definition for her own use of the term. Second, there is no discussion of Bourguiba's thinking about religion and politics since independence. And, finally, Salem does not discuss the national system of secular education or Tunisian roles in international tourism and labour migration, although they presumably would pertain to an articulation of religion with the events of 1978 and 1980.

FREDERICK C HUXLEY

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The Story of an African Working Class: Ghanaian Miners' Struggles 1870-1980

Jeff Crisp

London: Zed Books. 1984. 200pp. £16.95. £6.50pb

This study of the workers in the 'modern' mining sector of the Gold Coast/Ghana over the past century—especially in the gold mines of the Western Region and Ashanti—is an impressive contribution to African labour history. In Chapter 1, Crisp elucidates its 'central themes': 'labour control' and 'labour resistance'. Subsequent chapters show how these have manifested themselves under the special conditions of Ghanaian gold-mining. Production costs always loomed large in the strategies of mining capital; producers did not determine final prices and, as in South Africa, deposits were low-grade and at deep levels. At any particular level of technology, then, labour costs were a prime concern of mine-owners. Efforts were made to control supply (and

therefore wage levels), regularity of work and discipline (and therefore productivity) and—from 1944 on—union organisation. Investment in new technology has taken a second place; when labour supply was at a low ebb or when wages were pushed up by labour militancy, technology was updated. However, such modernisation was usually accompanied by new strategies of labour control which sought to uprate work to the maximum of the new technology.

It is difficult in a short review to do justice to Crisp's subtle, complex but always lucid historical analysis. Chapter 2 explains why the nascent mining industry was unable to attract locally a 'disciplined', settled labour force. There was ample agricultural land, mining was traditionally regarded as slave work and government forced labour had given all work for Europeans a bad reputation which conditions and pay in the under-capitalised mines did nothing to enhance. Chapter 3 describes how between 1906 and the 1920s, as demand for labour in more congenial sectors (notably cocoa-growing) grew rapidly, the mines sought to assure a labour supply from the relatively distant, less prosperous Northern Territories of the Gold Coast by urging the colonial government to allow them to introduce South African methods of recruitment and management. The government refused to agree to this system—aptly described by one official as 'imprisonment with hard labour'—but did assist the mines at times of particularly tight labour supply by associating them with its own compulsory recruitment.

Recruitment from the Northern Territories and, increasingly, from migrants flowing south from Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso) soon predominated (but without the controls the mine-owners sought). The labour force was characterised by high turnover—although this has lessened in recent years—and a significant cleavage between surface workers (many of whom were local) and underground workers (a majority of whom were migrants). Underground work was unpleasant, dangerous and debilitating, demanded much cooperation between workers and was particularly subject to cost-cutting and productivity-boosting ploys. Underground workers therefore developed early a tradition of militancy which, as Crisp shows in Chapter 4, had already reached a first particularly intense phase in the 1930s despite there being as yet no trade union.

By contrast, union organisation was developed from 1944 by surface workers (often artisans or clerical workers with a lower turnover than underground workers) who have continued to dominate official leadership. One important consequence has been a recurrent alternation between situations in which the leadership sought to attract the rank-and-file as members and assure their own increasingly comfortable position as officials by taking opportunist militant courses, and those in which grass-roots militancy—often expressed in 'unofficial' action or the creation of splinter organisations—bypassed a leadership that was perceived—often correctly—to be conservative and corrupt and to have been bought off or absorbed by mine-owners or the government.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 give a detailed account of the response of the Mine Workers' Union (MWU) and the rank-and-file to the changing labour control policies of mine management and government as Ghana passed from colonial rule through various civilian and military regimes. Government became increasingly interventionist partly because it sought to 'capture' all union organisations for ostensibly developmental ends (as under Nkrumah) or to emasculate them altogether (as under Busia) but also because it took over the Western Region mines in 1961 and took a stake in Ashanti Goldfields in

1968. The overall outcome is aptly characterised by Crisp as 'union atrophy' but, as he also indicates, direct or indirect grass-roots militancy remained strong. Noteworthy were the intense outbursts of 1968-71 and 1976-7, the second of which was marked by the unprecedented, if short-lived—the government soon retaliated—emergence of a radical former underground worker, R A Yeboah, as MWU General Secretary.

Despite the book's title, Crisp's historical account effectively runs down with Yeboah's arrest in 1977. In his useful conclusion (Chapter 8), however, he not only concisely describes the specific roots of Ghanaian mineworkers' militancy, but also cautiously assesses the likelihood of its being wedded to broader movements for radical change in Ghana. Mineworkers have, he argues, concentrated almost exclusively on occupational issues, by contrast, for example, with the railwaymen of Sekondi studied by Richard Jeffries, whose populism has always had a national as well as occupational focus. Their attitude to union leaders—again in contrast with the railwaymen—is *ad hoc*, 'conditional and instrumental'. There is no tradition of effective democratic control of leadership; when the leadership is effective it is used, otherwise it is bypassed. Indeed, Crisp argues that union leaders are often seen as 'part of the hierarchy of authority which perpetuates [mineworkers'] exploitation and subordination.' Ghanaian mineworkers are not, Crisp argues, apolitical or 'economistic'. Only, however, if they were to make the union their own might 'their historically rooted militancy and solidarity become a more influential force for progressive political change.'

This reviewer's substantive criticisms of Crisp's book are mainly concerned with relatively peripheral matters—which cannot be pursued at length here—and with presentation. Crisp tacitly accepts a conventional wisdom which has come to see labour supply from northern Ghana as an outcome of more or less deliberate colonial underdevelopment of the region. This interpretation needs considerable refinement at least. A slow aggregate increase of wealth for the Northern Territories in the colonial period seems to be indicated; the crucial question demanding further examination is perhaps how this was distributed geographically and socially within that protectorate. Moreover, although Crisp draws attention to labour supply from Upper Volta, this and other 'foreign' African inputs into southern Ghana's dependent development have not been given the attention they deserve generally. More detailed studies would undoubtedly put northern Ghana's 'underdevelopment' in a somewhat different perspective.

'Labour control' seems to have outweighed 'labour resistance' in the production of this book. Those who feel that the author has been a little churlish in not referring more explicitly to earlier work that covered some of the same ground—if without Crisp's command of the sources—should refer to the PhD thesis on which the book is based where he is far less reticent. His abruptness is perhaps an element of the abridgement which his publishers seem to have forced on him. This has also robbed the book of some highly evocative quotations, entirely eliminated important tabular material on labour-force composition and truncated bibliography and notes.

ROGER G THOMAS
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A Peace in Southern Africa: The Lancaster House Conference on Rhodesia

Jeffrey Davidow

London: Bowker Publications. 1984. 143pp. £15.50

The author was a US State Department officer who served as a 'diplomatic observer' in Rhodesia during the last days of white rule. While his mission was to monitor the internal settlement between Bishop Muzorewa and Ian Smith, soon after his arrival events took an entirely different course, beginning with the Commonwealth Heads of Government conference in Lusaka.

Although the United States was no longer an equal partner at Lancaster House, as it had been during the Anglo-American negotiations initiated by Henry Kissinger and resumed by Andrew Young, it played an important role behind the scenes. From this vantage point in the diplomatic network, Mr Davidow undertook research at Harvard University's Centre for International Affairs to determine how the conference had succeeded in solving the 'Rhodesian problem', despite the abortive efforts of successive British governments over the previous fifteen years.

In accounting for its success, the author maintains that 'Rhodesia was ready for a settlement and effective British diplomacy converted that favourable situation into an agreement.' Although the aims of the Muzorewa-Smith delegation and the Patriotic Front (PF) alliance of Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo were indeed incompatible, both realised that the war could not be rapidly won and both were confident of African support in an election.

Nevertheless, a conference breakdown often seemed inevitable, with the PF opposed to guarantees of white parliamentary seats, remittable pensions and land ownership; and to the continuation of Rhodesian civil and military authority during the elections preceding independence. However, these crises were often resolved by outside intervention, as with the US offer of financial support for purchasing white-owned land for black settlement. The Commonwealth and the Front-Line States also intervened to redress a balance heavily weighted against the PF, urging an increased Commonwealth military presence and safeguards for guerrilla forces during the cease-fire.

Much of the credit for success is attributed to the 'negotiating dexterity' of Lord Carrington, the British Foreign Secretary. Perhaps his most effective tactic in 'conference management' was the threat of a 'second-class solution', which would have meant recognition of the Salisbury regime if the PF had withheld agreement.

What most strikes the reader of a book refreshingly free of professional jargon and Cold War polemics is the stark contrast between the outlook of this author and those now determining US policy in Africa.

ELAINE WINDRICH

London

Urbanization in Kenya. A Bottom-up Approach to Development Planning

R A Obudho

London: University Press of America. 1983. 400pp. £15.50pb

This book is a revised version of the author's thesis from 1974 and it therefore appears a bit dated. The author's starting-point is that there is dualism in the Kenyan urban system between an urban-place sub-system and a traditional market-place sub-system. The author sets out to show how this dualism can be reduced by regional planning. Central-place theory is the basis of the analysis.

The major analytical effort in the book is a component analysis of twenty-eight variables and forty-seven central places. Unfortunately it is rather difficult to see what one learns from the component analysis which is not already self-evident in the original data, and the results do not feature much in the discussion of development strategy that follows.

The market system is said to be weakly organised, and the author argues that the development of the market centres is vital both for urbanisation in Kenya and for the rural population. There is an emerging fusion between the two systems, and among the factors which are supporting this trend he mentions the removal of barriers set up under colonial rule, improved communications, Africanisation and development planning.

The author criticises the government approach to spatial planning, which is characterised as top-down planning. The discussion is at times confusing. It is said, for example, that 'the objectives of spatial planning should be maximization of national income and minimization of regional income disparities' (p 221). There may well be a trade-off between these two objectives!

In the final chapter a spatial planning strategy for Kenya is presented. A major point is that the future development of Kenya's hinterland depends very much on the planning of the central places in the traditional market-place sub-system. The discussion, however, does not go much beyond the statement of this proposition. There is a brief discussion about how to select growth centres, but there is hardly anything about what is to be done beyond that.

The book, to sum up, gives extensive empirical information about urbanisation in Kenya both during and after the colonial period, but the analysis based on central-place theory is not taken very far. The author presents some tenets which sound plausible, but he does not always present convincing evidence for his case. Finally, the reader hoping to learn what a 'bottom-up' approach to development planning means is virtually left in the dark.

ARNE BIGSTEN

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In Defence of Canada. Indochina: Roots of Complicity

James Eayrs

Toronto: University of Toronto Press. 1983. 348pp. \$45.00. \$17.50pb

In 1954 the protracted attempt by France to maintain its colonial foothold in Indo-China

came to an inglorious end. At the Geneva Conference that year it was agreed that Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam should become sovereign states, with Vietnam being temporarily divided along the seventeenth parallel pending country-wide elections to be held within two years. To oversee the complex provisions of the agreements regarding such matters as the disengagement and regroupment of forces, an International Commission for Supervision and Control was created in respect of each country. These commissions were to be composed of representatives of neutralist India, Eastern bloc Poland, and—a late choice—Canada.

This last decision was hardly taken on account of Canada's interest in the region. Since World War II she had been following events in Indo-China from her Embassy in Paris, and in 1954 it was Paris which had to be resorted to when Ottawa found itself in need of a good map of the area. (Subsequently, the cartographical briefing supplied to the first Canadian Commissioner for ICSC Vietnam consisted of a map of Indonesia!) But Canada was to learn a great deal about it over the next two decades, as a not inconsiderable proportion of the Canadian diplomatic service and officer corps found itself serving in one or other of the three successor states—notably Vietnam.

The key question for Canada was whether her nominees were to act in a judicial or a political manner—whether they were to try to assess events impartially or to shape the record in a way which would support Western interests. In this study of the first three years of Canada's involvement, Professor Eayrs records that from the outset Ottawa's instructions were ambivalent. And before long, with the Poles regularly espousing what seemed to be an obstructive Eastern line, Canada's Western tilt became more pronounced—although never, of course, publicly admitted. Informing Washington about activities within each Commission became a regular procedure, and, in time, returning Commissioners were routinely debriefed by the American State Department and Central Intelligence Agency.

Service in these International Commissions proved burdensome. Initially Canada had anticipated that her involvement might be 'for a few years at least' (p 251). As the length of this particular piece of string proved troublesomely long, the 'subject of the future of the commissions provided senior officers of the Department of External Affairs with a recurrent theme for lengthy memoranda' (p 252). But while their spirits sank, the military (an official recalled) 'were beginning to find peacekeeping an interesting challenge' (*ibid*). And with a suggestion that Australia and New Zealand might like to take over from Canada being greeted with 'somewhat hysterical laughter' (p 272) by their representatives, Canada settled down for a long haul. The Cambodian Commission had little to do after 1956, and that for Laos adjourned *sine die* in 1958, but the Vietnamese Commission remained in being until the final American withdrawal from South Vietnam in 1973. Ironically, Canada's decision in 1956 not to seek the dissolution of this Commission was significantly influenced by a concern not to upset the security of the South—which was then beginning to receive considerable military assistance from the United States. Her lay the roots of Canadian complicity.

The tale of Canada's early participation in the three Commissions has been superbly told by James Eayrs. His book is clearly structured and beautifully written, reflecting a mastery of the sources and their context. It will be read with immense profit—and pleasure—by students not just of Canadian foreign policy but of foreign policy in general, of Indo-China, and of international peacekeeping. It is a notable addition to the author's magisterial volumes on the theme, *In Defence of Canada* (which are in turn

part of a wider series on decisionmaking in Canada). Fortunate indeed is Canada to have its foreign policy described and analysed by a scholar of this calibre.

ALAN JAMES

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Regional Security in the Middle East

Edited by Charles Tripp

Aldershot, England: Gower (for the International Institute for Strategic Studies). 1984. 182pp. £12.50

The common theme underlying the six essays in this splendidly edited volume is that the regional security of the Middle East focuses on the Arab-Israeli conflict. In his introduction, Tripp observes that 'much of the pressure on Middle Eastern regimes stems from their perceived failure to cope with the challenge of a Jewish state established on land regarded by many in the area as inalienably Arab and Muslim' (p vii). The House of Saud, though it considers the United States the guarantor of stability in the region, in the view of Adeed Dawisha, has consistently viewed the Arab-Israeli conflict as one which, if not settled quickly and equitably, would lead to major eruptions in the entire Middle East. Saudi Arabia was one of the first Arab states prepared to accept the legitimacy of Israel provided that that country withdrew from the Arab territories occupied after 1967. Riyadh has also consistently argued that the Palestinians need a state or at least a homeland. Itamar Rabinovich argues that Syria's policy in the conflict has been governed by the need to demonstrate a credible strategy for regaining the Golan Heights, lost by the Baath in controversial circumstances.

Central to the resolution of the conflict is a settlement of the Palestinian question. A Palestinian state, according to Avi Plascov, would mean 'war, not peace in Israel' (p 90). But, in the end, Plascov states that the conflict is not really over the issue of a Palestinian state 'but over Israel's existence, in whatever borders, as the embodiment of Zionism' (p 96). On this matter, according to the former British Defence Attaché in Tel Aviv, Colonel Andrew Duncan, time is undoubtedly on the Arab side, though in his opinion 'a great deal of time will pass and possibly several wars before Israel could be defeated militarily' (p 115).

With the Middle East about to enter the nuclear era, the 'toehold' which the Arab-Israeli dispute provides for the Soviet Union is likely to become a matter of increasing concern for Western leaders. And, as Shahram Chubin observes when discussing the progress of Soviet influence in the Persian Gulf, this is 'less likely to result from a hospitable regional environment than from Western failures of conception, unity and will' (p 169).

RITCHIE OVENDALE

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The Two Yemens

Robin Bidwell

London: Longman. 1983. 350pp. £15.95

The Struggle for South Yemen

Joseph Kostiner

London: Croom Helm. 1984. 195pp. £14.95

The Two Yemens is a journey through the long, varied and rich past of the southern part of the Arabian peninsula—the Yemen north and south. It tells an extremely interesting story of the people of Yemen, and charts their progress from one cruel and bloody political regime to another. There is vivid description of the intrigue between the various contenders—Arabs and Europeans—for possession and control of the country; at times horrifying and disgusting and at other times quaint and amusing. All very readable stuff, written by someone who knows his subject-matter well.

It is only in the past few decades that the Yemen has become involved in the world outside or has been active within the Arab world to which it rightly belongs. Barriers had been created around the Yemen. It was not geography alone which did it. The country had a succession of benighted dynastic regimes in the north and the European powers, particularly Britain, sought to dominate the south. A substantial part of the book, concerning events since the beginning of the twentieth century, is the story of British policy in that area. Britain wanted to stay in the southern part of the Arabian peninsula for various reasons—all, of course, centred on greed and self-interest. 'What we want is not a united Arabia but a weak and disunited Arabia split into little principalities as far as possible under our suzerainty—but incapable of coordinated action against us, forming a buffer against the powers in the West.' So went a statement by the British Government of India which the author quotes to explain Britain's attitude to the endeavour by the Imam of Yemen to reunite his country early this century. That is the old divide-and-rule recipe which was the mainstay of all empires. And the attempt by Britain in the 1950s and 1960s to create a 'Federation of Arab Emirates of the South' was designed as part of that old policy—to perpetuate disunity and division between the two parts of the one Yemen.

With regard to one important aspect of the modern history of the Yemen, the author's version of events appears to lose credibility by the rather gratuitous abuse he heaps on President Jamal Abd al-Nasir—eg 'Nasser, with his habitual disregard for truth' (but the author does not bother to mention a single fact about which the man, by objective verification, had lied). Of Abd al-Nasir's decision to send troops to support the republican regime which had overthrown the monarchy in the north in 1962 the author says that 'historians . . . accept the statement that the Royalist [Yemen] Ambassador made to the UN . . . that there had been "a prearranged plan for the invasion of the Yemen, in order to clear the way for the UAR to establish a bridgehead for further aggression throughout Arabia"'. This view of Abd al-Nasir as aggressor is not shared by many historians, who instead regard him as the champion of Arab nationalism—the movement which sought to unite countries and people who by geographic, economic, historical, racial, linguistic, religious and other criteria were (and remain) part of an indivisible whole. By that standard Abd al-Nasir was not an aggressor but a reformer

and a liberator who journeyed to the Yemen to promote the cause of Arab nationalism and to fight the reactionaries who at that time were symbolised by the Saudi Arabian oligarchy. Egypt's final decision to withdraw from the Yemen is recounted by the author thus:

This situation might have lasted for twenty years, as Nasser forecast, had it not been for the total defeat of the Egyptian forces by the Israelis. Nasser's challenge to Faysal for the leadership of the Arab world collapsed and he was forced to become the pensioner of his former antagonist.

One can detect an element of glee here. But the author is not correct in claiming that both Abd al-Nasir and Faysal were bidding for leadership of the Arab world. Abd al-Nasir was *the* leader, hands down, and as leader he had to trounce Faysal who, by the definition which was shared by the overwhelming majority of the Arab masses, was a reactionary and an enemy of Arab nationalism.

The Struggle for South Yemen deals with the development of nationalist sentiment in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and the emergence in the struggle for independence of the two main political parties—the National Liberation Front (NLF) and the Front for the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen (FLOSY). These two parties engaged in a bitter war in which Britain (which at that time occupied Aden), Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the other Yemen in the north were involved to varying extents. The book is based on a Master's degree thesis for the University of Haifa. The main sources are newspapers and radio broadcasts, and at times one feels that perhaps too much academic analysis and significance has been given to pedestrian items. But with the sources such as they are, studied from a remote distance, the author has made as good a job of recording the history as anyone in similar circumstances could.

MUSA MAZZAWI

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The British Empire in the Middle East 1945–1951: Arab Nationalism, the United States and Post-War Imperialism

William Roger Louis

Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1984. 803pp. £45.00

Professor William Roger Louis established his claim as one of the foremost historians of the British Empire with the publication of *Imperialism at Bay* (1977). His new *magnum opus*, *The British Empire in the Middle East 1945–1951* is a *tour de force* and a comprehensive analysis of the post-war British imperial system in West Asia and North Africa. Until recently, it was generally accepted that the period after 1945, following the granting of independence to India and Pakistan, was one which was marked by a rapid dismantling of the British Empire throughout the world. While it is undeniable that Attlee's Labour government was committed to the liquidation of the old-fashioned empire, it was nevertheless determined to preserve Britain's predominant position in the Middle East.

The architect of British foreign policy in the Middle East was Ernest Bevin, Foreign Secretary in the first post-war Labour Government. Bevin was determined to halt

Britain's decline as a great power but his was an approach with a difference. A committed socialist and a democrat, he abhorred both strong-arm tactics and palace intrigues. His watch-words were 'economic and political partnership' and he thus sought to remodel the British Empire through an alliance with the moderate nationalists and by working to raise the level of living standards of the population of the region. He hoped perhaps to reverse the pattern of imperial development of the late nineteenth century by once again reconverting the formal empire into informal spheres of influence and alliances.

After the loss of the Indian empire, Bevin was convinced that the key to stem the eclipse of Britain's power lay in the Middle East. He repeatedly told his cabinet colleagues that 'In peace and war the Middle East is an area of cardinal importance to the United Kingdom, second only to the United Kingdom itself.' There was a considerable hard-headed realism in his contention. During World War II British forces had gained control over large areas in the Middle East and it seemed that if Britain started whittling down her dominant position there, she would end up being a small island power in the north-west of Europe. In the immediate post-war years no responsible statesman in Britain was willing to contemplate that. Moreover, it was feared that Britain's withdrawal from the region would create a vacuum into which the Soviet Union would step.

The pivot of the British strategy lay in the Suez Canal Zone. As the Egyptians would not let Britain have free control of the Canal Zone and because 1948 was not 1882, Bevin was forced to agree to a withdrawal not only from Alexandria and Cairo but also from the Canal Zone, and to rely on Egyptian goodwill. As the main nationalist party, the *Wafd*, was out of the government, the agreement not surprisingly failed to materialise and the British remained in the Canal Zone until the 1956 débâcle. Nor were the British any more successful in securing an alternative base in Palestine. Here, on the one hand, caught between the terrorism of Menachem Begin and Yitzak Shamir and, on the other, affected by the fickle-minded policies of the Truman Administration under increasing Zionist pressures, the British had had enough. They cut their losses by abdicating their responsibilities in Palestine. In retrospect, it is not surprising that Bevin's policy of maintaining influence should have failed. Britain had little to offer the nationalists in return for her presence in the Middle East: and most of the nationalists did not share Britain's apprehension of communism.

This is an important work which no student of the Middle East or the process of decolonisation can afford to ignore. The American Historical Association has recognised the immense merit of the book by conferring the prestigious Louis Beer Prize upon its author.

GOWHER RIZVI
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Communication Policy and Planning in Singapore

Eddie C Y Kuo and Peter S J Chen

London: Kegan Paul International (in association with the East-West Communication Institute). 1983. 111pp. £9.95pb

Dependent Development and Industrial Order: An Asian Case Study

Frederic C Deyo

New York: Praeger. 1981. 138pp. £13.00

Both books under review provide useful information about Singapore. Data collection for the work by Professors Kuo and Chen, both sociologists, was completed by mid-1978 and their analysis does not basically go beyond that period. The study by Professor Deyo, also a sociologist, covers the period through to 1979.

Singapore, is the first modern global city. Literally, it is a city-state of 2.5 million people whose significance, because of its phenomenal economic success, is a role model for other Third World countries far beyond what its population size might warrant. Ethnically, it is a country 76 per cent Chinese, 15 per cent Malay, and 7 per cent Indian sitting in a Malay sea (Malaysia to the north and Indonesia to the south). A *sine qua non* for success for this quarter-century-old country is the avoidance of communal conflict, especially between Malay and Chinese, and the forestalling of any tendencies which might give rise to a 'Third China' mind-set. The nation-building process occurring includes not only social and economic advances but attitudinal evolution which at a minimum must result in some form of symbiotic political/communal integration. Cultural and religious diversity is acceptable, but political dissent which has any communal overtones is quickly crushed.

Communication Policy and Planning in Singapore includes two planning and implementation case studies: Radio Television Singapore, a department in the Ministry of Culture; and the Singapore Family Planning and Population Board, a statutory board. The two chapters dealing with these two government entities are carefully descriptive of very efficient organisations, apparently not involved in any intra-government debates over scope and implementation of policy. Television came to Singapore in 1963. Its goal is information, education, and entertainment, in that order. Not surprisingly, its principal popularity is the third priority—entertainment. A subsequent study should evaluate the impact of what sometimes seems to be a plethora of national campaigns (averaging approximately eight per year in the 1980s depending on how such efforts are categorised and counted). Are they turning people off and being ignored? This was a question raised not too long ago by People's Action Party (PAP) backbenchers. In a city as cosmopolitan as Singapore, there are limits to how much lecturing can occur without it becoming dysfunctional.

The cornerstone of government mass-media policy enunciated by Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew is to 'reinforce, not to undermine the cultural values and social attitudes being inculcated in our schools and universities' (p 43). Restrictions on non-government mass media are discussed, though perhaps not as extensively as would have been ideal. Restrictions on the press are often informal, eg, a phone call from a government official. The limits of acceptability seem to be clearly understood by the press. Those inclined to articulate too strident a line are aware of the 1964 Sedition Act which includes among proscribed tendencies those which will 'excite disaffection against the government.'

Overall this is a perceptive book written by two Singapore citizens dealing with sensitive issues. Analyses of policymaking and the role of the Ministry of Culture would have been useful subject areas to include. This study certainly is not a muck-raking endeavour, but the authors are clear in stating that communication in Singapore is

basically a one-way flow from the top down. Shutting down two newspapers and the detention of four Chinese press executives in 1971 caught the attention of most professional communicators and has set the parameters of acceptable behaviour since. The newspaper industry in Singapore, or at least most of the management, by now place commercial success first, and this makes government control markedly easier. A follow-up study to this solid work should analyse why the government believed it necessary to 'shot-gun merger' Singapore News and Publications (which appeared in 1982 when the two leading Chinese dailies were compelled to merge) and the Straits Times group into Singapore Press Holdings, signalling the end of meaningful journalistic competition as well as the triumph of profit first. Control of Singapore mass media is not highly centralised but it is effective.

Deyo's excellent book uses Singapore as a case study to discuss issues of industrialisation relevant to Third World countries consciously pursuing industrial development. Labour-intensive industrialisation, which most Third World countries initially pursue, particularly if they are gearing toward a viable export market, requires political stability, various inducements such as tax-breaks and industrial parks, and a hard-working, relatively low paid labour force. This study suggests but does not convincingly prove that the need for foreign capital, technology, and marketing means local business must inevitably be dependent on foreign firms or it will stagnate. One might also question Deyo's thesis that worker demoralisation and world market industrialisation are usually associated. One criticism of the typical Singaporean made by government officials is that he/she is over-materialistic and excessively concerned with self-gratification. These are not manifestations of demoralization.

The introductory chapter, heuristic in many ways, is sometimes heavy with jargon. Authoritarian corporatism as discussed in detail is basically government control of trade unions. Deyo suggests Singapore is moving towards popular-authoritarian corporatism. There is, however, little evidence that the National Trades Union Congress has an independent power-base and thus has any perceptible autonomous input into government decisions. A reference in Chapter 1 suggests that Mexico is an appropriate model for state-union relations in the Third World (p 15). The union movement in Mexico, too, often manifests some of that country's most corrupt features; Singapore presents a more viable though not ideal model.

The bulk of this work succinctly, and interestingly, provides the historical setting for and analyses industrialisation policy in Singapore between 1965 and early 1979. Contrary to this study, I would suggest unions were first brought under official control so that the government could survive politically and continued (after 1965) so it could effectively industrialise. Singapore can be ranked first in its enthusiasm for multinationals among countries where foreign investment is welcomed. Singapore's leaders are good learners as well as rigorous teachers, and the country's industrial strategy is grounded in the recommendations of a 1961 UN report. Unlike any other country in the world, industrialisation for export, and/or nearly complete dependency on the regional or world economy pervades Singapore's entire economic system.

Several of the criticisms Deyo makes of Singapore's industrialisation now seem to be much higher on the government's agenda. Large industry-wide unions are being reorganised into company-size house unions. The Trade Development Board, if it achieves what is intended in 1985, will provide valuable assistance to the local, small industrial exporter who has benefited minimally from government policy over the past

two decades. Deyo's work, limited to labour-intensive industrialisation, provides a superb foundation for an analysis of SIR (Second Industrial Revolution) initiated in 1979 by the government to move toward high technology/high skill industry. SIR, only partly successful to date, was launched by increasing wages rapidly for three successive years. The objective was to replace labour-intensive with technology-intensive industry.

Both of these carefully researched books contribute to our understanding of Third World development, and Singapore specifically. One must conclude that often there is an over-authoritarian flavour to official Singapore policymaking and implementation which is unwarranted and is a consequence more of habit than necessity. This should be juxtaposed against the fact that Singapore is that rare polity where national interests (albeit defined by a narrow elite) are consistently placed ahead of any particularistic benefits for the rulers. Both books, when carefully read, help us understand why Singapore works and works well.

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Basic Needs and the Urban Poor

P J Richards and A M Thompson

London: Croom Helm. 1984. 276pp. £14.95

The essays in this book cover various aspects of meeting the basic needs of the urban poor, including low-income housing, health care, water supply, human waste disposal, education and transport. The individual chapters contain much interesting factual material and some important insights: for example, the housing chapter records the changing emphasis over the last decade from the provision of housing and eradication of slums to the renewal of slum areas, and the very substantial achievements in Hong Kong and Singapore in this area. The chapter on water shows that in many cases investment in provision of water occurs predominantly in middle-class areas. The consequence is that the poor spend much more for much less (in quantity and quality) than the rich.

A major weakness of the book—acknowledged by the editors—is the treatment of each sector separately, and independently of the macro-environment. Linkages between sectors mean that achievements in one area can be vitiated by failure elsewhere—for example, the provision of health services does little for health without associated changes in education, housing, water etc. Secondly, the macro-environment is of critical importance: low incomes and employment are a pervasive cause of inadequate achievements and can rarely be compensated for by efforts in particular sectors. Moreover, the urban problem cannot be separated from the rural. Substantial resources devoted, for example, to slum renewal, may be rendered nugatory if a new wave of migration from the rural areas results. This is one reason why it has been easier to make substantial improvements in housing and other areas in the 'city states' of Hong Kong and Singapore than in areas where rural poverty is substantial, such as the Philippines.

While this book provides some useful material on particular sectors, a more 'macro' perspective is needed to understand why some economies are more successful in meeting basic needs than others.

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Pricing, Planning and Politics: A Study of Economic Distortions in India

Subroto Roy

London: Institute of Economic Affairs. 1984. 36pp. £1.80pb

On 29 May 1984, the day Subroto Roy's *Pricing, Planning and Politics: A Study of Economic Distortions in India* was published, *The Times* (London), in a leader headed 'India's Bad Example', described the monograph as showing 'how Asia's largest democracy is gradually being stifled by the imposition of economic policies whose woeful effects and rhetorical unreality find their echo all over the Third World.' It goes on to say that for everybody who has been asking questions concerning 'India's poor performance', Dr Roy has 'the answers'.

Those readers of *The Times* who did, in fact, turn to the IEA monograph for 'the answers' were, however, likely to be disappointed. The 'answers' really amount to what may be characterised as the views of the neo-classical extremist which translates rather straightforwardly into the proposition that government should retire altogether from the marketplace and leave all economic activity to private enterprise. The role of government, in this view, would then be limited to guaranteeing individuals and firms rights to their property, enforcing voluntary contracts between and among them, and to providing public goods like national defence, roads, dams and bridges. Whatever happens subsequently is 'efficient', such efficiency being a state of affairs in which no one can be made better off without somebody else being made worse off. ('Pareto-optimality' in the jargon.)

The objection to such a proposition that comes immediately to mind—among many others that can be raised—is one that development economists have been making for a long time: that, if in fact, India's problems are due to the government's market interventions, as Roy contends, then would not the excessive supply of landless labour (by far, the majority of the Indian population) result in market clearing wages so perilously low that scarcely any 'consumption bundles' would be within their 'budget sets' to even assure sustenance? That such a 'free' system of prices somehow constitutes a 'solution' strikes one as rather bizarre. Roy skirts this issue altogether by discussing, in considerable detail, policy impacts on various sections of Indian society from textile exporters to landed farmers without any mention of the hapless landless labourer.

Throughout the monograph, it is claimed that India's development planners neither heeded nor understood 'old objective lessons of political economy'; paradoxically, Roy does not himself seem to understand 'old objective lessons' from development economics. Possibly the simplest and most important of these has been succinctly summarized by A K Sen in his book *Poverty and Famines* (Oxford: Clarendon Press,

1981, p 161) when he wrote that 'Adam Smith's proposition is in fact concerned with efficiency in meeting a market demand, but it says nothing on meeting a need that has not been translated into effective demand because of market-based entitlement and shortage of purchasing power.' If, as *The Times* says, Roy's monograph has 'the answers', they are certainly not answers to the questions he poses.

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Micronationalist Movements in Papua New Guinea

Edited by R J May

Canberra: Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University. 1982. 487pp. np

It is a historical fact that nationalism may be either blessing or curse. On its positive side it means merely the recognition and maintenance of cultural differences among people. In its negative form it promotes intolerance and a narrow spirit of exclusiveness. It is a complex historical phenomenon, operating at varied levels in contemporary society, including political, social, economic, and psychological aspects. From the time of the French Revolution to the contemporary world, it has remained one of the most powerful of all political forces. It gives no evidence of disappearing soon from the contemporary scene.

There are two main peripheries of contemporary nationalism. Macro-nationalisms (or the pan-movements) represent an attempt to extend existing nationalisms into larger entities. Examples are pan-Slavism, pan-Germanism, pan-Europeanism, pan-Turkism, pan-Arabism, Zionism, pan-Asianism, pan-Africanism, and pan-Americanism. The varied attempts to produce nationalism writ large have been notable for their lack of success.

The other periphery is the existence of the mini-nationalisms, or what the editor of this book prefers to call micro-nationalisms. Here the existing nationalism is challenged by small nationalisms within his borders, each seeking to express a nationalistic sentiment of its own. It is a disintegrative force. One sees it in the urge for local autonomy by British subjects in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, in the reassertion of separatism in Europe's Low Countries, in the Balkans, Spain, Switzerland, and Italy. The process is global. It exists within the vast reaches of the Soviet Union, as well as in countries of the Third World. It is a worldwide phenomenon, limited to no one continent. It is constantly in action. The demand is for local autonomy or independence, and the means of seeking it vary from use of the ballot box to outright terrorism.

European and American scholars pay much attention to the many sub-national communities within the range of their vision. That the phenomenon exists elsewhere is shown by this study of micro-nationalist movements in Papua New Guinea. This is an area of 178,260 square miles, slightly larger than California, occupying the eastern half of the island of New Guinea, with neighbours Indonesia on the west and Australia on the south. Its capital, Port Moresby, is well-known for its role in World War II.

Europeans visited the area in the fifteenth century, and land claims began in the nineteenth century, when the Dutch took control of the western half of the island. Later, the British, Australians, and Germans laid claim to parts of the island. After World War I, Australia was given a League of Nations mandate and later a UN trusteeship over the area. Self-government came in 1973, and independence in 1975.

Here as elsewhere, there is a basic problem. Successive waves of peoples entered the country, probably through Indonesia from Asia. Population was broken down into a large number of tribes, some in complete isolation with mutually unintelligible languages. There are Papuans in the south, Melanesians in the north and east, Chinese, Polynesians, Australians, and pygmies. Tribal warfare has broken out intermittently.

The theme of this book is an analysis of the spontaneous local movements in Papua New Guinea. Though they differ in origins and specific objectives, they share a concern with the achievement of economic, social, and political development through communal action. Eleven of the more notable of these movements are examined in detail by scholars with specific local expertise.

The editor, R J May, contributes an opening chapter in which he describes the broad historical background in which the movements developed, and a concluding chapter summarising broad characteristics of the movements in an attempt to account for their proliferation.

The organisation of the book is excellent. There are four major sections. In Part I, devoted to marginal cargo cults, the editor describes the failure of the Hurun movement and its unsuccessful Peli Association, while R Adams describes the Pitenamu society, a wide group of relatively disadvantaged villagers from the Morobe highlands.

Part II is concerned with local protest movements, with James Griffin on Napidakoe Navitu, R J May on the Nemea landowners, and R Adams on the Ahis. Part III treats self-help development movements, with Jerry W Leach on the Kabisawali movement, R J May on the Trobriand experience, and Rolf Gerritsen on the Damuni as a pressure group. Part IV turns to regional separatist movements, including Bob McKillop on the Papua Besena, Bill Standish on the Highlands Liberation Front, and Michael Mei, speaking as an insider, on the Highlands Liberation Front.

All the contributions, without exception, are well done and contribute much to placing these movements in historical perspective. Taken together, they bear out the editor's summary of essential characteristics: 1) membership is based on community or region and is typically fairly loosely defined; 2) objectives are universalistic; and 3) ideologically, emphasis is on achieving objectives through communal self-help, rather than dependence on the colonially created 'state'.

The guidelines set by the editor in this most useful study may well apply to other countries in the Third World which are currently in the process of disengaging from the wide economic and political systems imposed in the colonial era. One sees this kind of disparate group of movements in many areas although in such cases there may well be greater internal coherence and intensity than in the Papua New Guinea movements.

In his final chapter, the editor presents 'an anatomy of micro-nationalism', by treating 1) objectives; 2) leadership and organisation; and 3) strategies and achievements. It is an excellent summary of the evidence presented in his book. But in the last three paragraphs he makes the mistake of suggesting 'the likely future of micro-nationalism' in Papua New Guinea society. The chronicler of nationalism treads on shaky ground when he begins to prophesy about the future. It is difficult enough for the historian to

reveal trends of the past without entering the realm of prophecy. G A Heeger was correct in his assertion that 'social change, from being inevitable and ultimately modernising, is sporadic, erratic and unpredictable in its consequences.' This is also true in the countries of the Third World. Anything can happen on this planet.

LOUIS SNYDER

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Inequality in New Guinea Highlands Societies

Edited by Andrew Strathern

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1982. 190pp. £19.50

West Papua: The Obliteration of a People

TAPOL

London: TAPOL. 1983. 114pp. £2.50pb

In his study, *Global Mini-Nationalisms: Autonomy or Independence* (Greenwood, 1982), the present reviewer was careful to note in title as well as in the text the worldwide existence of the compelling force of a minority struggling for independence or a separate homeland. Centralised states throughout the globe are fraught with divisiveness, factionalism, and disruption. On every continent, including the Third World, in capitalist and communist nations alike, regional minorities, motivated by historical concerns for territory, economics, politics, culture, or language, demand the right to self-determination.

Everywhere the story is much the same. Whether the state is old or new, it must take into critical consideration the maintenance of its centralised functions. National unity becomes the *sine qua non* of its existence. It must under no circumstances give way to calls for regional autonomy or independence. It regards any such activity as treason and takes steps, ultimately based on sheer force, to strike down divisiveness and maintain the integrity of the centralised nationalism.

This is usually an unacceptable state of affairs for the mini-nationalism, ordinarily practised by a small minority of dissidents who regard themselves as leaders of a liberation movement calling for the right of self-determination. They see themselves as local or regional patriots whose people are suffering under 'military occupation'. They denounce violations of their rights: racial discrimination, arrest and detention, torture while in prison, disappearances, and mass slaughter. They persist in waging guerrilla war against the state, which they charge has usurped their own territorial imperative.

The relationship between the state of Indonesia and West Papua, though not too well known in Europe and the United States, is an excellent example of the confrontation between an established centralised state and an unhappy and dissatisfied mini-nationalism. Indonesia, the world's largest archipelago, consists of some 3,000 islands, the largest of which are Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan (most of Borneo), Sulawesi (Celebes), and West Irian (the western half of New Guinea). Until March 1942 Indonesia was a Netherlands overseas territory. Following World War II there was intermittent warfare between the Netherlands and Indonesian forces, which ended with

an agreement in November 1949 transferring sovereignty over all Indonesia, except Netherlands New Guinea (Irian) to a new interim government.

From then on the relations between the Republic of Indonesia and West New Guinea or West Irian became strained. In 1962, a US mediator's plan was adopted providing that West Irian be turned over temporarily to the United Nations, then to Indonesia. Under the agreement Indonesia pledged to hold a plebiscite by the end of 1969 to determine whether the people of West Irian wanted to stay with Indonesia or to separate from it. But on 1 May 1963, the area was turned over to Indonesia by the United Nations. The proposed plebiscite was never held: in April 1965 President Sukarno announced that the vote was cancelled.

Angered dissidents denounced the 'takeover' of their country. They demanded self-determination. They even refused to accept their regional name. During the era of Dutch colonialism, it was usually known as West New Guinea or Dutch (West) New Guinea. At the time of its dispute with Holland, it was known as Indonesia or West Irian. The dissidents called their locality or region West Papua.

Leaders of the mini-nationalist movement formed an organisation called the OPM, for Organised Papua Merdeka (Free Papuan Movement), which was banned by the central government. Government propaganda referred sarcastically to the OPM as the 'GLP' ('wild terrorist gangs'). Officials in Jakarta again and again spoke of the OPM as 'finished' or down to 'no more than 300 men'.

The two books reviewed here are strongly different in content. One is a scholarly collection of objective papers in social anthropology, while the other is a propaganda pamphlet designed to bolster the case of the OPM.

Inequality in New Guinea Highlands Societies presents a new anthropological thesis. The area has been presented in the past as egalitarian and as characterised by achieved leadership, the Melanesian 'big man' system—an established anthropological model. These five papers, all beautifully prepared, suggest that this interpretation underestimates the elements of structured inequality within these societies, and that the classic picture should be modified and supplemented. It is a convincing performance by able anthropologists.

The TAPOL book, on the other hand, is a propaganda treatise designed to arouse sympathy for the cause of the West Papuan resistance movement. Similar books could be written, and have been written, by Basques in Spain, Corsicans in France, Serbo-Croatians in Yugoslavia, and Sikhs in India.

The book details abuses in human rights, detention without trial, torture, extra-judicial killings, and massacre. It asserts that West Papuans have become 'squatters in their own land'. It attributes the constant flow of refugees to the intensity of Indonesian military oppression. It charges that Indonesia's determination to hold on to West Papua is due to the fact that the area contains the world's richest copper deposit and rich oil wells. It criticises Western support for Indonesia, especially military aid by the United States, Britain, Australia, West Germany, and the Netherlands. It denounces the United Nations General Assembly 'for ignoring the opinion of the Papuans and placing them at the mercy of their new rulers.' Even more, this is the 'obliteration of a people'.

For the Indonesian authorities all this is unmitigated nonsense, the exaggerated complaints of a handful of traitors. The government sees itself as engaged in the necessary and critical task of maintaining the union. It will counter force with force. It

will not allow the dissolution of a state which, it points out, is recognised by the United Nations.

For the fair-minded observer it is a melancholy and agonising choice. He may be dismayed by the systematic use of a legal system in handling political prisoners, while at the same time trying to understand the harsh means of the government to maintain and legitimise its position. We have here an example of the familiar global battle between centralisation and separatism in the age of nationalism. The situation in Indonesia is a sad commentary on the contemporary human condition, by which a solution without force seems impossible.

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Non-Jewish Zionism: Its Roots in Western History

Regina Sharif

London: Zed Press. 1983. 152pp. £11.95. £5.50pb

The long tradition of Gentile Zionist thought and the help it has rendered to the modern Zionist movement has long been a neglected field in the history of Zionism. This is partly due to the general disdain of contemporary historians towards what they consider an outdated history of ideas, partly also to a fixation upon the principal protagonists of the Palestine struggle, Zionist Jews and Palestinian Arabs, which tends to overlook the genuine European origins of Zionism and its roots in the political culture of the West, with its 'Jewish problem' and Zionist cures. Though the interdependence of anti-Semitism and Zionism is frequently stated, Regina Sharif has done a pioneer job by systematically tracing the Zionist predisposition of many an anti-Semite in the late nineteenth century and twentieth century to an age-long, mostly Protestant tendency to connect Jewish sovereignty in Palestine with millenarian expectations. This intellectual predisposition against Jewish emancipation and assimilation and in favour of segregation in the Jewish 'homeland' of Palestine was certainly not the only and not the most important motive behind the support given to Jewish Zionism by non-Jews, but it characterised the state of mind of numerous Western politicians and tilted the scales in quite a few cases in favour of Zionist demands.

Sharif gives a thorough and comprehensive analysis of the different brands of Gentile Zionism, beginning with the Reformation and ending with the formulation of US foreign policy. While pointing at the continuity of non-Jewish Zionist inclinations in the last four centuries of European political thought, she avoids the danger of suggesting all too simplistic monocausal explanations of such an intricate and dynamic historic phenomenon as Zionism. Only her insinuation of an unqualified complicity of Zionism and Nazism evokes uneasiness, especially since a recent study (Alexander Schölch, 'Drittes Reich, zionistische Bewegung und Palästina-Konflikt,' in *Vierteljahresheft für Zeitgeschichte*, (4) 1982, pp 646-74)—which was published, to be sure, after Sharif's book had already appeared—throws a different light on this fatal episode of German and Jewish history. One should not ignore the fact that the violent anti-Semitic racism of German fascism—which directly led to the gas chambers and extermination camps—was beyond what Zionists like Herzl or Jabotinsky thought of when proposing to collaborate with anti-Semites.

This, however, does not impair the basic value of Sharif's study, even more so since it is not the Archimedean point of her argumentation. For anyone dealing with Zionism, be it in a Middle Eastern or European context, *Non-Jewish Zionism* is a must.

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The Conflict of Tribe and State in Iran and Afghanistan

Edited by Richard Tapper

London: Croom Helm. 1983. 463pp. £19.95

This symposium, consisting of a long and very searching introduction by its editor plus sixteen further chapters, represents a major contribution to the study of tribal-state relations in the Muslim Middle East; a contribution underscored, of course, by revolutions of very different kinds in both countries under consideration in 1978 and 1979, as well as by the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan at the end of the latter year. It represents, in this sense, a continuation of a trend towards the anthropological analysis of tribe and state in an Islamic context which was initiated for the Maghreb by Ernest Gellner and Charles Micaud in their earlier symposium, *Arabs and Berbers: From Tribe to Nation in North Africa* (London: Duckworth, 1973). But the major difference between the Gellner-Micaud volume and that under review here is that the former contains a good many papers which do not really address themselves to this crucial question, or which do so only peripherally, whereas in this volume by Tapper all the articles included keep their sights directly on the central target, within the time-zone 1800-1980, in order to provide, as the editor notes, the anthropological and historical background to the current and ongoing crisis in both countries concerned.

The volume therefore reflects the fact that historical concerns have now become central to social anthropology, and *vice versa*; a view fully endorsed by this anthropologist reviewer. Given the fact that conflict between tribe and state in both Iran and Afghanistan is inherent in the actors' view of themselves in both national societies, Tapper's insistence that if the state has a 'tribal problem' the tribe also has a 'state problem' is very much to the point: for as the tribe exists within the state, so does the state exist within the tribe. To the point also is the notion that tribalism is more indispensable to nomadism than *vice versa* particularly in the case of Afghanistan, where the global tribal phenomenon, so to speak, has always been stronger and more accentuated than in Iran, where tribes have always remained a minority, even if a most important one, and where the distinction between tribesmen and non-tribesmen was of correspondingly greater importance.

The essays in this volume represent a most interesting series of variations on this theme; and, despite the so-called 'traditional hostility' between tribe and state, Anderson, for example, in a paper on dialectics of Pukhtun tribalism (which this reviewer found to be somewhat obscurely worded and overprone to sociological jargon) nonetheless hits the nail on the head by saying that 'to recognise that "tribe" and "state" interpenetrate is still only half an analysis, for it is the nature of that interpenetration which is decisive' (p 144).

A few other specific points of minor disagreement: although Yapp's notion of 'jellyfish' tribes (pp 186-7) is nice and usable, one could quibble with the 'accepted' (by whom?) account of Bellew (whose work on the subject is left uncited) as to the internal segmentary arrangements of the Zakha Khayl Afridi (p 153); our own informants gave a somewhat different version (though only in detail and not in substance). Also, why does Yapp use 'confederation' for Afridi (p 151) when they are capable of tracing their descent from a common ancestor? And what is wrong with 'clans' for their principal sections? (On this question, see my *The Afridi of the Pakistan North-West Frontier: Social Organisation and History in an Eastern Pukhtun Tribe*, Lahore: Vanguard Books, 1985.) Further, on p 160: 'Khan Bahadur Khan what?' Surely, *a priori*, a top *khan* or *jirga member* of the Malik Din Khayl Afridi must have had a *name* and not just a title! On p 168, the statement that the Orakzai are divided into four main tribes certainly cuts across the work of L White King (*The Orakzai: Country and Clans*, originally 1900, now Lahore: Vanguard Books, 1984), in which some twenty-six discrete Orakzai clans are shown to exist. In addition, Ahmed's paper on Waziristan is excellent (one of the best in the book) along with Nancy Tapper on Amir 'Abd al-Rahman's resettlement of Pukhtuns in north-western Afghanistan (and her husband's fine introduction), although the fact that he left the Faqir of Ipi out of recent Waziristan history seems a curious oversight. And if Salzman, in his Baluchi chapter, had considered some of the literature on Moroccan Central Atlas Berbers, with respect to the alleged irreconcilability between segmentary lineage systems and chiefs (as discussed, for example, by both Gellner and myself: Ernest Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1969, and David M Hart, *Dadda 'Atta and His Forty Grandsons: The Socio-Political Organisation of the Ait 'Atta of Southern Morocco*, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire: MENAS Press, 1981), he might have better overcome some of the more obvious incongruencies as presented in his otherwise most interesting chapter.

Apart from this, Garthwaite, Digard and Brooks present three different but complementary views on the Bakhtiyari of Iran, and Beck (on the Qashqai) makes the useful observation that 'state' and 'central government' are not necessarily interchangeable. It is also abundantly clear from this symposium that the Tribal Agency Pukhtuns of Pakistan are the most segmentary-oriented and organised group in the area, with the Shakak Kurds (as described by Van Bruinessen) as a trailing second—although in this case heavy clientship complicates the issue. It is also abundantly clear (as I have long argued) that tribal social structure or degree of segmentarity has little or nothing to do with tribal economy, whether pastoralist-nomadic or sedentary-agricultural.

In sum, it is very good to have all these points spelled out: even though the volume itself, as Strathern notes in his conclusion, may show few advances in anthropological theory, it nonetheless indicates the ease with which anthropologists and historians can communicate with each other today. And it also provides an extremely rich spectrum of historical situations: how tribes have fought against state control, have co-opted state forces for their own use, have been swallowed into states, have merged with confederacies or mini-states and/or have split up, and have either knocked over dynasties or helped them into power. The whole gamut of variations is covered in this volume, which is precisely why it is so suggestive.

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The Great Game: Rivalry in the Persian Gulf and South Asia

Edited by Alvin Z Rubinstein

New York: Praeger. 1983. 275pp. np

The Indian Ocean has been an arena of East-West maritime rivalry for more than a decade. The West's monopoly on naval deployments was broken by the USSR in the late 1960s, and attempts at limiting activity there have not succeeded: neither direct US-Soviet negotiations, of the kind undertaken in 1977-8, nor the broader proposal for an Indian Ocean Peace Zone, advocated since 1971, have led to substantive agreements. If the Indian Ocean is not the prime site of East-West rivalry, it is a significant secondary arena, and is likely to remain so.

The essays collected in this volume examine strategic aspects of East-West rivalry in the Indian Ocean from several standpoints, examining the policies of local states in the Gulf and South Asia, and looking at Soviet and US policies in the region. Perhaps the most original essay is that of the former National Security Council expert, Gary Sick, on the development of US strategy, since he gives a number of interesting insights into the thinking and stages of US policy during the 1970s. He does not acknowledge the US role in undermining the 1977-8 talks, nor does he bring out the degree to which the US and its NATO allies, Britain and France, have clear naval superiority over the USSR in the Indian Ocean. But his contribution is worth reading as an informative account of how current US deployments came about.

What emerges clearly from the accounts of Sick and others is that the West has a forward strategy in the Indian Ocean: the Soviet presence there, weak as it is, enables Western strategists to argue for sustained and increased force deployments, and the direction in which Western policy is going is towards a greater permanent presence. There is, therefore, no single concept of 'security' applicable to all states, littoral and otherwise, but rather a conflicting set of military policies which aim to treat the Indian Ocean in the light of particular requirements.

Whatever local states demand or suggest—and there are forty-four states entitled to attend a conference of littoral and adjacent countries—the interests and conflicts of the great external powers will have their impact. It is the besetting weakness of this book that it spends far too much time analysing the area in terms of the threats to Western security posed in the Indian Ocean, and far too little to exploring ways in which a measure of US-Soviet détente could lessen the presence of both in an expanse of water remote from either state.

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Unions and Politics in Mexico: The Case of the Automobile Industry

Ian Roxborough

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1984. 209pp. £22.50

Until the last few years, the Latin American working class has been relatively neglected by academic analysis, particularly compared to the bourgeoisie, whose nature played a major part in the debate generated by dependency theory. A detailed study of one

section of the Mexican working class, the auto workers and their union organizations is, therefore, more than welcome.

One of the strengths of Ian Roxborough's study is the way in which the case-study is related to wider debates about the working class and trade unions in Mexico. An introductory chapter discusses the conventional view of labour in Latin America and, more specifically, in Mexico. This emphasises the corporatist control over labour which results in cooptation or repression of rank-and-file insurgency and turns the labour movement into a bastion of support for the regime. A corollary of this view is that in Mexico the emergence of 'independent' unions would challenge corporatist control of the labour movement and pose a potential threat to the stability of the political system.

In analysing the Mexican automobile industry where both 'official' and 'independent' unions exist in different plants, Roxborough finds that this account is oversimplified. It is indeed possible to distinguish between militant and conservative unions, but these do not coincide with the distinction between independent and official unions. In fact, a better predictor of the degree of union militancy is found to be the extent of internal union democracy, so that the real dividing line is between democratic unions (including some official unions) and oligarchic unions. A second weakness of the conventional account is its tendency to underplay the extent of worker insurgency, especially shop-floor struggles, because of its focus on national-level bargaining.

The specific focus of the study is union government and the way in which this relates to union militancy. While this facilitates a lucid presentation of the central theme, at times the reader finds himself wishing that the author had cast his net wider. For instance, differences in the degree of union control over the labour process are discussed purely in terms of union militancy—indeed it is taken as one indicator of militancy—with little attention to differences in managerial strategy between different firms. It would also have been interesting to have had more details of the ways in which the two state-owned firms differed from the foreign subsidiaries in the industry. Nevertheless, within its self-imposed limitations, this is a well-researched and well-argued study of considerable value to all those concerned with understanding workers and their organisations in Latin America.

RHYS JENKINS

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Economic Integration among Unequal Partners: The Case of the Andean Group

Alicia Puyana de Palacios

Oxford: Pergamon (in association with the Centro de Estudios Económicos y Sociales del Tercer Mundo—CESTEEM). 1982. 405pp. np

This book analyses the impact that the Andean Pact had on the economic development of its member countries from 1965 when discussions on the possible formation of an Andean Group were initiated, until 1981, when the optimism for international cooperation and development which underlay the Group's foundation reached its lowest ebb. Particular attention is given to the period from May 1969, when the Group was founded (incorporating Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru), through the joining of Venezuela in February 1973, to the withdrawal of Chile in October 1976.

The author discusses both the general principles of economic integration and also the specific characteristics and problems of the six countries which have been involved in the Group since the original Cartagena Agreement of 1969. Special consideration is given to the political and ideological antecedents of the Group, to the original conception of accelerated development through economic integration which underlay the objectives set at the time of foundation, and to the political divergences and narrowly nationalist attitudes which have often characterised the governments of the member countries. In presenting the main economic characteristics of the Group, the lack of adequate global data forces a country-by-country description which emphasises the marked differences that exist among the members in terms of levels of development and of the economic policies pursued.

It is demonstrated that economic integration has been successful only in expanding reciprocal trade in primary and manufactured products. This trade dynamism, however, has not led to significant new industrial investment, increased competition or major economies of scale. Industrial growth continues to be based on the old import-substitution model without effective policies to change the relatively rigid structure of supply or the small size of the market.

With regard to political integration, the inter-country differences in levels of development and of economic policy have prevented agreement on a common external tariff, coordinated planning of the industrial sector, or common responses to international trade, aid and debt problems. There must be grave doubts as to whether it is possible to find a common development strategy based on industrialisation in such a relatively heterogeneous group of countries with peripheral capitalist economies, when the socioeconomic impact of shared development policies will benefit some countries and interest groups more than others. The original conception of the Group is shown to lack both a sufficiently comprehensive economic rationale and a genuine political feasibility.

Puyana de Palacios provides a good review and a thorough analysis of the institutional and economic factors that explain the commercial success and the broader development failure of the Andean Group. Coverage of the industrial sector is particularly strong, and there are very detailed notes and a copious bibliography. Coverage of the agricultural and mining sectors is relatively weak however, despite the fact that they accounted for two-thirds of the growth of intra-Group international trade in the period 1969-75. Similarly, the monetary aspects of integration receive relatively little attention, despite the recognition that the most important aim of intra-Group trade is the freeing of hard currency for importing capital goods from outside. Nevertheless, this is one of the most important studies ever made of the Andean Group, and it merits a wide readership among specialists in the economics of the Andean countries and in the design and evaluation of programmes for international economic integration.

RAY BROMLEY

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Nicaragua: la difficulté d'être libre

Alain Gandolfi

Paris: Editions Karthala. 1983. 264pp. np

Des prêtres au gouvernement: L'expérience du Nicaragua

Teofilo Cabestrero

Paris: Editions Karthala. 1983. 133pp. np

When leaders of Nicaragua's Sandinista government announced, shortly after overthrowing the American-backed administration of Anastasio Somoza Debayle almost five years ago, that it had every intention of ruling their homeland without yielding to exterior influence or pressure from the United States a sequence of events was set in motion which seemed to defy completely seven decades of past experience. It was indeed a bold political stroke, dramatically shattering all previous assumptions which had been taken for granted about America's 'special place' in Nicaraguan domestic affairs.

Until 1979, Washington's relationship with Managua was nothing more than a sordid legacy of almost uninterrupted intervention and internal meddling. Between 1909 and 1933 the United States Marines invaded the country on many occasions to put down numerous nationalist movements longing to free themselves from the yoke of exploitive economic colonialism imposed by several generations of American political and business interests. The most famous of these liberation struggles was led by Augusto César Sandino, a 'self-styled general of free men' who in 1927 directed a hit-and-run guerrilla war against American occupation forces which would last for the better part of the next six years. Despite marginal success, the beleaguered rebels (suffering from severe shortages of everything except fierce patriotic resolve and courage) were no match for the immensely superior firepower of the American military arsenal.

The pattern of employing naked armed force to crush Nicaraguan insurgency was later replaced by more subtle forms of outside domination. In 1937, the United States cultivated close ties with Anastasio Somoza Garcia, a local right-wing despot, who, in exchange for American arms and support, agreed to recognise Washington's dominance and imperial designs in the region. The elderly Somoza then proceeded to consolidate his power with the help of the Nicaraguan National Guard (trained and equipped, incidentally, by American advisers) and hastily unleashed a reign of intimidation and assassination to silence all opposition. For the next forty-two years, the Somoza family dominated Nicaragua with an iron-fisted grip that was in the classical tradition of a model 'banana republic'. The tenacious hold was not broken until freedom fighters named after Sandino toppled Somoza Garcia's second son.

Gandolfi interprets the Nicaraguan revolution as a backlash to the abuse and humiliation inflicted on the nation by the United States and on the dictators who were its friends. The Sandinistas, contends the author, are a logical product of America's repeated attempts to deprive Nicaragua of its legitimate self-determination. What guides the Sandinistas and their followers is the sincere conviction that Nicaragua has never really been a country with genuine sovereignty because prior to Somoza's ousting, the nation was a mere appendage of the United States. Having now rid themselves of their foreign masters, Nicaragua can at long last exist for Nicaraguans.

Although not always written in a wholly impartial and clinically detached manner, this is essentially a most useful study which, notwithstanding these above mentioned faults, deserves the widest possible audience among both the academic community and interested general public.

'Priests are no more necessary to religion,' observed John Haynes Holmes over half a century ago in *A Sensible Man's View of Religion*, 'than politicians to patriotism.' Whether Holmes was correct in voicing his critical pronouncement is, of course, still a largely unresolved theological issue which continues to remain philosophically debatable. In contemporary Nicaraguan history, however, priests, religion, politicians and patriotism are inseparably fused to form a single sociological entity.

When the National Sandinista Liberation Front violently overthrew the puppet dictatorial regime of General Anastasio Debayle Somoza in July 1979, an extraordinarily dramatic sequence of events radically altered the *status quo* of the previous forty-five years not least of which was the appointment of three Roman Catholic clerics to senior positions of political power. What were these men—a Jesuit, a Maryknoll priest and a Benedictine monk—doing inside the decision-making chambers of a predominantly Marxist-inspired military *junta*? This is only one of the many significant and fascinating questions on which Teofilo Cabestrero attempts to shed some valuable light in his clearly sympathetic yet clinically detached study, *Des prêtres au gouvernement*. The book traces the religious and political lives of Father Fernando Cardenal, director of the national literacy programme and vice-coordinator of the Sandinista youth movement; the Reverend Miguel d'Escoto, Minister of External Affairs; and Brother Ernesto Cardenal, Minister of Culture. To be sure, these individuals were clearly not the only Christians who actively participated in the long chain of blood-soaked tragedies which eventually attracted world media attention five years ago. Nevertheless, their presence in the official governing hierarchy tends accurately to symbolise the enormously salutary influence and courageous contribution that an overwhelming majority of lay and ecclesiastical Roman Catholic Nicaraguans exerted on the course of their country's recent historical past.

Des prêtres au gouvernement is, essentially, a series of candid and revealing interviews which the author conducted with Fernando Cardenal, Miguel d'Escoto and Ernest Cardenal. Through the intimate channels of this frank dialogue and serious exchange of opinion we are able to determine the reasons and motives for their fateful decision that ultimately led them to clasp hands with the Sandinistas and a broad popularly based coalition of other anti-Somoza forces. Beyond their own devoutly religious commitment to the successful outcome of Nicaragua's socialist revolution, other larger and more complex themes emerge from the discussions. For example, what is the relationship between religious faith and political consciousness? In particular, should the Roman Catholic Church and its members openly ally themselves as spokesmen and benefactors of those who ardently desire an armed resolution to their oppressed and exploited condition? And what about the collaboration among Christians and Marxists: are there irreconcilable differences or do they have anything substantially in common that is worth preserving and pursuing?

Des prêtres au gouvernement, in short, is much more than a quick glance at the title might first erroneously suggest. Besides giving us a humanistic appreciation of these remarkable clerics, it also intelligently examines some of the most controversial subjects ever to confront the Roman Catholic Church and, for that matter, other religious

denominations as well. If it were only for this reason, Cabestrero's lucid and stimulating analysis deserves the widest possible circulation.

ANDRE G KUCZEWSKI

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Global Development: Issues and Choices

Edited by Khadija Haq

Washington DC: North-South Roundtable of the Society for International Development. 1983. 231pp. np

Crisis of the 1980s: World Monetary, Financial and Human Resources Development Issues

Edited by Khadija Haq

Washington DC: North-South Roundtable. 1984. 317pp. np

Crisis in Economic Relations between North and South

Edited by Norman Schofield

Aldershot, England: Gower. 1984. 439pp. £18.50

In 1983, the US GDP amounted to \$3,282 billion, at current prices and exchange rates. Consequently, the United States found itself producing and consuming approximately one-third of global wealth with 5 per cent of the world's population, as compared with a global product share of some 25 per cent in 1975. Further, a 30 per cent cumulative gain in the dollar's value during the past year has placed American per capita income behind only the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait in the world. If the current OECD projection of 6 per cent US 1984 growth is accurate, 47 per cent of overall OECD product will be generated by one member-nation. At a time when relative US economic strength and self-confidence have been partially restored, simplistic arguments that developing-country public-sector size and extensive domestic economic controls present the main barrier to growth have become increasingly fashionable. The 1984 joint annual meeting of IMF-IBRD ministers has recently reaffirmed the view that the main contribution to the solution of the international debt crisis must come from the developing debtor countries themselves. Among developed industrial country decision-makers, the political will for major structural reforms has never been more limited since the Sixth Special Session of the United Nations in April 1974.

Conservative analysts strongly hold that the market economy can adjust efficiently to any resource shortage, and that privatisation of production and distribution is the major prerequisite for global development. Within this context, *Global Development and Crisis of the 1980s* make a particularly important contribution, by counterpointing a set of forty-four diverse but informed and authoritative perspectives which are decidedly agreed that inaction is short-sighted, since 'the invisible hand is of flesh and blood'. In various ways, the point is repeatedly made that the health of the international system is more dependent than ever upon open dialogue and mutually consistent national policies, despite the great variety in national political and socioeconomic circumstances

observed. The first volume is divided into seven parts, three of which are largely based upon presentations made to the plenary session of the fourth annual North-South Roundtable. This took place in Tokyo/Oiso, on 22-24 October 1982, with a conference theme of 'Searching for New Approaches to Global Cooperation'.

Some of the most interesting insights within this provocative work are provided by Bradford Morse: 'We are awash in laboriously defined development prescriptions . . . which have yet to be properly integrated'; Shridath Ramphal: 'The world economy sets up its own vibrations which make their impact on national economies with ever increasing intensity'; and Robert Hormats . . . 'We still do not focus enough on the individual problems experienced within developed and developing countries'. The remaining sections of this first volume are based upon panel papers and discussions, followed by an overview chapter. The appended Oiso Declaration reaffirms that the solution to global development lies in our own collective hands. Three problem areas are apparent. First, there is a preoccupation (partially corrected in the succeeding volume) with the perceived world economic stagnation of 1982 on the part of several contributors, which does little to strengthen the current case for fundamental structural reform, given the circumstances outlined at the outset of this review.

Second, despite the expressed intent of the concluding chapter, the recorded instrumental consensus remains exceedingly limited; thus, the immediate action agenda of the Oiso Declaration is not an agreed statement, and has much more to say about objectives than means. Third, notwithstanding the title *Global Development*, no operational distinction between economic growth and the much broader development process clearly emerges. Similarly, the second volume, *Crisis of the 1980s*, brings together the ideas and papers presented at the Istanbul Roundtable, from 29 August-1 September 1983. This conference was convened by the North-South Roundtable and the UNDP Development Study Programme in order to address the international financial situation, as well as human resource development. The major strength of this work lies in the clarity of issue definition. Fundamental institutional questions are raised in a number of areas, such as global liquidity adequacy and distribution, interest rates and debt rescheduling, growth strategy and the need for systematic contact between trade and financial policymakers.

Participant approaches to the international debt problem are particularly diverse. Yet, in the light of the recent OECD consensus that developing debtor countries should further streamline their economies, and take additional steps to attract foreign investment, a number of valuable insights are again offered. For instance, John Williamson contends that direct investment has grown in line with host nation real economies during recent years, and that it is mistaken to expect an investment flow of much more than the current level of \$10 billion to \$12 billion per annum. Moreover, Carlos Massad, Richard Fletcher and George Vojta (among others) suggest several imaginative means for the recombination of external debt liabilities into more manageable forms. Further, the discussion of human resource development draws much-needed attention to the sociocultural and institutional aspects of growth which have been long neglected in the traditional focus upon more easily quantified factors. On the other hand, the analysis of the plight of the least developed countries in parts three and four does not really succeed in transcending a truly dramatic pessimism. If it is vitally important that there be a clear and agreed diagnosis of what is wrong with the present international financial system, as Mahbub ul-Haq eloquently argues, such a goal

is substantially advanced by the exchanges recorded here—even if specific prescriptions continue to differ.

Crisis in Economic Relations between North and South is a collection of twelve papers which grew from a research seminar held at the University of Texas at Austin in 1979. The first three chapters are global-historical in scope, followed by a somewhat uneven examination of specific commodity markets (aluminium, coffee, copper and rice), the EEC's STABEX export earnings stabilisation scheme, and an analysis of African economic cooperation between 1900 and 1980. Norman Schofield explains the major underlying premise: that individual equilibrium strategies will not lead to Pareto-optimal outcomes. An inclusive international forum which deals with trade, commodity and aid issues will facilitate the necessary process of cross-national cooperation and compromise. This is assuredly unexceptionable, although clear criteria for issue-area exclusion are not specified. Similarly, in a concluding chapter by David McKay which deftly interweaves OECD macroeconomic policies and 'political realities', the economic crisis of 1981 is once again explained by the failure of a new hegemonic power to replace the declining United States. Once more, this by now familiar argument may have been incompletely overtaken by events. As a whole, *Crisis* offers a useful if rather disaggregated set of readings in international political economy, in which careful and comprehensive research largely compensates for the evident lack of uniformity in sophistication and synergy.

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Recent Publications

BOOKS*

- Angalade, C and Fortin, C: **The State and Capital Accumulation in Latin America: Vol 1, Brazil, Chile, Mexico.** London: Macmillan. 1985. 254pp. £30.00.
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* This is a list of books that have been recently received by *Third World Quarterly* for review; they are not available for sale through *Third World Quarterly*.

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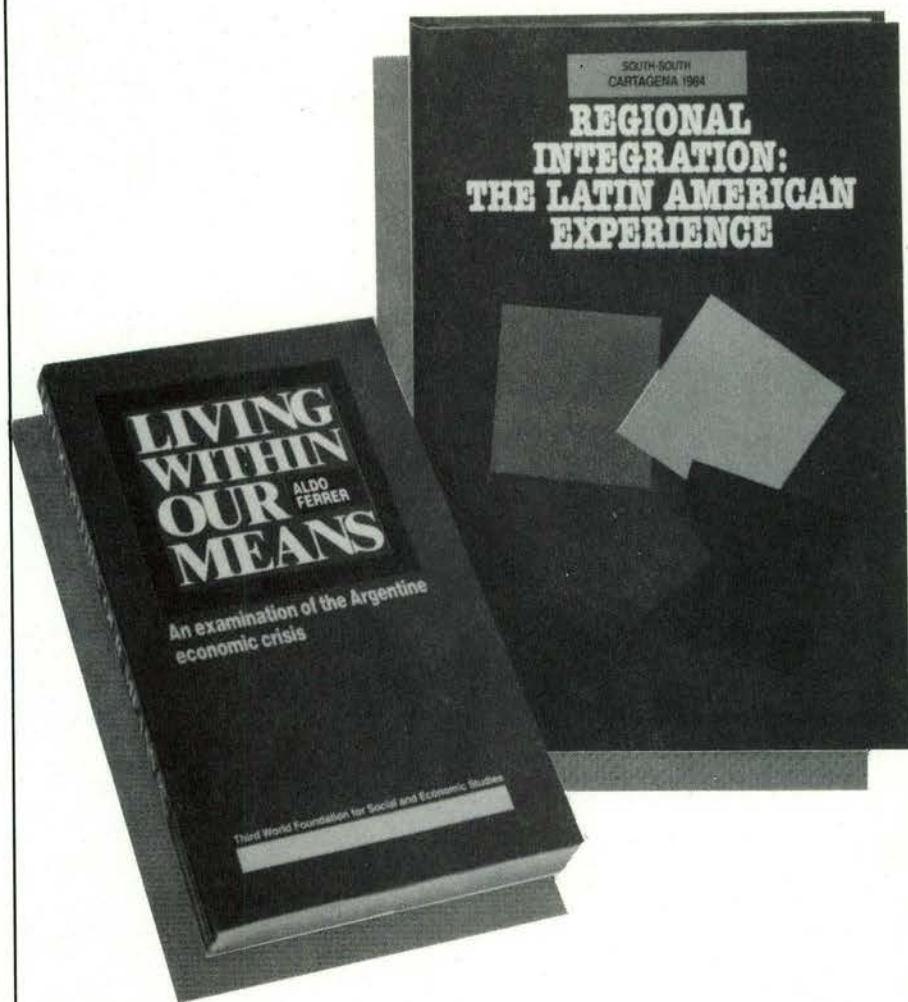
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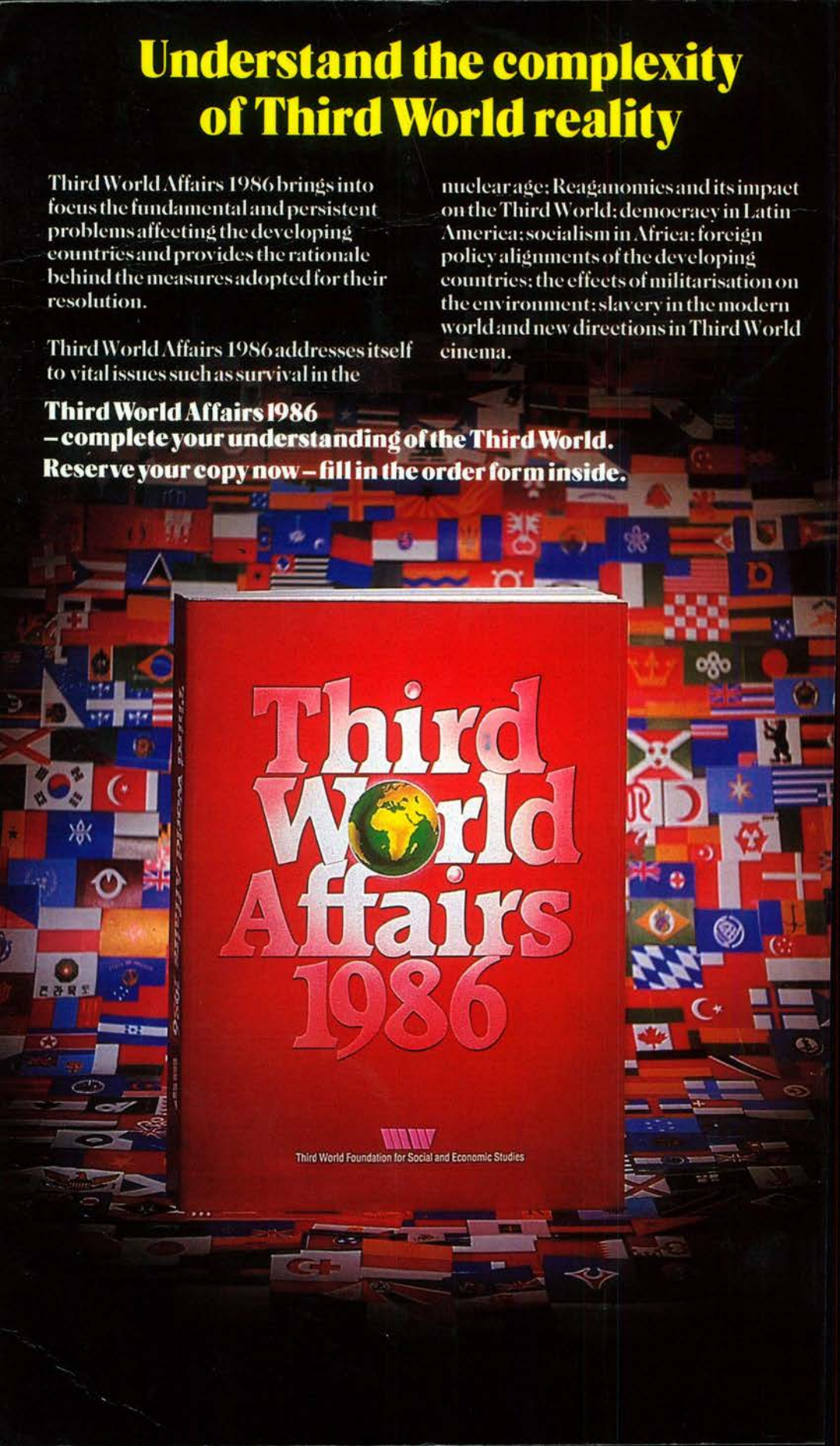
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