MILITARISM, STUDENT RESISTANCE AND THE PRESS

IN NIGERIA, 1970 - 1979

by

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A thesis submitted for the Degree

of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the University of Leicester

Dedicated to the memory of:

Kunle Adepeju
Shehu Alhaji
Amai Nicholas
Lasisi Abubakar
Gwusu Khasal
Bukola Arogundale
Wewimo Akinbolu
Fatima Adebimpe
Nuhu Amuda Yusuf
Mohammed Jibir Daura
Akintunde Ojo
Mrs. Arike Balogun and her unborn baby
Unidentified School Pupil at Ile-Ife
Dorcas Ojewole
Paul Alonge

Who sadly lost their lives
in the events chronicled here.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To a certain extent, scholarship, as other aspects of social production, is a collective endeavour. This work is no exception. Among many contributors, of which not all can be named here, my gratitude goes first of all to my thesis supervisor, Graham Murdock. His tolerance, patience and rigorous demands enabled me to develop what was at the outset a hazy idea. I thank him for this, and for many of his other kindesses to me since my first day in Leicester.

I have also been fortunate to share in the vast intellectual wealth and personal friendships of the staff of the Centre for Mass Communication Research, the University of Leicester. My gratitude to the Director, Professor James D. Halloran, and Paul Hartman, Peter Golding, Robin McCrone, Peggy Gray, and the late Philip Elliott. Each of them assisted in some way along the line. In addition, I benefitted enormously from lively exchanges with the following graduate student colleagues: Dantala Yohanna Garba, Yusuf Turundu, Yusuf Abba, Darien Bernstein, Ngozi Nwandison, Chris Iyimoga, Abubakar Abdullahi, Chamil Wariya, Bunn Nagara, Rufai Ibrahim, and Tony Amakiri (Politics Department).

I am also grateful to Professor Justin Tseayo, who for the past ten years, has encouraged and challenged me to improve my intellectual horizons. Other colleagues at the University of Jos have been equally helpful. Of these, I wish to thank Professor Omafume Onoge - the Head of Sociology for his keen interest, support and energetic footwork. Equally supportive were other members of the Sociology team at Jos: Dr. S.K. Bonsi, Dr. A.B. Zack-Williams, Dr. Mbosowo, E.O. Alemika, Mrs. E. Emovon and Olufemi Adelakun; and Dr. S.G. Tyoden of the Department of Political Science.
In Nigeria, my fieldwork was made possible by the hospitality of relations and friends, and I wish to thank: my cousin William Mozeh, Tyodzua Akosu, Adamu Aboki Musa, Dr. Wole Ogundele (Literature Department, University of Ife), Dr. Frank Ogbuaajah, Daniel Sugh, James Sugh, Mr. and Dr. (Mrs.) I. Lawal, Benjamin Aindigh, Iyorhen Ortese, Segun Okeowo, Peremo Ihyande and Henry Ejembi. Henry also made available to me his invaluable collection of documents on Nigerian students.

My special thanks to Samson Nyior and Samaila Kewa, who contributed more than they know. NA GODE. To mum and dad, and brother Terna, I cannot thank you enough for your patience.

Finally, my gratitude goes to all Nigerians who have supported a few privileged ones as myself through formal schooling. The only way we can sufficiently express our gratitude to you is by utilising this education for improving the condition of your existence.
INTRODUCTION

Compared to the wealth of studies of the media in advanced capitalist societies and at the international level, critical examinations of the situation in Third World countries are relatively scarce, especially in Africa. Hence, the main aim of this study is to make a modest contribution to filling this gap. A secondary aim is to contribute something to current debates about cultural production in general, and news reporting in class societies in particular. But since the media are part and parcel of the societies within which they operate, the thesis also aims to provide a social commentary on Nigerian society by looking at the interplay of two main social groups: the military and the intellectuals.

In order to realise these broad aims, it takes the phenomenon of militarism as a general point of departure and looks at its principal base, and at the consequences of its operations for societies such as Nigeria. Since militarism is, among other things, a cultural phenomenon centred around notions of discipline, order, obedience, and patriotism, it poses problems for intellectuals as much as for other groups in society. Consequently, intellectuals must come to terms with its presence in the configurations which both find themselves. And of the various intellectual groups who responded to militarism in the period covered by the thesis, the most organised and consistent reactions came from the students and media personnel.

In the case of the students, we have tried to place their responses in the context of their past contributions to the development of the Nigerian state, and the historical realities of this state. In addition, we have tried to examine the ways in which the military regime itself responded to the critical initiatives of
the students and other opposition movements.

Other groups, however, who watched the conflict between the students and the regime on a day-to-day basis relied, of necessity, on the news media for definitions of the situation and its causes. While we could not possibly estimate how their perceptions and interpretations were influenced by the media, we felt we should try to analyse the representations offered to them, and by contrasting them with our historical reading of events assess how adequate the media accounts were as a basis for understanding and tackling the problems of underdevelopment in neo-colonial Nigeria.

I do not pretend to be a disinterested observer. As a product of that history, my reading is obviously coloured by my own experiences within the society, including my experiences as a student who participated in the events described. Hence my attempt to reconstruct their course and to excavate their causes is not intended as a 'neutral' yardstick against which to measure the news reports, but rather as an alternative perspective which points to significant aspects of the situation which news definitions either ignored or misrepresented.

The thesis begins with a look at competing explanations of militarism as a social phenomenon, its causes, and historical origins, its contemporary manifestations in Third World societies, and its economic, social, political and cultural consequences. It tries to set the scene for the subsequent discussion of militarism and its relationship with intellectuals and other social groups, both generally and within Nigeria in particular.

Chapter 2 too, is a scene setting chapter which focuses on the dilemmas of intellectuals in class societies and how they try to come to terms with them.
The aim is to provide a basis for a discussion of students and journalists as intellectuals working in the class societies of advanced capitalist countries and the neo-colonial world, and to see whether any broad similarities exist between them despite the vast difference of the world the two operate in.

These two chapters, together with the third which analyses the political role of student movements, set the agenda for an examination of Militarism, Student Resistance and the Press in Nigeria, between 1970 and 1979. Our choice of period cuts out the more turbulent years of Nigerian militarism, including the civil war of 1967 to 1970, since it is felt that this period deserves a more specialised attention. The end point, 1979, happens to be the time when the military withdrew to the background, and handed power back to a civilian government.

The next chapter (Chapter 4) looks at the social structure of Nigeria tracing it back to the pre-colonial and colonial days, before moving to discuss the events that ushered in the military in 1966, and led to the civil war. In the post-war period, which mainly concerns us, the analysis is focused on the political and economic realities of Nigerian militarism in order to provide a general context for the subsequent chapters.

Chapter 5 shows how various social groups ranging from the workers, peasants, unemployed persons and individuals reacted to the rule of the military; and in addition, anticipates the chronological account of student political activism in chapters 6 and 7. These two chapters, apart from surveying the course of student movements, explore the reasons behind them, and the issues involved in the protests.
From here, we proceed to examine the media's role by exploring the structural problems of the Nigerian press, the constraints these impose, and the margin for 'negotiation' they leave open. The remaining part of the main thesis, Chapter 9, presents a detailed content study of the press's representation of the students and their confrontation with the military regime, and examines the way in which the professional values and routines of news production, which were transferred from the advanced industrial countries operate in a neo-colonial situation.

The concluding chapter (Chapter 10), tries to pull together the arguments developed in the previous chapters.

Strictly speaking, Chapter 11 does not fall within the main borders of the thesis, since the events discussed there lie outside the period covered by the analysis. However, they have important bearings on the thesis, since the arrival of another military regime in Nigeria presents a test for some of the central arguments developed in the main text. Hence, although the thesis can be read without bothering with this epilogue, hopefully, reading it adds to the picture we have tried to paint.
1. MILITARY INTERVENTION IN POLITICS AND MILITARISATION OF SOCIETY IN THE THIRD WORLD

During the past two decades incidents of military intervention in politics of Third World countries, by way of direct control of state power, have become so commonplace that announcements of an attempted coup or successful military overthrow of an elected civilian administration no longer come as a surprise. To many citizens of Third World countries, military rule has become routine, an accepted way of political life. Some have even come to prefer military rule over civilian rule because of the latter's identifiable ineffectiveness and undisguised corruption. Frustrated by ineffective policies, widespread poverty and misery amidst islands of ill-acquired wealth and conspicuous consumption, a surveyor will easily come across Third World citizens expressing sentiments for a return to military rule in countries with elected governments. However, military overthrows in Africa, Latin America and Asia have not tackled satisfactorily the perennial conditions of poverty, disease, ignorance, misery and mortification suffered by the majority of the population. Such regimes end up being equally or even more repressive than the elected civilian governments. They, in the end, face mass opposition, and ultimately are forced out of office by other coup makers or the civilians they deposed.

The proliferation of military coups has witnessed a corresponding increase in intellectual debates on the subject. Both theoretical and empirical studies of the causes and consequences of military rule in the Third World have been carried out. Over the years, the literature on the subject has grown rapidly. Analysts with different and often conflicting positions present persuasive arguments, closely followed by statements on what should be the
role of the armed forces in society, and how it should be executed. Frequently, attempts are made to compare the consequences of direct military intervention in the Third World with the indirect intervention characteristic of the industrialised countries, in an effort to work out a general framework for analysing militarism in the World. While this necessary linkage will be born in mind, and reference made to it from time to time in our discussion, our focus here will be more specifically on militarism in the Third World.

Theorisation of the causes and consequences of military take-overs in the Third World, and the possible direction of this phenomenon is becoming more difficult because of the constant shift in possible classificatory patterns of intervention. For example, the military have overthrown regimes of both right and left of the ideological divide. For the former: Egypt (1952), Libya (1969), Yemeni (1962), Somalia (1969), Ethiopia (1974). In case of the latter: there is Ghana (1966), Uganda (1971), Indonesia (1965), and most notable of all, Chile (1973). There are also several instances of dissident factions within the armed forces taking up arms against the ruling factions as has happened in Nigeria (1966, 1975, 1976), Ghana (1978, 1979), and the celebrated case of Bolivia where coup plotting has almost replaced all other forms of military life.

1. In the 1960's, The RAND Corporation, a major associate of United State's Department of Defence, sponsored several researches and Conferences on the military, including the 1959 Santa Monica one which resulted in John Johnson's The Role of the Military in Underdeveloped Countries. The Rand Corp. Princeton University Press. 1964.
As each group of officers comes to power, rationalisations for their course of action (normally diagnosis of society's ills and ineffectiveness of the overthrown regime to cope with such ills) are put out for public appreciation. Good intentions of the coup makers can be deciphered from some of the catchwords commonly selected as the badge of office: 'Revolutionary', 'Redemption', 'Liberation', 'Salvation'. After seizing the radio station, closing air and sea ports, the country's borders, and declaring a dusk to dawn curfew, one of these decorative epithets is presented as a symbolic gesture towards winning popular acceptance. Examples include; Ghana's 'National Liberation Council' (1966), 'National Redemption Council' (1972) and 'Armed Forces Revolutionary Council' set up by Flt. Lt. Jerry Rawlings in 1979; 'People's Redemption Council' of Liberia under 'Dr.' Doe; and Ouedroago's 'People's Provisional Salvation Council' later overthrown, in Upper Volta.

Spectacular as these interventions and accompanying rationalisations may appear, it is necessary to treat them in their wider social context if we are to uncover the fundamental factors behind the upsurge of militarism in the Third World. This requires an investigation of the social formations within these societies, and the crises which beset them. Our approach to such a project is firstly, to examine the general phenomenon of militarism, its origin in society and implications for that society; secondly, to trace historically, the changing role and function of the armed forces in society up to the present day notion of an apolitical military in the capitalist world; and finally, to isolate the causes and consequences of direct military intervention in the administration of Third World states. Particular attention will be given to the contending scenarios provided by Behaviourists and Marxist inspired scholars.
At the end of the road, we hope, our understanding of the relationship between militarism and civil societies in the Third World, will be deepened sufficiently to enable us to unravel the tensions between the military and the major centres of intellectual and cultural production - the universities and the mass media - and to show how these institutions confront the ideology of the military state under specific social and economic conditions.

State Power: The Marriage between Coercion and Consensus

Political analysts are generally agreed that both force and consensus are essential components of state power and that specific circumstances will determine which of these two modes will dominate. In most situations the ability of a group to rule over others depends primarily on their ability to secure and maintain a consensus. Nevertheless, command over organised force always acts as the last line of defence. Considered as a whole, therefore, in reality, there exists a dialectical relationship between the two.

In the historical development of states in all societies, organised force has remained a central instrument for subjecting subordinate groups to the dominant group in control of state power. It is a key component of the social power which is concentrated in a few hands, but it is not an independent and determinate variable. Its foundation lies in the material conditions and the accompanying social relations that exist in every society at a particular historical moment. Thus, organised force - both the means employed and ends to which it is put - depends on the state of the productive forces in the society.

In a penetrating analysis of the rise of militarism in Germany, Karl Liebknecht shows how the history of Capitalism is closely linked to the emergence
of a new type of military force and war (Liebknecht, 1973). In his view, militarism as a social force under advanced conditions of economic production does not operate on the bases of purely numerical majority, that is, in the form of greater physical force. It is the control of the productive forces of society which facilitates the control of political power, including armed force. Though the ruling group may be in the minority in terms of numbers, their "intellectual and economic superiority" is turned into a simple physical superiority through the possession of arms, or better arms. It is this which facilitates the "complete domination of the class conscious majority by a class conscious minority" (Liebknecht, 1973:10).

Although the reality in different societies is a good deal more complicated than Liebknecht allows for, the clarity of his assertions have given them a universal appeal. Certainly, they are supported by other prominent critics of class societies. Engels for instance, argued that, "Force is no mere act of the will, but requires very real preliminary conditions before it can come into operation, that is to say, instruments, the more perfect of which vanquish the less perfect; moreover, that these instruments have to be produced, which also implies that the producer of more perfect instruments of force, of vulgo arms, vanquishes the producer of the less perfect instruments, and that in a word, the triumph of force is based on the production of arms, and this in turn on production in general - therefore, on 'economic power', on the 'economic order', on the material means which force has at its disposal" (Engels in Semmel, 1981:49).

Similarly, Luxembourg considers militarism as a province of accumulation, playing a crucial role at every stage of the historical process,
including the rise of capitalism as a mode of production, and its expanded stage of internationalisation known as imperialism (Luxembourg in Semmel, 1981). In the later case in particular, Luxembourg maintains that, militarism "is employed to subject the modern colonies, to destroy the social organisations of the primitive societies so that their means of production may be appropriated, forcible to introduce commodity trade in countries where the social structure had been unfavourable to it, and to turn the native into a proletariat by compelling them to work for wages in the colonies" (Luxembourg in Semmel 1981:149). Luxembourg argues that military power is a key weapon of capitalist expansion in non-capitalist nations. As she states: "From the purely economic point of view, it is a pre-eminent means for the realisation of surplus value: it is in itself a province of accumulation" (Luxembourg in Semmel, 1981:148).

The employment of military force in the subjection of subordinate social groups existed in the precolonial states of Africa and other parts of the Third World before military conquest and colonisation. However, it took a particular form during the colonial period and this has persisted over time, years after some of these societies have obtained independence. This formation will be tackled later in this chapter.

Before then, however, we will briefly examine the nature of militarism in the Third World before their transition to a capitalist based organisation of the armed forces, and the way in which changes in state forms and militarism have occurred in these societies since the introduction of colonialism. Our major focus will be on African societies since these are most directly relevant to the present thesis.
From Pre-Capitalist to Capitalist Armed Forces in the Third World;

Conflicting Interpretations

The notion of the 'professional soldier' as currently constituted has grown out of changes in society over the years, most notably the emergence of more specialised division of labour. Over time, many commentators forgot the political history of the military and instituted the a-political military, familiar in the advanced Western societies, as a universal ideal. This is particularly so with those Social Scientists whose perspective is shaped by either Functionalism (Sociologists), or Pluralism (Political Science). To them, the politically neutral military has a specific duty to perform in society, and one has to try and understand the way they perform that role, where they deviate, and why and how they can be corrected. This ideal is then translated to other societies irrespective of history.

Of late, however, even within this intellectual tradition, certain writers have begun to question this 'universal' wisdom by casting a wider historical net. albeit in a limited way. Nevertheless, this does mark something of a rediscovery. An important collection of papers edited by Ali Mazrui, for instance, attempted to present what some of the authors term 'an African perspective' on the state and the military (Mazrui, 1977). In it they argue that contrary to the conventional wisdom which stresses the separation of the state from the military, African states prior to the colonial encounter integrated military and state functions. To them, the current situation is simply a transition from "the warfare polity to the welfare polity" (Mazrui, 1977:9).

The authors point out that the integration of the military into the state structure was characteristic of all pre-capitalist societies with a state structure.
Similarly, Elaigwu, presents this case in a more elaborate way, by arguing that:

traditionally, the formation of the state (especially the conquest state) has always intimately involved the military (whether these were Greek and Roman city-states, imperial systems like the Chinese, Byzantine or Roman Empires, feudal states or societies like the Hausa-Fulani states in West Africa, or patrimonial states as found in Near-Eastern and South East Asian societies (Elaigwu, 1979:3).

At the same time, however, they give the impression that there is 'an African perspective' on state military relations which is somehow unique and distinctive from the rest of the pre-capitalist world. Elaigwu, for example, concludes that in Africa the apolitical military is an alien conception and was introduced by the Europeans. Examples ranging from the Oyo Empire on the West Coast, to the Bunyoro Kitara and Buganda states on the East Coast of Africa are provided as evidence of pre-colonial African states where the "distinction between the military, economic, political, social and religious institutions of government were blurred, (Uzoigwe, in Elaigwu 1979:9). Without any detailed examination of pre-colonial African social organisations, inferences such as "the military was not distinct from the political structure: it followed closely the organisation of the state" are drawn (Uzoigwe, in Elaigwu 1979:10). Apart from being descriptive, this presentation has tended towards a romantic celebration of 'soldier and the state' in pre-colonial Africa. Surely, this rethink lacks the crucial background information on the internal application of state power. It tends towards foreign relations. This is why a lot of emphasis is placed on 'the warrior tradition', as
if the origin and consequences of pre-colonial military-state fusion can be derived exclusively from foreign conquest.

A second and more serious criticism of this approach is its characterisation of the state. It is a weakness that limits the examination of military-state relations in general. The state is presented, almost exclusively, as a set of institutions: the political legislature, the judiciary, and the executive with its bureaucratic tentacles with a specific division of labour; with the result that the military are theoretically defined out of politics and it is implied that they are apolitical. Where their political role is more manifest, as in pre-colonial African societies, their lack of separation from state power is recognised. This dichotomy is followed with the reasons for contemporary Third World militarism, lack of fit between Western values and African social organisation. Again, to quote Elaigwu:

... the problem of civil-military relations in African states can be related to the problems of institutional transfer. Both political and military institutions in post-colonial African states were imported. But the values which underwrite these institutions had not been sufficiently internalised. (my emphasis) (Elaigwu, 1979:12).

Or,

... the military institutions as borrowed from Europe had not imbibed the professional values which created professional corporate identity and respect for civilian supremacy (Elaigwu, 1979:12).

The problem is therefore the inadequate socialisation of post-colonial military organisations.
Such behaviourist explanations have major limitations. Firstly, and most importantly, they are unable to conceive of the state, all states, as having organised military force as its most concentrated component. Secondly, they ignore the fact that the state does not exist in a vacuum, but is an outcome of specific forms of social relations with a material foundation, all of which transform over time. Such an explanation should provide a more useful distinction between military forces based on pre-capitalist and capitalist social formations.

Engels, as far back as the 19th century, had provided such an outline in his excursion into anthropology (Engels, 1968a). In his *Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State*, he noticed the presence of "a self-acting armed organisation of the population" or the community army where everybody is a warrior as well as a producer. In other words, defence of the community, due to the rudimentary division of labour, remains firmly in the hands of the community as a whole. War is 'waged simply to avenge aggression or as a means of enlarging territory that had become inadequate ...' (Engels, 1968a:571).

From this first stage in the historical development of societies and their armed forces, Engels moves on to a second stage that approximates to many of pre-colonial African states referred to by Mazrui and others: "the period of the iron and the sword", when "iron became the servant of man, the last and most important of all raw materials that played a revolutionary role in history" (Engels, 1968a:570). Iron enabled the cultivation of farmland, building of houses, more productive crafts, and increased commodity production in general. "Wealth increased rapidly, but it was the wealth of single individuals," which nevertheless marked 'the second great division of labour' (Engels, 1968a:570).
The results of this new historical reality were as follows:

The continued increase of production and with it the increased productivity of labour enhanced the value of human labour power. Slavery, which had been a nascent and sporadic factor in the preceding stage, now became an essential part of the social system. The slaves ceased to be simply assistants, but were now driven in scores to work in the fields and workshops. The division of production into two great branches, agriculture and handicrafts, gave rise to production for exchange, the production of commodities; and with it came trade, not only in the interior and on the tribal boundaries, but also overseas ... The distinction between rich and poor was added to that between freemen and slaves - with the new division of labour came a new division of society into classes. (Engels, 1968a:570).

The new arrangement had multiple consequences, the break up of communities, the end of common cultivation, the emergence of private ownership, the rise of the nuclear family as the basic economic unit of society, and the emergence of the state and a new form of military force and war. The military commander became an important feature of these states, as "The wealth of their neighbours excited the greed of the peoples who began to regard the acquisition of wealth as one of the main purposes in life" (Engels, 1968a:371). In sum:

Internal affairs underwent a similar change. The robber wars increased the power of the supreme military commander as well as of the sub-commanders. The customary election of successors from one family, especially after the introduction of father right, was gradually transformed
into hereditary succession, first tolerated, then claimed and finally usurped; the foundation of hereditary royalty and hereditary nobility was laid ... from an organisation of tribes for the free administration of their own affairs it became an organisation for plundering and oppressing their neighbours; and correspondingly its organs were transformed from instruments of the will of the people into independent organs for ruling and oppressing their own people (my emphasis) (Engels, 1968a:571-2).

In most of Africa, the pre-colonial social development witnessed this gradual transition from a communal mode of production to a slave or feudal based society. From communal ownership and sexual division of labour, there emerged inter-clan conflicts over land, and military organisation for raids to capture not only land, but also animals, treasure and people. The slaves were further used as agricultural and military labour by the now emerging ruling class. With greater social surplus, the new ruling class of chiefs, elders and freemen appropriated a large share of the surplus, and eventually consolidated their power base sufficiently to establish feudal authority over their people.

By the 10th Century, the feudal mode of production, with the preceding slave mode still appended, had become prevalent in Africa, with Chiefs, Emirs, Kings and their noble court-men appropriating not only the surplus, but taking over ownership of all the land, animals, the slaves and control of foreign relations. Foreign relations consisted of trade in consumer items, and military excursions to expand territory and enhance greater accumulation of surplus. The development of iron technology was therefore essential in the execution of wars on neighbouring territories, in addition to the organisation of a rigid internal class structure necessary for accumulation. Examples of these feudal societies
include the Emirates of Northern Nigeria; the Benin and Oyo Kingdoms in the South (which were in actual fact, semi-feudal kingdoms); the Buganda kingdoms in East Africa, and the feudal Arab states in North Africa. It is these societies, where military leadership was closely integrated into the administrative structure of the state, that inspired 'civil-military' theorists to designate as 'traditional African states' worthy of analysis within a distinctively 'African perspective'.

This misleading characterisation has however been rectified since the past two decades by French Marxist Anthropologists. Directly relevant here is the work of Terray on the Abron Kingdom of Gyaman.

Terray in a very important study of Gyaman has thrown some light on the internal organisation of these states and their foreign relations, especially within the context of long-distance trade (Terray, 1974). Terray explains that the primary source of wealth in these societies was captivity, since it was the slaves who produced the surplus - gold mining and other items of long distance trade, which were expropriated by the chiefs. Since command over men, and ability to organise them into large scale production was the basis of economic wealth; and slavery and captivity were the most efficient forms of bondage or personal dependence, 'the aristocracies in power were first and foremost military aristocracies' (Terray, 1974:331). Terray compares the Gyaman situation to

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1. See works by Godelier, Meillassoux, Terray, Rey, Auge etc. An informative review essay, with a rich bibliography is Joel-S-Kahn and Josep. R. LLobera "French Marxist Anthropology : Twenty years After" The Journal of Peasant Studies, Vol. 8, 1, 1980.
that of Ashanti and concludes that:

... in Ashanti as in Gyaman, the structure of the State closely followed that of the army, and the subdivisions of the first closely corresponded to the different sections of the second; among the obligations binding vassals to the sovereign feature first of all the duty of assistance in time of war; and among the rights reserved by the aristocracy to itself was first of all that of organising captive raids and of deciding on peace and war; now a number of captives were prisoners of war; these formed the most important of the booty gained by the conquerors, and the rules of sharing this booty favoured the kings and the chiefs. (Terray, 1974:331-2).

Terray continues to explain the domination of military force in public life by stressing its centrality in the exercise of political and economic power:

we are in the presence of social formations in which relations of captivity in some way constitute the central core. Now in the last instance it was military force that enabled these relations to be established and maintained: its utilisation was above all the basis of the very existence of most captives, since the majority of them we have seen to consist of prisoners of war; even if some were bought on the market, they first had to be enslaved by others, and here again, this enslavement was most often the result of violence; in any case, given the occasional nature of trade in captives, no State could allow itself to rely on trade alone to obtain such an indispensable resource for itself; also for each State war continued to be the most certain method of procuring slaves; lastly, only indisputable military superiority covered the local
aristocracies against a possible revolt by their captives. It followed that since the relations of captivity were the dominant element in the social formation, and since military might was the chief instrument of their establishment and reproduction, it was natural for the problems raised by the creation and use of this force to be at the very heart of the social formations functioning; and also natural that among the multiple variables determining the organisation of the State, the decisive factor should be the various forms this force took, the various methods in which it was used, and the different types of control which could be exercised over it. (Terray, 1974:332).  

The trans-Atlantic slave trade, introduced by the Europeans into Africa, to a large extent capitalised on the existence of internal forms of slavery and domination. It began life, initially, in the form of trade in manufactured articles in the West; and raw materials, essentially minerals such as gold, within African societies. By the time of colonisation in the 19th Century, there already existed a mixture of modes of production, ranging from the Communal to the feudal, with corresponding forms of military organisation, and utilisation of armed force. Changes introduced by the new economic system and state structure, though co-existent with the former modes of production had repercussions in the way the armed forces were organised and used. The question of the transfer of military institution, including its ideology from the Western countries to the Third World must therefore be linked to the general question of imperialism, whether of the

1. Apart from Terray, there are other relevant studies in the French Marxist Anthropological School worth noting: Bazin (1974); Coquery-Vidrovitch (1977).
local variant whereby aristocracies utilised state force to expropriate surplus as indicated above, or Luxembourg's notion of the internationalisation of capital. In the latter case, metropolitan capitalists in conjunction with aristocratic strata of the ruling classes of the Western world, utilised organised military force to subject the colonies to the capitalist mode of production; destroying their social organisations, their means of production and proletarianising the peasantry.

Imperialism introduced new economic and social relations among which was the emergence of a strong centralised state structure backed up by the organised force of an 'apolitical' military establishment. In the formation process itself, the new state structures were established and sustained for a long time through high handed force. In other words, the beginnings of today's militarism in African states, and other parts of the Third World, has to be traced to the very beginnings of the Colonial state, whereby, it was routine for the army to intervene in politics. As Eide observes, "The colonial heritage had left a legacy in certain parts of the world of the need for 'civilised' forces to protect stability against encroaching 'natives' or 'primitive peoples' (Eide, 1976:314).

A second important source of today's permanent crisis of military intervention in African politics was the creation and expansion of the armed forces in the colonies for the purposes of fighting imperialist wars. After World Wars I and II, such forces remained as colonial armies, either regionally or territorially confined, to defend the 'internal' or 'domestic' interests of the metropolitan powers against internal uprisings. At independence, the armies, at least in many African states, were nothing more than a motley of ill-equipped battalions in no position to fight external wars, and were confined to this internal role of crushing resistance movements, or defending the interests of the new
class in power.\textsuperscript{1}

The post-colonial military, like its colonial and pre-colonial predecessors, reflected the colonially established class structure, with its cleavages and repressive disposition to the local and lower classes.

Based on this analysis of the continuity and changes that occurred in the organisation, ideology and use of the armed forces during the various historical epochs of communal societies, slavery, feudalism and the colonially established mode of production, we wish to proceed to an evaluation of contemporary military interventions in the direct administration of state power in the Third World. We will be particularly concerned with the causes and consequences of this 'new' wave of militarisation of African politics and society, and that of the rest of the Third World. Attempts will be made to locate and explain the class character of the military in the Third World, and the significance of military intervention in the changes and continuities of social classes, and its relationship to what Wallerstein terms 'The World System' - the world-wide expansion and dominance of capital.

The Post-Colonial State and Military Intervention

We begin with the differing theoretical positions taken by social analysts interested in intervention and rule of the military.

Two contending perspectives on the question prevail in the Social Sciences today. The first is broadly Behaviourist, and is associated with Structural-
Functionalism in Sociology and Anthropology, and with Pluralism in Political Science. The second is broadly Marxist, with emphasis on class and class conflict.

To the Behaviourists, there is no single reason for the intervention of the military in politics, and the investigation of the social conditions that precipitate such interventions consists of a search for the most suitable combination or aggregate of factors. Occasionally, one factor or combination of factors is singled out for special emphasis. This may be personality, an institution, an ethnic group, regions (as suggested in the case of Brazil) or even international involvement with domestic groups. Economic factors appear simply as one of the multiple causative factors. These kinds of contingency explanations have not produced a coherent overall theory. Instead general models or 'ideal types' are constructed for classifying military intervention. Generally, the models are based either on factors external to the military or on factors relating to the internal organisation and composition of the military establishment. This division has resulted in two seemingly divergent interpretations within the Behaviourist school: the Environmentalists and the Organisational theorists.

In contrast, the Marxist inspired position, contends that the nature and the role of armed force has to be explained by the nature of the productive forces in society. Accordingly, in capitalist societies, the military are taken to be the most concentrated political arm of the capitalist state, acting as its last line of defence against labour. In other words, the military is organic to, and an instrument of the capitalist class, not only in the competition for the expansion of capital in other territories (colonial expansion), but also in the repression of the dominated classes within national boundaries. Under conditions of intense crisis,
therefore, the armed forces, because of their operational control over the most powerful instruments of coercion in society, are called upon - directly or indirectly - to restore the necessary conditions for capital accumulation. In principle, such a rule by members of the armed forces is supposed to be temporary, and as a result, has been designated Bonapartist, after Marx's characterisation of Louis Bonaparte's military coup d'état in France in 1851. The coup restored the defacto rule of the bourgeoisie, though juridicial control passed over to the military establishment. Engels used this analytical approach to explain the rule of Bismarck in Germany (Engels, 1968b). Since then a variety of Marxist writers have tried to show the relevance of the analysis to the Third World.

In the following treatment of militarism in the Third World, we will try to examine these contending positions, their strengths and weaknesses, in order to define their essential features and assess how they contribute to an analysis of militarism as a political phenomenon in Third World societies.

Militarism and the Functionalist Avangarde in the Post-Independence Era

With the death of direct colonial rule, and the declining influence of its accompanying intellectual associates of anthropologists, there emerged a new movement of 'Developmentalists' known an 'modernisers'. Their key concern was with the psycho-cultural conditions of the newly independent countries. Specifically, they sought to demonstrate how cultural tribalism hindered integration and stability of the new states. They looked for ways of creating stability and conditions for 'take-off' towards modernisation. Every institution operational in the West was seen as functional, and contributing positively towards
stability and integration of societies of the Western World. If these institutions functioned in the West, and if societies all over the world developed by passing through already identified stages, then the newly independent nations could be guided through the stages undergone by the West. This project required strategic institutions, and suitable elites that would man them. In the forefront was the institution of organised force which could provide stable conditions. As Hans Speier, Chairman, Research Council of the Rand Corporation put it at the time:

In many of the new states that have emerged in the recent era of decolonisation, the military play a vital role. As a revolutionary force they have contributed to the disintegration of traditional political order; as a stabilising force they have kept some countries from falling prey to communist rule; as a modernising force they have been champions of middle class aspirations ... (Speier, in Johnson, 1964:V).

It was on the backdrop of this cold war logic that a search for stability culminated into a growth of a specialised literature on: 'The Role of the Military in the Politics of Developing Nations'. As more countries in Africa and Asia became independent, and military coups multiplied, there was a corresponding increase in the academic literature on the 'Military and Modernisation'.

Within this gathering, there was almost universal agreement as to the positive effect of the military in the establishment of stability, from which the market forces and the other Western agencies necessary to economic development would benefit. Any discord that existed was internal to this general agreement. This is why the contention between Environmentalist and Corporatist analysts of the military must be seen as such, and therefore, as complimentary to each other.
Some of the serious sceptics within this tradition of military analysis did no more than regret the absence of effective military forces in certain parts of the Third World that would carry out the task of modernisation. For example, Coleman and Brice argued that the military because of their origins in colonialism and close association with the Anglo-American traditions of military formation and values were not likely to intervene in politics. The military could not therefore play a strong modernising role. Referring specifically to the situation in Africa, they concluded, almost with overt lamentation, that:

African states lack what many other new states of the former colonial world have had, namely an army which could be a modernising and stabilising source of organisational strength in society, a last standby reserve which could be called or could take over to prevent external subversion or a total collapse of the political order. (Coleman and Brice, 1964:359).

In a similar vein, Eduard Lieuwen (1963) saw the military essentially as a reactionary force because of the class origins of the commanding officers. Discussing the situation in Latin America, he came to the conclusion that the intervention of the armed forces in politics was going to diminish with the economic development of these countries. This position is surprisingly similar to the Marxian position which attributes the upsurge of militarism in the Third World to the permanent crisis of underdevelopment in these societies, to which we will return later. First a comparative evaluation of the two major Functionalist strands is essential.
Corporatism or the View from Organisational Sociology

Corporatists tend to emphasise the internal organisation of the armed forces; their social cohesion and cleavages, skill structure, and career lines; the background of officers, their professional and political ideology. As Oyediran puts it, the key question for them is: "what characteristics of the military establishment of a new nation will facilitate its involvement in domestic politics" (Oyediran, 1979:1). The most distinguished proponents of this viewpoint are Morris Janowitz from Sociology, and Lucien Pye from Political Science.

Janowitz for example argues that the more cohesive the armed forces are, the more prone they will be to intervene in politics, ostensibly to hold together a divisive policy (Janowitz, 1965). But contrary to this thesis, the divisiveness within the military establishments of many Third World countries has been a contributing factor in their intervention in politics. A good example is our case study - Nigeria - where such cleavages catalysed the counter-coup of July 1966; and Bolivia where there have been repeated incidents of army take-overs and counter-coups by fellow officers opposed to the faction in control. The case of Brazil where regional compromise within the armed forces is essential for the survival of any government, whether civilian or military led is another counter illustration. On the contrary, it is suggested by Huntington that with well articulated professional values, it is unlikely that an army will take over the affairs of state (Huntington, 1957). According to him, "a highly professional officer corps stands ready to carry out the wishes of any civilian group which secures legitimate authority within the state". Again, this argument is countered by those Janowitz positions, that in actual fact, such professionalism will generate in the military, a certain aura of importance which may outstrip the ability of the civilian politicians to contain them: "Once an army has realised
its strength in its own ... it becomes a potential danger to the established political order" (Gutteridge 1969:39).

This maze of conflicting explanations will become clearer when we return to the Environmental factors favoured by Huntington, or the combination of both external and internal factors prescribed by Finer and Gutteridge. First however, we turn to Pye's 1964 formulation of the problem, based on his seminal essay "Armies in the Process of Political Modernisation". Three key themes permeate Pye's essay: the psychological consequences of military rule, the political effect, and the possibilities of economic development. To Pye, the military will induce "modernising" attitudes, provide political stability, and encourage foreign aid and commercial investment for economic development. The guiding threads of Pye's thinking could be summarised as follows:

(a) The military is a produce of industrial societies and it 'comes as close to the ideal type for an industrialised and secularised enterprise'.

(b) Military socialisation is a 'training in citizenship' essential for 'responsible nationalism. Indeed the recruit may be impressed that he must make sacrifices to achieve the goals of nationalism and that the process of nation-building involves more than just the shouting of slogans.' Hard work pays, or effort is rewarded; military norms provide necessary example for upward social mobility, and should be the guiding institution for the rest of the population of the independent nation.

(c) Unlike the migrants from the rural areas who have no employment opportunities and may turn to 'extremist politics' as a result, the fact
that the military provides the recruit with security is more likely to prevent him from turning to the type of politics that is 'derived from a psychologically threatening position' like unemployment.

(d) Finally, the drive to industrialise the new nations through foreign assistance (Western aid and investment), leads Pye to the conclusion that:

Military leaders are often far less suspicious of the West than are civilian leaders because they themselves are more emotionally secure. This sense of security makes it possible for army leaders to look more realistically at their countries. All of these considerations make it easier for the military leaders to accept the fact that their countries are weak and the West is strong without becoming emotionally disturbed or hostile towards the West. Since these leaders seem to have less need to avoid realities, they are in fact easier people with whom to deal and to carry on straightforward relations (Pye, 1964:87-8).

To a certain extent, Janowitz is more concerned with explaining why the military intervene than Pye's overt canvassing for such an intervention. There is nonetheless, no doubt that both consider such an intervention desirable under certain circumstances. Pye is particularly less reticent than Janowitz. To him, the military are more acceptable than the civilians because they are 'far less suspicious of the West than are civilian leaders ...'; and are as a result less 'hostile towards the West'.

These behavioural arguments are in many instances reinforced by reference to attributes such as the personality of the military leaders, as in
Uganda, where the eccentric personality of General Amin, drove him into bitter disagreement with Milton Obote and finally precipitated the coup d'état of 1971. Or to civilian restrictions on military privileges such as cuts in pay, tight military budgets, threat to demobilise an oversize and unproductive army, all of which may cause resentment in the armed forces and bring about a military coup aimed at restoring military privileges.

**Environmentalism or External Organisational Forces**

In contrast to these internal organisational factors cited by Pye and Janowitz as reasons for military intervention, Huntington emphasises forces outside of the military organisation as the key to explaining the intervention of the military in Third World politics. In his much quoted work on the subject, he maintains that when society is overpoliticised or overmobilised, all social and political institution such as the churches, the Universities and Trade Unions, tend to pursue their own group interest. (Huntington, 1968). Under these circumstances, the group which controls the means of violence - normally the armed forces - emerges as the stronger and more dominant group. The military will therefore, take over control of the state in order to reshape it and avert the condition of 'anarchy'.

Because of this strategic role, a lot of emphasis is placed by Huntington on the interaction of the military and society. The military like any other institution or social group within the polity, is not expected to remain passive or neutral to political issues. They have to create or generate 'order' in conditions of 'anarchy' or 'chaos', by bringing together the feuding political elites.
Further, Huntington suggests that the rule of military is necessarily temporary, since they are not capable of creating lasting political institutions.

Cox (1976) and Pinkney (1972) have tried to apply this analysis to coup d'etats in Sierra-Leone and Ghana respectively. For Cox, it was the schism within the Sierra-Leonian civilian elites that permeated the army, and led to their intervention in 1967 and 1968. Cox concludes that: "both forms of elite cleavage tend to exercise a mutually reinforcing influence, so that the boundaries between intra-military and intra-civilian politics are often highly diffused" (Cox 1976: 217). In the case of Nkrumah's Ghana, it was not necessarily the weakness of political institutions that brought about his overthrow rather, it was their over-centralisation, and the 'autocratic leadership' of the Osagyefo (Pinkney, 1972). In general, very little is said of the foundations of these elite cleavages or the origin of the weaknesses or enormous strength of the political institutions. At best, they are attributed to a plurality of factors, and in the case of Africa, to unintegrated tribal cultures.

A more sophisticated synthesis of the Corporatist and Environmental positions has been provided by two leading scholars: S.E. Finer (1962) and William Gutteridge (1975). Both combine political fluidity with the strength of the military to explain the incidence of coups in the Third World. To Finer, in his monumental work *The Man on the Horseback* (1962) the relative weakness or strength of political institutions at the level of 'political culture' encourages the army to intervene in politics. Such weakness mean there are no accepted processes of transferring for power, and the ensuing scramble for control among competing elites delegitimises the regime in the eyes of the general population, creating conditions for the army to assume power.
Again, it is a characterisation that is replete with serious problems. For instance, it is difficult to clearly specify different 'levels of political culture' (Luckham, 1971b) that is, "the difficulty of providing adequate operational definitions of the weakness of institutions and deciding how this is to be measured" (Luckham 1971b:10). Outside of winning international wars, the question of what constitutes 'strength' becomes tautological since the only criterion for measuring 'strength of the military', and by implication, the weakness of civilian rule, is the successful launching of a coup d'etat.

In no way does this explain the weakness of the civilian institutions or the coherence and strength of the military establishment. Moreover, the empirical examples of Turkey and Greece with established procedures of changing-over governments, and of African and Latin American states where such procedures are less well established, show that the military have intervened in both supposedly weak and strong democracies.

Despite its limitations however, this interactionist model has maintained a strong attraction for many other writers on the military including Feit, Welch Jnr., Bienen and Robin Luckham's earlier writings. In the above quoted paper, Luckham queried the one-sided tendency in each perspective. He pointed out that:

The main weakness of the existing theories of civil-military relations which take on this task is that they still either concentrate on the characteristics of the civilian politics and their influence on military intervention and civil-military relations, to the exclusion of the organisational and professional qualities of the military itself; or they give emphasis to the latter, to the exclusion of the social and political environment (Luckham, 1971b:8-9).
Luckham proceeds to suggest that both be taken into account in analysing civil-military relations by examining "the nature of the boundaries between the military establishment and its socio-political environment". (Luckham, 1971b:9).

In an earlier study of Nigeria for example, he argued that cleavages within the Nigerian political elite along ethnic and regional lines permeated the military, causing organisational cleavages in the army. (Luckham, 1971a). These cleavages were responsible for the two military coup d'états in 1966; and ultimately, precipitated the outbreak of the Nigerian civil war.

Similarly, Feit (1968) notes that organisational and environmental perspectives are simply two faces of the same coin. Using Ghana and Nigeria as illustrations, he argued that the marriage of traditional administrative systems with British administrative institutions in the colonial period - with the later as Leviathan - was the source of stable government in these countries. To Feit, independence saw the collapse of this arrangement, and the introduction of party politics in an environment where the parties were no more than 'political machines' to keep their controllers in power instead of 'mass political parties' capable of aggregating interests and demands, and converting them into legislative policies. Consequently, a new Leviathan became necessary to avoid the 'tribes' reverting to their pre-colonial state of anarchy, each rising against the other. This was the role of the new military government. Following on from this, in a later paper (1973) he prescribes the effective mechanisms which will retain the armed forces in power. The military, he stresses, must not only collude with civil-bureaucrats, but also seek 'active compliance' of the population by conditioning the public to symbols and appropriate political rituals, preferably within the
framework of a mass party. Effectively, it is a suggestion for the military establishment to transform itself into a party. Such transitional regimes have not however provided the necessary stability envisaged by Feit. Examples include Peron’s Argentina, Siad Barre’s Somalia, and more recently Ethiopia under Mengitsu. Even where there has been an element of stability, that is, absence of major political crisis from within, as in Ghadaffi’s Libya, major problems of democratic participation by the rest of the population have remained, given the peculiar nature of military hierarchy and the ideology on which the party is modelled.

Finally, Welch Jnr. (1976) provides a check list of indices that epitomise ‘decaying political cultures’ in the Third World; and the corresponding mode and level of military intervention. According to him, the ultimate form of intervention is Displacement of the civilian leaders. Among Welch’s most important factors are the military’s corporate awareness of its power to not only influence but replace the politicians, following identification of the following indices: ineffective political parties; cleavage and decline of nationalist parties after the exit of the colonial powers; economic difficulties; domestic antagonism; corruption and inefficiency of the existing civilian government. To succeed however, the armed forces must be cohesive and disciplined, and there must be no chance of outside intervention.

Fundamental difficulties are glossed over by these analysts: Corporatist followers of Janowitz and Pye; the Environmentalist perspective of Huntington; and finally, in the Interactionist analysis of Finer, Gutteridge, Welch Jnr., Luckham and Feit. Some of these will soon be mapped out but first, we wish to add that, apart from the factors stressed by these dominant perspectives, a variety of other reasons have also been given for military intervention.
These include: foreign instigation, Chile (1973), assassination of Lumumba in the Congo (1960), French sponsored removal of Emperor Bokassa in Central African Republic (1979), and the overthrow of Idi Amin by Tanzanian forces in 1979. There is also defeat in war, as with the Egyptian defeat by Israeli forces in 1948 with the subsequent overthrow of the monarchy by Nasser and his Free Officers in 1952; and most recently, the 'resignation' of General Galtieri of Argentina following the defeat of Argentina by Britain in the Falklands war of 1982. Combined with the dominant perspectives, it is concluded that: "no single cause can be adduced for military coups. ... there are societal, extra-societal, intra-military and miscellaneous-sources of military coups. In other words, the causes of military coups are complex and are varied." (Elaigwu, 1979: 25). This conclusion, as we will be arguing, is based on the inability to distinguish between basic similarities and distinctively unique differences. The latter is contingent and can be accounted for by this miscellany; the former, however, requires a grounded general formulation.

A summary of the principal tenets of these studies is essential:

(i) In most of them, the structure and ideology of the military as modelled in the Western world is conceived of as having the necessary bureaucratic attributes, the universalising and rational values, which will 'modernise' (or Westernise?) the underdeveloped nations of the Third World.

(ii) The assumed corporateness of the armed forces and their assigned role of defending the country against external attack is taken as an indication of their commitment to an ideology of 'National Interest' or a high level patriotism untainted by other sectional or class considerations.
(iii) The military's control over the means of coercion provides them with special powers of political control.

(iv) When the political institutions of these societies are defined as weak, the military's special powers over the means of coercion coupled with an ideology of strict compliance to order and nationalism, are seen to be the only remaining institution that can hold the society together.

(v) Finally, overseeing all these assumptions is the hard nosed concern with Order and Stability in these countries; the ends of which are either not clearly specified or subsumed under the general heading of 'socio-economic and political modernisation'.

Like other behavioural studies, these works have a tendency to separate political from economic power, or to provide a simple parallism - political stability runs side by side with economic development - without investigating the complex articulation between them. As a result, the contradictions inherent in the equation of military rule, stability and economic development is conveniently swept under the carpet. Furthermore, because of their unilinear interpretation of history, tinged as it is with ethno or Eurocentricism, their analysis and prescriptions are aimed at reproducing in the developing countries of the Third World, preordained conditions, deemed essential for the 'maintenance' of all societies. Inevitably, these just happen to be those seen as responsible for the development and current stability of Western societies. Hence 'levels of political

1. Pye, however, specifies explicity why he prefers the military to civilians; they are more dependable allies of the West.
culture', 'political stability', and 'political integration' as standardised by the liberal societies of the Western world, become imperatives for the developing World. Along with them, the necessary inculcating institutions - like the military, the mass media, the educational system, and religious institutions - appear as crucial mechanisms for the production of the 'new man' rooted in the cultural attributes of universalism and rationality necessary to execute the project of national integration and socio-economic development. The 'primitive' irrational and particularistic 'native' is to be guided by this 'newly formed man' of culture.

Unlike our earlier schema which tried to link the development of the military, the state and other social formations within specific historical conjunctures, these theories have a very limited historical perspective. Their history starts from the emergence of new nations populated by backward peoples, and ends with their transition to Western type societies run by modern elites. Particular emphasis is placed on industrialisation and legal rational rules and institutions as seen by Weber and reformulated by Parsons. Of the 'radical' Africanists working within an 'African perspective', a duality is struck by mechanically comparing the 'traditional' to the 'modern'; and if possible, rejecting the assumed superiority of the latter. Or, showing similarities between the two, e.g. that the military intervenes in politics of both advanced industrial nations and the new nations; the only difference is the degree of intervention.

These obvious shortcomings notwithstanding, we are of the view that some of the factors associated with military intervention stressed by behavioural scientists are important for an understanding of specific or particular cases of intervention. At the same time, they cannot provide an overall theory that is
"at once sufficiently inclusive and sufficiently precise". (Murray, 1966:41).

Consequently, it becomes necessary to look for alternative perspectives that will enable us to come to grips with the phenomenon of military intervention in Third World countries. It is for this reason that we now return to our earlier materialist informed analysis of the relationship between force and politics.

**Marxist Perspective on Military Intervention: The Post-Colonial World**

If one selects Engels' observation that force requires instruments which have to be produced under specific material and social conditions, and juxtaposes it with Luxembourg's analysis of imperialism, in which force is considered an essential component, one will easily distill some of the key formulations of Marxist scholars.

**Firstly**, in a world dominated by the capitalist mode of production, it is the inner dynamics of capitalist production, which underline the production and organisation of instruments of force. In case of the peripheral capitalist states or post-colonial societies, imperialist expansion sought, and still seeks, to consolidate and refurbish its control through checking forces 'subversive' to its system of domination. It also tries continuously to expand investment and profits and to mystify its essential features through 'humanitarian' acts such as aid. This requires a predictable regime in the post-colonial state. Today such a regime must be prepared to actively collaborate with agents of monopoly-capital, creating for them the required atmosphere of operation. At the same time it has to look legitimate to its own people.

These dynamics produce two characteristic forms of military intervention in the Third World. Firstly, where the existing regime is hostile
to imperialist interests, the military are instigated either directly (Chile 1973; Ghana 1966), or indirectly (Uganda 1971; Nigeria February 1976; Mali 1968) to take over direct control of government. On the other hand, imperialist expansion and some of its perquisites, such as bribery, kick-backs, and other forms of corruption, together with the contradictions it generates within the social system, give rise to intense struggles within the ruling elites. The military therefore steps in to stabilise the social conditions, and in the process, takes command of allocating the perquisites, with the lion's share going to top members of the military establishment.

In summary, to the Marxists, the key question is that of capital accumulation. Throughout the imperalist age of capital, force has been central for cementing the conditions of exploitation. But exploitation generates contradictions and crisis, necessitating greater force. It is this ensuing class contradiction, attendant upon profound social and political upheavals, that provide the basis for a general explanation of military intervention in the Third World, rather than the will of individual or collective actors - individuals and institutions.

Unlike the Functionalists, Marxist analysts are less preoccupied with a presentation of typological models, or heuristic, provincial and ahistorical theories of military intervention. Their first priority is to construct a general theory that would explain the causes of these events, their historical meanings for the societies in which they take place, and their possible international ramifications. This is not to deny the relevance of some of the elements in functionalist models, but rather than allow these elements to interact freely, they are incorporated into a carefully worked out analysis capable not only of
explaining the particular contemporary moment, but also, of projecting future directions.

In common with the behaviourists, Marxists stress the significance of the officer corps of capitalist armed forces; their ability and predisposition to use institutionalised military values such as hierarchy and strict compliance with command from above without questions. True, they employ these mechanisms and assume power or support civilian factions. In evaluating the officer corps, their background training, or socialisation into these professional values of metropolitan countries (United States for Latin American countries; France for ex-French colonial territories; and Britain for Anglophone countries in Africa); the source of their equipment and accompanying instructors, are all taken into account. All of them bear the stamp of the military organisation and ideology of the military in metropolitan countries. As the military in the metropolitan country, their major role is that of internal and international suppression of forces hostile to unhindered operations of capital.

At the same time, it is acknowledged that it would be unrealistic to rely almost exclusively on these factors as Janowitz, Pye and others, in interpreting military intervention in the Third World. What is required is grounded investigation of the material and social conditions which give rise to and sustain this particular form of military organisation and behaviour at this moment in history. Whatever follow up disagreements that emerge are premised on this basic understanding. In other words, like the Behaviourists, this perspective too has its own differing strands, different points of emphasis, but nonetheless, a common premise of take off which is capable of providing an overall explanation of military intervention and military rule.
As with Behavioural Science, two general orientations co-exist. The first views the military in capitalist societies as an instrument controlled by the ruling classes for domination of the subordinate classes. Their departure point is Marx's observation that more than any other aspect of the state apparatus, the military's officer corps use their privileged position in the structure and ideology of the armed forces as a whole to protect the interests of capital. One of the explanations being that the officer class, especially in the Western nations, are drawn mainly from the property owning class and therefore tend to have close ties with members of the property owning classes as a whole. Here, the condition can be best described as an 'organic relationship', i.e. the unified development of both capital and superstructural apparatuses including the specific organisation of the armed forces that gives the officer class - as a part of that organic whole; ruling class - the power to control the instruments of force. In other words, they are not just 'instruments' of the ruling class, but represent organically the interest of capital.

In the Third World, there are more variations in the class origins of the officer class. Most of the officers are recruited from the lower classes, and as such, the case of organic growth becomes more tenuous. Consequently, the instrumental argument tends to be more attractive for those that argue, that the military are there to serve the interests of international finance and industrial capital.

The second major Marxist orientation, it seems, seeks to correct the impression the instrumentalists give of the military and other state apparatuses as mere conveyor belts for international capital. In contrast, they stress that the military and the state in the Third World, as elsewhere, is relatively
autonomous of the materialist base. By implication, it is not just an instrument of capital. Even though, the military and the state in the Third World may be limited in its actions by the prevalence of capital as a political force, both are capable of considerable degree of independent operation. To a large extent, it is an approach that combines the structural features of the instrumentalists with certain elements of the Functionalist perspective.

Like the instrumentalists, they too insist that their interpretation is based on their reading of Marx. They specifically point at Marx's analysis of mid 19th century French political struggles to show the changing circumstances of the state. A commonly cited passage is Marx's explanation that:

... under the absolute monarchy, during the first Revolution, under Napoleon, bureaucracy was only the means of preparing the class rule of the bourgeoisie. Under the restoration, under Louis Philippe, under the Parliamentary republic, it is the instrument of the ruling class, however much it strove for power of its own. Only under the second Bonaparte does the state seem to have made itself completely independent (Marx, 1968:169-170).

Added to this last sentence is Marx's observation that under Napoleon "all classes equally impotent and equally mute, fall on their knees before the rifle butt" (Marx, 1968:168). Under this situation, Napoleon's eccentric, contradictory and uncontrollable personality enabled him to turn all classes for and against him; throwing the "entire bourgeois economy into confusion" and "producing actual anarchy in the name of order".
In terms of bringing all classes under the political control of the military in the Third World, there is a strong case for the relative autonomy thesis. However, this must not be argued to a point where the military state is seen as operating independently of material forces of dependent peripheral capitalism. Rather than stress the 'autonomy' of the phrase, we propose that it is the 'relativity' that must be emphasised. Here, capital sets the overall limits within which the military state must operate, even though the latter has the necessary political power to determine specific operations of capital and to suppress the lower classes. Any serious attempt to break from that overall limitation will unquestionably bring the military state into conflict and confrontation with capital; and, as a by product, reconciliation with the interests of the lower classes. This last instance is a rarity in the Third World, since it demands that the officer class commit class suicide. It therefore leaves capital serving military states in the Third World.

It is this objective world of capital, setting limits on the military state, but at the same time providing margins for action - seemingly independent action - which must reconcile the two perspectives in their efforts to come to terms with militarism in the Third World. Since both varieties of Marxist analysis do accept the overall argument that it is the crisis of capital accumulation embracing the Third World that necessitates the intervention of the armed forces; and that no matter how much capital is subordinated to the military-bureaucratic state, such intervention serves the interest of capital better than that of the subordinate classes, the materialist perspective - with all its variants - must be considered the best overall theory for explaining the phenomenon of military intervention and militarisation in the Third World. This is no mere preferred assertion.
It is based on the various and irrevocable evidence produced of class polarisation within the Third World: the centrality of multinational companies within these countries; and the tensions such class differences have generated necessitating 'stabilisation' by authoritarian military governments.

Describing the conditions in Africa, Murray sketches the social situation thus:

The fragility of authority in contemporary tropical Africa is, of course, related to the fundamental but unbalanced transformations of economy and society catalysed by administratively supported capitalism. Partial and unfavourable integration into the world market system detonated a radical restructuring of society and the emergence of contradictions which most of Africa are only now beginning to crystallise: demographic surge, imbalance between education and employment opportunities, rural depopulation, widening income differentials and social fissures, volatilisation of culture values etc. (Murray, 1966:44).

Since 1966 when Murray made this observation, the social situation in peripheral capitalist states has remained basically the same: an endemic crises with a permanent state of siege. Hence, it is little wonder that the military should come to occupy a pivotal role in political affairs, and with it the primacy of force over consensus.

Although the military has overwhelming superiority in the sector of force, and readily use it in resolving social crisis, militarism attempts to conquer the necessary cultural space for the psychological sector of the war.
Efforts must be made to militarise consensus. Firstly, the military creates a situation of anxiety: a state of emergency, identification of either internal or external 'threat', and the need for national unity or integration. Constantly, the military propaganda machine is directed at promoting the need to reinforce group solidarity. The military puts itself up as the patriotic institution capable of upholding the nation's interests and mobilising the necessary solidarity towards its realisation. In essence, the military becomes both the problem and the solution. As it is the function of all social myths, this embedded contradiction tries to resolve the fundamental class contradictions. By so doing, it preserves the interests of those social groups that expropriate surplus, usually taking it out of the country.

It is therefore essential to examine not only causes of intervention, but also, the consequences of such interventions. Rather than pitch our arguments on whether the military should intervene in politics or not from an essentialist position, it is more rewarding to see the material and cultural consequence of militarism. With this, it should be possible to assess the contrasting contentions between Behaviourist and Marxist scholars. To what extent do military regimes fulfill their role of 'stabilising and modernising' the newly independent nations as stressed by Behavioural Social Scientists? Or, are Marxist scholars justified in arguing that the military simply reproduce the necessary conditions for international and national capital accumulation, and in doing so suppress and frustrate the aspirations of the lower classes in many Third World countries? We will, in the next section, try to examine these two positions broadly; and in Chapter 4, see if these broad conclusions are of any relevance to one particular Third World case - Nigeria.
Some Consequences of Military Rule in the Third World

Any change of government brings about multiple consequences; and a change through acts of violence is bound to have wide ranging repercussions. Here, we do not intend to give a comprehensive catalogue of possible outcomes of military take-overs. Instead, we will concentrate on the general consequences of military rule for socio-economic development; and for the militarisation of society, i.e. the attempt to restructure social, political and cultural life in line with the military's professional ideologies.

(i) Militarism and War Economy

One of the most profound consequences of military rule is the rapidity with which the economy is redirected towards the procurement of armaments and the provision of outlandish wages for members of the armed forces. In the end, expenditure on the military is completely out of proportion with that on social services. Mandel has described a 'war economy' as a situation whereby:

part of the productive resources of constant capital and labour power are devoted to the making of means of destruction, the use-value of which does not make possible either the reconstruction of machinery, or of stocks of raw material, or of the labour force, but ends on the contrary, to bring about the destruction of these resources (Mandel, 1968:332-3).

This characterisation applies to the economies of most of the industrialised countries on which Third World countries are dependent for their armament supplies. Therefore, it is in the sphere of exchange rather than production that many Third World countries come into the armament picture. The umbilical cord between the two regions is provided by the multinational corporations. As monopolies operating in an era of serious economic crisis, they seek to constantly expand their markets in the Third World, including the armament market. In this
industry, the principal consumer is the state. Special attempts are therefore made by these corporations to have as close a link as possible with those in direct control of state power in the developing countries. The interests of these monopolies are best served when those in control of the state happen to be members of the armed forces, because the military's top hierarchy favours massive increases in expenditure on its professional instruments, out of which they benefit both corporately and individually. Whether by accident or design, it has been estimated that by 1977, military officers were in direct control of state power in 40% of all developing countries (Sivard, 1978:v).

Expenditure on armaments, has for a long time, been a special feature of industrialised countries since the end of the second World War. Its consequences on their economies has remained a matter of great concern in these countries themselves and in various international forums. Calls for disarmament and re-direction of the collosal amounts spent on armaments to welfare needs of the World's poor and anti-war demonstrations have become the *sine qua non* of politics.

Recently, this massive build-up of arms has taken hold in the Third World through both importation and the establishment of subsidiary production plants in sub-imperial powers such as Brazil, Venezuela, Argentina, Israel, Egypt, South Africa, India, Pakistan and South Korea.

Between 1956 and 1975, total world expenditure on armaments was more than $5,000,000 million (in constant 1976 prices), out of which $390,000 million or about 7% were spent in the Third World. At current (1980) prices, total World military spending has passed over $500 thousand million.
Table 1.1: Total World Military Expenditure in constant price figures, 1971 - 1980

Figures are in US $ mn, at 1978 prices and 1978 exchange rates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>120,655</td>
<td>121,105</td>
<td>114,976</td>
<td>113,666</td>
<td>110,229</td>
<td>104,261</td>
<td>108,537</td>
<td>109,247</td>
<td>109,861</td>
<td>111,236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other NATO</td>
<td>66,469</td>
<td>69,994</td>
<td>71,286</td>
<td>73,200</td>
<td>75,272</td>
<td>76,642</td>
<td>78,134</td>
<td>80,468</td>
<td>81,942</td>
<td>82,674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total NATO</td>
<td>187,124</td>
<td>191,099</td>
<td>186,261</td>
<td>186,866</td>
<td>185,501</td>
<td>180,903</td>
<td>186,671</td>
<td>189,715</td>
<td>191,803</td>
<td>193,910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USSR</td>
<td>(93,900)</td>
<td>(95,400)</td>
<td>(96,900)</td>
<td>(98,300)</td>
<td>(99,800)</td>
<td>(101,300)</td>
<td>(102,700)</td>
<td>(104,200)</td>
<td>(105,700)</td>
<td>(107,300)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other WTO</td>
<td>8,853</td>
<td>9,040</td>
<td>9,541</td>
<td>10,003</td>
<td>10,624</td>
<td>11,103</td>
<td>(11,444)</td>
<td>(11,574)</td>
<td>(11,943)</td>
<td>(12,250)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total WTO</td>
<td>(102,753)</td>
<td>(104,440)</td>
<td>(106,441)</td>
<td>(108,303)</td>
<td>(110,424)</td>
<td>(112,403)</td>
<td>(114,144)</td>
<td>(115,774)</td>
<td>(117,643)</td>
<td>(119,550)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Europe</td>
<td>8,814</td>
<td>9,374</td>
<td>9,537</td>
<td>10,204</td>
<td>10,598</td>
<td>11,125</td>
<td>(11,064)</td>
<td>(11,192)</td>
<td>(11,587)</td>
<td>(11,821)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>11,189</td>
<td>12,569</td>
<td>18,943</td>
<td>25,007</td>
<td>30,350</td>
<td>(33,033)</td>
<td>(32,451)</td>
<td>(33,283)</td>
<td>(33,445)</td>
<td>(37,900)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Far East</td>
<td>13,267</td>
<td>14,254</td>
<td>14,757</td>
<td>14,694</td>
<td>16,193</td>
<td>17,427</td>
<td>19,058</td>
<td>21,916</td>
<td>24,260</td>
<td>25,767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>(39,000)</td>
<td>(33,200)</td>
<td>(35,100)</td>
<td>(35,100)</td>
<td>(37,100)</td>
<td>(38,000)</td>
<td>(37,100)</td>
<td>(38,000)</td>
<td>(40,000)</td>
<td>(40,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>2,839</td>
<td>2,797</td>
<td>2,871</td>
<td>3,106</td>
<td>3,203</td>
<td>3,193</td>
<td>3,204</td>
<td>3,203</td>
<td>3,218</td>
<td>3,369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>5,679</td>
<td>6,064</td>
<td>6,259</td>
<td>7,750</td>
<td>9,138</td>
<td>9,796</td>
<td>9,859</td>
<td>(9,577)</td>
<td>(10,037)</td>
<td>(9,859)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central America</td>
<td>953</td>
<td>975</td>
<td>1,030</td>
<td>1,093</td>
<td>1,223</td>
<td>(1,526)</td>
<td>1,786</td>
<td>(1,912)</td>
<td>(1,969)</td>
<td>(2,186)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South America</td>
<td>3,942</td>
<td>3,906</td>
<td>4,121</td>
<td>4,765</td>
<td>(5,175)</td>
<td>5,867</td>
<td>5,980</td>
<td>5,953</td>
<td>(5,953)</td>
<td>(6,050)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World total:</td>
<td>379,515</td>
<td>382,946</td>
<td>389,174</td>
<td>400,569</td>
<td>412,970</td>
<td>417,914</td>
<td>425,866</td>
<td>435,256</td>
<td>444,798</td>
<td>455,311</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Perhaps, the most depressing aspect of this growth for the Third World is the rapid rate of increase in the share by Third World countries. From a mere 3% in 1955, share of Third World expenditure on armaments grew to about 12% in 1976, and to around 25% in 1980. The most rapid rate of increase came from the conflict zones, notably the Middle East, with an average rate of 22%. In Africa (excluding Egypt and South Africa), the annual growth rate has been equally alarming, even though it had stabilised by the mid 1970s.

Table 1.2: Regional Military Expenditures as Percentage of World Total, 1980

Figures are in US $ mn, at 1978 prices and exchange rates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Total Expenditure</th>
<th>Percentage of World Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>37,900</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asia</td>
<td>4,902</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Far East</td>
<td>25,767</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa (excluding Egypt and South Africa)</td>
<td>6,903</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central America</td>
<td>2,186</td>
<td>under 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South America</td>
<td>6,050</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>123,708</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

World Total = 455,311

Source: SIPRI Year Book, 1981.

As a percentage of Gross Domestic Product, there is considerable variation based on the peculiar demands of specific countries and regions. The highest percentages come from countries with belligerent neighbours or/and sharp
internal divisions of social inequalities. For example, the Middle East, as we have already noted, and the Far East - dominated by events in Vietnam - devoted over 10% of their GDP on armaments.

Table 1.3: Select Underdeveloped Countries classed by Military Expenditure as Percentage of Gross Domestic Product, 1971-1979

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Military Expenditure as % of GDP (1971-1979)</th>
<th>No. of Countries</th>
<th>Name of Countries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Over 10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Oman, Yemen Democratic, North Korea, Vietnam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Yemen Arab Republic, Pakistan, Burma, Guyana, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Libya, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Cuba, Morocco, Mauritania.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5-4.9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Lebanon, India, North Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Burundi, Chad, Mauritius, Sudan, Zaire, Chile, Uruguay, Indonesia, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Niger, South Africa, Tanzania.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 2.5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Others</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SIPRI Year Book, 1981.

As Table 1.3 above shows, sixteen other countries including major oil producing countries as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Libya, spend between 5 and 10% of their GDP on armaments. While in the next category, those spending between 2.5 and 4.9% of GDP on arms, are included members of the World's poorest twenty-five countries: Chad, Mali, Niger, Tanzania and Burundi.

These countries would better spend their meagre resources on welfare expenditure rather than procurement of armaments.
On closer observation, it becomes clear that though the classification in Table 1.3 illuminates certain disturbing features of the arms race in the Third World, it is at the same time deceptive on certain aspects. Firstly, it does not throw light on the hierarchy of the Third World's major arms importers because of the relatively low ratio between arms expenditure and Gross Domestic Product. For example, Syria, Libya and India which are respectively the fourth, sixth and eighth biggest arms importers in the Third World have huge GDPs, and therefore indicate relatively low arms spending percentages. The case of oil producing countries is particularly telling; notably, those who have in one way or the other been involved in armed conflict. Dramatic increase in revenues has meant an equally dramatic increase in their expenditure on armaments: Nigeria 1,700% between 1958 and 1972; Libya 2,000% between 1964 and 1974; and Saudi-Arabia over 1,000% between 1962 and 1973.

Secondly, some of these countries and others not shown in the Table, are major arms producing and exporting countries. Again many of them have huge GDPs with low percentage allocation to armaments. Relevant examples here are: Israel, South Africa, Brazil, South Korea, Argentina, India, etc.
Table 1.4: Rank Order of the 12 largest Third World Major Weapon Exporting Countries, 1977-80

Figures are SIPRI trend indicator values, as expressed in US $ million, at constant (1975) prices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exporting Country</th>
<th>Total Value</th>
<th>Percentage of total Third World Exports</th>
<th>Largest Importer per Exporter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Brazil</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>Chile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Israel</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. South Africa</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Libya</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>Syria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Egypt</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>Somalia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. South Korea</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Argentina</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>Chile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Somalia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Singapore</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Indonesia</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Benin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Cuba</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Peru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. India</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>South Africa&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,271</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Via a company in Spain; final destination not known to Indian government.


Finally, we need to mention that some of the more subtle methods of expenditure on the military establishment employed in the industrialised countries are now actively used in the Third World. As Albrecht et al have pointed out:
It is to be stressed that military budgets do not usually reflect the real magnitude of the burden. Para-military organisations, some of which have expanded very rapidly, are not financed out of military budgets, nor are investments in infrastructure (airfields, roads, railways, communication systems, industrial plants, etc.) even where these are made essentially for military purposes and their civilian use figures low on the priority scale. For example, the 'defence' budget of the United States would show a clear increase of 50% of all the money that goes to veterans and towards servicing war debt, plus the cost of storing strategic weapons, were included.

The camouflaging of military outlay common to the industrial countries is also practised by most of the developing countries, effectively masking the real economic burden (Albrecht, et al, 1976:329).

The statistical descriptions above do not foreclose debate on the socio-economic consequences of military expenditure in the Third World. Positive and negative consequences of armaments are still contested in the social sciences. The best known proponent of the positive case is Professor Emile Benoit. In an impressive statistical study covering 44 countries over two overlapping periods of 1950-1965, and 1960-1965, he intimates that defence spending, far from hindering development, encourages or promotes it by attracting foreign aid and industrial investment and by diffusing modernising skills and attitudes (Benoit, 1973). To get a fuller picture of Benoit's argument, we present below a detailed summary by Kaldor of what constitutes his main points:

First of all he mentions the "primary economic contribution of the defence programme in assuring a minimum physical security in the
absence of which the political structure and hence also the civilian economy would falter and ultimately disintegrate". Secondly, he argues that defence spending boosts aggregate demand and utilises idle capacity which is to be found in the manufacturing sector of many underdeveloped countries. His evidence suggests that, had it not been for military spending, a number of countries, most notably India, would have pursued more restrictive fiscal and monetary policies. Thirdly, defence programme provide direct inputs into the civilian economy, such things as communications networks, roads, disaster relief and rehabilitation, and various other scientific and technical functions. In addition .... Soldiers learn such useful Western skills as "following and transmitting precise instructions; living and working by the clock; noticing and reading signs; spending and saving money; using transportation (bicycles, motor-cycles, autos, buses, boats, planes, etc.); listening to radio". The military experience helps to break up traditional patterns of life which are a "vastly important impediment to development. The shaking-up experience involved in transforming traditional-bound peoples into modern urban types is unpleasant and difficult and usually resisted. Military discipline provides a mechanism for speeding up the process." Finally, defence spending may contribute to nation-building and help to overcome tribal or regional divisions. Military stress may "become a symbolic expression of national crisis, releasing psychological energies helpful to growth, such as willingness to work harder, curtail or postpone consumption, co-operate better with fellow citizens and the government, etc." (Kaldor, 1978:62).
Throughout, Benoit’s emphasis is on attitudes and expenditure rather than on either resources or productivity in general. Although Schmitter (1971) surveyed Latin American countries during the same time as Benoit, and in fact found the same incident of growth in the economy, he came out with rather different conclusions. To Schmitter, the growth figures were a facade because the high growth rate in GNP depended on external variables, particularly massive foreign aid that made these economies more and more dependent on the industrialised nations that provided this aid. Similarly, Stepan’s study of Brazil at the same period found that the military in Brazil did not in any way provide the desired ‘stability’, as observed by Benoit and other ‘modernisers’ (Stepan, 1971). Rather, the armed forces were permeated by the same cleavages which characterised the society in general. In addition, the high rates of growth in the economy were due to unequal fiscal policies and systematic political repression which paralysed meaningful social development.

Despite these objections, others, like Kennedy (1974), still support the view that military expenditures are in fact useful or beneficial to the developing countries. For example, Kennedy argues that, war may provide access to other resources, including aid, e.g. oil for Nigeria, and foreign aid for Vietnam’s neighbours.

These views need not detain us long since we have already provided the necessary criticism in our earlier discussion of behavioural analysis of the military, and secondly, because a variety of international organisations and independent individual researchers have over the years provided substantial evidence to the contrary: SIPRI (annually, since 1968), United Nations (1972, 1977), Barnaby (1978), Jolly (1978), Kaldor (1976, 1978), Luckham (1979), and
Hamburg Study Group or Albrecht et al (1976). We therefore move on to the alternative view that massive military expenditures in the Third World place considerable burden on the economies of these countries.

In four separate Reports, the United Nations noted that heavy military expenditures, apart from heightening international tensions hindered improvement in social services, particularly in Third World counties. In 1977, they noted that:

... on the cost side of the arms race, the situation has been changing for the worse. In the 1970s many countries experienced deep recession and severe inflation. Most others were affected indirectly by its impact on international trade and by the disruption of the international system of payments. As a result, government programmes in the social and economic fields have in many cases had to be revised downwards ...

Against this background of a darkened economic outlook and a greater awareness of the scarcity of resources and the fragility of the physical environment, the continued mindless and uninhibited wastage of the arms race becomes ever more incongruous and unacceptable (my emphasis) (cited in Jolly, 1978:137).

In the same year, Ruth L. Sivard came out with more specific conclusions on the consequences of military expenditures on social services. Here, we present eight of her most disturbing findings:

i) Usually the largest non-military program, government education expenditures are primarily for the school-age population (5-19) which now numbers 1.3 billion children, one-third of the world population. Total expenditures are 7% less than military
expenditures. For each school-age child they average $230 a year, as compared with military expenditures averaging $14,800 for each soldier.

ii) For all public health, national health insurance, and health care under workmen’s compensation, governments spend a little more than half as much as they do for military programmes. The average is $44 per person, against military expenditures of $81 per person.

iii) Official foreign economic assistance has a budget somewhat less than 6% of the military expenditures of the donor countries. It provides the poorer nations with development aid amounting to $6 per capita, about two-thirds gift, one third loan.

iv) Expenditures for the United Nations and the operations of its world-wide programmes in health, food, education, environment, labour, meteorology, etc., add up to less than $2 billion annually, the equivalent of two days of military expenditures.

v) A year’s expenditures on international peacekeeping, another UN-supported activity, are equal to 3 hours of the world’s expenditures on national military forces.

vi) Arms imports in developing countries have expanded twice as fast as the gain in development aid and as the advance in their living standards represented by average per capita GNP.

vii) Of the 83 developing nations which imported arms in 1975, more than one-fifth were among the very poorest nations in the World
(average income under $200). These are the countries whose basic problem is insuring an adequate food supply for their growing populations.

viii) In the last three years, while they invested $13 billion in foreign arms, the developing countries that are not oil exporters had a sharply rising external debt, their current account deficit increasing by $30 billion (Sivard, 197:v)

The armament procurement policies of Third World countries are primarily of benefit to the multinational corporations who produce them and other industrial commodities. As the Director of the French Aeronautical Industry Association framed it: "The military sector remains the mainstay of our exports". Armaments therefore have a decisive contribution to the general pattern of international capital accumulation.
Table 1.5: Rank Order of the 20 largest Major-Weapon Exporting Countries of the World, 1977-80<sup>a</sup>

Figures are SIPRI trend indicator values, as expressed in US $ million, at constant (1975 prices).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exporting Country</th>
<th>Total Value</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Exports</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Value to Third World</th>
<th>Largest Importer per Exporter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. USA</td>
<td>24,893</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>Iran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. USSR</td>
<td>15,755</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>79.5</td>
<td>Syria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. France</td>
<td>6,213</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>76.5</td>
<td>Morocco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Italy</td>
<td>2,273</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>76.6</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. United Kingdom</td>
<td>2,141</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. FR Germany</td>
<td>1,712</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Third World</td>
<td>1,271</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>98.0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Norway</td>
<td>724</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Netherlands</td>
<td>536</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>87.0</td>
<td>Peru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Brazil&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>97.2</td>
<td>Chile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Israel&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Australia</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. China</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>95.0</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Sweden</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Switzerland</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Canada</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>98.3</td>
<td>Ivory Coast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. South Africa&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Finland</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>USSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Czechoslovakia</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Libya&lt;sup&gt;b,c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>96.0</td>
<td>Syria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>80.8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| World Total: | 57,459 | 100.0 | 68.7 |

<sup>a</sup> The values include licences sold for the production of major weapons.

<sup>b</sup> Included also in the Third World group of exporters.

<sup>c</sup> Figures for Libya are not representative of a trend, due to the resale of aircraft and armoured vehicles in 1979.

Source: SIPRI Year Book, 1981:188.
Of the sixteen major arms exporting countries (i.e. excluding the rows Third World, Finland, Czechoslovakia and Libya), fourteen are developed market economies, with profit as the primary motive of production. Together, they export over 70.5% of total major weapon exports, with the United States alone exporting 43.3%. The largest importers of these arms are the most repressive regimes in the Third World. Good examples being Chile, South Africa, Philippines, Pakistan, Morocco and Iran.

The Soviet Union, the world's second largest arms supplier after the United States has more restricted customers. Main recipients being friendly socialist countries as Cuba, Vietnam, Afghanistan and Ethiopia. Apart from these, its major arms receivers are, in the Middle East: Syria, Iraq, Libya, Algeria and South Yemen; and in the sub-continent: India. The tension created by superpower struggles seem to have made it imperative that regimes hostile to the West automatically turn to the Soviet Union for arms. Very soon, the increased procurement of armaments by contending parties heightens tension in the Third World.

Placing this rivalry in arms delivery to the Third World in cold war perspective, Halliday has correctly pointed out that since the 1950s, excruciating mass poverty in the Third World in the midst of continuous surplus expropriation by Western companies has increased the level of revolutionary activities in the Third World countries. These revolutions have produced regimes that are opposed to market or capitalist economies, and tend to experiment with alternative systems of social and economic organisation. Most of these regimes opt for socialist systems (e.g. Cuba, Ethiopia, South Yemen, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Angola and Mozambique). Others are simply nationalist
(Nasser's Egypt, Mosadeq's Iran); or religious (Iran 1978). Comparing the responses of the two opposing cold-war blocs, Halliday has this to say:

... these (revolutions and the changing position of the Third World within international capitalism. I. D. Ayu) have combined to encourage the advanced capitalist countries to reassert control over the Third World, by deploying a wide range of weapons for this: direct military intervention, increased support for right-wing regimes, destabilisation of post-revolutionary states, economic pressures (Halliday, 1983:82).

Turning to what he terms 'a policy of ideological simplification' known as 'the Soviet threat' (threat to capitalism's raw materials and markets for its commodities, including armaments), he points out that the Soviet role has been that of preventing these revolutionary regimes from being overthrown. They have rarely moved in to bring such regimes into power. Referring specifically to Cuba, South Yemen, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Angola, he concludes firmly that:

In none of these cases did the Soviet military role play a decisive part in initiating the revolutionary change (Halliday, 1983:99).

In considering the impact of armament sales to the Third World, it is therefore essential to bear these two contrasting wider roles of the major suppliers in mind. This is important for avoiding misleading number games between the centrally planned economies and market economies; and for appreciating the concrete relationship that exists between armaments and underdevelopment in the peripheral capitalist countries of the Third World.
Kaldor (1978) and Luckham (1979), attribute this state of affairs to the contemporary organisation of the armed forces around the 'Weapon System', which they argue, requires a specific form of organisation of force based on the prevailing mode of production. The development of the 'Weapon based' organisation of the armed forces, Kaldor argues, is based on the capitalist mode of production, and has therefore followed the general development of the arms industry, shipbuilding, various forms of engineering, vehicle industry, aerospace, etc. Its importation into the Third World, she continues, will undoubtedly reproduce the relationships as exist between capital and labour in the industrialised countries, within the developing countries.

While Kaldor emphasises the dependent relationship caused by armaments, and the general underdevelopment resulting from that dependence, Luckham in addition to these, emphasises the international tensions and internal repression that results from armaments. Both are correct in their analysis of the international armaments situation. However, they occasionally seem to slip into a technologically deterministic argument even though, at the outset, they both reject such a course. Of the two, Kaldor seems more guilty of this. For example, her use of 'the Weapon-system-based force structure', in certain places, tends to give the impression that military technology has an autonomous capacity of action; excluding 'the possibility of a revolutionary technology, involving perhaps less expenditure and displacing traditional industries'; or, "... the industrial army .. is based on the weapons system concept which strictly limits the room for variation in the relations of force." However, these reservations do not detract from what is otherwise very sound analysis of the consequences of militarisation of Third World countries.
(ii) Militarism and Political Repression

Apart from the direct absorption of social surplus in the Third World by way of armaments, personnel emoluments, pillaging the most productive members of the population, and other hidden forms of expenditure, the military establishment creates favourable conditions for the penetration and exploitation of the country by international capital. Perhaps, this is the practice referred to by the 'modernisers' as the 'creation of stable political conditions for (capitalist) development', to which we may add 'and underdevelopment'. This in turn requires a redirection of the uses made of the armed forces, from external to internal affairs.

Dependent on the industrialised countries for aid, investment and trade, from which the military leaders and their bureaucratic associates derive both corporate and personal benefits, in many countries of the Third World, affluence exist side by side with oceans of poverty and disease covering the majority of the population. This segregation of the poor, and the threat they face from starvation, illness and other forms of social deprivation generates further crisis more profound than the one which in the first instance, brought the military into direct state control. The crisis inevitably produces resistance, manifest forms of which are: waves of industrial strikes, peasants revolts, student demonstrations, urban riots and in more extreme forms, further military take-overs or even guerilla movements as is the case in Central America. This requires greater utilisation of military and para-military forces to suppress them. In a sense, it is a situation of 'internal war' organised along class lines.

However, we have to acknowledge that, this condition of 'internal war' is not just a recent creation. It has a history extending into the colonial times.
As explained earlier, many of the armies of the Third World, especially in post-colonial Africa, are legacies of colonial regimes which, despite their massive expansion since the formal end of colonial administration, still retain practices of the colonial era. Firstly, they were introduced during the colonial periods to suppress 'native uprisings'; then to fight colonial wars of liberation - the French in Algeria and Indochina; the Portuguese in Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique; and the British in Kenya and Malaya. As Eide points out: "the use of force was not for the purpose of defence against external attack (which would have been legitimate under the United Nations Charter), but designed to maintain established control and to resist the struggle for self-determination" (Eide, 1976:311).

In the post-colonial era, that 'struggle for self-determination' has persisted as dependence continues to create opposing social groups, with the elite groups collaborating with what was 'the enemy', for the exploitation and suppression of the remaining society. In the 1960s when this quest for genuine self determination intensified in Latin America, Asia, and some parts of Africa, internal use of repression was rechristened as 'counter-insurgency'; and the United States government, for example, was prepared to provide 'flexible response' or rapid intervention to assist 'friendly' Third World governments against 'subversives'. Military bases were established all over the Third World; and under the Military Assistance Programme (MAP), necessary hard and software for counterinsurgency was provided to Latin American countries.  

This legacy of internal use of the armed forces has taken a variety of forms given the peculiar nature of particular local situations. However, there are common characteristics like anti-labour decrees, imposition of austerity measures, 'Emergency laws' legislating against public protests, public associations and rallies, harassment of individual dissidents. Frank (1981) has documented such measures of Emergency from South Korea, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, India, Sri-Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Egypt, Tunisia, Nigeria, Ghana, Zambia, Uruguay, Argentina, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia and Jamaica. Most of these happen to be countries ruled by Military regimes. From each of the regions chosen, we present an illustration of what one may consider typical of these repressive regimes:

**South Korea - 1977**

Strikes are prohibited by law and the trade unions are prohibited by law and the trade unions are a shadow of their Western counterparts ... The strict labour laws permit the government to break up any union which it considers has become a threat to the safeguarding of public order .. Since that date (1971), the penalty for striking has been a prison sentence for up to seven years. (The Times, 26th September 1975, in Frank, 1981 190).

**Philippines - 1974**

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FERDINAND E. MARCOS, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the Power invested in me by the constitution do hereby order and decree as follows: Section 1. It is the policy of the State to encourage trade unionism and free collective bargaining within
the framework of compulsory and voluntary arbitration and therefore all forms of strike, picketing and lockouts are hereby strictly prohibited... (Frank, 1981:192).

Pakistan - 1977
On July 10th, the Chief Martial Law Administrator, General Zia ul Haq issued Martial Law Regulation No. 12 stating that "all kinds of activity relating or pertaining to, or connected in any manner whatsoever with, trade unions, labour association or any other body of similar nature (are) prohibited." (Frank, 1981:199-200).

Nigeria - 1977
... the military junta of Lt. Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo has enacted another repressive industrial law.

The Trade Disputes (Essential Services) Decree 1977 provides fines of up to 10,000 naira (about $14,500) for anyone found guilty of "disrupting" the economy or impeding the functioning of "essential services". ...

In addition, the whole trade union movement is being restructured under government dominance. The 1,870 existing unions are being reorganised into seventy authorised unions with the regime having the power to appoint their general secretaries. By the beginning of 1978, sixty four of these new unions had been established and hundreds that did not qualify were outlawed (IPC 30th January 1978). (Frank, 1981:206-7).

Argentina - 1976
... The right to strike has been annulled in principle through government decree. Those who use this instrument of pressure anyway can be
dismissed immediately and in addition commit a "subvertive act", which can lead to imprisonment for an indefinite period. (Frank, 1981:213).

In all these countries, harsh labour decrees are accompanied by widespread repression, and with ridiculously low wages, capital flows in from the industrialised countries, followed by huge profit repatriations. Again, we turn to Brazil, now used as a model for Third World countries to illustrate what is a general feature of 'wage discipline', political repression and 'unequal accumulation'. As Frank has shown:

... while exports increased from $1.43 billion to $8.2 billion between 1964 and 1975 ... imports increased from $1.25 billion to $12.2 billion. The balance-of-trade deficit thus reached $3.3 billion in 1975. . . On top of that there was a financial deficit of $3.2 billion on service account for the remission of profits, foreign debt service, and so forth. So the balance-of-payments deficit on current account was about $6.7 billion for 1974, 1975 and 1976. In 1977, Brazil enjoyed a small trade surplus, but in 1978 the trade deficit was about $1 billion, which grew to nearly $2.5 billion in 1979, largely because of increased imports of agricultural products in a bad crop year. On financial (profit remittance and debt service) account, the balance was increasingly negative, so that each year's balance-of-payments deficit was added to that of the preceding year. Deficits on this order of magnitude can only be covered by a massive influx of foreign capital and loans. This explains why the foreign debt of Brazil rose from $4 billion in 1968 to $10 billion in 1972, to $22 billion in 1975, to an estimated nearly $30 billion - or three to four year's total
export earnings - in 1976, and to $50 billion - or $40 billion of net foreign debt in excess of $10 billion of foreign reserves - by the end of 1979.

(Frank, 1981:8-9).

Even at the height of the 'miracle', 1968-1973, the President of Brazil, Geisel, was forced to concede that "the economy is doing fine, but the people are not".

(iii) Crisis and Containment: The Ideological Dimension

As the political and economic crisis deepens, so repression increases. An important feature of this containment process is the intensified articulation of what Mattelart (1979) correctly identifies as 'the ideology of the Military state', which over the years, has been systematised as the Doctrine of National Security. As a war doctrine, it isolates friendly and enemy camps, and elaborates the best strategies of containing them. The military defines itself, the bureaucracy, domestic businessmen, multinationals, supportive intellectuals, Church leaders, a compromising judiciary, etc., as members of the group which is out to maintain the 'security' of the nation. All others, especially oppositional movements out to question the unequal social arrangement or demand a fairer share for themselves, are labelled as 'subversives'. And because it is a 'total war', it involves every aspect of human life, in every place, and at all times. The 'whole society' has to be 'mobilised' against the enemy - 'the subversives'. It means that the concept of 'defence' is redefined. And since the whole of society is now acknowledged as a battlefield, all aspects of society have to be regimented. Political parties and associations are banned, anti-labour legislation introduced, curfews recur, a powerful intelligence network is established, arbitrary arrests of political and intellectual dissidents intensify, soldiers are posted to such institutions as schools to 'maintain discipline', measures are taken to co-opt or dictate to
journalists, and finally chiefs, clergymen, top military officers and judges are enlisted to preach or interpret the new philosophy of National Security. All members of society are expected to co-operate.

In Chile, the military junta made such a "Declaration of Principles" in 1974. 'National Security' was defined as:

"the responsibility of each and every Chilean. It is therefore necessary to include this concept in all of the socio-economic strata, through concrete instruction dealing with civic obligations, both general and specific, which are related to internal security. This may be achieved by expanding the range of patriotic values, by disseminating the cultural advances which constitute our own patrimony in autochthonous art, and by following the direction of the historical traditions and the respect for symbols representing the Fatherland (cited in Mattelart, 1979:408).

Not only is the military establishment projected as a symbol of the 'Fatherland', it demands maximum co-operation of all members of the society, particularly intellectuals: the media, the universities, Religious leaders, traditional leaders and the judiciary. It is they who will systematise and promote the image of the military as defenders of the Fatherland; of the existence of a threat to society; and of the need for social solidarity under the overall command of the armed forces. Since military ideology prescribes strict obedience without questions, it is imperative that all members of society, including those whose professions demand persistent questioning and critical search for alternative solutions, must be regimented by the new code of social conduct.
This ideology of the military state, apart from forestalling the aspirations of a vast majority of the population, comes into direct conflict with critical values of some institutions and social groups. For example, attempts to control the cultural output of the universities and the media conflicts with the accepted and established values of 'freedom of expression', and 'intellectual freedom'. But, the Doctrine of National Security does not recognise, or seek to recognise 'autonomous units' in society. To the military, "total war demands total response". This is particularly more with these centres of intellectual production, crucial for the articulation of the military's outlook on society. Consequently, direct and indirect pressures are brought to bear on them as individuals, and as corporate groups, in order to force them to reconcile their liberal ideals with the military's doctrine of 'National Security'. In essence, two professional ideologies, founded on the ideals of liberalism, come into direct conflict with themselves. Beyond this, there are groups whose perception transcends liberalism, and by implication, the two antagonistic ideologies of the military on one hand, and the liberal press and university on the other. The aspirations of these alternative social forces tend to express the emergence of a new historical moment that will replace the existing social and political practice of which militarism itself is a fractional expression.

This is why, at this critical juncture, we find two divergent responses from intellectuals: Co-operation and Accommodation by those who see militarism as a temporary phenomenon, or the armed forces as genuine upholders of 'the national interest'; and Resistance through active struggle by those who identify militarism as an intolerable fortification of capitalist exploitation. The latter takes action against militarism's hegemonic ideology; seeks to resist its doctrine
of 'National Security' by mobilising public consciousness through public protest. This defiant response activates a counter response that is total and comprehensive. Both instruments of coercion and consensus are mobilised towards containing the opposition. It is at this stage that popular representation of the struggle between the resistance movement and militarism is seen as an important 'Division' of the battle. The images of the struggle become another cite of struggle. This is because they are of immense importance for the public's understanding and support of either the resisting social groups or militarism and its underlying mode of production. It means the images themselves are of wider implication or significance to the whole power structure and relationships of the society in which the struggle is taking place; and by extension, that society's relationship to the wider world.

In the Chapters that follow, we will try to examine the articulation between these various forces: capitalism and military rule; resistance forces; and the press that tries to explain them to the wider public. Though our discussion scans the Third World in general, it specifically tries to examine in greater detail the case of Nigerian students' struggles against militarism, and the way which that struggle was represented by the Nigerian press. Respectively, the next two chapters, therefore, look at the struggles and accommodations of intellectuals in class societies and critically assesses theoretical explanations of these struggles; and the specific case of student struggles in the Third World.
2. ACCOMMODATION AND STRUGGLES OF INTELLECTUALS IN CLASS SOCIETIES

Every social group, coming into existence on the original terrain of an essential function in the world of economic production creates together with itself, organically, one or more strata of intellectuals which give it homogeneity and an awareness of its own function not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields. - Antonio Gramsci.

In the absence of consensus, political parties, or parliament, the media must provide the military dictatorship with its "organic intellectual". The media also are an area where the dictatorship confronts both a cultural investment representing another form of power organisation inherited from the liberal state, and the rupture existing between overt propaganda operations, and the covert, metabolological action of ideology. - Armand Mattelart.

In modern societies, the specialised category of intellectuals perform a crucial function in the social process because of their ability to provide the necessary ideological cement between structure and the superstructure on the one hand, and between the dominant and subaltern classes on the other. Such a cement enables the social group in dominance to organise, and direct the economic, political and cultural life of the people as a whole. This view of intellectuals has contributed immensely to a more indepth appreciation of intellectual practice in society, particularly in the advanced capitalist states of the world. In the Third World, however, the profound transformations taking place in the area of politics have made the application of Gramsci's analysis of intellectuals more
problematic, especially where coercion features prominently as the dominant element in relation to consensus. Nevertheless, consideration of intellectual practice in the Third World must pay particular attention to Gramsci's seminal elaboration.

Despite the enthusiastic reception of Gramsci's expanded treatment of intellectuals as a social category, very little of his analysis has been extended to studies of the social and political role of intellectuals in the 'exceptional states' which now constitute more than half of the developing world. Perhaps, this omission can be traced to the emphasis such states and their analysts place on the use of force in maintaining the hegemony of the dominant social groups. This has served to direct attention away from the dialectical relationship that exists between coercion and consensus under conditions of military rule. To provide a comprehensive account of militarism however, one has to look at the cultural mechanics necessary for its ideological cementation and rule as well as at the physical exercise of coercion and control.

In this chapter, I want to approach this 'other' side of military rule by arguing that colonialism and its introduction of the capitalist mode of production in the Third World (including our Nigerian case study) created its own 'organic' intellectuals - the latter day politicians, military personnel, bureaucrats, and technical elites now in control of state power and incorporated 'traditional' intellectuals, such as chiefs and religious leaders, to elaborate its dominance. The same crisis of the post-colonial state and its social, political and cultural life that necessitated the rise of militarism also required a reconstitution of the intellectual strata and its ideology. Though capitalism and its underlining liberal culture had placed an 'iron-discipline' on the ideology of the intellectual strata,
(e.g. the contradiction between 'freedom' and 'property rights', their removal from activist political action, and limits set on their field of discourse),
militarist reconstitution calls for a further fortification of this 'iron-discipline'.
This fortification involves three essential movements: (a) a projection onto civil society of intellectuals from within the military establishment itself; (b) the incorporation of 'organic' intellectuals produced by the colonial situation, and absorption of traditional intellectuals left over from pre-colonial times; and (c) the systematic suppression of 'irrecuperable' intellectuals and the emergent social groups who aspire to a position of dominance.

In other words, the crisis of post-colonial capitalism which ushered in the 'exceptional state', also ruptures the arrangement provided by liberalism; and in the cultural sphere, oppositional social groups, including their intellectual strata, stood in confrontation, and the military had to reconcile these contradictory forces in the interest of capital. In this project, the ideology of the military state constructed from the professional values of the military establishment is in conflict with the culture of liberalism. While intellectuals socialised into a liberal culture will insist on critical analysis before rational action, military values demand, as in all war conditions, total destruction of the enemy. Consequently, the military have their own definition of the press and the educational establishment. Similarly, the judicial system is converted to an institution for issuing military decrees, and religion has to support the overall aim of the military establishment. All cultural production, including intellectual practice, becomes an arm of psychological warfare.

Faced with this kind of demand from the military state, some intellectuals inevitably accept co-optation into the ideology of the military state. By the same
token, socially committed intellectuals, who are prepared to undertake, in Marx's phrasing "ruthless criticism of everything that exists, ruthless in the sense that the criticism will not shrink either from its own conclusions or from conflict with the powers that be", will inevitably come across obstacles and hostility from the authorities from intellectual colleagues, and from the population in general. Committed intellectual practice, argues Baran, involves some element of messianism especially in social situations where maximum conformity is in demand (Baran, 1971). Later on in the discussion, while efforts will be made toward explaining how the process of incorporation takes place in the Third World our attention will continue to be focussed on the socially committed intellectual: Baran's 'social critic' whose attempt to identify, to analyse, and in this way 'to help overcome the obstacles barring the way to the attainment of a better, more humane, and more rational social order' (Baran, 1961:17), brings him into confrontation with the military state.

Before then, however, we would like to contextualise our discussion of these intellectuals, by examining critically the development of the concept and its existing applications. Along the way, possible conceptual and analytical shortcomings and advances will be indicated. Throughout the discussion, while emphasis will mainly be on the structural location of intellectuals, we will endeavour to synthesise structure with function in order to present a fuller picture of both location and practice.

'In Search of the Intellectuals'

After posing the question of who intellectuals are, their practices and function in society, followed by a review of the contesting definitions and analyses offered by scholars from both East and Western Europe, Philip Schlesinger
arrived at the conclusion that: "there is no simple answer to what should be expected from a theory of the intellectuals" (Schlesinger, 1982:221). In fact, many of the scholarly formulated "theories of intellectuals" read like "theories for the intellectuals". This problem of a proper formulation of the concept has persisted over the years. Writing on the changing conceptualisation of intellectuals, Tibor Huszar traced it back to the early days of Greek city states and their philosophers who saw themselves as men of thought or Thinking Men, endeavouring to understand and to make others understand the world around them, nature's secrets and operational forces; above all, to generate new ideas, to 'recognise and make others aware of the driving forces of action' (Huszar, 1976:81).

Anticipating Kant and Hegel, their concern was not so much with the pragmatics of social problems in a purely secular perspective, but with the metaphysical pursuit of truth and knowledge. The realities of political life came in only tangentially to the extent that they bore some relationship to their idealist notions of man, nature, natural forces, truth and knowledge.

By the 19th century however, the conception of intellectuals changes radically with changes in the historical circumstances in Western European societies. They came to be associated with a distinctively rebellious culture. The militant oppositional activities of the Russian Narodniks against the Tsarist monarchy; the anti-establishment activities of Polish intellectuals; and the stand of French intellectuals in the Dreyfus affair in 1898, (which also inaugurated the wide use of the concept 'intellectuals') all helped to sustain this image of rebelliousness. This posture was attributed to the assumed alienation of intellectuals from the ruling power groups.
Focus on such committed intellectuals however was soon relegated to the background in social analysis, as the consolidation of capitalism witnessed a closer relationship between intellectuals and the emergent men of property. There was something of a rediscovery of the traditional notion of intellectuals, read by Karl Mannheim who strenuously tried to detach the intellectual strata from Marx's class analysis. His Sociology of Knowledge approach, elaborated very ably in his *Ideology and Utopia* (1936), presented intellectuals, as 'free-floating' or independent of the power structure of society. Since Mannheim aimed to draw a special distinction between 'truth', 'objective truth' (*utopia*), and the partially concretised ideas (*ideology*) of particular interest groups in society he had to nominate a special group of agents as carriers for his 'objective truth'. Faced with the argument that every member of society happens to be a member of some partisan interest group, upholding the non-objective ideology of this group, Mannheim resolved the difficulty by designating intellectuals as autonomous and non-partisan category of social agents.

According to him, since they were drawn from all social strata, intellectuals were not linked to any social group's particular interests and *ideology*, and were therefore uniquely capable of constructing a value system he termed *Utopia* reflecting and directing the spirit of the age. The *Utopia* so shaped was in turn to reconstruct the chaotic social and political order. The problem which remained unapproached was how this representative assembly of objectively knowledgeable men was to work out the desired *utopia*; and what precise form the *utopia* was to take.

**Intellectuals: From Cultural Leadership to a 'New Class'**

Before Mannheim's attempt to solve the problem of ideological conflict
in society, Weber had argued that "it was not the dictatorship of the proletariat but that of the official which was on the march" (Weber, cited in Gouldner, 1979:96). Weber’s studies of society had placed a great deal of emphasis on rationality, particularly the transition from religious rationality to secular rationality as exemplified in his works on religion and bureaucracy (Weber, 1970). At the centre of this rationality stood cultural values, understood by Weber as that part of reality systematised over historical time in the process of human thought. Study is therefore guided by what is culturally significant, or the subjective interpretation of objective reality. Here, intellectuals or the analyst with a 'value reference' tries to provide the society with some kind of leadership.

Considering himself in the forefront of such an intellectual enterprise, he embarked on the cultural project of constructing ideal-types of value systems and social action against which concrete objective situations could be measured. In Weber's approach, one imagines, intellectuals were to provide the 'required' scale of cultural rationality for measuring objective reality.

Weber's formulation was later given an extended interpretation by Parsons, Shils and Lipset. Parsons and Shils saw intellectuals as 'Cultural specialists' whose aim was to facilitate "positive adaptation of members of the community to the broader cultural system". In other words, they were to perform the crucial role of legitimating power. Conversely, deviants, whose work ran contrary to established values were immediately excluded from the category of intellectuals. As with Weber, both men work with an ill-defined concept of rationality. Shils equates rationality with an elite socialised within certain major institutions such as the judiciary, education institutions, bureaucracy, and political parties. "By an intellectual system" Shils argues, "I do not mean a
system of ideas but rather a set of intellectual institutions in which persons are
trained for or perform intellectual roles." (Shils, 1965:498). Presenting a case
for 'A Modern Intellectual Community', Shils recommends to intellectuals
within African states to "bear constantly in mind that the precipitation of a new and
indigenous intellectual centre of gravity within their own countries requires
simultaneously the cultivation of good relations with the intellectual community
outside ('the outside world of metropolitan culture') and with the authoritative,
executive sectors of their own society". (my emphasis) (Shils, 1965:518). To
Shils, the underlying role is that of legitimation; and for Third World intellectuals,
the perpetuation of dependency, including intellectual dependency.

Less empirically minded, Parsons presents an abstract, but nevertheless,
consensual role for intellectuals stressing the provision of certain cultural ideals
to guide social action or to which the individual members of the community could
adapt (Parsons, 1948). Both take a specific category of intellectuals within a
specific historical moment, and generalise or project this as a model to be used
in evaluating intellectuals at all times and in all places. Strongly anchored in a
search for consensus, neither pay attention to the possibility of social conflict, or
to the intellectual contributions of anti-establishment members of the society.
In fact, they overlooked the possibility of even supportive intellectuals presenting
ideas that run counter to those of the leaders. Their analysis of cultural values,
intellectual practice, and social adaptation is therefore static with very little
room for social change, except as directed by elites who happen to be those
dominating the rest of the society. With this, they had not progressed beyond
Weber's 'dictatorship .... of the official' which he declared was on the march; the
only difference being, in Parsons and Shils' case, its synchronous movement with
those in political and economic control.
Alvin Gouldner and 'The New Class Project'

If Weber, Parsons and Shils saw intellectuals as either providing cultural leadership or legitimising the values supportive to the ruling elites, Gouldner saw them as "the rise of the new class" (Gouldner, 1979). The new class thesis can be traced to an amalgamation of several conflicting sociologies. On the one hand, there is the Weberian-Mannheim transcendental position, closely allied with Burnham's managerial revolution thesis. In a lengthy bibliographical footnote he refers approvingly to works of key 'managerialists' such as Veblen (1932), Berle and Means (1968), Burnham (1941), J.K. Galbraith (1967) and Bell (1973).

With little qualification, he declares:

"For my part, I have in these theses attempted to clarify the conditions under which the New Class would be more or less alienated from older elites and established institutions, and thus unified, rather than simply to assert the inevitability of that alienation, or of such a unification (Gouldner, 1979:95, emphasis original).

On the other hand, there is the substantial borrowing of Marxian categories, though Gouldner rejects Marx's central assertion that ultimately, it is the proletariat, with progressive intellectuals in the vanguard, that will take over power and abolish all classes to make way for a classless society.

In opposition to both the transcendental role assigned to intellectuals by Mannheim, and the instrumental role allocated by both Marx, and Shils and Parsons, Gouldner sees the intellectuals of both East and West as a rising class in "contention with the groups already in control of the society's economy whether these are businessmen or party leaders." (Gouldner, 1979:1)."
For evidence, Gouldner cites the appropriation of a special and more rewarding culture of justification and rationalisation by the intellectuals; their ability to persuade for 'consensus'. Gouldner argues that this is a common attribute to both humanistic and technical intellectuals that binds them together. Groups from similar and dissimilar environments, people with opposing political and economic systems, all become members of 'a special speech community' with 'a culture of Critical Discourse'. Schools within diametrically opposed social systems are acknowledged by Gouldner as mere 'linguistic conversion centres' run by 'a special group of the New Class'. Like Mannheim, Gouldner tries here to transcend the question of class and class conflict by favouring a marginal social group which he regards as the bearers of rationality.

Apart from the universal character of this 'new class', Gouldner's second intriguing submission is that "the new class is elitist and self-seeking and uses its special knowledge to advance its own interests and power, and to control its work situation" (Gouldner, 1979:7). Though elitist, "it is the best card that history has presently given us to play". (Gouldner, 1979:7). At this stage, the new class moves from its fringe location into the heartland of social class struggles, not on behalf of other social groups, but out of its own self-interest. Nevertheless, Gouldner interjects later, as if as an after-thought, that the new class is in fact egalitarian. Such persistent contradictions are characteristic of his analysis. But, there are also other, more serious weaknesses of this 'New Class' thesis.

Firstly, Gouldner's use of class, as applied to intellectuals is very contentious. Equally, his notion of Cultural capital whose possession is supposed to give the new class its political strength requires very serious re-examination.
Gouldner rejects Marx's employment of economic relations as a criteria for defining classes and stresses instead the importance of lifestyles, access to education and cultural consumption patterns, in unifying the new class. He does not give serious consideration to the overall limits set by the economy on access to these new class attributes. In other words, though in a footnote, he suggests that his thesis is quite different to that of the managerial revolutionists, he in fact ends up endorsing their arguments with all their shortcomings.

Closely allied to this limitation is Gouldner's division of capital into two exclusive categories: Money Capital and Cultural Capital. Contrary to Bourdieu's insistence that cultural capital has to be considered at both the material and symbolic levels - the way in which material conditions set limits on cultural production, and available cultural practices contribute to class reproduction,¹ Gouldner assigns culture an absolute autonomy, free from economic and political determinations. Cultural capital is thus superimposed on 'Money Capital' and its appropriators, the intellectuals, become real controllers over the means of production leaving 'the old moneyed class on the historical shelf'. As mentioned above, this is essentially a sophisticated version of Managerialism, eloquently refuted by Zeitlin (1974) with compelling empirical figures; and as Schlesinger notes correctly, the resurgence of minimalist arguments beneficial to the moneyed class hardly support any new class thesis (Schlesinger, 1982).

1. See special issue of Media, Culture and Society (Vol. 2, No. 3, 1980), devoted to "CLASS AND CULTURE: The work of Bourdieu" with an incisive introductory essay by Nicholas Garnham and Raymond Williams.
Finally, if the new class is a 'universal class' present 'in the Third World of developing nations, in the second World of the USSR and its client states and in the first World of late Capitalism', as Gouldner insists, and if the new class is fighting 'a civil war within the ruling class', under what conditions will the new class come to power? Will the new class have the same advantages over the political and moneyed classes in the First World as in the Third World and in the Socialist countries of the Eastern world? Unfortunately, Gouldner does not in any way specify the weapons available to the 'New Class' and the dominant 'old classes'. Certainly, the containment and repression of non-conformist intellectuals in all the parts of the world he considers hardly indicates a rise to class power by this new class.

In the specific case of the media, Gouldner had in an earlier work argued that, though socialist states had placed great restrictions on public enlightenment, in liberal-democratic societies, "it is through the mass media and through them alone that there is today any possibility at all of a truly mass public enlightenment that might go beyond what universities elicit, i.e. beyond small elites and educated elitism. It is through the media that the system may be made to "dance to its own melody", or "to expose itself" (Gouldner 1976:160). In his writings on the new class however, Gouldner jettisons this argument for a less helpful thesis. But as Philip Elliot has correctly pointed out, "the shift in the location of power from the nation state to the international economic system is graphically illustrated by current developments in the mass media and so too are the implications of this shift for the intellectual fraction of Gouldner's 'New Class'. It is not just that the 'new class' is destined not to come to power. The intellectuals are about to be robbed of those public forums in which they could
engage in their 'culture of critical discourse'. Their toe-hold on power is crumbling under their feet" (Elliot, 1982:243).

Though Elliot's emphasis on the erosion of the powers of the 'nation state', and with it the 'public sphere', within which intellectuals exercise some form of power, shares Gouldner's emphasis on intellectuals as members of nation states rather than social classes, his powerful overall criticism of the new class thesis in the context of liberal-democratic societies diminishes the little credence it might have commanded. However, before looking at the situation in the Third World countries where attempts to militarise intellectual production has brought into sharp focus the genuine class character of all intellectuals, clearly contradicting Gouldner's idealist 'class' analysis, we will consider the case of Socialist states.

The 'New Class' in the Socialist States of Eastern Europe

In the socialist states of Eastern Europe, it is officially considered that the proletariat in association with the peasantry are now in control of state power and that social class distinctions, and with it, the exploitation of man by man has come to an end. Following Marxist sociology of knowledge, intellectuals are considered an organic part of the proletarian state. It is assumed therefore that intellectual practice will be conducted in the interest of the workers, to improve their material conditions, and raise their level of consciousness to enable them to defend their hard won gains.

Though considerable efforts have been made in this direction, the bureaucratisation of the state has produced certain limitations on intellectuals. For those whose world view cannot be reconciled with that of the official state,
such limitation backed by the restraining hand of the party is source of resentment. When lifestyles are contrasted and those of the working people found deficient vis-à-vis those in the commanding heights of the bureaucracy, it is announced that new classes are emerging in these societies despite the official abolition of social classes. The intelligentsia are seen as a particularly important fraction of the ruling class.

Whatever the strength and weaknesses of this presentation of the new class thesis it has been elaborated by a number of dissident intellectuals in Eastern Europe. To some, the intelligentsia in these societies have constituted themselves as a new bourgeois class to frustrate the revolutionary aspirations of the working and peasant classes (Kostecki and Mrelala, 1982).

Alongside Gouldner's argument that the new class in Eastern Europe are coming to power, critical intellectuals within these societies have stressed the possibility of intellectuals having some form of power now. The East German dissident, Rudolf Bahro for example, argues that the division of labour in these societies is based on the level of education with the more educated constituting themselves into a special social category at the top of the pyramid and enjoying social benefits disproportionately higher than those involved in simple and schematic activities at the base (Bahro, 1978). Levels of knowledge therefore become crucial determinants in the process of production and redistribution. Unlike Gouldner however, he does not announce with glee that intellectuals are at last coming to class power. On the contrary, he suspects that the intellectuals who are in power are in the process of establishing another form of bureaucratic control. Bahro recommends a socialisation and democratisation of the institutions, producing intellectuals. This he argues would bring about greater
political participation, diminish the role of the party, and help to integrate the expert with the non-expert. The final result would be the dismantling of the special interest of the experts to be replaced by the collective interests of all.

While Bahro sees 'the alternative in Eastern Europe' in the 'collective intellectuals', he does not suggest how this change would be brought about. The necessary educational reforms from which the 'collective intellectuals' will emerge, and in return demolish the existing state machine are still expected to come from within the present power structure, which Bahro calls, the 'Politbureaucratic dictatorship'. The question of how far and in what ways this bureaucracy would mobilise to block the rise of the collective intellectual is simply glossed over. Further, Bahro does not indicate in his work how to avoid the new social structure mutating into another collective prince.

Apart from Bahro however, important contributions to the debate have also come from Rakovski (pseudonym of Gyorgy Bence and Janos Kis) (1977), and Konrad and Szelenyi (1979). Like Bahro, both attribute radical reformatory roles for Eastern European intellectuals. But like Gouldner, both see the key struggle as a struggle within the dominant class, and in the case of Konrad and Szelenyi, they also assume a helpless and passive role for the working classes.

Rakovski sets out to explain the nature of East European 'dissent' by arguing that it should be seen as the marginal remnants of freedom for discussion left by the bureaucratised state. Unlike the working class who have very little access to this marginal 'public sphere', intellectuals still have room and capacities for manoeuvre. This is why, they are very essential for the reformation of socialism in Eastern Europe. Moreover, he argues, although
they are a fraction of the dominant class they do have some concern for the conditions of the working class, and are out to change the state apparatus for the interest of all.

To Konrad and Szelenyi, state socialism is nothing but an institution for the expropriation of surplus and the intelligentsia who are in control of its apparatuses have interests opposed to those of the workers. Their dominance is predicated on their control of 'redistributive power' rather than means of production. Earlier, Szelenyi put it thus:

All those who have a vested interest in the maximisation of redistributive power are members of a new dominating class, since their interests are antagonistic to those of the direct producers. If we define the new class this way, it obviously includes more than just the bureaucracy or even the techno-bureaucracy. It potentially comprises the whole intelligentsia (1978-9:52).

Within this model, the intellectual strata is therefore subdivided into bureaucratic elite, technocratic elite and humanistic intellectuals. The bureaucratic elite, since Stalinism, are said to have reconstituted themselves as a privileged group at the top, leaving the technocrats and humanistic intellectuals to push at the realms of political power. Konrad and Szelenyi recommend that these two marginal groups should form an alliance with the working class in order to challenge the political dominance of the political or bureaucratic elite. At the end of the day, they envisage what Bahro shudders will happen, replacement of the leading role of the elite with that of the intellectuals. This is what prompts them to title their book; "The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power". But why this should happen,
or why the intellectual rule of the techno-humanistic combination should be preferred over that of the political elite remains unexplained. In the end, we are left with nothing but a projection of the possible power structure modelled after the current struggle within the dominant class. What becomes of the 'direct producers' - the working class - remains a matter for conjecture. But one is given no reason to suppose that their situation will be too far removed from the present conditions described by the authors.

Before we move to other ways of looking at intellectuals, we would like to observe that the 'New Class' thesis tends to be totalising (in the case of Gouldner) and teleological in the case of all the analysts presented above. Because most are concerned primarily with the political role of intellectuals, there is a tendency to overstress that role to the point of discussing it outside the activities of other social groups. Further, the social formations within which the intellectuals function are inadequately analysed, with the result that the defining parameters of class location and class action become a matter for arbitrary selection. Thus, for Gouldner, classes can be identified by their cultural lifestyles derived from formal education and their ideology, manner of speech of 'Culture of Critical Discourse'. The economy becomes less significant. To Rakovski, structural factors are important but only to the extent that they set limits to the real determinants of class formation within 'market socialism'. These real determinants, like Gouldner's, are access to education and ability to communicate. Finally, Konrad and Szelenyi settle for 'reistributive power'. Which one of these should be accepted as the most representative feature of classes is difficult to recommend. Moreover, the only element common to all of them is the notion that intellectuals have a significant role to play in whatever changes
which may take place in society, whether capitalist or socialist, industrialised or non-industrialised. What is required is therefore a more consistent and penetrating examination of the structural location of intellectuals in general and in specific moments, and of their class alliances, and the nature of their struggles and accommodation within the power structure.

**The Location and Practice of Intellectual Activity within Class Societies:**

**The Marxian Legacy**

Marx himself attributed very little political role to the 'intermediate and transitional strata' of capitalist society. These included: small tradesmen, shopkeepers, handicraftsmen and even some classes of peasants, whom he characterised as 'petite bourgeois', together with members of the bureaucracy and those in technical occupations. The latter, though not objectively members of the bourgeoisie, are by virtue of their individualistic careerism, actively involved in the perpetuation of the capitalist order. And it is this group that Marx's outlook on 'intellectuals' is said to be based on.

Many analysts after Marx have followed this instrumental characterisation without looking back at its specifically descriptive value of a particular social formation; and secondly, without supplementing it with a further look at his comments on philosophy, art and culture. The general thrust of his remarks is well represented in his comment that: "it is the immediate **task of philosophy**, which is in the service of history to unmask self-estrangement in its **unholy forms**" (Marx, 1975:244). Alluding to Luther and the Reformation, he stated: "Just as it was then the **monk**, so it is now the **philosopher** in whose brain the revolution begins" (Marx, 1975:251).
Several deductions can be made from this as regards intellectuals. Firstly, he never specifically located them in the self-seeking petite-bourgeois class whom he argued would ultimately be swamped by big capital, thereby reducing them to a proletariat. Secondly, the notion of 'ruling class; ruling ideas' as contained in his work, does not conscript all philosophers into the role of articulating dominant ideology, as his own example of anti-capitalist intellectual efforts illustrates. In other words, the political function of intellectuals in relation to the two major competing classes remains open, with a number of contradictory strands. While Marx cast aspersions on those intellectuals who supported the bourgeois social order, he also underlined the role of working class intellectuals and other intellectuals who supported working class emancipation.

From Lenin to contemporary Marxist commentators, divergent views on intellectuals have continued to appear. To Lenin and Kautsky intellectuals resemble proletarians by virtue of the fact that they sell their labour for a livelihood and are exploited by capital, but differ substantially from the working class because they perform mental work, directing the efforts of other workers. Because of their higher income, they live lifestyles comparable to those of the bourgeoisie. In terms of class location, they saw intellectuals as part of the petit-bourgeoisie, situated between the two competing classes of bourgeois and proletariat. Both insisted that the proletariat had to create its own intellectuals. Focusing specifically on artists and scholars, who may not necessarily be involved in wage labour, Lukacs counselled that under market conditions, creative artists and scholars could not be autonomous in relation to owners of capital (Lukacs, 1971). Lukacs expected revolutionary intellectuals to be aware of this truism and take a more critical position in relation to the bourgeoisie and bourgeois intellectual output.
More recently, Poulantzas, in his analysis of social classes in contemporary advanced capitalist states worked out class boundaries and located intellectuals in what he designated as 'the new middle classes' (Poulantzas, 1975). Poulantzas argued further that, intellectuals and all members of the 'new middle classes' are like the old petit-bourgeois ideologically, in the sense that both dominate the working class at the ideological level. However, they are different in the sense that while the old petit-bourgeoisie have control over their labour, intellectuals do not. Hence it follows from this that in certain respects, intellectuals will have contradictory relations with both the working classes and the traditional sectors of the bourgeoisie. Selecting economic, political and ideological factors, he proceeds to trace the class boundaries between the working class and the 'new middle classes' on the one hand, and between the 'new middle classes' and the bourgeoisie on the other. But the relationship between the 'new middle classes' and the working class in Poulantzas' scheme is rather intriguing and deserves a closer look. Using his criteria for isolating classes at the political, economic and ideological levels, it becomes clear that 'the new middle classes' are objectively opposed to the working classes, as the following diagram illustrates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Class</th>
<th>New Middle Classes</th>
<th>Working Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Politically</td>
<td>Supervisory</td>
<td>Non-supervisory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideologically</td>
<td>Mental</td>
<td>Manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically</td>
<td>Unproductive</td>
<td>Productive</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Turning to the 'new middle classes' relationship to the bourgeoisie, Poulantzas limits himself to economic criteria: ownership of the means of production. He argues that intellectuals are structurally differentiated from the bourgeoisie, but are nevertheless located politically and ideologically in such a way that they reproduce and extend the bourgeoisie's control over cultural and intellectual life. Poulantzas' work is of course rather more sophisticated than what we have outlined here. But detailed review would take us outside our scope, and consequently we have concentrated on Poulantzas' central assertion that intellectuals are members of the 'new middle classes' doing mental and unproductive labour.

Our major objection to this is Poulantzas' contention that mental labour is unproductive, and because of this that intellectuals are removed from the working classes. His conception of 'production' is undoubtedly too restricted. Writing on the productivity of all professions, Marx insisted that: "A philosopher produces ideas, a poet poems, a clergyman sermons, a professor compendia and so on". (Marx 1979:37). Marx produces a catalogue of items produced by a 'criminal', whom Poulantzas would find difficult to locate in his class structures. We have "crimes ... criminal law ... the professor who gives lectures on criminal law ... his lectures (which he throws) onto the general market as 'commodities' ... the whole of the police and of criminal justice, constables, judges, hangmen, juries, ... art, belles-lettres, novels and even tragedies etc. ..." (Marx, 1979:37).

The distinction that is required, therefore, is that between 'production in general', and production in a 'definite historical form'. Intellectual production in capitalist society has to be understood, therefore not only from its
general nature, but also from its specific form of material production. The latter requires a careful analysis of the concrete antagonisms which arise in capitalist production between the dominant class of bourgeoisie and the working class. This requires us to go beyond a neat isolation of class positions, and the boundaries between them. The class practices of the intermediary classes, as a group, become difficult to specify precisely because they are diffuse, and as such, not easy to pigeon-hole. Marx acknowledged this difficulty of giving clear class boundaries when he noted that: "The economic structure of modern society is indisputably most highly and classically developed in England. But even here the class structure does not appear in a pure form. Intermediate and transitional strata obscure the class boundaries even in this case ..." (my emphasis) (Marx, 1961:186).

After this lengthy detour, the question of intellectuals in the political process remains unresolved. Such a resolution requires a return to our opening quotations from the Italian philosopher, Antonio Gramsci, and the way in which his ideas have been amplified and restructured by Erik Ohlin Wright. Firstly, the arguments provided by both serve as powerful critiques of all the previous works we have reviewed. Secondly, they provide remarkable insights of their own, which we can usefully employ to the case of Nigerian intellectuals.

Hegemony and Historical Process: The Centrality of Intellectuals

Gramsci's approach to the analysis of intellectuals remains the clearest and most consistent Marxist statement on the subject. Gramsci is particularly clear on the conception of intellectuals, their structural location and their function in the social process.
A firm distinction is made between intellectual activity in general and the intellectual practice of specific social groups in a particular historical conjuncture. This distinction is not just a matter for word play. It has an important theoretical and practical importance to the politics of all societies where classes are in opposition. Intellectuals, Gramsci notes, should not be distinguished by their occupational activity per se, i.e. the convenient division between mental and manual labour. Intrinsic criteria are misleading since 'all men are intellectuals ... although one can speak of intellectuals, one cannot speak of non-intellectuals, because non-intellectuals do not exist ... Each man, finally, outside his professional activity, carried on some form of intellectual activity, that is, he is a "philosopher", an artist, a man of taste, he participates in a particular conception of the world, has a conscious line of moral conduct, and therefore contributes to sustain a conception of the world or to modify it, that is, to bring into being new modes of thought" (Gramsci, 1971:9). But if everyone has a modicum of intellectual practice in him, and all social relations constitute intellectual activity, it is still necessary to distinguish those who "have in society the function of intellectuals".

Each historical moment requires people who will systematically represent and explain the existing material conditions and provide a coherent ideological cement for the dominant order. Intellectuals performing this task are termed 'organic intellectuals' by Gramsci to distinguish them from the 'traditional intellectuals' who are a carry-over from the old and dying historical bloc. At the time the old mode of production prevailed, these traditional intellectuals served as the 'organic intellectuals' of the social group then in dominance. Their self-declaration as "socially-unattached intellectuals" is due to a loss of historical
perspective. And, their increasing separation from current social reality, which tends to foster the illusion that they are above ongoing social struggles.

Three issues immediately become clear in this analysis. Firstly, there are no "free floating intellectuals", neither do intellectuals in themselves constitute a class. Secondly, the question of class location is implicitly resolved by locating intellectuals in all social classes, with both the dominant and the subaltern classes aspiring towards a position of dominance. However, this is an inference drawn from our third and final issue, the function of intellectuals in society. In other words, if "every social group, coming into existence on the original terrain of an essential function in the world of economic production, creates together with itself, organically, one or more strata of intellectuals which give it homogeneity and an awareness of its own function not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields" (Gramsci, 1971:5), then, all intellectuals can be located within specific social classes.

In his search for a solution to the 'boundary' question raised by Poulantzas, Ohlin Wright criticises Gramsci for collapsing intellectuals into two basic social classes: bourgeois and proletariat, through a marriage of functional and structural definitions of class locations (Ohlin Wright, 1979b). Ohlin Wright contends that such an approach does not take into account the objective antagonism between some of the intellectuals and the bourgeois class. Later, we will return to some of Ohlin Wright's arguments which we consider relevant to the political activities of intellectuals in class societies.

Before then, we wish to round off our assessment of Gramsci's view of intellectuals by looking a little more at the function of intellectuals in specific
historical blocs, and at his vision of subaltern intellectuals. When Gramsci
discusses intellectuals, his concern is with the organisation of culture, more
specifically, the way culture is organised by a particular social class for its
political gains. When functional intellectuals perform this role of cultural
organisation, to Gramsci, they may simply be acting as 'clerks' of the class in
question. In some instances, they may not even be conscious of the fact that they
are performing this role. Consequently, in order for the proletarian class to
achieve a position of dominance Gramsci argues, that they must create their own
counter intellectuals; who would organise and direct their own political life and
that of other social classes. For this purpose, Gramsci does not consider
intellectuals on an individual or occupational bases, but as a collective social
group, the "elite of intellectuals" whose activity unlike the bourgeois intellectuals
of 'eloquence' have to combine an exterior moving of feelings with 'active
participation'.

Gramsci's reformulation of the formation process and function of
intellectuals in society has been very well received both in Western Europe and
other parts of the world. Nevertheless, there have been some criticisms of his
treatment. The most constructive has come from Erik Ohlin Wright (1979a; 1979b).
As we mentioned above, Ohlin Wright questions the derivation of 'structures'
from 'functions', even though he generally accepts Gramsci's definition and
functional analysis of intellectuals. Ohlin Wright, like Poulantzas, maintains that
the boundary question, especially the location of the middle classes, has to be
answered. However, unlike Poulantzas, Wright approaches it in a less dichotomous
and mechanistic fashion. Rather than seek clear cut divisions between the classes
through common factors, Wright proposes a return to the diffuse approach
initially suggested by Marx. At the same time, he employs Poulantzas' economic and ideological levels.

Ohlin Wright maintains that intellectuals occupy contradictory locations within class relations. All class relations are contradictory, but some are doubly contradictory at the levels of economics, politics and ideology. One such relation, emphasised by Wright, is that between intellectuals and other classes: "Intellectuals occupy a contradictory location between the working class and the petit-bourgeois at the economic level, but between the working class and the bourgeoisie at the ideological level" (emphasis original) (Ohlin Wright 1979b:203). Wright considered intellectuals semi-autonomous employees because they have 'real control over their labour process. But, like workers, they have to sell their labour power to capital', and do not control the labour process as a whole. They simultaneously share positions with the working class and the petit-bourgeois; but 'have interests identical to neither. They are torn apart between the classes'.

Ohlin Wright then goes on to discuss the ideological level, arguing that it is here rather than the social relations of production that intellectuals enter into an actively contradictory relationship with the working classes and the bourgeoisie. To him, intellectuals play a key role in the reproduction of capitalist social relations and culture because they occupy positions "involved in the elaboration and dissemination of bourgeois ideology". At the same time, because they have control of the labour process, they are capable of either subverting or reproducing bourgeois ideology. Within the universities in such societies, for example, the institutionalisation of academic freedom offers considerable space for the dissemination of counter-bourgeois ideology.
Ideologically, therefore, the relative autonomy of academics from bourgeois control provides the possibility of rupture resulting into a production of both supportive and counter ideological positions. In other words, the contradictory location of intellectuals means they have a doubly contradictory character in the class struggle.

Undoubtedly, Ohlin Wright's perspective is a very carefully worked out one. Nevertheless, it has major limitations. One such limitation is the tendency to concentrate almost exclusively on class positions without any serious analysis of class consciousness. The impression he gives as a result is that class positions can in essence, be worked out by examining occupations. While occupations obviously must be considered a central factor in class mediation, it will be erroneous to focus on them exclusively in analysing the relationship between social classes. One must also look at other equally powerful mediating variables as family, education, group and community affiliations, which together with occupations, combine to influence one's class outlook. It is this totality, together with the degree of social class distinctions that should explain the rupture that occurs among intellectuals in class societies.

The second major problem with Wright's analysis is that critical intellectuals are not considered in relation to Gramsci's notion of the party as 'collective intellectual', created by the working class to give it leadership and provide the necessary ideological cement in the struggle. While Gramsci stresses function at the expense of structures, Wright follows Poulantzas into doing the exact opposite - overstressing of structures at the expense of consciousness. Intellectuals we would suggest have contradictory locations within social class relations, even within a collective party carefully organising the working class
and cementing its ideology. Perhaps this is why many working class parties tend to ossify and consolidate into a bureaucracy removed from working class aspirations, culture and politics. However, their structural location needs to be traced historically, through the formation of the historical block as a whole. In addition, it has to be linked to the overall question of consciousness. Class struggles, as they relate to intellectual participation, requires us to take on board the formation of 'organic intellectuals' within a historical conjuncture; the incorporation of what Gramsci calls 'traditional intellectuals'; the contradictory location of intellectuals within social class relations; and the nature of their conscious class action within the social formation. Generally, this will serve as the guiding light of our discussion of intellectuals in post-colonial societies, with special attention on the problems of political participation by intellectuals in militarised societies of the Third World.

**Militarism and Intellectual Production in the Third World**

The development of capitalism, and the subsequent rise of militarism in the Third World does not correspond to the models discussed by Gramsci, Poulantzas and Wright. While the development of intellectuals functional to the capitalist states of the industrialised countries grew side by side with the economic growth of capitalism, the Third World case of externally introduced capitalism presents different problems of analysis. Anyone interested in understanding the nature of post-colonial intellectual struggles, in fact all class forces in the societies in question, must pay attention to the powerful influence of these external forces. Secondly, there is the key difference that many industrialised countries have well established working class movements, some of which have well defined links with parties that are committed to winning power for the working classes.
Examples include the Communist Parties in Italy and France. In many Third World countries, such well articulated working class movements are either legislated out of existence; centrally controlled by the ruling class in power; poorly organised, weak, and torn apart by internal feuds, or simply not in existence in any serious form. The third major difference is the audience available to intellectuals in advanced industrialised countries, which by comparison to those of the Third World, is far larger and much easier to reach. In the Third World, the majority of the population are illiterate peasants living in the rural areas. The easiest access to them is through the medium of the radio which is controlled by a state that is firmly in the hands of ruling classes.

Despite these differences, however, there are certain similarities and overlaps which make the application of the analysis developed by Gramsci and Wright both necessary and useful. The first is the historical transformation of these societies and the centrality of certain categories of intellectuals, those formed alongside emerging social groups, and those co-opted from declining social formations. In the case of Africa, colonial capitalism created a special corps of intellectuals to serve it during and after the period of colonial rule. In addition, those functioning in pre-capitalist societies were assimilated to serve the colonial administration.

The second relevant similarity is the capacity of the two systems to generate contradictions out of which will emerge counter forces. In the intellectual sphere, there are profound schisms resulting into different forms of class alliance. If, as we will try to demonstrate in later chapters, the interests of the intellectuals created by imperialist forces are externally directed, and therefore in conflict with those of aspiring subaltern classes and their intellectual allies,
then it is not out of place to discuss Third World intellectuals in the context of hegemony; though, in this case, linking it squarely to the dependent nature of Third World countries. It implies the presence of intellectuals whose output and activities will be supportive of exploitation and dependence; and others who will try to support subaltern social classes through subversion of the exploitative and dependent order.

At this point it is important to bear in mind that, just as it is essential in the industrialised capitalist countries for the state to organise hegemony for the dominant social groups through intellectuals, it is equally necessary in the Third World that "this hegemonic position must be created" (Saul, 1974:351). As Saul correctly noted: "Peripheral capitalism like advanced capitalism, requires territorial unity and legitimacy". It is the responsibility of the post-colonial state, using colonialism's organic intellectuals to provide that necessary unity and legitimacy, in addition to "promoting economic development" (Saul, 1974:351). Ironically, 'modernisation' literature, which nurtured many Third World intellectuals, unequivocally takes such a position. To quote Shils again:

The legitimacy of authority is ... (among other factors) a function of what its subjects believe about it; beliefs about authority are far from resting entirely on first hand experience, and much of what is believed beyond first hand experience is the product of traditions and teachings which are the gradually accumulated and attenuated product of the activities of intellectuals (Shils, 1972:5).

As an indispensable instrument in the legitimation of the powers of the dominant classes, Shils underlines that intellectuals 'form an effective collaboration
between the authorities which govern society for order and continuity in public life and for the integration of the wider reaches of the laity into society (Shils, 1972:21).

Except for the universalistic treatment, Shils' notion of the intellectuals role in securing legitimacy is not far removed from Gramsci's casting of intellectuals as central to the establishment of hegemony by all social classes.

In the post-colonial states of many Third World countries, the collaborative role of those intellectuals necessary for the persistence of neo-colonial relations has been well established. Discussing the role of the bureaucracy in Africa, Meillassoux describes them as "a body generated by the colonisers to carry out the tasks which could not (or would not) be undertaken by the Europeans themselves" (Meillassoux, 1970:105). Meillassoux specifically notes that, Education and state control through government employment are an essential feature of their role; and accordingly the colonial state handed over a well developed bureaucratic apparatus to the local bureaucratic group (Meillassoux, 1970). To Shivji, this powerful elite of intellectuals, defined loosely as teachers, higher civil servants, prosperous traders and farmers, professionals, and higher military and police officers, who collaborated with the masses during independence struggles have taken advantage of the weakness of the masses to constitute themselves into a separate class (Shivji, 1975). This remark is particularly directed at that fraction of intellectuals in the post-colonial states who contribute towards creating the necessary conditions for the 'free' operation of international capital and the exploitation of the subaltern classes.  

1. To a certain extent, the arguments of Shivji, Saul and Meillassoux are similar to Hamza Alavi's. See Alavi, (1974).
With the establishment of a military state, and the consequent realignment of forces within the dominant social classes, intellectuals are subjected to the doctrine of National security. The crisis, out of which military rule emerges, necessitates a more concerted effort at the ideological level despite the tremendous use of force. The use of military theoreticians to provide the required social analysis and recommend solutions is a common phenomenon in the Third World. The case of Latin America has been convincingly analysed by Mattelart, using official publications from Brazilian, Chilean and other Latin Generals. The most prominent of these is General Golbery do Couto e Silva's work *Geopolitica do Brasil*, which, Mattelart notes, now serves as the reference work for all internal security policies in Latin America. Its central theme is that of 'total war, total response' in the interest of National Security which we discussed in the first chapter.

In Africa too, such military ideologists are not lacking. A good example is Nigeria's General Olusegun Obasanjo's 1977 lecture at the Senior Staff College, at Jaji, which the armed forces tried to formalise as a kind of ideology: *Jaji Declaration*. Its central emphasis was on discipline. It sought to isolate the roots of indiscipline in Nigerian society, and the possibility of creating what the General called: "A DISCIPLINED, FAIR, JUST AND HUMANE AFRICAN SOCIETY."

He maintains that: "The major cause of most of the ills of the society which I have so far referred to is the sandy and shaky substratum on which we have tried

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to build the society through the colonial days"; and in addition, concludes that:

"The structures of Nigerian society need to be transformed" (Obasanjo, 1977:6).

Nowhere does he indicate how he will transform that 'sandy and shaky substratum'. Rather he devotes the whole six pages to stressing the necessity for discipline, and occasionally, referring to the other central concepts of 'fairness', 'justice' and 'humaneness'. These last three, also dwell extensively on the question of 'crime and punishment'. In fact, the theme of 'punishment' seems to be central to the General's treatise, even though he tries to clothe it by alluding to social, economic and political concerns.

A few examples are needed to show how similar Obasanjo's 'political theory' is to that of General Golbery do Couto e Silva's. To the General, there is one homogenous socio-political and economic entity, and all its members are equally guilty of the disease of Indiscipline. No class distinctions are made; and as a result, there are no exceptions. At this stage, it is necessary to look at what, to Obasanjo constitutes indiscipline. After dividing indiscipline into economic, political and social, Obasanjo specifies that the key features are: tax evasion, hoarding, conspicuous consumption by the 'fortunate' to the envy of the 'less fortunate'; refusal to vote in elections, corruption, indolence, destruction of public utilities without due consideration to other citizens and so on. The common denominator of this aggregated 'indiscipline' is given as lack of "restraint and self-control in individuals for the good and happiness of all" (Obasanjo, 1977:2).

If these constitute indiscipline in Nigeria, it is precisely the privileged social groups of which Obasanjo serves as a perfect representative that need to be disciplined. In 'disciplining' them however, 'disciplinary action' must transcend:
appeals for self-restraint and prudence in consumption habits; that they should not block main roads to exhibit their wealth; that they should not hoard and profiteer; respect the law; contribute to Government projects; be their brother's keepers. Certainly, as General Obasanjo himself noted, it requires firstly, the transformation of Nigeria's social structure.

Although Obasanjo sees such transformation as essential, he does not believe it is necessary. Its necessity would require him to abandon the upholding of the interests of that privileged social group that needs 'discipline'.

Perhaps he is conscious of this dilemma. This is why he proceeds with his militarist option by first rejecting all changes that are informed by ideology: "... I am convinced beyond all doubt that the decision to choose between capitalism or socialism and energy expended in making this choice becomes diversionary and wasted" (P.1). He continues: "I ... see these ideologies as proclaimed by many people as mythical instruments of political oppression, the practical application of which in many cases open the door of political and economic morass. The slow, unsteady and rather tortuous so-called ideological path of transforming a nation into the theoretical and utopian society is clearly not the most expedient application to our expectations and aspirations" (Obasanjo, 1977:2). This is clearly an obfuscation. For Obasanjo has no "choice" between 'socialism and capitalism' to make. At the time he delivered the speech, he was presiding over one of the thoroughly neo-colonial capitalist state in Africa. He administered this state firmly for capitalism. His regime was responsible for repressing popular aspirations. Concrete examples include: his decision to reorganise the Trade Unions so as to effectively emasculate them for the benefit of national and international capital; his violent
killing of more than ten university students who attempted to oppose his administration's elitist educational policies; his expropriation of fertile peasant lands for the benefit of multinational corporations; repression of such political dissenters as Fela Kuti; and above all, the totality of his whole economic policies - including the use of huge oil revenue - for the benefit of the class he represented including its internal allies. Therefore, it is fair to argue that it is not the theoretical edge of ideology which serve as, to use his own words, "mythical instruments of political oppression" in addition to "opening the door for political and economic morass". This is precisely what his administration of the Nigerian state amounted to.

Bala Usman correctly countered the General by arguing that the symptoms of the disease should not be mistaken for its causes. Rather than focus on the symptomatic manifestations of 'Real Indiscipline' in Nigerian society, he called for an incisive analysis of "The Actual Roots of Indiscipline in Nigerian Society". This he identified as Nigeria's satellite capitalism which encouraged "private accumulation of wealth through profit, rent, interest and wages;" with the following major characteristics:

(a) individual private appropriation of what is produced by social production;

(b) absolute interests and rights possessed by individuals over all forms of material reality;

(c) standardisation and uniformity and in satellite systems this is manifested in a dependence and slavishness towards the centres of the system;
(d) sharpening divisions between mental and material labour, and
between conception and reality, as manifested in the romanticist,
and traditionalist symbolism which dominate its political ideology
especially in the satellite units. ... (Usman, 1979b:6).

Since Obasanjo evaded these concrete realities of Nigerian capitalism in
his discussion, even though he completely upheld them in practice, it is a bit
disingenuous for him to have taken as the theme of his lecture: "A DISCIPLINED,
FAIR, JUST AND HUMANE AFRICAN SOCIETY." What he ended up doing was to
re-emphasise some of the central tenets of militarism; and similar to "The End
of Ideology" theorists, to legitimise exploitation and repression. The latter, we
have already illustrated. It remains for us to show how Obasanjo's 'Jaji
Declaration' as the elites promoted it, was in reality an ideological offensive on
behalf of authoritarianism.

We begin by looking at the alternatives to 'ideology' which he offers in
the paper. Firstly, he lays a lot of emphasis on what he terms 'our traditional
society'. The type of society he has in mind is first and foremost "our
traditional society which respects age, experience and authority". Only after
asking rhetorically, what is wrong with this kind of society does he add: "Or the
norm that everybody is his brother's keeper ..." (P.1). But another perceptive
writer in commenting on the killing of protesting students by the Obasanjo
administration had this to say:

African public opinion generally sees student unrest as evidence of the
disruptive intrusions of alien culture into our traditional ways. The
truth is that traditional African society is adult-centred. In these times
of cultural vindication, we romanticise the age-group system that traditionally awarded rights and privileges according to age. In fact, however, the system penalised the young. ... Parental authority is still basically autocratic and child beating, on which society does not really frown, is widespread. Society in fact follows on the stern discipline within the family, demanding of the young that same unquestioning submission to authority imposed at home. This is one of the reasons why African governments are severe with student demonstrations (Enahoro, 1978:9).

What need be added is that contemporary elites like Obasanjo select those aspects of 'traditional African society' which fit their authoritarian ideologies to promote, while evading those which demanded responsibilities from the elders. While maintaining unjust social and economic systems, they turn round to demand compliance to this fundamental injustice from subordinate social groups.

Secondly, if "a just society metes out punishment to all offenders without favour or special dispensation" did the General himself not state that there were people in Nigeria who evade tax, hoard, and profiteer at the expense of others? Under what conditions did they operate? Besides, does a 'Just and Humane society' rely on "heavy punishments" to rehabilitate those that resort to deviant acts? For example, he states: "Within a humane society, punishments are commensurate with offences. And no hard-hearted and deliberate criminal goes without heavy punishment". (P.5). Under the military, there was widespread robbery with violence; many of these armed robbers were publicly executed. Would it be proper to say it was humane to sign the papers for their execution? Is the punishment commensurate to the crime? One would expect a humane society to seek changes
in the structure of the society that determine criminal tendencies, especially the exploitation and repression of the helpless. Rather, Obasanjo's administration concentrated on punishing those that dissented against repression and exploitation; while protecting those that exploited them.

In essence, it was a negation of his principle of a just and humane society; and entrenchment of an authoritarian ideology involving total regimentation of social life.

This regimentation covers educational and media institutions. Traditional or liberal definitions of 'freedoms' are reconstituted, if not totally abolished. A lot of emphasis is placed on 'relevance' and 'practical or problem solving' teaching in case of educational institutions, and 'responsibility' to the 'nation' in case of the media. Such demands become a subject of either negotiation or confrontation between the military and these centres of cultural production. By the same token, semi-autonomous intellectuals such as musicians, creative writers, and artistic performers, together with 'traditional intellectuals' such as chiefs and clergy (Moslem, Christians, Animists remain very influential in many post-colonial societies); members of the judiciary, especially the customary courts which have continued to be one source of direct oppression of the subaltern classes, are subjected to intensive military pedagogy. They are expected to 'assist' in the construction of what Obasanjo calls "a humane, just and disciplined society". Nevertheless, emphasis is on the 'discipline' rather than justice and humanity.

It is within this context that we have to examine the location and operation of such intellectuals as journalists, radical students, 'deviant' artists;
the occasional revolts by the peasantry; and the struggles of the working classes.

In the subsequent chapters, we will endeavour to develop a more systematically and empirically grounded account of the struggles of these classes and their intellectual allies against garrison-state capitalism.
3. CRISIS IN THE PRODUCTION OF INTELLECTUALS: UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN THIRD WORLD POLITICS

In the winter of 1968, the prestigious journal of the American Academy of Arts and Science - Daedalus, devoted its tenth anniversary edition to a discussion of a social and political issue hitherto marginal to mainstream western social science: "students and politics". This rediscovery of the centrality of higher education to politics could be attributed to the changes which had taken place in the Western world, in which the apolitical lifestyle associated with university students since the end of World War II had given way to a partisan and activist student generation.

Divergent explanations were given to the rising wave of student disturbances. Among the favoured interpretations then, were the psychological make-up of the students involved in the protests. Distinctions were made between "activists" and "non-activists", with the former, usually described as "emotionally ill and paranoic" (Bettelheim, cited in Klineberg et al, 1979:4). Their disturbed minds were relayed back to their liberal, middle class origins. It was maintained that they acquired their parents liberal or leftist orientations (Keniston, 1968 and Flacks, 1970). It was also argued, that because these students were relatively affluent, as most of the Western societies of the time, they tended to stay in school longer than required; they became frustrated and aggressive, revolting against their permanent state of dependence.

Others held the Social Sciences and Humanities responsible for what they described as the 'narcissistic' behaviour of the students. Glazer stated firmly that they were "fields that have a restricted and ambiguous place in contemporary society", (Glazer, 1971:317). According to Glazer, the crisis of the student
activist was not only a psychological crisis, but a crisis of these intellectual areas for "both student and Faculty" (Glazer, 1971). On the other hand, other major 'post-industrial' theorists like Daniel Bell saw the protests as "the last gap of a romanticism soured by rancour and impotence" (cited in Rootes, 1980:489). Like Glazer, Brzezinsky added, that modern society required purely technical skills making liberal arts students "historically obsolete". To him, the students were simply sounding "the death rattle of the historical irrelevants" (Brzezinsky, 1968:25).

Yet still, a number of other scholars noted that the recurrent conflict of generations was the main reason for unrests on University campuses. This position was most eloquently argued by Lewis Feuer, who attributed student protest to the basic psychological disposition of the young towards violence, normally activated by inadequate socialisation (Feuer, 1968a and 1968b). The key institutions of society, Feuer noted, were decaying and therefore incapable of adequately socialising the young. Consequently, the adolescent aggression against their parents, is directed away from their parents towards the wider society.

This general failure to come to terms with the political dimension of student activism by America's leading intellectual elites is not particularly surprising. Most of them had rather close connections with centres of power, and identified with the established ideals of the existing social order. It could be argued, therefore, that their inability to isolate the deep origins of the protests hinges on their differential historical responsibilities as pointed out about all intellectuals in Chapter 2. Although not all students were opposed to the cherished liberal conception and operations of political consensus, a considerable
number of them identified themselves with groups, issues and ideals which were outside of the dominant ideological discourse.

If liberal intellectuals reacted with shock and puzzlement to the student movements in their own societies, in the Third World, they responded slightly differently, albeit still within the overall frame of consensus politics. Students, since the nationalist days were recognised as a 'significant force' in the political development of 'new nations'. Writing on "The Intellectuals in the Political Development of the New States" (1972), Edward Shils noted the special role of students by stressing that: 'No consideration of the intellectual class in underdeveloped countries can disregard the university students. In advanced countries students are not regarded as ex-officio intellectuals; in under-developed countries they are.' (Shils, 1972:393). Following modernisation theory, a distinction was made between 'traditional' and 'modern' by Shils and others, and students together with other 'modernising intellectuals' were credited with the required know-how that would industrialise post-colonial societies and move them towards Western models. Periodic attitude tests were carried out on Third World students (Klineberg et al 1967, 1979; Barkan, 1975 and O'Connell and Beckett, 1978).* Despite the transient nature of political attitudes, it was believed such periodic attitude testing will help in predicting the political behaviour of future Third World leaders.

However, when student 'activists' started opposing some of these modernising governments and their policies, they were regarded as 'subversives',

*Majority of studies on Third World students are attitude testing.
possibly sponsored by outside forces. By then, the production of intellectuals within many Third World countries (with possible exception of Latin America where there were established traditions of "the political university") was geared towards manpower provision in a very narrow sense of the word. By the time most of Africa had gained formal independence - around the mid 1960s - this generation of 'manpower oriented intellectuals' had crystallised into an effective ruling class occupying strategic positions of power in state and financial organisations, and were actively collaborating with foreign capital for the exploitation of the lower classes within these societies. Those involved in the task of producing new intellectuals for the reproduction of the neo-colonial order were themselves embedded in the received knowledge of 'modernisation' transmitted by leading liberal scholars.

To understand the character of militant student protests in the Third World, we need to go beyond the accepted interpretations of students as an elite for social change in the societies in question. Firstly, it is essential to look at the historical development of education, particularly higher education; the changing conceptualisation of higher education and society in the context of class formation. Secondly, students as incipient intellectuals, conscious of class contradictions, have to be located in that class structure, with their functions as social groups clearly delineated. Such an undertaking should provide us the necessary viewpoint from which to analyse the disarticulation between these incipient intellectuals and 'incorporated' intellectuals of consolidated social classes.

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Education and Society in the Third World: The Role of the Universities

No society can exist without its own system of education. They help to produce individuals and groups who, in pursuit of their own interests and those
of the society, actively reproduce the society as a whole. Thus, every dominant social group tries to create individuals and group of intellectuals whose interests are in harmony with the existing mode of production, and who sustain the existing system of rule.

Although this process continues at all levels of the educational system, the universities, because of their ability to direct the orientation of the other levels of education, are considered central to the production of a hegemonic culture. At the same time, because of the institutionalised notion of tolerance of conflicting ideas, the university allows for dissent from the established conception of the world. Consequently, universities operate as centres for the manufacture of dissent in society.

The history of the modern university in the Third World has been closely associated with the colonial expansion of metropolitan societies - especially of Western European countries. Since colonialism sought to create its own functional intellectuals, the university was conceived of essentially in manpower terms. As Ashby commented on the requirements of African universities which he helped to fashion: "Africa’s prime need from its universities is for the broadly educated citizen capable of manning the civil service and the schools, and for general practitioners in the professions, rather than for research-minded specialists..." (Ashby, 1964:61). Thus, the traditional liberal view of the university as "a seat of learning, a treasure - house of knowledge and a creative centre for research" was relegated to secondary status.

Independence did not alter this conception significantly. Universities were charged with the responsibility of helping the process of 'nation building' by
legitimising established authority. This was not to be done in an overt political way, as universities were expressly defined as outside the orbit of partisan politics, centres of objective knowledge, where intellectuals could learn to 'provide practical solutions to the nation’s problems'.

Against this background, we wish to underline the fact that, though we will soon be treating the universities as important centres of dissent, this does not in anyway weaken the argument that they are also the most important apparatus for the construction of hegemonic culture. The majority of the students and staff in Third World universities, like universities in other societies, carry out intellectual activities entirely consonant with the established "national interests". In the first place, the universities are funded by the state, a state controlled by the dominant social groups of the society, who in general terms insist that the goals of the university should coincide with those of the 'nation as they define them', do not deviate. Moreover, many mature academicians see themselves, in a very proper sense indeed, as duty bound to pursue these national goals which to them are synonymous to the common goals of the society.

Apart from direct state funding and prescription of what should be the accepted directions of intellectual inquiry, the universities also are constrained by the market relationships of the capitalist economy established in many Third World countries through imperialism. University graduates have to proceed into a world controlled by the market, both in the public sphere and the private sphere, without any serious alternatives. Here, the question of destination became significant in the orientation of the universities in the Third World. The second factor, seemingly less significant but of profound consequences was, and in many Third World countries remains, the question of external funding for the
universities. These funds came from either governments or Foundations, or even
directly from corporate commercial organisations in the centres of international
capital, and were specifically tied to departments or projects which would
promote the interests of the donating concerns. For example, by the mid 1960s,
foreign aid donors emphasised population as one of the major factors inhibiting
development in the Third World. Apart from castrating many Third World adults,
pressures were put on developing countries to establish Population Studies Units
in virtually all their universities to study the most effective ways of reducing
growth rates of Third World populations. These studies of growth were never
related to available resources, methods and ways of organising production; and,
above all, the underlying political constraints.

Despite such constraints on the production of intellectuals with alternative
conceptions of Third World problems, the structural contradictions in the society
which continued to produce mass poverty, ignorance and disease, at the same
time produced within the universities intellectuals whose mental outlook and
actions ran counter to those of the dominant social and economic groups and their
intellectual supporters. To some extent, the universities accommodated them
because of the prevailing concept of 'freedom', whereby ideas become
commodities in circulation.

Within the "dissenting academy", the most important single group in
many Third World countries are students, who despite their relative social
advantage over other groups serve as an important opposition force to the
hegemony of the elites. In the remaining section, we will try to explain the class
nature of student activism with particular emphasis on the way in which class
alliances with intellectuals have been redefined in the Third World; and
specifically, the political significance of student militancy to subaltern classes in
states where considerable constraints have been placed on the working class and
peasants. As we move along, specific illustrations of student activism will be
provided to strengthen our basic contention that students as incipient intellectuals
in societies where the overall political consciousness is still at a very low ebb
are a major factor in fracturing the hegemony of the dominant social groups, and
by so doing, contributing to the overall political awareness of the subaltern
classes.

Students and Class Relationships in the Third World

In themselves, students do not constitute a class but are an ambiguous
category in the class structure. One observer has characterised them as "a very
diverse set of young people, both in terms of social origin and ideological outlook,
and are preparing to be organisers, technicians, and educators in the world of
production and the complex apparatus of the state" (Spours, 1977:341). In other
words, though not a class, they are "connected, socially, politically and
ideologically to either the capitalist or working class" (Spours, 1977:341).
Political responses of students all over the world would suggest that there is no
clear cut way of determining their class allegiance. On the one hand they have
participated in the overthrow of dictatorships, as when Russian students helped to
overthrow the Czar and establish a Communist state. On the other hand, German
students contributed or actively participated in the rise of Nazi Germany, one of
the worst dictatorships in contemporary history. More recently, there have been
the agitations of students in communist states of Eastern Europe leading to the
1956 Hungarian uprisings, Czechoslovakia and Poland in 1968, and again, the
involvement of Polish intellectuals in the rise of Solidarity. These incidents
could be contrasted to the turbulent student protests of the 1960s in the Western world where the target was not an undemocratic socialist state, but rather an undemocratic capitalism with its racism, imperialist wars (Vietnam and Algeria) and patriarchal university bureaucracies; or even the more virulent Zengakuren of Japan who after the second World War directly attacked the security treaty signed with the United States.

In Japan, the Western world, and the communist societies of Eastern Europe, students have defied accepted or established ways of political expression. Each case, it would seem, suggests its own specific explanation based on the circumstances of the society in question. Thus, whatever similarities we may arrive at, we have to bear in mind that any attempt to distill a general theory of student activism requires important qualifications. Besides, such a theory need not fit every situation. Essentially, a general theory of student activism is aimed at constructing heuristic tools that will aid analysis of situations in their own specificity.

In terms of class location, students along with intellectuals in general occupy contradictory class locations as suggested by Ohlin Wright (Chapter 2). Economically, Third World intellectuals despite their considerable advantages over workers, peasants, and the vast army of unemployed people, are exploited by capital in alliance with local associates. This capital is international in character, with its centres of operation in the metropolitan countries. Although many members of this intellectual strata benefit tremendously from this close association through kick-backs, inflated wages out of proportion with the rest of the country and have lifestyles similar to those of the middle classes in the metropolitan countries, they are unreservedly subjected to the international
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dynamics of capital. This relationship need not present itself in a direct and open connection, though in the case of employees of multinationals operating in the Third World, it does. For public employees (including university intellectuals of the mature category), the connection is sustained indirectly through their contribution to the maintenance of a state system that is strongly organised in the interest of international capital.

Unlike Ohlin Wright however, who seems to provide neat divisions between economic and political relationships, we propose that the political and ideological relationship between intellectuals and other classes be linked together organically. Bearing this in mind, it is our submission that in the case of the Third World, intellectuals politically, have control over their labour, and as a result are in a position to determine their political and ideological relationships. Consequently, it is here, rather than on the economic level, that we wish to stress the dislocation within intellectuals as a social category in the Third World, out of which arises both support for the existing order and opposition to it.

It is our contention that, to a large extent, intellectuals formed during the colonial and immediate post-colonial days mostly belong to the former category, while those that came after them contain substantial ingredients of an oppositional culture. Again, we stress that this distinction is not based on a simple criteria of 'generational conflict', but on the way which, historically, class is mediated by generations. As we pointed out earlier, even among the current student generation, there is a substantial proportion that is supportive of the dominant order.

In discussing students as intellectuals, their location and function in the class structure, we have to pay attention to three aspects of their social
trajectory; firstly to their class origins; secondly to their class situation, and finally, to their social class destinations. Trajectories cannot be defined as "lifetime structure of positions through which an individual passes in the course of a work career." (my emphasis) (Ohlin Wright, 1979a:93). We would rather view trajectories as career through life in which not only one's occupation mediates experience and action but also the family, community and educational exposure. This is why we differ from Ohlin Wright's characterisation of students in their current position as "pre-class", and his imputation that their political participation is determined by their positions to which they will move on completion of their studies.

For conceptual clarity, we present the following explanations of our key terms.

(a) The Class Origins of the students relate to their family and community backgrounds. While in the advanced capitalist states, students have middle class backgrounds, in the Third World, though a substantial number of students have similar backgrounds, the majority have petty bourgeois, working class and peasant origins. While we do not wish to derive student political behaviour purely from their class origins, we are of the view that they share the suppressed aspirations of the exploited classes.

(b) Current class situation relates to their incipient intellectual status. They are apprenticed to learn, but do so by selectively accepting and rejecting ideas and ideals put forward by their teachers. Unlike the latter however, they are not constrained by job security, or immediate responsibilities to family and clients. Hence their disposition to free
political expression. Where social and political circumstances present themselves for serious criticism, students become ready candidates.

(c) Class Destinations, in our own understanding, is Wright's definition of trajectories: "a lifetime structure of positions through which an individual passes in the course of a work career". Important though this factor is, if blown out of proportion, it will definitely present a distorted picture of students' class configuration. Though they are being prepared "to be organisers, technicians, and educators in the world of (capitalist) production and the complex apparatus of the state", it would be wrong to dismiss them as Woddis does by labelling them as "privileged petit bourgeois intellectuals" or an elite in formation (Woddis, 1972).

The necessary approach is to construct our arguments using all three determinants: class origins, current class situation and class destinations; all of which are underlined by the structure of society. The notion of determination here does not involve a causal relationship of one to one correspondence, rather it implies the need to examine these factors among other possible factors in the formation of students' ideological perspectives and resultant political action.

Taking class origin for example, it is important to note that militant student demands for the amelioration of the conditions of the poor, have come mainly from students from poor backgrounds. Although some may be prompted by self-interest, calculating that favourable state policies on education will assist them in completing their studies in order to assist their poor relations.
Many commentators have stressed the altruistic element in the student movements of the world. Feuer, though hostile and in no way sympathetic to the student movement, stated: "Of all social movements, those composed of students have been characterised by the highest degree of selflessness, generosity, compassion and readiness for self-sacrifice" (Feuer, 1968:3).

But of the three main factors, it is their current class situation, as students, distanced from the material world of production but politically and ideologically involved through (i) the relationship of the university as a whole to the larger society; and (ii) their own direct contact with the world, together with (iii) the multiple explanations of the world, including their own world, on offer in the universities, which is the most significant factor in their choice of class allies.

Finally, class destinations enter as only a marginal determinant in the equation, since in many Third World countries, the fever of "manpower crisis" is yet to receive an effective antidote. Neither can one talk of 'proletarian intellectuals' or 'educated working class', except for a few countries like India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Future class location does not seriously worry students in the Third World. Rather, they tend to exaggerate the 'good life' which they will embrace on graduation.

At the end of the day, one could postulate that it is the social structure of the society as a whole which defines the nature of students' political protests. In the Third World countries where capitalism has polarised people into antagonistic social classes, followed by a low level of consciousness and disorganisation among the peasants, workers, the petite bourgeois, and the
lumpenproletariat, over which the elites in collaboration with international capital exercise hegemony, students protests serve as a barometer of the relative strength of social and political forces. In many instances, their persistent protests have led to a change of regime; and in one known case in Africa (Ethiopia), to the transformation of society from feudalism to what Halliday and Molyneux see as possibilities of "a transition to socialism". A significant proportion of students in the contemporary Third World tend to see themselves as the organic intellectuals of the subaltern classes. In the following section, we will present in summary form, some specific cases of student struggles to illustrate their "selflessness, generosity, compassion and readiness for self-sacrifice". Such an exercise requires us to root the struggles of the students in the social structure of the societies concerned. Our five selected countries, come from the three continents of the Third World and are broadly representative of the class configuration within Third World countries and the dependent nature of their solutions.

**Students and Society in Militarist Brazil**

University students came of age as an organised political movement just before the military overthrew Goulart's administration in 1964. Given their peculiar location in the class structure of Brazil, and perhaps because of their middle class connections, they were initially spared the widespread persecutions directed against workers, members of the Brazilian left parties and other forces hostile to the exploiting classes and their external interests. As a result, they

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remained stronger than other organised political movements, and therefore in a better position to fight the new regime. A few years after the coup d'etat, the relative neglect of students as a serious political opposition gave way to their persecution because of regular confrontations.

The first Congress of the National Students Union (UNE) took place in July 1965 and issued declarations critical of the military and its allies. Immediately, the military responded by trying to militarise the student movement. The "Suplicy Law" - named after the Minister for Education - was passed banning the UNE, and bringing all Unions of individual campuses under the control of the Universities. These student bodies, to be known as 'Political Directorates', were to have their funds controlled by the university authorities. These authorities attempted to immobilise the students by limiting them to the organisation of leisure and cultural functions.

Immediately the 'Suplicy Law' was passed, students organised themselves to oppose its implementation. The first practical confrontation was the boycotting of the officially sponsored elections for the new "Political Directorates" which took place in August 1965. When the military responded by making it mandatory for each student to cast his vote, the students decided to cast blank votes, making the whole exercise ineffective. The following year, the students organised mass demonstrations in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. Apart from a large turnout from the students, a large number of working and unemployed people in these urban centres joined in the demonstrations. These urban uprisings, though brutally suppressed by the military authorities, continued to occur sporadically throughout 1966, 1967 and 1968. In 1968, they culminated in the killing of a Rio University student, Edson Luis, during a march through the town.
Initially, the issue of protest centred around the changes introduced in the running of the universities and the Students Union in particular. The students were strongly against the transformation of the universities into branches of the commercial and industrial sectors - the 'privatisation of the universities'.

Under the scheme, designed in close association with American agencies, the universities were to concentrate on the production of technocrats - engineers, chemists, agronomists and business managers instead of 'wasting resources' on the humanities and Social Sciences which had no direct relevance to industry and commerce. Such a scheme required a rigid and hierarchical command structure in the administration of the universities which would facilitate the transmission of directives from State House to the lowest unit of the University. The students not only opposed this move, but also demanded "parity control of the universities. The university institutions at all levels were to be controlled by parity committees of teachers and students with representation for administrative functionaries and of all campus workers". (Quartim, 1971:129).

These initial demands were soon extended to include general demands for an end to military rule and for changes in the social organisation of Brazil. A brief analysis of the social classes of Brazil at the time, still in existence today, is essential for understanding the protests.

Analysts of Brazilian society and economy characterise the relationship within the exploiting classes as a "Pact of Dependence", whereby the economy is

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1. This was in fact a large scale design covering many Third World countries. On Nigeria, see Bala Usman, 'American Plans for Nigerian Universities' in (Usman, 1979a:73-77).
effectively controlled by industrialists, big Coffee growers, the Latifundish oligarchy, and international monopoly capital, while political power is to a large extent left in the hands of the military and bureaucracy (Quartim, 1971; Stepan, 1971). These four power blocks of the exploiting class exercise political, economic and cultural hegemony over the lower classes of the population. But in the last instance, it is international monopoly capital that takes the lion's share of the surplus produced, thereby leaving the country in a state of dependency. Since 1964, the role of the military in this relationship has been to transform Brazil's capitalism into state monopoly capitalism in conditions of dependence. The intellectuals necessary for such a project are technocrats.

The 'pact of dependence' confronts the Brazilian workers and peasants in very serious and degrading forms. While wages were reduced for the workers, Brazil, instructed by the IMF and the World Bank, was busy curbing inflation and liberalising the economy for foreign economic organisations. Agitations by the workers against the worsening living conditions were brutally suppressed by the military who deployed two battalions against protesting workers in the urban areas in 1968.

In the countryside, with about 1% of the population holding over 60% of the land, semi-feudal practices like land rent and child slavery still thrive. Like the working class, the peasants have no serious political organisation to defend their interests. As a result, they have been reduced to subsistence living conditions and recurrent famine. In some regions of Brazil where agriculture is most advanced, they are driven out of their lands by landlords who want to transform them from the arable farming of coffee to pasture, which requires less peasant labour. Evicted peasants migrate into the urban centres with no saleable
skills, no definite jobs in mind and no definite future. Many are proletarianised, living in the shanty towns and working as volantes (farm hands contracted from the shanty towns and transported to work on the commercial farms on a daily basis).

Others join the vast reserve army of labour - the lumpenproletariat.

Abolition of these class divisions and their contradictions was the key demand of Brazilian university students. Despite their weak political connections with these lower classes, they received tremendous support from them, particularly from the urban working and unemployed people. To this limited extent, we can state that in the case of Brazil, university students' world view had close relationship to the aspirations of the subaltern classes, and is therefore in opposition to that of the exploiting classes. Hence their repression by the military authorities. In fact political repression of opposition movement was at its zenith during the high tide of Brazil's so-called 'miracle'. It was essential for rekindling the confidence of foreign financial and industrial capitalists, and for securing foreign aid and loans.

**Indonesia**

Since the overthrow of Sukarno by the army in 1965, Indonesia according to observers is characterised by repeated violations of human rights. One analyst went as far as comparing it to Nazi Germany. This is probably an overstatement but Indonesia certainly ranks as one of the most brutal dictatorships in the Third World. Apart from killing almost a million citizens designated by the Suharto regime as communists, arbitrary arrests, harassment and prison

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torture, the people of this oil-rich group of islands - formerly a Dutch colony till independence in 1945 - have suffered sustained economic repression fostered by the domination of the economy by American based multinational corporations with occasional assistance from the Japanese.

The realities of the Indonesian situation have been graphically summarised in a submission by the General Chairman of the Student Council of the Bandung Institute of Technology (BIT) made in a court trial in 1979. Independent researches have since confirmed this characterisation, and we therefore present a substantial portion of it.

(1) The lopsided character of our society's social existence, typified by one group that gets richer by the day without having to perform any meaningful work, alongside millions of unemployed people who are forced to sell their dignity as human beings simply to avoid starvation. Social justice is far from a reality.

(2) Our present development, with its stress on economics, is of no benefit for the masses of the people, and is incapable of overcoming the danger of famine, even though rice imports total 2,400,000 tons a year. Unemployment grows every year even though it is claimed that factories are being built with foreign capital - which in the last analysis diverts the riches of our nation into foreign hands. The living standards of our society are still far from our hopes, even though our forests have been logged bare and pawned off, while the contents of our motherland's belly steadily flow away from her oil womb. The patent result of 'development' today is: an increasingly ostentatious, not to say greedy, lifestyle on
the part of a small band of thieves of the state treasury, traffickers in the nation's wealth, generally referred to by the terms corruption, abuse of power, and so forth. The development of our economy has also sacrificed the economic potential of native citizens while fattening the bellies of foreign and non-native businessmen.

(3) Our political life is frozen and our political dynamic is flaccid, as a result of a concentration of power which has made political bodies and state institutions incapable of functioning properly. Most people are afraid to express their opinions freely because they are terrified of being 'dealt with' by the all powerful KOPKAMTIB which can even put citizens on forced labour, bypassing any form of legal procedure, in addition to the massive infiltration of intel agents who feel entitled to take any steps they like to spy on citizens of our beloved Republic.

(4) Our cultural life today is characterised by aj mumpung (greedy opportunism) the craving to get rich quickly without doing any work, and the revival of feudalistic attitudes in a certain sector of society. These attitudes in their everyday manifestations cause incalculable harm to the state. Because 'they' want to get rich quick, 'so long as they happen still to be in power', they rip off state funds, they sell their offices and positions to build houses, buy up company shares etc. Some of these practices, particularly when done by small and medium-sized fish, have been exposed by Opstib - but what about the big fish? In the eyes of the public the case of Pertamina is still murky as is Palapa and various other giant projects, whereas it is precisely in these quarters that we find 'termites' gnawing calmly away at the state.
(5) It is precisely many of our state leaders who give the worst example to their people, who must perform the tasks of development - development which is no longer an optional matter, but one of life and death. It is among these leaders that we find the 'pioneers' of luxury sports such as gold, shopping abroad, and costly 'tours' of the provinces. To make way for the construction of golf-courses much land and many houses belonging to the people have been bulldozed and the inhabitants abandoned.


Although the students concentrated heavily on the misdeeds of the powerful, they did point out the misery of the poor and the dependent nature of Indonesian society. At the end, they reasserted their position (as contained in the White Book which had sparked off the demonstration and eventual trial of the students) as follows:

The students of BIT feel themselves called upon to lay them bare, not merely because they have the political right to do so, but because it is also their duty as academics with an honest-critical-scientific attitude to formulate them and also to publicise widely to the public all threats to the survival of our nation. It was thus in their Declaration and White Book that the students fulfilled their rights and their obligations. These texts represent simply the expression of the disappointment, the alarm, the aspirations, the restlessness, the desires, the hopes, and the demands for justice of the Students of the BIT, as part of the Indonesian Younger Generation (in Southwood and Flanagan, 1983:253).
This expression of the people's aspiration by the 'Indonesian Younger Generation' - the students, has been divided by Southwood and Flanagan into three overlapping phases: The 1966 Generation up to 1974; 1974-1977; and finally 1977 to the present day. The first group was essentially an anti-communist and Islamic inspired movement. It worked closely with the top hierarchy of the military in the overthrow of President Sukarno. Its leadership included ex-military officers, who had turned to students in order to organise and orchestrate anti-Sukarno sentiments among the Indonesian student population. With the overthrow of Sukarno, they turned their attention to the intra-bourgeois class struggles which were then rife within the ruling military-bureaucratic oligarchy. Their key point of attack was the corruption of the military-bureaucrats - particularly those in control of Pertamina (the State Oil Corporation) and similar important parastatals. In 1970, the "Accusing Students' Action Movement" attacked the huge increases in fuel prices, 100% for cooling fuel and 49% for petrol. Another protest letter was issued in 1973 as the "Petition of 24 October" criticising the government for "systematic violation of the law, corruption, suppression of popular opinion, rising prices, abuse of authority and unemployment". (Southwood and Flanagan, 1983:183). No action was taken against the students by the establishment. According to Southwood and Flanagan they were still considered as "critical collaborators", posing no serious threat.

By 1974, the situation was becoming a bit more intense. The Malari riots marked the beginning of a new style student opposition. The riots were a shift from 'critical collaboration' to critical opposition. At Jakarta and Bandung, university students demonstrated against the impending visit of the Japanese Premier Tanaka. On the day of his arrival, they burnt effigies of him, and when
he arrived in person he was greeted by almost ten thousand demonstrators. Anti-Japanese sentiments have remained strong in Indonesia since the era before Dutch colonialism because of Japanese conquest of the islands. This time, the students, joined by urban youth, demanded the dismissal of all pro-Japanese elements within Suharto's administration. Although a number of the students were arrested and detained, and a Commission of Inquiry set up to look into the disturbances, nothing serious emerged from it because certain currents in the army headed by General Sumitro were alleged to be behind the pro-American demonstration directed against Japanese inroads into the Indonesian economy. Serious suppression of the students was to wait till a later date when the student movement emerged with clearly defined social and political goals counter to the requirements of the military-bureaucracy. This came in 1978 with the publication of Buku Putih (the White Book) discussed above.

The White Book attacked the President for deviating from Constitutional provisions for elections and demanded that he withdraw from the elections. This was an unprecedented direct attack on the President. In January 1979, the students mounted a massive demonstration in the major urban centres. Their demands no longer centred on the legislative issue mentioned above, but on the fundamental question of Indonesian class structure. Immediately, the military moved in on them. 600 students were arrested and tortured in various prisons, and 34 brought to trial. All student Councils were abolished, and seven newspapers which were sympathetic to the demands of the students were closed down till they made apologies to the military establishment and a pledge not to 'err' in future. Once confrontation and suppression of Indonesian students had been inaugurated, court submissions were turned into clear cut political sermons
invoking the frustrations and aspirations of the Indonesian working people. The Bandung Institute of Technology (BIT) court submission reproduced above, represents one such sermon.

**Militarism in Mali, Social Contradictions and Student Struggles**

"It won’t be kids who force us out: at least, they will have gone before us". General Moussa Traore, Mali’s Military Dictator, May 1980.

Traore’s kids have not yet forced him and members of his junta out, but they have presented him with a crisis of state control, bringing into focus the social contradictions of Malian society.

Like Indonesia, Mali is a post-colonial society, of French extraction. Like Indonesia, the first post-colonial leadership in Mali leaned towards Socialism and away from the preferred socio-economic prescription of the former colonial power. Three years after the Indonesian army overthrew Sukarno, Mali’s Modibo Keita was overthrown by military officers led by Colonel (now General) Moussa Traore. Since then, Traore has presided over one of the most formidable dictatorships in post-colonial Africa.

As soon as they came to power, the army went into alliance with merchant capital and other privileged social groups to take control of the economy. At the heart of it all was French capital which despite Keita’s rhetorical socialism had never been disengaged from Malian economy since independence.¹ The

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¹ Meillassoux (1970), "A class analysis of the Bureaucratic Process in Mali" is a penetrating analysis of the articulation between the various classes during Keita’s ‘Socialist’ experiment.
military and domestic merchants in collaboration with French capital have continued to operate in a manner that is completely opposed to the Malian people as a whole.

Predominantly a peasant society, Mali, geographically afflicted by desert conditions, has become a land of perpetual famine. The climax of this famine came in the wake of the Sahel Drought of 1974, thereby forcing the plight of the peasantry into international limelight. Traore, like the other West African states affected by the Drought, had a convenient explanation of 'Natural Disaster'. But hunger or famine are not just "natural disasters" but essentially social disasters underpinned by society's system of production and administration of distribution of the food produced. In Mali, this social reality has not been recognised, and it is not the exploiting class who are rich enough to pay for imported food, that suffer the ravages of famine but the poor peasantry of the countryside.

In the 1974 drought, over 100,000 people died of famine in Mali, and the country's cattle rearing population had their cattle destroyed. While big capital proletarianised the peasantry in Brazil, this "natural disaster" did the job in Mali but to the benefit of big river basin farmers rather than unknown 'natural forces'. Displaced farmers who had migrated to the urban centres became a pool of cheap labour for these rich farmers. Supported by the state and multinational corporations, they raised the quantity of cash crop production during this period. Export of cash crops increased by about 30% between 1975 to 1979 as cotton, ground-nuts, tobacco, sugar-cane and tea took most of the cultivable land instead of grain, which is the staple food of the Malian people. The search for the foreign exchange necessary for the importation of luxury items for the ruling class was
deemed more important than the starvation of the Malian working people.

Furthermore, since the industrial sector was not performing any better than before the drought, the state continued to tax the peasantry in order to alleviate the catastrophic condition of the treasury.

This kind of superexploitation has generated occasional responses from the working people of Mali. From time to time, the peasants have resisted the payment of taxes, and had to be coerced into doing so. In fact, some had their property taken away from them in lieu of payment of taxes. In case of the workers, their response has been in form of trade union consciousness; demanding increase in their wages, sometimes as much as 50%. Of late, Traore has decreed that strikes are illegal, and that wage claims should be conducted under 'a peaceful atmosphere'. As in other Third World countries with military rule, there are no organised movements within the subaltern classes. What exist are scattered grievances expressed in form of riots or strikes. Such reactions are easily triggered off when students dissatisfied with institutional or educational policies incorporate these fundamental contradictions.

In the case of Mali, such a catalyst came with mass student demonstrations of 1977 following the announcement of the Palme-Belloncle Educational Reforms; and again in 1978, 1979 and 1980. The Palme-Belloncle reforms made it more difficult to enter higher educational institutions. The primary school syllabus was restructured to suit the demands of cash crop production and the other needs of the military establishment. The increased difficulty of getting into higher educational institutions, meant that children entered the labour market at a very early age and were subject to exploitation
of the worst kind. To many, the inaccessibility of higher education meant unemployment, creating a vast increase in the pool of unemployed people in Mali. The demonstrations that followed were carried out essentially by Primary and Higher school students.

In 1978, the government organised a seminar on the future of education in Mali aimed at either selling its education programme or presenting an image of consultation with the people as to the direction education should take. The Union National des étudiants et élèves du Mali (UNEEM), declared at the seminar that education is a right and not a privilege, and that every Malian child should be allowed to make use of that right. This marked the beginning of harsh criticisms of the regime by students and confrontations with members of the armed forces in the streets. In October 1979 these urban protests resulted in the death of ten students and two soldiers, and mass arrests of students, and workers and unemployed people that joined the students took place. Other students were dragged into the army. UNEEM was banned the following year so as to disorganise the students who by now had become the vanguard of Malian opposition to the exploiting class.

In March of 1980 another demonstration took place, despite a military crackdown, and 18 students were killed. Later the leader of the Student Movement, Abdul-kareem Camara (his mother was held hostage by the army till he gave himself up) was murdered in prison, bringing the death toll of the students to 19. The tough measures taken by Mali's military rulers reflects the massive support the students received from the urban population and the potential significance of their politics to the rural population. An observer of the Malian situation has noted that:
"The student uprising had, in fact, revealed the weakness and isolation of the military regime. The students had put together a number of anti-imperialist demands which had a strong appeal especially in the towns: denunciation of France's domination over the economy, support for the liberation struggles in Southern Africa and solidarity with the school children in the Central African Empire. (General Bokassa of the then Central African Empire, now Republic, had bayoneted a number of school children for refusing to line the streets for him). And apart from their demands, the students had shown up the repressive and neo-colonial policies of the regime." (Francois, 1982:24).

Students and the Fall of the Ethiopian Feudal Kingdom

The Ethiopian case is rooted in the feudal mode of production which was established in the 19th century, most notably in the South. In the North, feudal ownership of land, tied around 'gult', i.e. land given to either the Church or local chiefs and notables, simply interspaced the predominantly communal land system. This feudal mode of production in the South and some parts of the North, together with the 'rist' or communal land rights in the North was to give way to large scale commercial farming after the second World War. The transition from the pre-capitalist to a capitalist mode of production in Ethiopia as elsewhere, had very serious consequences, especially the high level proletarianisation of the peasantry. This was to serve as a focal point of attack on the imperial state in the 1960s and early 70s by the revolutionary forces; in the forefront of which were the university students within and outside the country.

Before returning to the contribution of the Ethiopian student movement, it is essential to point out the contradictions arising from land ownership and
agricultural commercialisation. By the 1960s, the attention of the monarch had
turned to the 'modernisation' of agriculture. Massive assistance was sought
from foreign governments and organisations, the principal participant being the
United States. As he put it in his development plans, "the rapid development of
commercial agriculture is the only way to get the relatively quick increase needed
in agricultural exports. It will clearly be essential to induce more foreign
private investment and to impart the needed managerial and technical skills"
cited in Cliffe, 1974:35). In the settled high lands, landlords evicted pastoral
farmers and established largescale plantations, while in the highland areas, the
landlords used their control over the land to establish commercial farms, but
turned the peasants into farm hands, doing those jobs which could not be carried
out through mechanisation.

Some of these commercial farms were established with the active co-
operation of the state by way of agricultural credit schemes which only the big
farmers had the necessary collateral or bureaucratic connections to acquire.
Commercial agriculture was profit oriented and therefore had no need for food
crops which the peasants could not afford to purchase in the first place.
Consequently, these farms concentrated in the area of cash crops. A small group
of people - the nobility, senior bureaucrats, and foreign investors - benefitted
from this policy, while majority of the population, especially the peasantry,
starved of hunger year after year.

The hunger situation came to a climax with the 1974 Drought whose
impact on Mali we have already discussed. Ethiopia with 65% of its land
agriculturally rich, and by World Bank estimates capable of supporting a
population of 310 million people has not been able to support almost 90% of its
31 million people. In 1974, the Drought took toll of about 200,000. Further, the scandalous handling of the relief materials that came in from outside bodies, including attempts to cover up the famine widespread in the countryside, diversion of food relief to markets outside Ethiopia, seriously crippled Haile Selassie's administration.

Opposition to this feudal anchored regime had divergent elements. Firstly, there was the long standing struggles of the non-Amhara nationalities for 'self determination' from what they considered Amhara domination. The most notable of these were the Eritreans and the Western Somalis. The former wanted an independent state of their own while the latter sought to be merged with their kith and kin in the Somali Democratic Republic. Despite massive military assistance to the Emperor from the United States, and the concerted attempts to suppress these liberation movements, they considerably weakened the control of the Imperial state.

Apart from these break-away movements, there were fundamental challenges to the aristocracy from the middle class of educated Ethiopians. The most significant of this group were the young military officers, university intellectuals and the students, and to some extent the working class, though this had remained rather small because of the country's low level of industrialisation. The constellation of these class forces brought about the downfall of the Ethiopian ruling aristocracy in 1974.

In course of these struggles, students played an active and key role. Starting with the 1960 student protests in support of an attempted military overthrow of Haile Selassie, students both in the Universities and Secondary schools continued to agitate for land reform, arguing that 'land should belong to those
who tilled the land'. In 1965, 1969, 1971, massive urban protests were
organised in Addis Ababa by the students to highlight the grievances of the rural
peasants, the deteriorating conditions of the urban worker, and the astronomical
increase in the number of migrants from the rural areas to the urban centres,
people with no skills, no jobs, no houses and no hopes of improvement in their
condition of life. During the 1969 and 1971 uprisings, a number of students were
murdered by the police, further radicalising the students.

In 1973, students went out into the countryside to organise opposition to
the imperial regime. Their message to the peasants was the same: "Meretle
Arashu" - "Land to the Tiller". By now, the students had emerged with two
political movements: All Ethiopia Socialist Movement (ME'ISON) consisting
essentially of the older generation of Ethiopian students many of which were
pursuing post-graduate work abroad. The second was Ethiopia's People's
Revolutionary Party made up mainly of younger generation of Ethiopian students,
the majority of them studying in educational institutions within the country. The
latter movement gradually evolved into a guerrilla organisation disrupting
essential activities and facilities of the administration. As Halliday notes, in the
absence of any identifiable working class and peasant opposition to the
administration, the oppositional activities of these two student groups, within
and outside the country, 'played a decisive role in the development of Ethiopian
politics' (Halliday, 1981:79). Together with young army officers, the Ethiopian
Teachers' Association and other Trade Union organisations, they successfully
overthrew the monarch and dismantled his feudal kingdom.
Sudanese students - both in secondary school and higher institutions - have long played an important role in politics, the most significant action being their nine-day agitation in 1964 which helped to bring down the country's first military government. In the early days of the Independence struggles, the students served as mediators between the feuding major parties helping to bring about agreement on important national issues.

After independence, Sudanese politics returned to the struggles between two dominant conservative parties. Both parties were based in the three North-Central regions of the country where the land was fertile on the Nile river basin. Agricultural production was high here with an equally high consumption level of foreign goods. It was also from this region that most of the bureaucracy and student population was drawn. Both parties were locked in fierce opposition to each other and could not establish any effective machinery of government. The small Sudanese Communist Party, with its roots in the working class, trade unions and tenants unions had no appreciable impact on national politics. The government was not in any position to deal effectively with the general condition of poverty in the Sudan, coupled with the fact that it had no effective policy on the Southern rebellions even though much of the country's GNP was directed to the military aimed at suppressing the Southern freedom fighters.

In 1958, the army which admittedly, was divided along similar lines as the dominant parties, in collaboration with elements within the political parties took over power to restore order in the Sudan. The autocratic rule of the military immediately drove the Southern Sudan into open civil war with the North, as they saw military rule as heralding the reconciliation of hitherto Northern differences.
for the ruthless suppression of the South. After six unsuccessful years of grappling with Sudanese problems, the armed forces were finally forced to call on the public for suggestions. The two conservative parties, whose rule had been ineffective, precipitating military rule in the first place, returned to the old themes of orderly government and representative democracy.

To the surprise of the military rulers, the students met and declared that the root of the country's problems was military rule itself. They demanded a fundamental change in the country's social structure; either a move over to modern socialist state, or turning the Sudan into an Islamic society devoid of the sins of contemporary society. The challenge to military authority had now gone too far and the authorities set out to repress the students. The students responded with greater demonstrations, and in course of the confrontation with the police and the army, one student was shot dead. Immediately, the students escalated their protests into the urban areas, and for nine days the streets were filled with chants of "Down with military rule". Eventually, the leaders of the principal political parties were forced to meet and issue a declaration supporting the students demand that the Sudan should be returned to civilian control. The Trade Union Movement finally joined the students by declaring a general strike throughout the country till power was returned to popular government consisting of all the segments of the population.

The relentless urban protests spearheaded by students from both secondary schools and higher educational establishments; the general strike carried out by the Workers' Movement; the call from the dominant political parties for an end to military rule; in addition to strong disaffection in the armed forces forced the hands of the military strongmen to hand over power to a
transitory government on which students had special representation. Though the Sudan was later on to return to military rule of the most repressive kind, following the installation of Nimeiri, students as a strata of society had demonstrated their potential in politics during the 1964 uprising.

**Conclusions**

All these cases have many similarities despite their differences. All are authoritarian states where a ruling class in collaboration with international monopoly capital run the state. They are all societies with sharp class differences. In all of them, the subaltern classes are not organised as a class even though they share a common fate of superexploitation. In all the cases, the students could be regarded as relatively privileged vis-a-vis the other members of the lower classes, if we are to consider only their class destinies. However, their concern with the contradictions in the society in general and the suffering of the lower classes in particular seem to be the motivating factor in their political responses. In terms of class alliances therefore, one could say that Third World students generally tend to exhibit the kind of consciousness that one could associate with 'organic intellectuals' of the subaltern classes even though, organisationally they may have very little contact with the lower classes.
4. THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF NIGERIAN MILITARY RULE

The political struggles between the military and intellectuals can be better understood by examining the class nature of Nigerian society through history. Here, we attempt an outline rather than an exhaustive treatment, since that would be beyond the requirements of this work.¹

Nigeria occupies a land area of 913,072.64 square kilometres off the coast of West Africa, and up to the Southern part of the Sahara desert. Criss-crossed by several rivers (the most important being the Niger and the Benue), it has very rich farmland. It is estimated that the land is capable of feeding almost the whole of the West African region. With a population of approximately 80 million (1973 estimate), it is Africa's most populous country. One in every four African is a Nigerian. This vast population is made up of over two hundred and fifty nationalities. Though differences do exist between them in terms of history and culture, they have important similarities including common forms of social and economic organisation.

Alongside this vast and diverse population is an equally rich and varied material endowment. It ranges from rich farmland through forest resources, to minerals of different kinds including oil which, for the past decade, has remained the country's principal foreign exchange earner. Potentially therefore, the country could be described as 'very rich', capable of satisfying not just the basic needs but also some other requirements of its population.

1. Detailed and excellent analysis can be found in Gavin Williams (1976 and 1980) and Onimode (1983).
During the pre-colonial period, the organisation of material production and the accompanying social relationships took three main forms, corresponding to the communal, slave and Feudal modes of production. In societies with a communal mode of production, the unit of social organisation was the clan; and production was centred around the family. Relations of production were on a co-operative basis. They were guided by an understanding that one was obligated to the social group as a whole, most especially to members of the family. The division of labour was not based on social hierarchy, but rather on gender and age. Any surplus was appropriated by the family or the community as a whole. The little that was given out to other communities went as obligatory gifts in exchange relations aimed at cementing alliances between the communities or families involved in the exchange.

Politically, these societies were Gerontocracies, governed by sets of rules and regulations guided and interpreted by a council of elders. In a few where chiefs emerged, they were democratically elected, and served as chairpersons. They had no hereditary rights.

Basically therefore, these communal societies were egalitarian in both the production and appropriation of social wealth, and in the decision making process. Whatever differences existed were of status rather than class, as with the difference between generations, and those between women and men. Examples of such societies include the Ibos, the Tivs and the Idomas.

As population expanded and clans started competing for land however, inter-clan conflicts began, leading to wars of conquest, the development of organised force and its concentration in a few hands - normally those of military
commanders. At the same time, the conquered peoples, their lands and property, were transformed into commodities and appropriated by the new leaders, making them increasingly independent of the existing forms of social control and relations of production.

Slave labour became increasingly widespread and the resulting surplus was appropriated by the new military commanders and their lieutenants who constituted themselves into a class apart from the rest of the population. It was primarily this labour which was used to construct magnificent roads and palaces for the leaders, and to carry out raids for more slaves, land and luxury goods. The development of a slave mode of production did not completely destroy the preceding communal forms of social production however. Families still had access to their land through communal land holding and were able to produce for themselves rather than for the chiefs or the market. Consequently, while their social and political relationship with their leaders now altered, their economic position remained the same. Nevertheless, there was, at the same time, a gradual transition from this new social formation to a more fully feudal system. Notable examples include Kanem Bornu Empire, the seven Hausa states in the North and subsequently their dependent territories which they secured through conquest, Oyo, and Benin kingdoms.

What we wish to emphasise here is, that these transitions did not mean the total destruction of the preceding modes. Rather, several modes of production co-existed; though at every stage, one remained dominant, setting limits on the internal articulation of the others. This point is important for any explanation of the subsequent subsumption of these pre-capitalist societies into the capitalist system following colonisation.
But first of all, the feudal mode of production. Although analysts still disagree over the presence of a feudal type society in Africa before the time of colonialism, empirical work has shown that between the 10th and the 17th centuries, several feudal states had emerged on the West African coastal region, some occupying what is now Nigeria. By the 13th century, the Kanem Bornu Empire, the Hausa states and to a less complete form, the Oyo Empire, had all evolved into societies dominated by feudal forms of social organisation. While the peasants still controlled their actual labour, they were in the position of serfs and had to give part of their produce to the land owners who were members of the crown council or serving as the representatives of the King/Emir/Chief. Although class struggles were rare, there were occasional incidents of slave revolts in territories ruled by very harsh and unsympathetic vassals or military commanders.

The confusion over the presence or not of a feudal mode of production in Africa stems partly from the fact that this social arrangement existed side by side with other forms of production relations. The significant thing however is that these other social formations were subordinated to the feudal state. The Chief or Emir could direct that significant contributions be made to his court by those who had control over their land and their process of production.

Despite these differences in the production and distribution of surplus, there was one important similarity between the various communities of Nigeria, the ascendency of production for consumption over production for commerce. Commerce was restricted largely to luxury items such as ivory, salt and kola nuts. Although trade between the coastal states and the Northern emirates was widespread, village production was not subjected to the demands of commerce.
Production was primarily directed at meeting immediate needs rather than capital accumulation. Emphasis was on the community's survival and not on profits or the superfluously privileged existence of the aristocratic class. In the next section, we will see how the encounter with colonialism changed all that, in some places working through the already established class divisions, and in others, particularly where there were 'primitive communist' social arrangements as among the Tivs, introducing new lines of class distinctions.

Mercantile Imperialism and the Rise of a Colonial Political Economy

Early European incursions into the West coast of Africa go back as far as the 15th century (Hopkins, 1973 and Rodney, 1970). Around the present coast of Nigeria, the Portuguese made the earliest contacts, trading in ivory, gold, silver and spice, which they purchased from the natives with guns, mirrors, beads and other goods manufactured in Europe. This trade, initiated in 1451 continued till the 16th century when the Portuguese were displaced by British merchants. By this time, the trans-Atlantic slave trade had developed into a booming business, and slave traders were actively operating on the coast of Nigeria. Princes and Kings who had earlier traded in non-human items seized this opportunity to wage wars and acquire sufficient slaves to bring in more luxury items from the Europeans, including firearms for further raids. The trans-Atlantic slave trade marked the turning point in the systematic integration of Nigeria into the capitalist World economy.

As a result, agricultural production for domestic consumption became irregular, if not impossible, as wars for the procurement of slaves raged and most able bodied youth - the primary source of labour for communal production and reproduction - were taken into slavery. This labour on which the annual productivity
of the family was calculated became property or investments for North American plantation owners throughout the 16th, 17th, 18th and the first quarter of the 19th century.

In addition, while the slaves were helping to develop the capitalist economies of North America and Western Europe, manufactured goods from these societies were being exported to the depopulated African societies, thereby discouraging the existing regional trade between the North and South of West Africa. Kings, Chiefs and their aristocratic associates were now developing an appetite for Western-made goods and were prepared to go to considerable lengths to acquire more. They no longer saw themselves as defenders of the weak, but rather, saw the weak as a new source of wealth, facilitating the accumulation of luxury items. Mercantilist imperialism had set in motion both the degradation of labour and the elevation of the profit motive over human welfare.

By the beginning of the 19th century, difficulties on the slave plantations and new demands from the industrial economies of Western Europe brought new pressures to bear on African societies (Williams, 1972). Cotton supply from North America, for example, was not adequate, while slaves continued to revolt against their inhuman conditions. The cost of repressing the slaves continued to increase, and so did the price of cotton produced on these farms. This, together with the moral pressure from the Abolitionists, led to mounting demands for slave labour to be replaced by cheaper wage labour on the plantations, and for the cargo in 'black skins' to be replaced by the export of primary commodities like palm oil, palm kernel and cash crops such as pea-nuts, cotton, soya-beans to be introduced by Mercantile companies.
By 1850, the British Government had begun military adventures aimed at establishing a government that would facilitate adequate production of these raw materials. Despite opposition from local chiefs and their subjects, the British succeeded in establishing a protectorate colony around Lagos in 1861, and by 1920, a colonial empire had been developed covering what is now Nigeria. Military expeditions were carried far inland against both stateless societies and Feudal states. The conquest of these territories and the establishment of a colonial administration was accompanied by the introduction of a new socio-economic formation.

Currency was introduced, and new lines of communication were constructed to tap the raw materials produced in the hinterland. Railway lines were laid from the coastline into the hinterland, and feeder roads were built to carry the produce from the villages to the railway stations. The lines carried both agricultural and mined goods, such as tin and columbite from the Jos plateau.

Initially the railways and roads were constructed by forced labour but later wages were paid. In the case of agricultural production, apart from a few unsuccessful commercial farms introduced in the Southern part of the country, there were no attempts to take over peasant land and introduce large scale commercial farms as in East Africa. Instead, exploitation took place at the level of exchange, backed by the colonial administration who encouraged the peasants to grow cash rather than food crops, which were then bought by the Marketing Boards.¹

¹ On the special place of the Marketing Boards in Nigeria's Capitalist Agriculture, see Helleiner (1966); Onitiri and Olatubonsun (1972); and Kriesel (1968-69).
Table 4.1: Nigeria: Value of Exports of Agricultural Products, 1900-1960 (£000's)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Palm Kernels</th>
<th>Palm-Oil</th>
<th>Cocoa</th>
<th>Ground-nuts</th>
<th>Raw Cotton</th>
<th>Rubber</th>
<th>Beni-seed</th>
<th>Hides &amp; Skins</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>834</td>
<td>681</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>1,090</td>
<td>858</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>2,451</td>
<td>1,742</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>1,693</td>
<td>1,462</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>5,718</td>
<td>4,677</td>
<td>1,238</td>
<td>1,120</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>4,937</td>
<td>4,166</td>
<td>1,484</td>
<td>2,394</td>
<td>797</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>3,679</td>
<td>3,250</td>
<td>1,756</td>
<td>2,196</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>2,245</td>
<td>1,656</td>
<td>1,584</td>
<td>2,093</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>1,099</td>
<td>1,583</td>
<td>1,476</td>
<td>621</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>3,496</td>
<td>1,894</td>
<td>2,150</td>
<td>2,696</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>1,220</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>16,694</td>
<td>12,072</td>
<td>18,984</td>
<td>15,504</td>
<td>2,975</td>
<td>2,835</td>
<td>704</td>
<td>6,381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>19,196</td>
<td>13,151</td>
<td>26,187</td>
<td>26,286</td>
<td>9,380</td>
<td>5,577</td>
<td>883</td>
<td>3,282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>26,062</td>
<td>13,982</td>
<td>36,772</td>
<td>28,198</td>
<td>6,207</td>
<td>14,239</td>
<td>1,851</td>
<td>4,522</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Ground-nuts include ground-nut oil; b these are all hides and skins.


These operated a system that deprived the peasants of the full benefits of the lucrative world prices for their products. Not only did middle men siphon off a large proportion of the prices paid but the taxation system enabled the marketing boards to contribute huge amounts to the colonial administration. By 1954, for example, the Marketing Boards had made cumulative payments to the various Development Boards totalling £24 million.
In addition, the peasants also had to pay a community tax which was used to finance the colonial administration. As a consequence of this system, food production remained either static, or completely declined in certain parts of the country as all attention was now directed towards production for the capitalist markets of Europe, for the cash necessary for taxation and the purchase of European luxury goods. In the mining sector, land for the coal, tin and columbite, gold, petroleum, silver and lead mines was forcefully taken away from the peasants and given over to the expropriating companies and cheap labour was employed to extract and process these minerals. All mines were owned by mercantile companies. They occasionally leased out certain activities to local businessmen, but most of the surplus generated was repatriated back to the metropolitan countries.

Table 4.2: Value of Mineral Exports, 1900-1960 (£ 000s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Tin Ore or Metal</th>
<th>Columbite</th>
<th>Coal</th>
<th>Petroleum</th>
<th>Gold&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; (ozs.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900-04</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905-09</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910-14</td>
<td>1,870</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915-19</td>
<td>6,163</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8,416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920-24</td>
<td>6,371</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4,029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925-29</td>
<td>10,751</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-34</td>
<td>4,762</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>97,358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935-39</td>
<td>9,651</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>139,379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940-44</td>
<td>16,690</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>121,083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945-49</td>
<td>19,955</td>
<td>1,242</td>
<td>787</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8,021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-54</td>
<td>34,908</td>
<td>11,299</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7,444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955-60</td>
<td>34,917</td>
<td>11,393</td>
<td>1,956</td>
<td>8,088</td>
<td>4,738</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Gold export quantity in ozs.

At the apex of the colonial political economy was a complex mixture of groups drawn from various sectors of the British national bourgeoisie. They included: governors, residents, District Officers, military and police officers; Merchants, financiers and Shipping Magnates. Working with them were the Feudal Chiefs/Emirs/Kings and their vassals whom the administration used in the suppressing of the native population. This was most effective in the Northern part of the country where the feudal states had been firmly established before the coming of the British (Yahaya, 1979). In addition to these local aristocrats there were indigenous commercial entrepreneurs, bankers, real estate speculators, transport magnates and so on, made up essentially of slave returnees and commercial families who had established trading relations with European merchants before the onset of British colonial rule. While they worked with foreign commercial interests they remained hostile to them because of the disadvantages they suffered as a result of the discriminatory policies of the colonial administration and financial houses. There were also local professional groups, such as lawyers, doctors, engineers and journalists, and closely associated with them, the bureaucratic salariat. The interests of these groups were objectively opposed to those of the remaining population.

This consisted of peasants, numerically the largest single group, plus workers in the mines, the construction industry, the commercial plantations, and the public services most notably the transport sector. Below them, there was also a growing pool of urban unemployed who were attracted to the urban centres by prospects of industrial wage labour.
By way of concrete class action by these subaltern classes, it was in the labour movement that opposition to oppression was most strongly expressed. Starting with the 1946 strike at Enugu coalmines, the Labour movement, despite intense internal disagreement, continued to press for better conditions and higher wages. These demands prompted a number of Commissions of Inquiry into the working conditions of the Nigerian working people. These included: Tudor Davies 1945, the Harragin Commission, 1946; the Miller Committee, 1947; the Gorsuch Commission of 1955; and the Mbanefo and Morgan Commissions of 1959. The frequency of these commissions however, illustrates the scant attention paid to them by the employers who were supposed to implement their recommendations and the escalating level of labour unrest. In 1946 there were 16 disputes and 10 strikes. By 1949, the figures had risen to 70 and 36 respectively and 46,698 workers were involved, causing a loss of 500,000 working days. The peak was in 1959-60 with 115 disputes and 54 stoppages involving about 23,250 workers and some 70,862 working days. As Onimode rightly points out, "Clearly, the colonialists were poor managers of labour in the light of the huge losses of potential surplus through the losses of working days" (Onimode, 1983).
Table 4.3: Labour Disputes and Strikes, 1897-1960

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Disputes</th>
<th>No. of Strikes</th>
<th>No. of Workers Involved</th>
<th>Loss of labour-days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Longest, over 3 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7,375</td>
<td>Longest - 13 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>46,698</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26,876</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>11,580</td>
<td>63,930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>8,403</td>
<td>13,860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>22,784</td>
<td>48,955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959-60</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>23,250</td>
<td>70,862</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In contrast, the unorganised peasantry offered comparatively little opposition except the resistance to taxation. Tax raids by colonial police and tax officials resulted in the torture of tax defaulters, the forceful seizure of peasant wealth whose value far outstrip the sum of the unpaid tax. Above all, it strengthened the powers of local government officials and local aristocracies.

In the dying days of colonial administration however, circumstances brought about a realignment of class forces. The domestic commercial and bureaucratic bourgeoisie, together with the professionals whose aspirations
to participate in the privileges enjoyed by colonial officers and merchants were frustrated, turned to the working class and the peasantry for support in their efforts to expel the colonialists. Given the degree of oppression suffered by these lower classes, they accepted this indigenous bourgeoisie as allies, and together they fought for independence.¹

Supported by the United States, who emerged as the dominant Western power after the second World War, and who, without colonies of her own, aimed at securing a foothold in the 'new nations' through championing self-determination for the colonies, nationalist movements blossomed over all of the colonised world. In addition, the Pan-African activities of people like Marcus Garvey, W.E.B. Dubois and George Padmore inspired many of the educated returnees from North America and Western Europe to agitate for self-government.

However, the domestic petit bourgeoisie had only a limited ambition to step into the spaces created by the departure of colonial officers and thus set limits to the extent to which Nigerian nationalism could express itself as an apathetic, liberating and anti-oppression movement. Rather than work towards the resolution of the contradictions between pre-colonial feudal relations and colonial capitalism, Nigerian nationalism became a vehicle for winning 'flag independence'. To put it in Onimode's graphic and uncompromising expression:

...colonial class struggle in Nigeria advanced to win political 'flag independence' for the country in 1960. But, in economic terms, the

¹ Coleman's Nigeria: Background to Nationalism (1958) remains the basic work on Nigerian Nationalism.
birth of the new nation was aborted. As petty-bourgeois anti-imperialism had no ideological foundation, it did not extend beyond anti-colonialism. Together with the weak economism of trade union demands, it became inevitable that the petty-bourgeois intellectuals who led the nationalist struggle would end by betraying the national bourgeois democratic revolution, by failing to secure national economic independence and articulating a national development ideology for Nigeria. These twin 'pitfalls of national consciousness' laid the firm foundation for future neo-colonial under-development and instability in post-colonial Nigeria (Onimode, 1983:133).

At the end of the war, the British Labour party was voted into power in Britain, and immediately, embarked on a policy of decolonisation. This was initiated in 1948 with the Foot Commission for the Africanisation of the civil service, a constitutional development which would enable Africans to participate in Legislative and Executive authority. At the same time however, decolonisation was negotiated on terms favourable to British commercial interests which not only remained intact, but actually expanded after independence. They were assisted by internal divisions among the leading nationalist fighters, who started scheming to dominate other fractions or control their own local fiefs when British colonial policy changed direction. As soon as this happened, the Nigerian National Youth Movement, established in 1936 as an umbrella organisation for all the anti-colonial groups in the country, dissipated into ethnic factions which ultimately emerged as political parties.

Such ethnic divisions were exploited by a policy of 'divide and rule', for the benefit of British commercial interests. Three administrative regions were
created on the basis of the three dominant ethnic groups from which the native bourgeoisie were drawn. By 1952, following the Richards Constitution which had recommended these divisions, this intermediary class started participating in both legislative and executive functions. In the bureaucracy, many of them moved to the upper sectors of the service. Similarly, their commercial counterparts were rewarded with policies which enabled them to participate in the commercial activities formerly restricted to colonial firms.

In order to tie this transitional administration to British commercial interests in the face of international competition, especially from the United States, the colonial government initiated a new policy of industrialisation. This took the form of 'import substitution' in the areas of food processing, production of textile goods, and assembling machinery parts imported from Britain. This wave of industrialisation gave the new rulers the opportunity to go into partnership with foreign capital. In addition, their control over state power and financial sources, notably the Marketing Boards, made them secure in political, economic and cultural terms. As an economic philosophy of 'mixed-economy' was adopted and active encouragement given to foreign capital, it was clear that the country had now embarked on a post-colonial course of Multilateral imperialism, whereby the indigenous bourgeoisie worked hand in hand with multinational corporations backed by their home governments. Left to suffer this unequal relationship were the peasants, workers and the unemployed of Nigeria.

After Flag Independence: Contradictions in the Neo-colonial State

Analysts of the post-colonial state have stressed the powerful role of the 'bureaucratic-military' oligarchy, indigenous commercial bourgeoisie, and multinational companies (Meillassoux, 1970; Alavi 1972; Saul 1974 and Onimode
159

1983). Though permeated by internal divisions and rivalries, it is agreed that their common general interests lock them into an uneasy alliance against the working people of these countries. At independence, the political fraction within this alliance takes over direct control of state administration. But given the deep contradictions inherited from the colonial administration, including the dissensions sown by colonial policy before departure, the neo-colonial state is soon crippled by crisis, with the result that the political class is removed from office and subordinated to the military fraction within the alliance. The Nigerian case has been cast in this form.

With the political withdrawal of the British in 1960, the indigenous bourgeoisie stepped in as linkmen between international monopoly capital and the Nigerian working people. Despite the rhetoric of a 'mixed economy' and the continued dominance of agriculture, the neo-colonial economy was and still is predominantly capitalist, with the other pre-colonial modes of production existing side by side within it. International monopoly capital - mainly British, French, American, German, Italian and Japanese - continues to dominate such strategic sectors as oil, mining, manufacturing, finance, construction and commerce, and to engage a significant percentage of the country's wage labour. Recently, they have also started making inroads into the agricultural sector, disengaging the peasant producers from their lands as a result of the country's "Green Revolution" policy.

Neo-colonialism is not a matter of straightforward domination by multinational corporations however. It requires the active collaboration of the indigenous ruling class for it to be effective. The policy of 'modernisation' adopted after independence centres on increasing industrial output. Development
Planning came to emphasise the central role of the private sector, and the state encouraged foreign investors who had the scarce capital and know-how necessary for the new 'Open Door' policy. This emphasis on the private sector favoured the Multinational Corporations who in turn welcomed these initiatives because of the availability of cheap labour and the introduction of tariff barriers to protect 'local products' on the other. The Multinationals moved swiftly to establish subsidiaries behind such protective trade barriers, and to take advantage of 'favourable investment conditions'. Local subsidiaries for example benefited from increases in the duty paid on imports or finished equivalents. The increases ranged from 33% to as high as 200%.

In terms of ownership, the manufacturing sector was dominated by such multinational corporations as UAC, Lonrho and Unilever.

Table 4.4: Key Multinationals and their Subsidiaries/Associates in Nigeria

I. United Africa Company (UAC) Nigeria Ltd.: Subsidiaries and Associated Companies, 1974

| United Africa Company (UAC) Nigeria Ltd. Subsidiaries and Associated Companies, 1974 |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Africa Timber & Plywood (Nig.) Ltd. | Niger Motors Ltd. |
| Finets Ltd. | G. Gottschalk & Co. (West Africa Ltd.) |
| U.A.C. Technical Ltd. | G.B. Ollivant (Nig.) Ltd. |
| Pan Electric Ltd. | Kingsway Stores (Nig.) Ltd. |
| Green Lam Plant Hire (Nig.) Ltd. | A.J. Seward (Nig.) Ltd. |
| West African Cold Storage Co. (Nig.) Ltd. | Bordpark Ltd. |
| Kingsway Chemist (Nig.) Ltd. | Premier Packaging Ltd. |

II. Lonrho Ltd. - Subsidiaries and Associates in Nigeria, 1975-76

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lonrho Ltd. - Subsidiaries and Associates in Nigeria, 1975-76</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Holt Properties (Nig.) Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Properties (Nig.) Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Holt Ltd.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.4 (Cont’d.)

| Holt Engineering Ltd.           | John Holt Investment Co. Ltd.    |
| Haco Ltd.                      | Holts Nigerian Tanneries Ltd.   |
| Haco Plastics Ltd.              | Nigerian Enamelware Co. Ltd.    |
| John Holt Shipping Services Ltd.| Phoenix Motors Ltd.             |
| West African Drug Co. Ltd.      | Pito Industries Ltd.             |
| John Holt Rubber Co. Ltd.       | Kaduna Textile Mills Ltd.        |
| Holts Transport Ltd.            | Star Motors Ltd.                 |
| Niger Traders Ltd.              | David Whitehead & Sons (Nig.) Ltd. |

III. Unilever Ltd. - Subsidiaries and Associates in Nigeria, 1975-76

| African Timber & Plywood (Nig.) Ltd. | Nigeria Motors Ltd. |
| Boodpak Ltd.                        | Nigerian Breweries Ltd. |
| G. Gottschalk & Co. (West Africa) Ltd. | Norspin Ltd. (Textiles) |
| Guinness (Nig.) Ltd.               | G.B. Ollivant (Nig.) Ltd.   |
| Kingsway Stores (Nig.) Ltd.        | Parmol (Nig.) Ltd.          |
| Lever Brothers (Nig.) Ltd.         | U.A.C. (Nig.) Ltd. (Holding Co.) |
| Lipton of Nigeria Ltd.             | U.A.C. Technical Ltd.       |

Sources: Who Owns Whom, A Directory of Parent, Associate and Subsidiary Companies (United Kingdom Edition, 1975-76) for II & III; and Onimode B. 1983:146 for I.

Although the manufacturing sector has grown by approximately 18% per annum since 1960, output as percentage of GDP has remained low and was approximately 5.1% in 1975-1976. Performance has not therefore fulfilled the promises. After two decades of 'import substitution industrialisation', it has been acknowledged that investment has not been transferred to the capital goods production sector to the extent predicted. Consequently, dependence on imported goods has continued unabated with very negative consequences for Nigeria.
Furthermore, many of the 'infant industrial projects' that required protection at the time of their establishment have remained 'infants' and have continued to demand greater government protection such as tax exemptions of various kinds. Since their products have remained inferior and uncompetitive, it is only through such policies that they can survive. Not much transfer of technology has occurred since their initial introduction into the Nigerian economy. Neither are their products directly relevant to the general population. The tendency is to produce consumer goods at prices that only members of the privileged urban bourgeoisie can afford and value. The dividends that accrue from these industries go directly to the multinationals and indigenous bourgeoisie that is in-partnership with them, further crystallising the class divisions.

Finally, there is the basic contradiction in this policy based on what happens to the surplus realised. As Onimode correctly notes:

... domination of import substitution by foreign monopoly capital causes a clash of interests between the import-substituting country and the MNCs. The Nigerian Government is interested in such issues as profit reinvestment, transfer of technology, new industries based on local inputs, satisfaction of basic needs, reduction of import dependence, co-operation with domestic enterprises, industrial exports, employment creation, industrial dispersal, etc. .... the global strategy of MNCs dictate contradictory interest in surplus transfer, greater imports, technological dominance, higher expatriate quota, limited use of domestic resources, quick and high profits, export of primary products rather than industrial manufactures from the client states etc.

(Onimode, 1983:183).
Onimode concludes on a sad note, that in this conflict:

The strength of the government in input possession, size of domestic market and favourable investment climate is then confronted with that of the MNCs in capital size, technological and organisation superiority, market power, investment dispersal and political support of their imperialist home governments. In most cases the client country loses; this is why, inspite of capitalist indigenisation in Nigeria, the MNCs remain comfortably dominant. (Onimode, 1983:183).

Apart from manufacturing, these MNCs also dominate other areas of economic life such as Mining, Banking and Insurance, Construction, and Trading and Business Services. In the Mining Sector, most notably oil which has remained the mainstay of the economy for the past decade, the dominant groups have remained British and American corporations. British Petroleum which had prospected for oil since the 1950s in Nigeria was joined by Gulf and Mobil, then AGIP, Elf, Texaco and Ashland. By 1960, Shell-BP was producing a total of 6,367,187 barrels per annum rising to 89,686,968 in 1965. The same year, Gulf took out 9,666,826. By 1972, just before the 1973 oil crisis which shot production levels up, the seven oil giants operating in Nigeria - Shell-BP, Gulf, Safrap, Mobil, Agip, Texaco - were producing between them a combined total of 665,283,111 barrels per annum. By 1976, production levels had reached 2.7 million barrels per day.

Oil revenues, which now form almost 90% of all government revenues have compounded the contradictions in Nigerian society. Apart from dependence on MNCs who have repatriated huge profits from the oil, oil has mostly benefited
the bureaucrats in control of state power, and the commercial bourgeoisie both
domestic and foreign. Turner (1980), identified the triangular relationship which
exists between the Multinational Corporations, the Military-Bureaucratic
oligarchy and the commercial bourgeoisie, each working to secure a larger share
of what is metaphorically termed the 'national cake'. Other consequences of the
'oil economy' such as galloping imports, inflation, and the rise in corruption are
also easily noticeable. All have had negative consequences for the working class
and the peasantry, rather than the improvement such a windfall should have
brought to the country as a whole. We will return to some of these consequences
later.

Before then however, we wish to conclude our account of Nigeria's
externally oriented economy by outlining the dominance of multinationals in Banking
and Insurance; the distributive sector; and in Building and Construction. In this
last sector, oil revenues stimulated huge construction programmes, especially of
roads. Corporations such as Dumez, Julius Berger and Strabarg of West
Germany; Guffenti, Stirling Astaldi, Borini-Prono and Cappa and Dalberto of
Italy; Tilbury and Wimpey and Taylor Woodrow of Great Britain;
and Solel Boneh of Israel (although Nigeria has no diplomatic relationship with
Israel because of her Zionist policies and connections with South Africa) have
handled contracts totalling over 10 billion.

As in Building and Construction, the major banks and insurance
companies operating in Nigeria are all foreign owned, and are guaranteed security
by going into partnership with the Nigerian government. In the Banking sector,
the key multinational banks include Standard Bank, Barclays, United Bank for
Africa, Bank of America, Savannah Bank, Chase Merchant Bank, Nigerian
Merchant Bank, International Merchant Bank and the Arab Bank. While Insurance is dominated by British-American, Guinea Insurance, Lion of Africa, and West Africa Provincial Insurance Co. Ltd. Apart from serving as a support base for the activities of the MNCs in terms of credit facilities and the transfer of surplus out of the country, these financial houses make huge profits themselves. Moreover, their discriminatory lending policies in favour of international monopoly capital and its local allies serves to further polarise the class structure.

Table 4.5: Cumulative Distribution of Foreign Investment by Activity (in percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Mining &amp; Quarrying</th>
<th>Manufacturing &amp; Processing</th>
<th>Agriculture &amp; Forestry &amp; Fishing</th>
<th>Transport &amp; Communications</th>
<th>Building &amp; Construction Services</th>
<th>Trading &amp; Business Services</th>
<th>Miscellaneous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>18.5</td>
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<td>1.5</td>
<td>5.3</td>
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<td>17.5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>20.0</td>
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<td>24.2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>22.4</td>
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<td>1.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>54.7</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974*</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* This column corresponds to the distributive sector.

a = provisional.

As can be seen from the table above, the multinationals have also been deeply involved in the commercial and distributive business, particularly import and export. Shipping for example has been dominated by Elder-Dempster since colonial days. The Company still controls over 60% of all shipping business between the United Kingdom and West Africa, carrying consumer goods and capital equipment for such giants as Lonrho, U.A.C., Unilever and the various governments. Apart from their involvement in wholesale businesses, these companies are also actively involved in retail business, further restricting the operations of petit commodity traders in the circulation sector of the economy.

The expansion in the manufacturing, mining, building and construction sectors, coupled with the rapid growth in the number of civil service employees has brought about a correspondingly rapid increase in the overall size of the working class. In addition, a vast pool of unemployed, made up principally of unskilled school leavers in search of wage labour, has swollen the population of the cities where most of the country’s non-agricultural economic activities are carried out. Urban centres such as Lagos, Kano, Kaduna, Ibadan, Enugu, Benin, Aba, Onitsha have not only witnessed a rapid population increase but also, an unprecedented rise in crimes ranging from petit pilfering to robbery with violence involving loss of life; in prostitution, in psychiatric cases, in juvenile delinquency and in a host of other social problems.

Over the years, the condition of the Nigerian urban working class and the lumpenproletariat has not improved meaningfully due to government labour policy, the internal disorganisation of the Unions, and an overall economic climate that strengthens capital and weakens labour. We have already discussed the intricate relationship between international monopoly capital and the
government, how the state generally collaborates and supports international capital in its exploitation of Nigerian resources. Three other areas are also worthy of attention if we are to get a better view of the total exploitation process. Firstly, the pattern of income determination which favours capital and the upper echelons of wage earners; secondly, the emasculation of labour unions through legislation; and finally, government interference in the internal organisation and running of the Trade Unions. All three are interconnected and applied with varying degrees of intensity depending on the type of regime. For example, a government which actively encourages capital accumulation by the private sector and is less committed to the social welfare of its citizens will tend to legislate more harshly against labour; interfere more seriously with the running of the unions, and operate a wage system which favours management and discriminates against those directly involved in the process of production.

On this note, the most useful starting point for a discussion of labour's relationship to capital and the state in Nigeria, is invariably the overall question of distributing rewards in society. As we have already argued, at the heart of the system is the appropriation of surplus by monopoly capital and its local collaborators in the commercial and state sectors. Demand for higher wages or salaries and improved working and living conditions by the working classes is primarily a reaction to the effect of this system on labour. This opposition between the classes has manifested itself several times in the form of selective or partial withdrawals of labour power either in one industry or a specialised branch of labour and occasionally in General Strikes, the most notable being those of 1964 and 1981. These labour demands have been met with an incomes policy that does not in any way tackle the fundamental contradictions of the Nigerian economy (Oni, 1974 and 1977).
The General Strike of 1964, which allegedly contributed to the fall of the first post-independence government, prompted the appointment of the Morgan Commission on wages. It recommended that wages be adjusted to cost of living; and suggested periodic reviews to take account of subsequent rises in the cost of living. In 1974, after the failure of the 1969 anti-strike decree, the military appointed another commission: the Udoji Public Service Review Commission.

Both of these Commissions recommended incomes which favoured the top hierarchy of the bureaucracy. Apart from basic wages, this group received such additional benefits as free housing, motor vehicle loans, generous car allowances (despite their access to official vehicles), plus child benefit and entertainment allowances. As a result, the highest paid civil servants received a net income around a hundred times greater than the highest skilled worker.

In addition, many of these senior civil servants also had access to sources of corrupt accumulation, and actively participated in the private sector of the economy. As salaries rose, so did inflation which at the end of the civil war in 1970 stood at approximately 35%. It rose to about 250% when Udoji's recommendations were implemented by 1975. In this lopsided distribution of incomes, it was again the urban working classes that suffered most from the escalating price of basic consumer items. The interplay within and between the classes had serious implications for the political situation between 1960 and 1966, and finally led to military intervention and the civil war of 1967-1970. A brief look at the state of post-colonial agriculture and the condition of the peasantry who formed over 80% of the total population is necessary for an overall image of this period.
Neo-Cononal Agriculture and Indirect Exploitation of the Peasants

Since independence, agriculture has witnessed a sharp decline, and with it the living conditions of the peasantry. Furthermore, the decline in domestic production has meant massive importation of food and sharp rises in the price of food items as Table 4.6 shows. Reasons for this state of affairs are varied, but we will try to give the most pertinent ones.

Table 4.6: Money Supply and Consumer Price Index 1960-77

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Money Supply (£ Million)</th>
<th>Consumer price index (1960-100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All Items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>240.7</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>243.0</td>
<td>106.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>252.4</td>
<td>112.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>268.6</td>
<td>108.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>305.2</td>
<td>110.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>316.9</td>
<td>114.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>344.9</td>
<td>125.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>313.4</td>
<td>120.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>328.1</td>
<td>120.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>426.8</td>
<td>132.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>608.4</td>
<td>150.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>628.9</td>
<td>174.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>700.2</td>
<td>179.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>827.2</td>
<td>189.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>1178.4</td>
<td>214.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>2044.1</td>
<td>287.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>3293.0</td>
<td>348.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>4794.6</td>
<td>423.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Akin Iwayemi, 1979:66.
Firstly, the integration of the peasantry into capitalist agriculture during
the colonial period has continued after independence. The gradual shift to
latifundia style farms requiring high levels of mechanisation for example, has
produced sharp fall in peasant production which had hitherto made Nigeria a
leading exporter of agricultural produce in the world. Absentee landlords,
mainly bureaucrats and local capitalist, buy up huge expanses of land for poultry
and other forms of dairy farming. Using credit facilities introduced by the state,
they employ capital intensive technology which the ordinary farmer cannot afford.
In addition, the various regional governments are now participating in these
profit oriented farms by taking over the most lucrative farmlands from the
peasantry. The various River Basin Development farms are a case in point.
This combined state and private expropriation of peasant farms is increasingly
proletarianising the peasantry. According to estimates, by 1970 about 12% of
those employed in wage labour were in agriculture.

Secondly, the system of Marketing Boards created during the colonial
period continued up to 1975 when they were abolished. As in the colonial period,
these Boards continued to pay the peasants prices that were far below those at
world levels. For example, between 1963 and 1967 the prices paid for cocoa,
palm kernels, ground-nuts and palm oil were respectively 64.3%, 50.2%,
67.8% and 55.5% of world prices. While in 1970-71 they had dropped to 60.3%,
48.0%, 41.2% and 46.8%. In other words, during each buying season, there was
a substantial gain for the buying agents and the Marketing Boards and a monumental
loss to the peasant producer.

Thirdly, the government continued the colonial policy of encouraging
the peasants to grow cash crops which would acquire scarce foreign exchange
instead of food crops. Crops such as cocoa, palm oil, palm kernels and rubber, dominated farming in the coastal areas. While further inland, cotton, ground-nuts, soya beans, beniseed dominated the small peasant holdings of between 1 and 2 acres. Conversely, food crops which were essential for peasant subsistence occupied very little space and given that the land was exhausted due to the new intensive farming methods, output was generally poor. This new commercialised agriculture gradually lead to the breakdown of the old system of primitive communalism as each member of the family tried to improve his own income instead of trying to ensure the survival of the community as a whole.

Finally, the oil boom in the 1970s and the relative neglect of agriculture meant the further decline of peasant production, and a further rise of food imports.

Table 4.7: Rising Trend of Food Imports, 1965-75

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Food Imports (N million)</th>
<th>Milk</th>
<th>Sugar</th>
<th>All Cereals</th>
<th>Wheat</th>
<th>Fish</th>
<th>Salt</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>28.2</td>
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<td>22.4</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>87.9</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
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<td>32.5</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>126.3</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>154.8</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>18.4</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Neglecting the agricultural sector means neglecting over 80% of the population. According to the national accounts survey\(^1\) of 1974, the urban sector with 17% of the population had 36% of the total income. Within this urban sector, 83% of the population were on low incomes; 12% on middle incomes; and 5% on high incomes. The survey suggests therefore, that 5% of the population enjoyed about 25% of the total income in the country. Given that official figures in Nigeria tend to paint a rosier picture than actually obtained on the ground, it could be argued that this minority actually enjoys more than 25% of the national wealth.

Whatever the correct figures are, there is no doubt that about 5% of privileged Nigerians, together with multinational corporations, enormously benefitted from an economic system that discriminated against the urban working class and the rural peasantry. It is against this background that one needs to assess Nigeria's political development from the post-independence civilian administration to military intervention and military rule, and examine the consequences for class antagonisms.

**Consensus Politics in a Neo-colonial State**

By the 1950s, competition and capital accumulation had become firmly established as the prevailing values of Nigeria's political life. What emerged as political associations were simply cartels in which participants calculated how best to maximise their returns. As a result, the internal contradictions of Nigerian society which were concealed during colonial rule re-emerged with

\(^{1}\) See Tony Hawkins review of trends in the Nigerian Economy since 1960, in Financial Times (London), Monday, September 29th, 1980, p.II.
independence, producing a series of military coups and counter-coups.

The relatively low level of class consciousness among the lower classes enabled the rich and powerful to emphasise factors that best served their interests. Regionalism for example, offered a useful weapon in the struggle to consolidate and expand the affluence and influence of the dominant social groups. As Williams explains:

"Politics" was the competition among, and the alliances between, politicians and their clients and associates. Its object was to control the resources of the state, and the rents and profits from foreign and local business activities. It was not limited to competition for electoral office. Academic, bureaucratic and judicial positions, and commercial opportunities were all equally "politicised". Politics was the means of class formation, financing the accumulation of money by the Nigerian bourgeoisie. It was the means of class competition, through which resources and opportunities were distributed (Williams, 1980:74).

Regionalism which the British colonial government had instituted as a 'divide and rule' device was retained after independence, and indigenous politicians began to regard themselves as members of regions. Northern and Western politicians in particular, welcomed the 1946 Richards Constitution that made the country a federation of three regions, and pursued strategies for consolidating their hold on their own individual regions. These began with the formation of tribal based political groupings. In 1948, prominent Yoruba leaders led by Obafemi Awolowo established the Egbe Omo Oduduwa which later became the Action Group Party, to cater for the interests of the Yoruba people. This
political formation was prompted by the fact that, at this time, most of Federal Government revenues were derived from cocoa produced in this region, which the Western regional elite saw as 'local revenue' that should be protected from the reach of other regions. Secondly, the Egbe Omo Oduduwa was a reaction against the growing political challenge from the numerically superior Northern region, and the growing educational challenge from the Eastern region.

Other regions responded with similar tribal formations. In the East, the Ibo State Union was formed, firstly, as a cultural group with direct political connection to the National Council for Nigeria and Cameroons (the NCNC) party, formerly a part of the Nigerian Youth Movement. Similarly, the Northern regional elites founded a 'cultural group', Jamaiya Mutanen Arewa that eventually transformed into the Nigerian People's Congress (NPC).

By 1952 when the nationalists started participating in elected office and higher administrative positions, regionalism had become the fulcrum of competition. Political parties became regional parties jostling for partisan interests. Competition for representation at the central government (both political and bureaucratic) and the citing of amenities - universities, schools, hospitals, roads, industries, etc., became rife; all followed regional lines. Revenue allocation became a highly contentious issue and commission upon commission was set up to work out the most acceptable formula for sharing centrally derived revenues between the regions. At each Commission hearing, every regional government insisted on the formula that most benefitted it, and shifted positions with changes in their economic fortunes. For example, on the key question of whether need or derivation should form the principal basis for sharing Federally derived revenue, the Western region opted for derivation
during the hey-days of cocoa production in the 50s and early 60s, while the other
two regions emphasised need. When oil gradually became the principal source of
revenue, the Eastern region, the site for most of the production, shifted from
need to derivation in order to take the lions' share of the oil revenues. In
response, the Western region turned about and advocated need instead of
derivation.

In addition to providing the basis for staking financial claims, regions
were central to the power struggles at Federal level. Control at the centre
facilitated the fulfilment of electoral promises to local constituencies, rewarding
loyal political lieutenants with sinecure posts and favouring the bureaucratic
members of one's tribal fiefdom. Above all else, it guaranteed capital
accumulation through bureaucratic corruption arising from kick-backs by foreign
companies in pursuit of government contracts and other favours, and control of
numerous parastatals. As a result many politicians later became wealthy
businessmen, in their own right.

However, regionalism itself generated an important contradiction. In
each region, political control became a means through which the elite of the
dominant ethnic groups could exclude minority nationalities from a state in the
political and economic spoils. The leaders of these excluded minorities in turn,
mobilised their supporters and agitated in the hope of getting their own separate
fiefdoms, over which they too could rule and accumulate. In the Western region,
for example, the Mid-West was carved out in 1963 to satisfy minority demands and
to weaken the opposition to the Federal government which was coming from the
region.\(^1\) In the North and East however, similar campaigns, for the Middle-Belt

\(^1\) Dudley (1982) explains in detail why the Mid-West succeeded while other
similar demands failed.
and Cross-River-Ogoja regions respectively, were not successful since the two
dominant parties in alliance at the centre were based in these regions and were
not prepared to risk any weakening of their home bases. In the North, the
blocking of minority aspirations led to the violent revolts in the then Tiv Division
in 1960 and 1964. The Tivs, according to one of their leading intellectual
spokesmen, were resisting 'a colonial structure of social relations'.
(Tseayo, 1976).

At the same time, these intra-ruling class conflicts at both national and
regional levels provided a stimulus to political alliances. Dominant parties in
one region would support minority struggles in another region, providing that in
return they supported them in their own struggle at the centre. The Western based
Action Group party went into alliance with the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC)
in the North encouraging them to resist what the former termed 'Northern
reaction'. In retaliation, the NPC which controlled the central government not
only supported the secession of the Mid-West Region from the West, but
encouraged a splinter movement within the Action Group party. Immediately this
faction emerged as a distinct political party known as the Nigerian National
Democratic Party (NNDP), the NPC went into alliance with it and supported its
bid to take over power from the Action Group at the regional level.

Before then, the NPC had gone into alliance with the Eastern based NCNC
in 1959. The NCNC elites hoped to benefit by sharing power at the centre, and at
the same time use Federal influence to break the hold of the Action Group in the
Western region. However, when the NPC admitted the NNDP into the alliance,
the NCNC pulled out in protest because the NNDP had taken many of NCNC's
Western regional supporters. Besides, oil was now becoming the backbone of the
economy and the leadership of the NCNC saw its position strengthened since the sharing principle of derivation was still in force. The NCNC left the alliance and renegotiated a new alliance with their erstwhile enemies - the Action Group Party and Northern Elements Progressive Party - NEPU. Both rationalised the alliance by purporting to be opposed to the 1962 and 1963 census figures in which each region accused the other of massive rigging. The new NCNC/AG/NEPU alliance known as the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) was sealed in 1964 in preparation for the coming General Elections that year. The NPC and the NNDP responded with the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA).

What is particularly interesting about this maze of alliances, break-ups and reformations, is the easy reconciliation of erstwhile antagonists employing the regional factor for personal calculations, and the conspicuous absence of political ideals. What each party or group of parties offered was virtually the same. All promised in their manifestos to provide amenities such as schools, hospitals, roads, industries, pipe-born water and whatever the local community put down as demands. In the eyes of the public, government became a gigantic philanthropic organisation in which some were more generous than others. In the end, all remained committed to free enterprise with varying degrees of affirmation. They ranged from the more welfarist policies of the Action Group (stressing free education at all levels, free medical services, housing for all, integrated rural development and the partial nationalisation of foreign corporations) to the 'Pragmatist Socialism' championed by the leadership of the NCNC, which defined Socialism as 'the right of each individual to have his own business', and the unmitigated free-for-all capitalism advocated by the NPC.
Devoid of any meaningful political ideals and deeply committed to the most avaricious quest for political and material gains, the parties employed every means available to achieve their objectives. Thus, the 1964 General Elections witnessed one of the most ferocious forms of political thuggery in Nigeria’s short electioneering history. While the Nigerian National Alliance (essentially the NPC) were determined not to lose their Federal control, the United Progressive Grand Alliance was equally determined to capture power at the centre. What started as routine disagreements over election results ended up with serious civil disturbances in the Western region as members of the Action Group Party attacked their 'elected' or 'victorious' NNDP counterparts. Ultimately, a state of emergency was declared in the region by the Federal Government, and the army was called in to restore 'law and order'.

It had become clear that politics was not just a game; it was serious business. As each participant went out to take as large a share as he could, politicians could no longer adhere to the rules of consensus politics handed down by the British. The open competition for economic and political power determined political judgements. Commenting on these intra-class struggles, Williams notes rightly, that: "The definition of appropriate solidarities and the choice of political alliances is made according to calculations of relative advantage and political judgement" (Williams, 1980:70). In the end, the contradictions which shattered the illusion of consensus politics in Nigeria necessitated the direct intervention of the armed forces. In January 1966, Nigeria witnessed her first military coup, and Major General Ironsi was made the Head of State. Initially, the intervention of the military raised hopes among the lower classes, given the ravages of the politicians during their few years in power. In the following section, we will examine the extent to which these aspirations were either well-
placed or misplaced. This requires us to look at military policies and their consequences for the lower classes, for the various fractions of the ruling classes, and for international monopoly capital.

The Class Nature of Nigerian Military Rule

From the first initial coup in 1966 to the time the armed forces transferred power back to the civilians in 1979, two other successful military coups and one attempted coup were carried out, indicating the sharp divisions within the army similar to those among the politicians. In other words, although the military were brought in to stabilise the crisis of neo-colonial capitalism, the very existence of this socio-economic system defied all the remedies they applied. Rather, the contradictions assumed an even more serious dimension in the form of civil war between 1967 and 1970. For immediate explanations, it might be argued that the war itself was precipitated by the crisis of authority within the military establishment. Their limited understanding of Nigeria's problems meant that incorrect remedies were applied, thereby reproducing the rifts in the political class within the military establishment. The first military administration led by General Ironsi were convinced that the crisis of Nigerian political system emanated from regionalism and immediately set about centralising power in line with the core military values of hierarchy and rigid discipline. Decree 34 was promulgated making Nigeria a unitary government. Ironsi also relied heavily on bureaucrats for advice; and like the British colonial administration courted traditional chiefs in the administration of the local governments. Like the British colonial administration, he tried to isolate the erstwhile Nationalists whom he identified as the 'trouble makers', causing instability in the country.
By the time the second coup d'etat was executed in July 1966, killing Ironsi and most of his trustworthy military lieutenants who happened to be from the same Igbo speaking ethnic group as himself, killings and counter-killings of military and political opponents, civil riots, and propaganda campaigns between the various contestants had created such a level of mistrust that political and military leaders in the East and the North believed there was no longer any basis for Nigerian unity. At first, the North was in the forefront in the demand for secession, even after Yakubu Gowon, a military officer of Northern origin was made Head of State. However, after sustained counselling by civil servants, members of the judiciary, and influential diplomatic representatives from the United Kingdom and friendly African countries, they changed their demand from secession to the non-negotiability of Nigerian unity; later to be the clarion call of the Federal government throughout the war. The Eastern regional leadership however, maintained its struggle for secession and was prevented only through military force.

Although there were other factors in the struggle for and against secession in Nigeria, notably the role of ethnicity, in the final analysis, the crucial factors were economic. Apart from the continuing struggle for control of central resources which we mentioned earlier, oil had now emerged as an important element in the calculation. While the Northern and Western regional elites saw it as an opportunity to maximise their economic returns and strengthen their political positions, the Eastern regional bourgeoisie saw that under the existing arrangements for revenue allocation, they would be seriously hampered from participating in the new found wealth, thereby weakening their own political chances. Effectively therefore, oil which by the end of the war would be such a
vital factor in state policy, the consolidation of class divisions, and the country's increasing dependency on the MNCs, had already modified political behaviour by 1966. What emerged as the 'Nigerian civil war' was actually a military expression of ruling class in-fighting.

As expected, the war itself became another source of profiteering on the one hand, and another factor in the systematic deterioration in the conditions of the subaltern classes on the other. The defence budget which by 1966/67 financial year was 5.67% of total Federal expenditure sky-rocketed respectively to 24.14%, 32.3% and 42.6% in the next three years. Such spending was defended by the top hierarchy of the officer corps in the name of 'national peace and security', although most of the vast sums allocated to defence during the war ended up as deposits in the bank accounts of the strategically placed military officers and top bureaucrats responsible for awarding of contracts for arms procurement. Other major beneficiaries were private contractors and foreign firms dealing in armaments. For the lower classes, the war plucked most of the able bodied men, normally the backbone of production in the rural areas. This contributed to the decline in rural production and short fall in the living standards of the rural dwellers. An immediate result of the decline in rural production was a corresponding rise in food prices in the urban areas; and this, coupled with the freeze on wages demands, created severe difficulties for the working class.

Some analysts of the military period still seek to generously credit the military by declaring that "... since January 1966, when the Nigerian Army first came to power ... far too much has changed for the perspective to be that of transition. There has also been transformation and the period needs to be
assessed from that point of view..." (Panter-Brick, 1978:1). They do not seem
to consider these essential points. By relying on the stated objectives of the
military, basically legal and institutional questions, and quantitative growth
figures for GDP and GNP, tend to clearly overstate the achievements of military
rule. Indeed, one can argue that rather than the military with oil transforming
Nigeria, it is the Nigerian working people who, together with oil, have
transformed the military-bureaucratic oligarchy and their associates into a
well formed class of exploiters. In return, this parasitic class subjected the
lower classes to sustained oppression and the ravages of the multinational
corporations. If anything, oil in combination with the military transformed
Nigeria into a 'rentier state'. Like the other developing countries that rely on
mineral exports, such states receive substantial amounts of external rents on a
regular basis either from foreign government or multinational corporations. As
Mahdavi notes in the case of oil producing states: "The oil revenues received by
the governments of the oil producing and exporting countries have very little to
do with the production processes of their domestic economies. The inputs from
the local economies - other than raw materials - are insignificant." (cited in
First, 1980:119). As a result, the spectacular economic growth figures do not
correspond to substantial changes in the society as a whole. This is because
there is no relationship between production and income distribution. Oil for
example is a capital intensive industry employing very few people, which means,
the revenue accruing to the state comes directly from external sources in the
form of taxes.

Consequently, the state tends to pay very little attention to labour or
manpower development. Furthermore, since much of the revenue is expended in
the tertiary sector, those who benefit tend to be the bureaucrats in control of oil induced development. At the same time, agriculture is neglected, leading labour to migrate to the urban centres where the service sector is expanding, further widening the gulf between town and country. As a result, the countryside can no longer produce at levels required to feed the urban population, and a sizeable portion of the revenues from oil is used for massive food importation. (Oculi, 1979). Between 1975 and 1980, food imports have risen from 8.2% to 21% despite a much propagated programme of Green Revolution.

Table 4.8 : Cost of Food Imports between 1975-1980

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount Paid in million Naira</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>353.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>526.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>912.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1,094.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>818.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.16 (billion)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: <sup>a</sup>Onimode, B. 1983:170.  
<sup>b</sup>Usman, B. 1982b:52

This is the scenario which faced Nigeria after the civil war. Some of the supporting evidence has already been presented in this chapter. What follows is therefore a supplement aimed at filling out gaps and strengthening our overall case for the essential continuity of the economic system from colonial, through the first civilian administration to the reign of the military-bureaucratic oligarchy.

Following the 1973 oil crisis, precipitated by the Arab oil embargo, a good international market coupled with expanded production of the country's high
grade crude, enabled the government of Nigeria to double her revenues from oil between 1970 and 1973. In fact, as Table 4.9 below shows, from 196.4 million naira in 1970, 25.9% of total Federal government revenue, contributions from oil jumped to 1461.6 million naira in 1973 or 67.3% of total Federal government revenue. By 1977, the figure stood at 5821.5 million, or 70.6% of the total.

Table 4.9: Oil Contribution to Federal Government Revenue, 1961-77.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Oil Revenue</th>
<th>Total Revenue</th>
<th>Oil Revenue Total Revenue %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>223.6</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>238.8</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>249.0</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>277.6</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>321.0</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>339.2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>300.0</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>299.9</td>
<td>7.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>435.9</td>
<td>16.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>196.4</td>
<td>758.1</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>740.1</td>
<td>1410.9</td>
<td>52.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>576.2</td>
<td>1389.9</td>
<td>41.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>1461.6</td>
<td>2171.3</td>
<td>67.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>4183.8</td>
<td>5177.1</td>
<td>80.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>4611.7</td>
<td>5861.6</td>
<td>78.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>5548.5</td>
<td>7070.3</td>
<td>78.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>5821.5</td>
<td>8251.3</td>
<td>70.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Akin Iwayemi, 1979:69.

In other words, by 1971 the government had started to rely almost exclusively on the rents paid by multinational corporations in order to run the Nigerian state.
With so much revenue coming in from oil after the civil war, it may appear incomprehensible that the military-bureaucratic oligarchy should face any crisis of economic and social policy. Again, the appropriatory operations of the collaborative bourgeois class in control of the rentier state is fundamental to understanding this crisis. As Tables 4.10 and 4.11 show, the first priority of the army was to cope with its own welfare and the demands of an overexpanded military population left over from the civil war. In every budgetary exercise, defence remained one of the top items, while crucial sectors like health, agriculture, education and housing assumed secondary status.

Table 4.10: Defence Expenditure in Relation to Total Federal Actual Expenditures, 1970-76 in Nigerian N

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Total Actual Expenditures</th>
<th>Total Expenditure on Defence</th>
<th>Defence as % of Total Federal Expenditures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970/71</td>
<td>928,417,812</td>
<td>314,846,094</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971/72</td>
<td>1,417,138,022</td>
<td>285,895,214</td>
<td>20.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972/73</td>
<td>1,740,289,870</td>
<td>370,253,689</td>
<td>21.26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973/74</td>
<td>2,167,728,504</td>
<td>420,162,573</td>
<td>19.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974/75</td>
<td>5,259,702,729</td>
<td>532,918,838</td>
<td>10.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975/76</td>
<td>9,730,028,137</td>
<td>1,166,699,421</td>
<td>11.99%</td>
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</tbody>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Total Actual*</td>
<td>428.7</td>
<td>443.1</td>
<td>445.4</td>
<td>503.4</td>
<td>845.2</td>
<td>928.4</td>
<td>1,417.1</td>
<td>2,283.9</td>
<td>2,961.4</td>
<td>6,951.3</td>
<td>6,809.3</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>3,097.0</td>
<td>2,800.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Total Defence</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>107.5</td>
<td>162.6</td>
<td>359.9</td>
<td>314.8</td>
<td>285.9</td>
<td>370.3</td>
<td>420.2</td>
<td>532.9</td>
<td>1,166.7</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>817.8</td>
<td>597.9</td>
<td>466.0</td>
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<td>193.6</td>
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<td>3. Agriculture</td>
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<td>60.7</td>
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<td>19.7</td>
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<td>27.7</td>
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<td>Development &amp;</td>
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<td>Reconstruction</td>
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<td>5. Education</td>
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<td>32.0</td>
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<td>1,119.3</td>
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<td>33.3</td>
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<td>158.8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>109.5</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>116.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Welfare</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Industries</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Defence as %</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of Total</td>
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<td></td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Total actual expenditure for 1965/72 and 1977/79 is for recurrent expenditure only.

** Draft Budget presented by President to National Assembly for March-December, 1980.

Note:  
(1) Economic Development expenditures are recurrent only.  
(2) Capital expenditure on agriculture is for primary production.  

### Table 4.12: The Ratio between Defence and Health Expenditure (in Naira)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Defence Expenditure</th>
<th>Health Expenditure</th>
<th>Ratio of (2) as a Percentage of (1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960/61</td>
<td>3,721,366</td>
<td>2,447,170</td>
<td>65.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961/62</td>
<td>4,544,831</td>
<td>2,796,840</td>
<td>61.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962/63</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3,451,050</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963/64</td>
<td>5,107,940</td>
<td>4,019,080</td>
<td>78.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964/65</td>
<td>5,296,400</td>
<td>4,619,480</td>
<td>87.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965/66</td>
<td>7,218,940</td>
<td>2,612,630</td>
<td>36.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First military rule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Defence Expenditure</th>
<th>Health Expenditure</th>
<th>Ratio of (2) as a Percentage of (1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1966/67</td>
<td>18,003,670</td>
<td>6,264,050</td>
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<td>1967/68</td>
<td>20,429,295</td>
<td>6,048,340</td>
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<td>1968/69</td>
<td>15,000,000</td>
<td>3,737,340</td>
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<td>1969/70</td>
<td>18,695,410</td>
<td>3,943,760</td>
<td>21.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1970/71</td>
<td>129,685,939</td>
<td>6,106,381</td>
<td>4.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>1971/72</td>
<td>87,204,040</td>
<td>9,870,309</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972/73</td>
<td>120,082,040</td>
<td>9,076,790</td>
<td>7.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>1973/74</td>
<td>309,073,450</td>
<td>22,712,102</td>
<td>8.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>1974/75</td>
<td>368,479,080</td>
<td>31,645,560</td>
<td>7.6</td>
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</table>

Second military rule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Defence Expenditure</th>
<th>Health Expenditure</th>
<th>Ratio of (2) as a Percentage of (1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1976/77</td>
<td>817,767,310</td>
<td>104,123,467</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977/78</td>
<td>596,147,962</td>
<td>81,021,350</td>
<td>13.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>1978/79</td>
<td>520,000,000</td>
<td>97,176,930</td>
<td>18.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>1979/80</td>
<td>460,000,000</td>
<td>116,451,000</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1 Police</th>
<th>2 Defence</th>
<th>3 Education</th>
<th>4 3 as a Percentage of 2</th>
<th>5 3 as a Percentage of 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1967/68</td>
<td>6,604,352</td>
<td>20,249,295</td>
<td>2,998,973</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>45.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968/69</td>
<td>9,633,890</td>
<td>15,000,000</td>
<td>1,883,400</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969/70</td>
<td>10,129,980</td>
<td>18,695,410</td>
<td>1,783,410</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970/71</td>
<td>13,427,438</td>
<td>129,685,939</td>
<td>1,601,473</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971/72</td>
<td>15,855,480</td>
<td>87,204,040</td>
<td>2,468,520</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972/73</td>
<td>20,905,510</td>
<td>120,082,040</td>
<td>3,976,650</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973/74</td>
<td>53,142,143</td>
<td>328,837,465</td>
<td>12,816,939</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974/75</td>
<td>98,981,423</td>
<td>339,839,985</td>
<td>128,731,674</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>130.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By 1975, even though defence expenditure had dropped as a percentage of total federal budget, due to the overall increase in the budget actual allocations continued to rise. Consequently, defence took an undue share of the scarce resources necessary for developing other sectors of the economy and society. Contrary to Benoit's thesis that defence spending generates spin-offs for non-defence sectors, most of the appropriations went on pay, especially the inflated salaries of the officer corps, and on replacement of out-dated military equipment. The rest was used on constructing barracks for the members of the armed forces. The 'spin-offs' were therefore, essentially confined to members of the commercial class who participated in the expenditure on defence through contracts for building and supply of equipment. Other beneficiaries were the multinational corporations that manufactured the required military armour, and construction machinery and equipment.

In other sectors, as in defence, there was no doubt, large 'spin-offs' for this class of Nigerians and their foreign allies. These 'spin-offs' have been characterised by Inyang Eteng, a leading Nigerian Sociologist, as a combination of the 'Importer' and 'Contractor' syndromes characteristic of a dependent capitalism (Inyang Eteng, 1981). In the 'importer' syndrome, the dependent economy spends all its realised revenue on consumer items manufactured in the industrialised countries. Without oil, it was clear that Nigeria was running huge trade deficits between 1973 and 1978. Even with oil, the country's foreign reserves which stood at N4.06 billion in 1974 plummeted to 1.6 billion by 1977. Heavy machinery (for the road construction industry) and transportation equipment (trailers to carry merchandise, and luxury saloon cars) dominated imports taking 42% of total imports by 1977.
Trade fairs, staged by the governments for foreign companies to sell their wares in association with the Nigerian Chamber of Commerce, and the Manufacturers Association (MAN), were held all over the country. Eteng gives a good country by country breakdown of sales by foreign corporations during the first of such fairs, the first Lagos Trade Fair of 1977. According to him:

... Britain, which fielded about 112 companies with the largest contingent of assorted goods displayed, realised ₦83.25 million from immediate sales. The United States, represented by 34 establishments, reportedly realised a total of ₦27 million from on-the-spot sales, in addition to sales totalling about ₦236 million which were expected within the next twelve months from established contacts with Nigerian distributors. Also, the American contingent secured 47 immediate agreements for joint ventures with their Nigerian appendages, while twelve companies also succeeded in establishing business contacts with indigenous agents and distributors. Austria, famous for her smuggled lace materials and electrical products, fielded 46 companies and realised about ₦2 million from immediate sales during the fair, with other anticipated sales totalling ₦1 million from contracted supply of beer to Nigerian agents. Canada made sales during the fair worth about ₦1 million, while France, Finland, Denmark West Germany, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Holland, Italy and Spain, with undeclared on-the-spot sales, also negotiated distribution contracts with several Nigerian Businessmen (Inyang Eteng, 1981:232).

The fairs had become such important features of Nigerian commercial life that complexes were built in many of the major urban centres to house subsequent ones.
For instance, the Lagos Trade Fair Complex constructed by the Yugoslav construction company, Energoproject, cost the Federal government ₦142 million.

As the crisis deepened, prompting industrial strikes, the military resorted to the familiar policy of wage adjustments, and made a half-hearted effort to nationalise foreign businesses. In 1974, the government set up the Udoji Salaries and Wages Review Commission, which at the end of the day, like its predecessors recommended huge salary increases. As previously, this favoured those at the top of the wage sector. The little the ordinary worker gained was cancelled out by inflation. Attempts to control prices through the Price Control Board, and rents through Rent Control Tribunals were ineffective. As a result the lower classes, whether on the job, in the market, at home or travelling, were worse off.

Two other measures deserve attention, the Nigerian Enterprise Promotion Decree and the Land Use Decree. The first of these, commonly referred to as the Indigenisation Decree, was issued in 1972. It aimed to limit the degree of foreign control over the country's economy. It was prompted by a number of considerations: the perennial balance of payments crisis which was blamed on the repatriation of profits and capital by international monopolies; the failed expectation of a transfer of technology by private companies; the restrictive and discriminatory lending policies of the major commercial banks that worked against the interests of indigenous businessmen; and finally, pressure on the government from indigenous businessmen for preferred treatment in economic policy. In addition, the government itself wanted to build up a patriotic image at a time it was facing opposition from several social groups.
Effectively therefore, indigenisation was a euphemism for 'national capitalism'. Hence, rather than seeing it as the expression of a fundamental conflict of interest between the Nigerian ruling class and international monopoly capital, it has to be seen as an effort to increase the Nigerian bourgeoisie's share of the surplus from oil. As one commentator has pointed out, "It has merely replaced foreign exploiters with a small group of local 'nouveau riche' merchant capitalists". (Iwayemi, 1979:58).

The second initiative (The Land Use Decree of 1978) was a response to a series of unsuccessful reformist agricultural policies that had been tried out over the years. Its forerunners and companions include the promotion of capitalist co-operative farming of the 1960s; the attempts at agricultural mechanisation; credit incentives to successful farmers operated through the Agricultural Development Banks, and Co-operative Banks which were specifically established to promote large-scale capitalist agriculture. The Land Use Decree was specifically designed to fit into this agricultural scheme. It aimed at facilitating expropriation of the peasantry of the most fertile lands along the various river basins for the establishment of model farms referred to as River Basin Development Projects.

The Decree invested all land in the government, thereby giving effective control in both urban and rural areas to the military and the bureaucracy. Although the decree was designed to stop land speculation, especially in the Southern part of the country, in reality it led to an increase in absentee farmers residing in the urban centres. These were usually bureaucrats, top military officers and businessmen, and in some cases foreign companies who were in partnership with Nigerian businessmen. The River Basin model farms were
aimed at subsidising the huge food imports required by the urban population and were of no benefit to the peasant in the countryside whose lands were being expropriated. Given that the peasant was given very meagre compensation for their lands, had no skills to find alternative employment in the urban centres, and therefore could not cater for himself and members of the family, the insecurity created by this 'agricultural development' exercise had telling effects on him. In many cases, it reduced the peasants to wage employment as farm-hands on the new farms. This process of primitive accumulation, with its sharpening of rural class divisions, is still in operation by the civilian government which has replaced the military.

To summarise, we are of the view that because the military's agricultural package was centred around producing for the volatile urban community it impoverished the rural population, thereby sharpening the distinction between town and country. Secondly, whether wittingly or unwittingly, it created a special class of latifundifia which gave the illusion of rural development while promoting rural capitalists at the expense of the ordinary peasant farmer.

Conclusion

Our historical survey of Nigeria's political economy indicates that military rule did not make a fundamental break with the past. Rather, it consolidated the policies initiated by the colonial administration and nurtured by the first post-independence government. Industrial policy continued to favour private capital, especially multinational corporations. When oil overtook agriculture as the principal foreign exchange earner after the civil war, peasant farmers were either neglected or subjected to a new form of exploitation,
proletarianisation. Inadequate attention to the agricultural sector, coupled with a poor showing in the industrial sector, turned Nigeria into a rentier state relying on oil taxes which were spent primarily on imports of consumer goods manufactured in the capitalist centres and on food produced on the capitalist farms in the West. Such massive food imports continued against a backdrop of capital surplus, land surplus and an undeveloped labour force within the country. Despite the spiralling costs of basic consumer goods, food, transportation and urban rents, Labour Unions were muzzled by harsh legislation against strikers and direct administration by military appointees.

Against this background, the military retained the elitist educational policy initiated by the colonial administration, even though demand for education rose sharply as people came to realise that education was the key to economic and political participation. While the privileged classes ensured that their children attended model schools known as "Federal Government Colleges" at public expense, the majority of children from working class and peasant families could not find schools to attend, even when they were prepared to pay.

Put together, these policies demonstrate that the process of class formation initiated by the colonial integration of Nigeria into the capitalist world system, and nurtured between 1960 and 1966 by the civilians, accelerated under the control of the military-bureaucrats. Basically, two principal classes had emerged: a lower class made up of urban workers, petty commodity producers and traders, urban unemployed, and the huge population of peasants living in the rural areas; and a dominant class made up of bureaucrats, senior military officers, ex-politicians, and a growing commercial fraction. By the mid-1970s, the various fractions of this dominant class, aided by the state and multinationals
were extending their control to include control over rural lands. This marked
the beginning of a gradual proletarianisation of the peasantry. One of the major
impacts of military rule was to effect a temporary reconciliation of these various
fractions by encouraging them to identify their common economic interests. Once
this was achieved, they collaborated with the military to rearrange their
relationship with the multinational corporations operating in the country.

Located and divided between these two main classes was a growing
intermediate class made up of middle management, teachers, university
intellectuals (teachers and students), journalists, and small scale business
persons. Some of these became politically active. It is within this overall
framework that their political activities will be discussed.
5. SOURCES OF OPPOSITION TO MILITARY RULE

The last chapter tried to outline the material world within which the subaltern classes struggled daily for survival and to point to the political practices of the ruling classes, together with the activities of their foreign partners which produced and continue to produce these conditions. However, our concentration on the objective situation rather than the conscious struggles of the lower classes, could be easily misread as docility on their part with the ultimate indictment that the victim is to blame. To forestall such an exercise, we will now outline a range of struggles engaged in by individuals and organised producers, which in our view attempted a critique of the Nigerian social system. We hope to show that the history of the Nigerian peoples during the years of military rule should not be written as 'a record of undiluted compliance and docility' to exploitation and repression. They resisted, actively, the repression of the Nigerian power elite.

Before discussing anti-ruling class resistance, mention needs to be made of the serious schisms and dissensions within the ruling class which persisted during the period of military rule. Despite the co-optation of the political and commercial fractions of the ruling class into the state administration, the politicians continued to loathe their subordination to the military-bureaucrats. Between 1966 and 1970, they accommodated themselves to the situation, partly because they had no choice and were held in contempt by the public, but principally for the successful execution of the civil war. Many of them held key Ministerial positions. With the end of hostilities in 1970 however, dissatisfaction began to re-emerge with the resignation of two key politicians from the Military administration: Chief Obafemi Awolowo, former leader of the
defunct Action Group, and of the Opposition in Parliament; and Mallam Aminu Kano, former leader of the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) and a key opponent of the feudal based NPC government of Balewa. They both called on the Military Government to hand over power to the 'civilians', invariably to themselves.

Although there were many other former politicians still serving in the Military administration, they believed that the Military would honour its 'corrective' pledge and hand over power to the civilians now that the war had come to an end. Working with the received wisdom of civilian supremacy over the armed forces, which was tacitly acknowledged by the military, they had every reason to believe that they would sooner or later reassume command of state affairs. In 1972, the Head of the Military junta raised their expectations further by announcing that power would be returned to them in 1976. Debates as to what form the new civilian led government would take were initiated, and efforts made to induce the armed forces' leadership to clarify the necessary steps towards the realisation of this objective. Apart from the nine point programme of: reorganising the armed forces; erradicating corruption in national life; creating more states; preparing and adopting a new constitution; introducing a new revenue allocation formula; conducting a national population census; organising national political parties; repairing war damage; and organising popularly elected governments in the states and at the centre, the army had no definite timetable for disengagement. The moral regeneration called for by the programme was unenforceable while the measures that could be carried out legislatively were scarcely attended to, casting serious doubt on the sincerity of the armed forces' promises.
In 1974, the momentum with which the politicians were preparing for a possible return to civilian rule was stalled with the announcement by the Head of the Military junta, General Yakubu Gowon, that the armed forces would no longer hand over power in 1976 as they had indicated in 1972. Gowon argued that returning power to the civilians would amount to "a return to the old cut-throat politics that once led this nation into serious crises". He concluded that the old political class had learnt nothing and forgotten nothing and that the old evil of corruption "is still very much with us". Invoking memories of the harsh post-Independence era, Gowon hoped to legitimise continued stay in power of the armed forces. Unfortunately, he seriously alienated his principal collaborators among the politicians who immediately accused him of 'dishonour' and 'sitting tight'.

Not surprisingly, the opposition to the armed forces' decision to stay in power indefinitely was led by those ex-politicians who had served in the military administration and were clandestinely preparing for the resumption of competitive electoral politics. They included: Obafemi Awolowo who was once second in line to Gowon in the Military cabinet; Chief Anthony Enahoro, a trusted aid to General Gowon; Ali Monguno, one of the most powerful Ministers in the administration; Joseph Tarka; Adamu Ciroma; and Inuwa Wada, a one time Defence Minister, who still had very powerful connections in the army. A supporting cast, made up principally of university intellectuals and lawyers, such as Political Scientists

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1. Professor Billy Dudley, who, to some extent, was an insider has stated recently that the Gowon regime toyed with turning themselves into a 'Mass Party' and staying in power indefinitely. Dudley (1982:93-96).
Professor Billy Dudley of the University of Ibadan, and A.D. Yahaya of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, argued passionately for a return to a Parliamentary system of democracy.

Within the armed forces, there were indications of divisions among the senior members of the officer corps and rumours of coup-plots were discreetly followed by 'resignations'. In July 1975, it was no longer a rumour. One such coup, organised by middle ranking officers (Brigadiers and Colonels), was successfully carried out, bringing into office the Mohammed/Obasanjo administration. From subsequent evidence made public by the new administration, it was clear that many of those involved in the organisation of the coup - battle tested young officers - had been excluded from the spoils of office. The most senior military officers and members of the bureaucracy monopolised the dividends of ruling a neo-colonial state, and those excluded had no option but to seize power by force. The contradictions of neo-colonial capitalism provided the critical impetus for such intervention. Triple digit inflation, clogged ports that threatened to bring the economy to a standstill, brazen displays of ill-gotten wealth, and the lack of improvement in the quality of life for the vast majority of the poor despite oil wealth, provided a ready justification for the coup, and immediate steps were taken during the first few months to alleviate the situation. They included the retirement of over 1,000 public servants designated as either 'lazy', 'corrupt' or 'unproductive'; firm action towards clearing the ports, the cancellation of demurrage payment to waiting ships; the creation of seven additional states; the promotion of a philosophy of 'low profile' involving the use of smaller official cars, a more casual appearance, and mixing with ordinary people; together with a definite time-table for handing over power to civilians.
As long as the new leadership carried out these measures, demonstrations of acceptance came from most people throughout the country. But, as with many populist regimes, this initial sweeping of the stables was not followed by concrete policies for effective change. Consequently, the momentary approval it had received from the working people soon turned sour. Opposition forces from the lower classes regrouped though still in separate units, and began to attack what appeared to be another variation of that fundamental opposition between toilers and gourmets.

The resurgence of opposition to the military under the reformist regime of Mohammed/Obasanjo was therefore a continuation of lower class struggles that had been going on since the colonial times. As long as the adverse conditions which made such struggles necessary remained it appears they were prepared to take action.

**Military Rule and Labour Protest**

Our starting point, deservedly, is the 'Labour Movement' which, because of its key position in the production process, remained central to popular struggle. Nigerian workers have had a long history of class action despite perennial attacks from without and schisms within the labour movement. However, they stop short of conceiving themselves as irreconcilably opposed to capital and the existing state, and engaged in political action aimed at seizing state power, and the means of production and distribution. There is a clear realisation of their common location in the economic system, their importance in the running of that process, and most significantly, a recognition that they have common interests which need be protected through collective action. In the Third World, it is the aim of capital, domestic and international, private or public controlled, to maximise
accumulation of surplus through the superexploitation of labour using divergent strategies, in the forefront of which is coercion. In response, organised labour tries to defend itself through wage demands backed up by strike action. From the colonial to the military period, Nigerian workers have had to recourse to this form of struggle.

As far back as 1897, Lagos workers went on strike for an improvement in their working conditions. Labour disputes and strikes continued throughout the colonial and post-colonial period, reaching peak levels with the General Strikes of 1945 and 1964. Undoubtedly, total withdrawal of labour power by means of general strikes suggests a growing political consciousness of any labour movement and in certain circumstances, such expression of dissatisfaction with the distribution of rewards in society can mark the beginning of a serious re-organisation of the political structure. In Nigeria, the 1964 General Strike for example did contribute to the political tremors leading up to the intervention of the Military in 1966. Hence, it is not particularly surprising that the labour movement expected some reasonable compensation from the military leadership.

The labour movement, along with most of the population, initially greeted military rule with enthusiasm. The Nigerian Trade Union Congress (NTUC), considered the most radical of the central trade union bodies, forwarded the following recommendation to the leadership of the armed forces:

The Military Government must move in the direction and best interest of the workers, farmers and toilers of Nigeria. Conscious effort must be made to rest out foreign domination of Nigeria's economy. The Military Government needs time and the peoples' confidence to
accomplish this. It should be made impossible for the old politicians or any group of politicians to commercialise politics again. It is to bring about this that the Military Government should address itself. And this can be realised in partnership with organised labour. The leadership of labour should be recognised by the Military Government, and the formulation of plans... must be done with their active and conscious co-operation (in Cohen, 1974:218).

This desire for 'partnership' with the military was practically demonstrated during the civil war. Strike action was shunned by labour leaders despite low wages and war taxation leading to a general decline in the living standards of the workers. Grass root pressure on the leaders to press for improved wages was described by the leadership as 'subversive'.

1968, the second year of the war, proved decisive for the generality of the workers. First, what was initially pronounced as 'police action' by the military authorities, turned out to be a long drawn out civil war that was draining the nation's human and material resources with no prospect of an end in sight. Secondly, and more significantly, while the working class (and other lower social groups on both sides of the war) suffered shortages, special war taxes, inflation and a general deterioration in their living conditions, the ruling class benefited from the arms trade and the trade in scarce commodities. Faced with their extravagant lifestyles, the majority of workers became increasingly sceptical of appeals to patriotic self sacrifice. As the Adebo Wages and Salaries Review Commission set up in 1970 pointed out, that:

.... the increase in the cost of living is a reflection of that sacrifice that has to be made in the interest of national security. Such sacrifice
would be easier to bear, however, if it was seen to fall equitably on all sections of the population, such that the least sacrifice was made by those in the lowest income group. From some of the representations made to us, it is clear not only that there is intolerable suffering at the bottom of the income scale, but also that the suffering is made even more intolerable by manifestations of affluence and wasteful expenditure which cannot be explained on the basis of visible and legitimate means of income.

The Commission was prompted by the fact that the rank and file of the trade unions had forced the leadership into a wave of strikes which started in 1968.

The Government's first response was to issue Decree 21 of 1968: The Trades Disputes (Emergency Provisions) Decree, making strikes illegal. The following year the Decree was tightened. In addition, labour leaders involved with union strikes were detained by the police. Such measures did not however restrain the unions which is why it became necessary to try softer measures towards the end of the war hence the Adebo Commission. So many memoranda were submitted to the Commission while it was sitting that it became the most popular public representation ever in Nigeria. As the extract from the Commission's final report quoted above shows, it became imperative to grant an interim award aimed at alleviating some of the 'intolerable suffering at the bottom of the income scale'.

But sympathetic as the Commissioners were to the plight of the Nigerian workers, its effectiveness was circumscribed by limitations of its conception of an incomes policy. The Commission's arguments for the need to match worker productivity against money incomes as a way of reconciling monetary stability
and industrial peace in the interest of all, did not resolve the crisis. Accordingly, far more strikes were recorded during 1971 when the Commission's recommendations were implemented than the previous year. There were a total of 118 industrial disputes, involving 79,598 workers with a loss of 233,863 working days.

Table 5.1: Industrial Disputes in Nigeria 1970-1979

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Disputes</th>
<th>Workers Involved</th>
<th>Working Days Lost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>20,015</td>
<td>52,630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>79,598</td>
<td>233,863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>29,656</td>
<td>65,254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>43,504</td>
<td>106,387</td>
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<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>62,693</td>
<td>159,613</td>
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<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>214,560</td>
<td>469,186</td>
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<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>55,273</td>
<td>160,822</td>
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<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>73,385</td>
<td>208,623</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>129,858</td>
<td>1,012,413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>173,309</td>
<td>1,309,361</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


As Table 5.1 shows, the level of industrial disputes remained reasonably high in the two subsequent years.

By the next round of Wages and Salaries Review in 1974, Nigeria had become the most strike prone country in Sub-Saharan Africa, and as Table 5.1 shows, peak levels were recorded during reviews. For example, during 1975, the year of the Udoji Salaries awards, there were a total of 394 disputes involving 214,560 workers with a loss of 469,186 working days. A similar review in 1978
produced similar results. In between these Commissions, not only did entrepreneurs hike up prices to reabsorb what was given out to the workers, but anti-labour legislation seriously hampered the bargaining capabilities of the unions. Employers, particularly in the private sector, used this period for super-exploiting labour. Describing the conditions of over 1,500 dock-workers employed by approximately 28 private contractors at the Lagos Ports for example, Umoh pointed out that there were no written conditions of service. Everything depends on:

... how generous a dock contractor is. The current daily wages range from ₦1.26 for general labour; ₦1.32 for winchmen and ₦1.38 for headmen. Majority of the dock-workers do not earn more than 15 working days a month. Contractors will engage short gang labour which means a man doing the work of two persons but earning the pay of one. Salaries are still paid through headmen. This creates opportunity for middle men to collect "tips" or commissions from unregistered dock-workers in order to guarantee them regular work. Those who refuse to enter into the deal of course cannot be recommended for recruitment by the middle men. So, a labourer officially booked as having been paid ₦1.26 may not get home with up to 80k. (Umoh, Daily Times, January 21st, 1974:21).

On January 24th, 1974, the Daily Times published an editorial on such conditions, likening them to slave labour. According to the paper, conditions of service at the docks were:

far below expectation. They are poorly paid and overworked. There are no effective rules and regulations to safeguard their interests.
Indeed, the whole dockyard situation can best be described as a slave
front, and the dock-workers as galley slaves. They are exploited by
contractors and middle men alike. Could anyone ever imagine that a
dock-worker earning ₦1.26k a day ends up with only 80 kobo after
paying the middle men. And he may not have more than 15 working
days in the month. So in a month, his average earning is only ₦2.
And if he falls sick, there are no medical facilities available to him.
But so hazardous is his job that he is in constant danger of ill-health.

This situation may sound exceptional but in reality it reflects quite closely the
sufferings of those at the bottom of the income scale. Certainly there was no
decline in the incidence of labour disputes.

In response, between 1974 and 1978 the government pursued a policy of
repressive legislation, detention of Union leaders, and the take-over of Union
administration by the military was, against a background of continuing resistance
from the Trade Union Movement. Each year, at least two or three labour laws
were passed to strengthen the 1968 and 1969 Labour Decrees. In 1976 alone,
three Labour Decrees were promulgated. Decree 7, February 1976, established
a complex network of negotiation aimed at making it impossible for Unions to
arrive at the point of withdrawing labour power. Later in the year, Decree 23
proscribed strikes by workers in "Essential Services". These were defined as
widely as possible to include the most restless of the Labour Unions, the Port
workers, Health Services and Communications; and the Armed Forces and the
Police, and many other public service workers.

The most damaging piece of legislation to the Unions came towards the
end of the year in the form of Decree 44 of 1976, the "Trade Unions Central
Labour Organisation” Decree. This cancelled the registration of the four central unions, and replaced it with an administrator, to be appointed by the Federal Commissioner for Labour. At the time of the Decree, the Adebiyi Tribunal instituted to look into the activities of the Trade Unions was still sitting.

In response, the National Executive of the fragile coalition formed by the four central Unions, the Nigerian Labour Congress (which represented both left and right tendencies) issued a strong statement condemning the Commissioner for Labour responsible for the Decree and the attempt to incorporate the Unions. The statement accused him of an ‘unholy attempt’ to split the movement, and pointed out that the Decree was against the principles of the International Labour Organisation whose Regional Headquarters were based in Nigeria. Part of the statement read:

We reject completely the idea of appointing an administrator to administer the Trade Unions in the country, and are directing our affiliated Unions not to have anything to do with the administrator if and when appointed inspite of our protest (in Waterman, 1976:8).

Following this letter of protest a meeting of all representatives from 200 affiliated unions was convened which not only endorsed the position of the central Committee, but in addition, attacked the Government on rents, housing, wages and inflation policy.

An inner group, consisting principally of the left oriented Nigerian Trade Union Congress (NTUC), formed itself into a "Committee of Trade Unions in Defence of Nigerian Labour Congress and Trade Union Rights”. The Committee declared that: "as long as the Nigerian state continues to opt for crude and
unbridled capitalism and free enterprise system as its strategy for economic development, it would be contradictory for the Nigerian state to seek to control, rationalise or moderate the Trade Unions by one device or the other" (in Waterman, 1976:8). The Committee also pushed for confrontation with the Government by way of mass rallies, which they argued, would appeal directly to the consciousness of the rank and file workers. Only the intervention of the right wing members of the NLC prevented such a confrontation.

The battle for the control of the Labour Unions climaxed with the 'publication' of the Adebiyi Tribunal Report against a background of escalating labour disputes which continued up to and after the Tribunal's recommendations were implemented. In the White Paper accompanying the report, the Government pointed out that "some union leaders, in the discharge of their responsibilities have been guilty of dictatorship, abuse of office and mal-administration and have sometimes used recognition and blackmail picketing, false propaganda, misrepresentation and violence to achieve their objectives". The Paper concluded that, as a result: "... Government intends to stop the activities of criminal elements who force their way into the Trade Union Movement and exploit the workers whom they pretend to serve. Racketeering, abuse of office, personality cult, politicisation, corruption, conflicts of interest and similar malpractices will be stamped out through appropriate legislation in the Trade Union Movement."

Based on these accusations, eleven labour leaders were proscribed from participating in the Trade Union Movement and property and money belonging to the Unions was confiscated by the junta and placed in the hands of their representative, the administrator of Trade Unions. But the strong allegations carried by the White Paper were very difficult to prove and, for some time, the
The government refused to publish the Tribunal's findings.

The Unions affected came out strongly in support of their banned leaders, and condemned the Government's labour policy which they said was designed to emasculate the Unions. The first to issue such an attack was the Public Works Construction Technical and General Workers Union (PWCT&GWU). The Union's executive put out a strong press statement. A copy was sent to the Head of State as a protest letter condemning the decision to its General Secretary, Mr. W.O. Goodluck, which it described as "a malicious attack on the leadership of the Nigerian Labour Congress". It argued further that:

(i) We have been under severe pressure from our rank and file members who rightly believe that unusual manner in which a release was issued without the publication of report or the issue of a white paper heightens their suspicion that the government decision is pregnant with many interpretations.

(ii) Mr. W.O. Goodluck is employed by our Union as General Secretary under the Union's terms and contract of employment. Like all employers of labour this Union reserves the right to decide when to hire and fire any of its staff. Our Union has no intention to compromise or transfer the right to hire and fire its staff to any authority.

(iii) It is inconsistent and illogical for the Federal Military Government to use Adebiyi's Tribunal Report, which never probed the Public Works Construction Technical and General Workers Union as the basis for the barring of Mr. W.O. Goodluck as General Secretary of our Union.
The Union reaffirmed its confidence in Mr. Goodluck and requested the Government to rescind its decision.

Similarly, the National Union of Railwaymen (NUR) denounced the barring of two of its officers: Mr. Michael Imoudu and Sule. Mr. Imoudu, for example, had been a long standing radical in the Trade Union Movement. Unassuming, isolated from material opportunism prevalent in the movement, and since the 1940s, very active in defence of the railwaymen and working people in general, he had been made an honourary life President of the Nigerian Trade Unions. Many working people were therefore dismayed at his dismissal and barring from trade union activities.

The Nigerian Motor Drivers and Road Transport General Workers Union passed a vote of confidence in Mr. Odeyemi and virtually all other affected Unions reaffirmed support in their leaders. So unpopular was the decision that the Lagos Branch of the Nigerian Bar Association offered to give free legal aid to "anyone whose legal right is infringed, to ensure that the rule of law reigns supreme in our land". The Law body added further that: "the continuous erosion of the civil liberties of our peoples by some Nigerians in army uniform" was viewed with dismay. (The Punch, March 4th, 1977, p.1).

Despite this concerted opposition from the Labour Movement and other public bodies, the Military Government of Olusegun Obasanjo went ahead with implementing the Adebiyi Tribunal recommendations. In addition to barring the labour leaders and bringing the central labour organisation under the control of the administrator, outside funding for all unions was proscribed, leaving them dependent on the Military Government, and a suggestion made that full time
officials to the registered unions be appointed from outside the Trade Union Movement with the participation of the Federal Government.

Later in 1977, another Labour Decree was issued since previous legislative measures and the ongoing emasculation of the Trade Union Movement had, if anything, escalated the strikes rather than diminished them. The new Decree provided that; no payment be made to workers during the period of strike action; that stalemated negotiations were to be resolved by a labour commissioner appointed by the Government; that the decision of the Commissioner was to be deemed as final and stiff fines imposed on a defaulting party and that anyone found guilty of acts calculated to disrupt the economy or essential services was liable to a two year prison term or a fine of ₦10,000.

But the harsher the Government's measures, the more determined the unions became. Figures for the level of labour disputes during the last three years of military rule, together with the form the disputes were taking, certainly suggest a hardening of attitudes.

In June 1977 for example, workers at Bendel Steel Structures clashed with the police, leaving 50 workers wounded. That same month, 7,000 typists and stenographers all over the country went on industrial action. At the University of Ibadan about 1,500 workers attacked the office of the Vice-Chancellor, clashed with the police and barricaded gates of the University. In July, it was the turn of Health Inspectors, Nurses, Dispensing Assistants, Dock-workers and the 200,000 strong labour force of the Nigerian Brewery Workers. All these Unions went on strike for improved living conditions and higher wages.
In the private sector, the single most decisive strike was at Unilever. As one of the largest Multinationals operating in the country, Unilever is the largest employer of labour in the private sector. The strike paralysed many of the company’s service and commercial activities. After Unilever, workers of a Colombian owned textile company, Atlanta Textile Mills, Ilupeju (Lagos) violently confronted the management, inviting police intervention. Gradually, the strike escalated, drawing in over 100,000 textile workers all over the country. In the wake of this strike, it was discovered that workers at the Atlanta Textile Mills, where the textile workers strike had started, were paid incredibly low wages, that annual leave allowances were between ₦10 - ₦15; that there was only an 8 kobo token retirement allowance; and that scant attention was paid to safety regulations, resulting in a high rate of industrial accidents.

It is possible to infer from the evidence above, that throughout the period of military rule, labour was capable of challenging the regime and that as a result vigorous efforts were made to neutralise it, firstly through legislation and then through a combination of all the available apparatuses of coercion - police intimidation of leaders, threats of redundancies, and the administrative incorporation of the labour movement. Even in the private sector, what were essentially struggles between labour and capital became struggles between labour and the military controlled state. In protecting the interest of capital the state faced a militant working class that was prepared to defy the might of the military by confronting employers, using its most potent weapon: withdrawal of labour power. However, as a well co-ordinated and ideologically coherent movement capable of mounting an effective opposition, the Nigerian labour movement was rather less effective, firstly because of its own internal divisions; and secondly, because of the concerted attacks from the military-bureaucratic state.
Aspects of Peasant Resistance

Generally, Nigerian peasants lack organisation in articulating their interests. Over the years, their most consistent form of resistance to domination has been opposition to taxation and the repressiveness of tax collectors and Local Government Authorities. In the Northern parts of the country, two such taxes Jangali (cattle tax) and Haraji (poll tax) were particularly resented and resisted. However, this opposition rarely manifested itself in a collective and consistent form, except for occasional peasant rebellions.

In 1968 and 1969, one such incidence, the Agbekoya rebellion,* occurred in what was then Western state of Nigeria. It centred around Ibadan area, and spread to such places as Remo, Ijebu, Egba, Oyo, Ogbomosho and Oshun. The rebellion had deep rooted historical origins. Before colonial administration made cocoa an important cash crop around Ibadan, peasants, mainly demobilised soldiers from the Yoruba wars of the 19th century, settled on the land and cultivated it for subsistence purposes. With the introduction of cocoa, and colonial local authorities, these farmers came under the control of an educated elite living in the urban centre of Ibadan; and some Military commanders declared rights over most of the lands. Effectively, peasants who had cultivated these lands for a considerable period of time became tenants. The new "landlords" were recognised by the colonial administration, and became intermediaries between them and the peasantry. This new arrangement marked the beginning of the exploitive relationship between the state and the peasantry around Ibadan which was to continue up to the time of the Agbekoya rebellion.

* Chris Beer's *The Politics of Peasant Groups in Western Nigeria* (Ibadan, Ibadan University Press, 1975), is an indepth study of the rebellion.

See also Beer and Williams (1976); and Williams (1980:121-131).
The overlords received small tributes, *isakole* (tribute in cash and kind) and *owe* (communal labour), and contributions to festive celebrations. As the colonial administration established itself, Native Authority officials residing in Ibadan introduced a variety of taxes, thereby worsening the position of the ordinary peasants. The 'landlord' farmers known as *bales* had substantial landholdings, and were wealthy enough to employ wage labour on their farms. Since they too lived in the urban centre, they had close connection with the Native Authority officials.

The Agbekoya, as a movement, was therefore centred around the less privileged tenant farmers. Its resistance to the combined oppression of the bales and the Native Authority officials can be traced back to the 1940s and 1950s. In the 1950s, its leadership was made up essentially of educated farmers or produce buyers and populist politicians such as Akinpelu Obisesan and Adegoke Adelabu. The farmers imagined that these 'knowledgeable' people would protect them against exploitation. In the colonial and immediate post-colonial period, they did resist some of the traditional forms of exploitation and oppression. However, the government found a more direct form of exploiting the cocoa farmer through the Marketing Boards whose role we have already highlighted in the previous chapter. Apart from paying the farmers low prices for their cocoa, 'Development taxes' were imposed and collected with promises of welfare benefits. At the end of the day, there were no visible returns to the farmer, either in the form of incentives for greater input in his farm or welfare benefits. What they got was more taxation, more oppression and more repression. As Williams puts it:

> With taxes came tax collectors and a variety of petty council officials, such as town-planning officials, clerks, and sanitary inspectors, who
embezzled money, exacted bribes from the farmers for the non-implementation of incomprehensible regulations, or just demanded the bribes. Accounts of the oppression of politicians and officials in the rural areas up to the Agbekoya rebellion make them sound more like activities of an army of occupation than indigenous administration. (Williams, 1980:124).

Reaction to this state of affairs came to a head in 1968, when the army was already faced with the task of conducting a civil war and opposition from the Trade Union Movement. The immediate cause of the rebellion was the arrest of tax defaulters by Native Authority Officials. But the underlying causes included low cocoa prices; increases in poll tax, educational rates and water rates; excesses of corrupt officials; and lack of response from the Government to their request for assistance to regenerate unproductive cocoa farms. These issues surfaced when the peasants started attacking the tax collectors.

The rebellion began in September 1968 and continued intermittently and with varying degrees of intensity until 1972. In its first few weeks, the farmers attacked and killed the local Oba and wounded some of the bales and police officers. Many peasants were arrested during the confrontation. Reports of the death of prisoners at Agodi prison in Ibadan (the prison was just outside the Governor's house) infuriated the farmers who immediately attacked it and released 464 prisoners. This rescue operation was followed by another week of intense fighting, and the fighting continued sporadically until October 1969.

As a result, the state Government was forced to make major concessions to the farmers. Poll tax was reduced from £5:10 to £2 per capita per annum.
An amnesty was declared for all arrested farmers, except those charged with murder. The Government directed that all local government officials be withdrawn from the villages, and that rural district councils be administered from Ibadan. Motor park and Market fees be temporarily abolished. Rates were not to be levied without the permission of those involved. No farmers were to be excluded from the Farmers Unions. The assets of all local government staff were to be investigated and most significantly, there was to be an end to tax raids and army and police patrols. The only important demand of the peasants which remained unfulfilled was for an increase in the price of cocoa to £250 (though this was still below the World market prices of the time). The Government agreed to pay farmers £150 per ton, and the farmers responded by threatening to burn down their heaps of cocoa. After negotiations however, they decided against burning the cocoa.

But the ill-feeling between the Government and the peasants continued to smoulder and in 1972, when the Government attempted to reintroduce the detested Local Government officials in the rural areas the farmers reorganised and attacked police posts and other government offices. Many of their leaders were arrested and imprisoned until 1975 when the Gowon regime was overthrown.

The Agbekoya rebellion is very significant in any discussion of peasant resistance to exploitation in Nigeria. Despite attempts by members of the elite class to turn the rebellion into a State agitation exercise, the farmers firmly refused to be manipulated by power seeking factions within the ruling class. Of greater significance was the fact that poor peasants who had been continuously subjected to repression and exploitation from colonial to post-colonial times, finally organised themselves into an effective resistant force and forced a
military government to make major concessions. Furthermore, for the first time, the peasants organised with their own leadership, ideology and strategies for action in defence of their own collective interest. Agbekoya now served as an important example to peasants all over the country, and the ruling class became apprehensive that similar uprisings might occur outside the Western state. So far however, social scientists have yet to explain why Agbekoya remained largely an isolated phenomenon despite the prevalence of the same basic conditions in other parts of Nigeria, particularly in the feudal parts of the North.

Since Agbekoya, the most important peasant struggles against the state have been those around the River Basins being expropriated for state projects. Recent studies of the areas affected have started to explore the effects they have had on the peasants in their vicinity and on the oppositional activities of these peasants. One such study is Wallace's investigation of the consequences of the Kano State Irrigation Scheme on the peasant population. Initiated in 1971, the scheme is projected to cover a total land area of 146,000 acres as part of a nationwide agricultural development programme. (Wallace, 1981).

By the time the scheme took off in 1975, the construction of the dam had displaced over 13,000 farmers from some 44,000 acres of land; while staff housing, office apartments and so on took a further 1,000 acres. As a result, peasants who had hitherto owned 0.5 to 10 acres of land were forced into wage employment, if they could find it, having received compensation amounting to only N80 per acre by 1971 and N250 by 1975. This meant that a peasant farmer with a household of about ten people to support, owning 10 acres of land was awarded N800, a flat sum which he could hardly invest and which had no possibility of yielding any additional income. He and the other members of the
household were therefore reduced to wage labourers hired by either the state or other well-off absentee farmers.

A number of farmers were allowed to own part of the irrigated farms but they had to repay the cost incurred in developing the lands and whatever credits they might have received from them. Some of them were unable to meet these debts, and refused to pay while some were tempted by offers from urban based farmers that benefitted from bank credits and other government incentives.

While peasant resistance at the Kano project was mild, at the Sokoto River Basin Development Project, Bakolori, where farmland was more difficult to secure and the fadama on the river basins very precious, the end result was a major conflict. In the first place, the fadama lands were seized from the peasants who were reallocated to arid desert lands. Secondly, the promised compensation for their lost lands was embezzled by State and Local Government officials. Inspired by the Italian company of Fiat through the FAO, the project, from its initial conception, was foreign oriented. As Oculi discovered:

The project was to be completed by March 1980 at the cost of N$159 million, but by January 1980 costs had already reached over N$350 million and opposition by farmers had reduced progress by 50 percent. Moreover the Government was paying the company, Impresit, about one million Naira a month for work they could not do because farmers had blocked roads, were hostile to workers and equipment and the personnel were idle. (Oculi, 1982:100, my emphasis).

It is clear that from the outset the farmers, opposed their dispossession by big capital. Later, when the project disorganised the lives of 60,000 peasants with
no prospect of compensation, a violent clash erupted between peasants and the police in April 1980, just seven months after the military had withdrawn from office. The clashes left 386 peasants dead, several injured, others arrested and detained by the police, and property destroyed.

Afterwards, the New Young Farmers of Sokoto, gave the following reasons for the disturbances:

(1) The confiscation of the lands of peasants for about five years without any compensation;

(2) Failure to pay the peasants for their economic trees on the confiscated farmlands;

(3) Failure to adequately **re settle** the peasants whose houses and lands were inundated by the lake that was created at the dam;

(4) The confiscation of peasant lands and other fraudulent deals perpetrated by wealthy men and highly placed functionaries;

(5) Failure to consult the peasants on all aspects of the new irrigation system being introduced in their localities. For instance, they were not consulted on the land-use system and they were not adequately informed on the implications of the scheme. (Sokoto Young Farmers, 1982:95-96).

In conclusion, they pointed out that those who actually benefitted from the Bakolori project were:

(a) The big foreign companies such as Impresit, Bakolori MRT, MASDAR, etc.

(c) Traditional Rulers and wealthy men who are swindling the lands and due compensation of the peasants. (Sokoto Young Farmers, 1982:96).

Since these River Basin Development Projects and similar large scale agricultural projects are now becoming a special feature of Nigerian agriculture, promoted through the Green Revolution campaign, more and more of such similar peasant revolts are likely to be encountered and eventually recorded. Together with the Agbekoya rebellion of 1968-1972, revolts such as the one at Bakolori are expressions of opposition to state policies that frustrate peasant aspirations.

Since the policies discussed above were initiated and to a large extent executed by the Military, the revolt of the peasants (even though it occurred after the armed forces had stepped down from the pinnacle of state power) can be considered as a protest against their policies.

At this point, we may mention the lack of contact between peasant opposition movements and those of the urban based working class. While capital co-ordinated its exploitative practices in both urban and rural areas, there was no such comparable links between the working class and the peasantry. While the former had clear long term plans to ensure its continuation in a position of dominance, the latter lacked such long term calculations and could only react to policies or circumstances that directly affected them. It was left to others to show their common location within Nigeria's class structure. These 'others' were mostly intellectuals committed to popular liberation. They operated either
as individuals or members of organised social groups and put together, they were a serious threat to the hegemony of the military state.

**Individual Opposition to Militarism**

Among the individual opponents of military rule, Tai Solarin, Aper Aku, Air Iyare, Wole Soyinka and Fela are important figures. All were educated Nigerians who expressed concern at the way state power was being used, either to amass personal fortunes or to repress the citizenry. They all focused their attack on corruption and all of them suffered imprisonment, torture and other forms of harassment under the military.

When in 1974, Yakubu Gowon renounced his earlier pledge to return power to the politicians, Tai Solarin, a School Head Master, wrote a one-page tract: "The Beginning of the End". In it he argued that "There is only one anvil on which the acceptability of a Government could be tested ... That, in a society, it is the incorruptibility of the Government". Solarin concluded that, "There was no reason whatsoever to justify the elongation, by a single day, of the army regime over this Federation. Unless the Military Government has the courage to call it quits on 14th January 1976, a chain of events might be set in motion, the end of which nobody would be able to predict. It would not be the end of our beginning; it would be the beginning of our end."

No newspaper agreed to publish the tract. Solarin, therefore, printed thousands of copies and distributed it all over the country. As expected, he was immediately arrested and placed under indefinite detention for inciting the public.

The same year, two other Nigerians - Godwin Daboh and Aper Aku - swore to affidavits, accusing two senior officials of the Military Government of
corrupt practices. One was a Federal Commissioner - Joseph Tarkaa, and the other a State Governor - Joseph D. Gomwalk. After a considerable public campaign, especially from a section of the Nigerian press, the Commissioner was forced to resign from office, though with a threat that if investigated he would drag many of his colleagues down with him. In the case of the State Governor however, rather than investigate the documented allegations against him, the Head of the Military junta absolved him, imprisoned the accuser without trial, and took steps to stop further swearing of affidavits.

The Solarin and Aku affairs were indicative of a progressive blocking off of possible avenues for expressing opposition to the Military. Dissatisfaction with this trend, coupled with the socio-economic difficulties faced by ordinary Nigerians rallied popular protest for the release of Solarin, Aku and other Nigerians detained for dissension. The capitalist state, backed up by repressive militarism was now confronted with difficulties it could not easily resolve by eliminating opposition.

**FELA : Popular Music and Popular Opposition**

I am an artist. I have my reasons for being sad. I want to change sadness. I want people to be happy. And I can do it by playing happy music. And through happy music I tell them about the sadness of others. So that they will come to realise that, "Oh, we can be happy!" With my music I create a change. I see it. So really I am using my music as a weapon. I play music as a weapon. The music is not coming from me as a subconscious thing. It's conscious. - Fela.*

With this utilitarian conception of art, Fela produced lyrics which uncompromisingly called for African emancipation, and a struggle against corruption, dictatorship, poverty and the militarisation of society. These were contentious themes, and they brought him into direct and regular confrontation with the military state in Nigeria.

Three things about Fela's music were particularly disturbing to the Military state: the form of the music; the audience for it; and above all, the critical content of the lyrics. First, Fela's uniquely dry sarcasm came alive in a language the ordinary Nigerian could understand - pidgin English interspersed with other indigenous Nigerian languages, especially Yoruba. Performed with catchy chants and a jazzy instrumentation that was profoundly popular with the lower classes, notably the restless urban youth, Fela's music became the rallying point of a rebellious subculture with the potential for organised confrontation. In addition, Fela was hugely popular with students in higher educational institutions who were the most persistent and active critics of the military and the capitalist state.

As to the content of the lyrics, we may trace the development of Fela's 'conscious music' as a movement from Pan-Africanism and general/social criticism (1970-1973), to a sustained critique of dictatorship by the state, foreign collaboration and conditions of poverty in Nigeria - 1974 to 1980.

The first period is characterised by such titles as *Alu Jon Jonki Jon*, *Lady* and *Shakara* which attacked social vices, individual greed, and the behaviour of educated African women; while his Pan-Africanism came alive in *Why Black Man Dey Suffer*, *Buy Africa* and *Black Man's Cry*. It was after these songs were released that Fela came into conflict with the police and other state institutions.
After his detention at Alagbon Close police station, Fela composed his first anti-police record: *Alagbon Close* (1974) which described his prison conditions and the demeaning treatment he received from the police. Further encounters produced *Expensive Shit*, a sarcastic attack on police efforts to collect Fela's faeces for laboratory tests while he was in detention for hemp charges. Fela had swallowed weeds suspected of being hemp during his arrest. His scorn for the police and the armed forces as a whole; his attacks on the Military and state leadership for exploitation, repression, and corruption, and the massive following he gathered earned him the wrath of the establishment. But ironically, the more repressively the state acted, the more defiant and concentrated were Fela's attacks, and the more popular his message turned out to be.

In 1976, Fela released eight albums attacking military, class and international collaboration. One of these was *Zombie*. Just before this record was composed, attempts were made by the authorities to channel Fela's enormous musical talents into the service of the state. Harnessing Fela's abilities to the production of a 'military culture' was considered essential and necessary because of the Military's quest for total ideological control. FESTAC, the International Black Arts Festival, provided such an opportunity. Fela was requested to serve on the Nigerian Committee. During its first meeting he provided an alternative programme of action, including "participation of the people", crackdown on corrupt FESTAC officials, and demilitarisation of the Festival. As he argued later on, FESTAC should be a genuine cultural expression of the people as a whole, and not a promotion of 'military ... culture', in which the ordinary citizen was brought in to entertain a corrupt bourgeoisie.
His rejection of this attempt at incorporation meant that the only course left open to the military was force. Fela himself was obviously aware of this. As he put it a few years later: "My public condemnations of the Government's actions and all the military and social oppression at a time when something like 60,000 people had come together in Nigeria for this huge black Festival brought a violent reaction." (in Moore, 1982:137).

The record Zombie therefore served as a convenient justification for such a show of force. Zombie assaulted one of the most cherished military norms: hierarchy and the ideology of unquestionable obedience to superiors, which according to Fela, turned human beings into mere robots incapable of productive thought of their own. It alluded not only to control of the other ranks by the officer class, but also, the external control of this officer class by international finance capital. The first theme could be read directly from the Zombie album; while the second was amplified by Fela in a subsequent album: ITT: International Thief Thief (1979). This concentrated attention on the intricate relationship between multinational corporations, their local representatives, the media that promoted them, politicians, top military men and bureaucrats. It summed up neatly, and in very plain language, the interlocking relationship between members of the dominant class. On the record Fela stressed that it was this interlocking relationship that facilitated "confusion, corruption, inflation, oppression and repression" in Nigeria.

In February 1977, an army battalion attacked Fela's residence, called Kalakuta Republic and his night-club - Africa Shrine. In the attack, Fela, his 78 year old activist mother, and many other members of the household were seriously beaten up and injured. Fela's house was razed by fire set up by the
attacking force and the injured people were taken into detention. Public outcry against this action eventually forced the Government to set up a judicial Commission of Inquiry.

The Commission reported that: (i) Fela harboured 'vagabonds' who provoked the soldiers into attacking his residence; (ii) his house was burnt down by an 'Unknown Soldier', implying that Fela could not, therefore, hold anybody responsible for the blaze; and (iii) that in the interests of 'Law and Order', the Government should seize both the residence and the night-club, together with houses of about 200 neighbouring residents suspected of working hand in hand with Fela to challenge the authorities. Unquestionably, this was one of the most distinctive acts of collaboration between the judiciary and the military to repress citizens.

This use of force was designed to break Fela and momentarily it appeared to have achieved its purpose. However, Fela soon re-emerged with another scathing critique of the military, using themes from the attack and subsequent Commission report for his records. Fear Not for Man, Sorrow, Tears, and Blood, and No Agreement were published in 1977, the year of the attack. They were followed in 1978 and 1979 by Shuffering and Shmiling, and Unknown Soldier and V.I.P.: Vagabonds in Power respectively.

Unknown Soldier for example, echoed the sarcasm in Zombie. In its bitter picture of the attack on his house, the injustice of the judiciary, and the maltreatment of his respected activist mother whom Fela described as "the only mother of Nigeria". In addition, he repeated his condemnation of military brutality and corruption. As he put it in pidgin-English:
Dem go burn Fela house
Wetin this Fela do oo
Dis Government i bad oo
Wetin this Fela do oo
Fela talk about soldiers
Flogging civilians for street
Fela talk about Government
We steal money for FESTAC

Translation

(They went and burnt Fela's house
What has this Fela done?
This Government is bad oo
What has this Fela done?
Fela talked about soldiers
Flogging civilians in the street;
Fela talked about Government
Which stole money during FESTAC...)

When Fela's mother died in 1978, probably because of the traumatic
time of the military attack, Fela held the military responsible for her
death. As a last gesture of confrontation, he took a mock coffin of his mother to
the gate of the residence of the Head of State, advancing against the pointed guns
of the guards. Afterwards, he published another record, Coffin for Head of State
as a farewell to his memorable confrontation with the Military establishment.
This was Fela's last encounter with the armed forces before their withdrawal
from office.

Throughout the post civil-war period, he remained a central figure in
the resistance to militarism in Nigeria. Through his music and practical
activities, he tried to awaken the consciousness of ordinary Nigerians at a time
when many other artists (including musicians like himself) were eulogising and
deriving benefits from the regime.

Conclusion

Military rule and capitalist exploitation was therefore presented with
resistance on several fronts, ranging from the organised opposition of the Trade
Unions to the unorganised actions of the peasantry, and the individual agitation of dissidents such as Solarin, Aku, Iyare and Fela. Secondly, as long as the social contradictions on which these opposition forces were predicated remained intact, and were reinforced through forceful repression, such opposition continued to present the leadership with a crisis of mounting proportions. Thirdly, within the ruling class itself, there were profound struggles for the control of state power with the politicians resenting their subordinate position within the power structure, and the armed forces fighting to preserve their own credibility and privilege. However, the lack of articulation between the various oppositional elements meant that, each fought as an isolated unit which was a major reason for their relative ineffectiveness against a well co-ordinated and powerful opposition.

In the next chapters, we will try to show how university students fit into this pattern of Military rule and the resistance to it.
A POLITICAL HISTORY OF NIGERIAN STUDENTS:
From Colonial Times to the Military State

This chapter attempts to reconstruct the history of student activism from the colonial period through to the neo-colonial era. It seeks to unravel the contributions that Nigerians in institutions of higher learning made to the formation and development of the Nigerian state; to chart the changing perspective of the students; to detail the shifting attitudes to the Universities and their students on the part of divergent segments of the society, and finally, to examine the ruling classes' efforts to incorporate students into the dominant forms of thought and action.

Before we undertake a chronological account of student political activism however, it is necessary to note two caveats. The first is institutional. We are aware of other institutions of higher education outside the Universities - the Polytechnics, Colleges of Education, Technical Colleges, etc., many of which have expanded tremendously over the years and have also participated in political agitations. Attention is however focused on University students because of their pre-eminence in public protests over the years, and because one can state with reasonable certainty that they represent the barometer of student thinking within institutions of higher education. The second caveat concerns the heterogeneity of political thought and action which exists on and between campuses. Consequently, attempts will be made later on to draw out the schisms within the Nigerian student movement.

Students and Decolonisation: The Nationalist Years 1920-1960

In any discussion of education in neo-colonial African states, one has first of all to map out the general development of colonial education, and its centrality in the social formation. Education directed by Christian missionaries
had its genesis in the 19th century. Before then, the colonisers relied essentially on their superior military power, the result of which was the depopulation of the continent through slavery. By the beginning of the 19th century, however, the crisis of the 'slave economy' made it necessary to introduce a new way of subjecting the colonies to the metropolitan powers. This entailed the creation of a new elite to assist in the administration of the colonies. This task of cultural conversion required an agency, and the missionaries served as that agency for its execution.

The missionaries began by training those who could read and write, and thus become link men with the native population. They served as interpreters of the new culture to the 'native' audience. However, as the cost of administering the colonies steadily rose, the policy shifted to training manpower such as clerks, interpreters, teachers, policemen, medical auxiliary men and clergy, to take up duties within the lower echelons of the colonial administration. By the end of the 19th century, the elementary schools responsible for this training had secondary schools and teacher training colleges added to them. This trend was particularly marked in the case of the Southern part of the country. In the North where a theocratic state structure had emerged as a result of the 15th century influence from North Africa, and Islamic culture and religion had a strong presence, no attempt was made to dismantle it. On the contrary, the British found this feudal system positively useful in its administration. Koranic education was therefore retained and encouraged, while Western missionaries were confined to areas with non-Islamic culture and civilisation. In other words, the penetration of the 'civilising missionaries' was determined by political expediency rather than the type of belief system operational before colonisation. This explains why only the sons of Emirs and the other aristocratic families involved in the dual
administrative structure introduced by the British participated in the new school system, and were allowed to retain their religious beliefs.

So, right from the beginning, education was structured along lines of privilege, creating an urban elite in the Southern part of the country, and an aristocratic continuity in the North.

However, some members of the Southern elite soon embarked on an aggressive quest for further betterment through Western education, with several sending their children to Western Europe and North America to pursue professional courses. On their return, some of them started to clash with the British administration over access to privileges. In the North by contrast, conscious efforts were made to avoid the situation whereby higher educational credentials were producing a pressure for greater participation in senior political and administrative office, and for equal treatment at social functions.

Based on this understanding, a Colonial Education Department for the Colony and the Protectorate was established in 1906 and operated a separate education policy for the South and the North. This practice continued up to 1948, thirty five years after the two parts of the country had been amalgamated.

As education became more and more important as a means of access to wealth and power, campaign for an institution of higher learning in Nigeria began to gather momentum and eventually, Yaba College was established in Lagos in 1932 to cater for post-secondary students in the areas of Medicine, Veterinary Science, Engineering and laboratory work. In addition, the same political pressure that led to the establishment of Yaba College led the colonial government to introduce a scholarship scheme to enable students to attend British Universities
to train as accountants, doctors and pharmacists. At the same time, the
children of 'slave returnees' and the merchant class on the coastal areas,
particularly around Lagos, were being financed by their families to study in
Europe and North America.

By 1948, there were more than 500 such students in Britain, half of whom
were at University pursuing professional degrees in Medicine, Law and Accountancy.
It was mainly these privately sponsored students, who by 1925, were becoming
A group of them ultimately came together and formed the West African Students
Union in London. Its leading members included Ladipo Solanke (Nigeria),
J.B. Danquah (Ghana), Jomo Kenyatta (Kenya), J.W. de Graft-Johnson (Ghana),
and later on Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana). The stated objectives of the Union
included the following:

1. To provide and maintain a hostel in London for students from
   West Africa.

2. To act as a centre for information and research on African
   history, culture and institutions.

3. To promote good will and understanding between Africans and
   other races.

4. To present to the world a true picture of African life and
   philosophy.

5. To foster a spirit of self-help, unity and co-operation.

1. For detailed information on WASU’s activities, see Olusanya
6. To foster a spirit of national consciousness and racial pride among its members.

7. To publish a monthly magazine called WASU.

(Coleman, 1958:204).

The magazine provided a forum for the discussion of nationalism and helped to stimulate political consciousness among Nigerians and other West Africans in London. Its influence enabled WASU to become a central political and social association for African students between 1925 and 1945. During this time, its leading members, who were also the main contributors to the magazine, wrote on the aspirations of African youth. To J.W. de Graft-Johnson, African youth had "the great yearning for freedom, for emancipation from the yoke of centuries. The youth of Africa everywhere is assailed by the alluring thoughts of a free Africa, of an Africa owing no foreign burden, but stepping in her rightful place as a unit in the powerful army of the human family" (in Coleman, 1958:205). On the same general theme, Solanke in a 1927 essay titled "United West Africa (or Africa) at the bar of the Family of Nations", argued that "In ancient and medieval negroland ... West Africa had organised governments of her own creation whose standards were ... equal to ... any other of the then known world" (in Coleman, 1958:205). He stressed the importance of the writings of Marcus Garvey and W.E.B. DuBois for African nationalism, and followed them by arguing that the continent's decline must be attributed to the slave trade which robbed Africa and enriched North America and Europe. He concluded that "British Imperialism and African Nationalism are two conflicting aspirations, theories and practices". (in Coleman, 1958:206).
Even though most of these writings were marred by racial categories and quasi-mystical calls for an African religion, they did display serious concern for the plight of the mass of the population. Apart from their political writings, Solanke and other members of WASU undertook lecture tours of West Africa between 1929 and 1932. During these tours, branches of WASU were established in several Nigerian cities and attracted the support of intellectuals and community leaders. Many of these branches later played a crucial role in the association which provided the basis for Nationalist political organisations.

The 1930s witnessed a growth in WASU's influence and an emphatic criticism of British rule in West Africa. One important influence behind their growing radicalisation was their subsequent participation in the 6th World Congress of the Communist International held in Moscow. The Congress's stridently anti-imperialist and internationalist position reinforced the outlook which many of them had already formed through writings and activities of Garvey, Dubois and George Padmore. Even if WASU members were not organised to transform Africa along the lines favoured by the Communist International, they recognised the need for a liberated African nation rather than the fragmented entities carved out by the European powers. Thus, in 1935, when Italy invaded Ethiopia, WASU immediately formed the Ethiopian Defence Committee in London. The invasion of Ethiopia confirmed their Garvey-inspired thesis that imperialism, apart from its economic exploitation was essentially a racial question of whites from the Northern hemisphere oppressing blacks in the Southern part of the globe. To them, Ethiopia was an island of black pride. It had over 2,000 years of independent existence, an ancient history, and equality in diplomatic relations with European states. The destruction of this ancient black civilisation was interpreted as a final assault on the black race.
In 1941, WASU held a conference in London and submitted a resolution to the Governor of Nigeria, asking for "a united Nigeria with necessary modifications.... Local tribal loyalty be gradually transcended, submerged, and suppressed by the creation and development of Nigerian loyalty." (cited in Coleman, 1958:239). By this time, the Nigerian Youth Movement had been founded in Nigeria with active assistance of past and present WASU members. In fact, some of the NYM's regional branches were converted offices of WASU as at Jos and Kano. Throughout the second world war, WASU as an organisation continued to work hand in hand with Nationalist organisations in Nigeria, especially the National Youth Movement, acting as the latter's liaison in London. For example, in 1944 when Azikiwe led a delegation of eight journalists to London at the invitation of the British Government to discuss a programme of 'self determination', WASU served as an important informal and collaborative host. The delegation's memo titled "The Atlantic Charter and British West Africa" closely resembled an earlier memo which WASU had submitted to the British Prime Minister following the publication of the Atlantic Charter. In it WASU had posed the question: "Great Britain has proclaimed her determination to re-establish and support the National independence of the countries of Europe, of Ethiopia and of Syria, but what about West Africa?" (cited in Coleman, 1958:239). In subsequent years, WASU, through groups such as the Fabian society, and interested members of parliament continued to act as a pressure group articulating African aspirations towards independence and nationhood.

The struggle for independence was accompanied by a struggle for the expansion of educational opportunities for Nigerians. It was strongly believed that education provided the key to the emancipation of the country and the people
of Nigeria. To this end, pressure was put on the British government to open up more avenues for higher education.

One result was the establishment of the Elliot Commission on Higher Education in West Africa. The Commission's work led to the establishment of University College Ibadan in 1948. The College was affiliated to the University of London, and bore a strong resemblance to the mother institution, with British oriented curricula and administration. With the intensification of nationalist activities in the 1950s, the College was severely criticised for its elitist outlook and foreign orientation, and there were requests for more Universities in the country. In April 1959, the transitional government set up the Ashby Commission "to conduct an investigation into Nigeria's needs in the fields of post-secondary school certificate and higher education over the next twenty years". On the Commission's recommendations, four new and autonomous Universities were established, and University College Ibadan was turned into an independent institution giving Nigeria five Universities by 1962. This marked the beginning of a massive expansion in the number of institutions and of student enrolment in higher education. The consequences of these changes will be discussed later.

Ashby's 1959 estimate of student enrolment in Nigerian Universities by 1966 was 7,500. In the event, this figure was exceeded by 1,300, giving a total enrolment in 1966 of 8,800. By the 1970/71 academic session, the total population of Nigerian undergraduates stood at 14,468, and the figure would have been higher if the civil war had not interrupted the expansion of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka between 1967 and 1970.

Up to the 1970s, political agitation by undergraduates was relatively rare, though there were a few notable incidents ranging from issues domestic to the
Table 6.1: Enrolment Figures in Nigerian Universities, 1964/5 to 1970/1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ibadan</th>
<th>Lagos</th>
<th>Nsukka</th>
<th>Zaria</th>
<th>Ife</th>
<th>Benin</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1964/5</td>
<td>2,284</td>
<td>563</td>
<td>2,482</td>
<td>719</td>
<td>659</td>
<td></td>
<td>6,707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965/6</td>
<td>2,687</td>
<td>773</td>
<td>2,579</td>
<td>957</td>
<td>713</td>
<td></td>
<td>7,709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966/7</td>
<td>2,729</td>
<td>1,116</td>
<td>3,125</td>
<td>973</td>
<td>945</td>
<td></td>
<td>8,888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967/8</td>
<td>2,593</td>
<td>1,859</td>
<td>1,352</td>
<td>1,254</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7,058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968/9</td>
<td>3,118</td>
<td>2,062</td>
<td>1,745</td>
<td>1,663</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8,588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969/70</td>
<td>3,146</td>
<td>2,395</td>
<td>2,351</td>
<td>1,803</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9,695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970/1</td>
<td>3,639</td>
<td>2,535</td>
<td>2,931</td>
<td>2,844</td>
<td>2,411</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>14,468</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Universities, through national political questions, to international affairs. Two of those that took place before independence in 1960 are worth mentioning here. Firstly, the 1944 King's College strike against 'bad food and unhealthy accommodation'. Though it took place in a secondary school rather than an institution of higher education, this incident had important political repercussions, not so much because of the strike itself, but because of the colonial administration's response to it and subsequent nationalist reaction. The colonial authorities arrested all the striking students, tried some and conscripted all those found to be ring leaders into the army. This high-handedness was swiftly denounced by the political parties and trade unions. They saw in it the general repressiveness of colonialism and vowed to press harder for an independent nation.

The second incident occurred in 1959, when the Western Regional government voted huge housing allowances for its members. The students of
University College Ibadan staged demonstrations denouncing the allowances as immodest and out of tune with the prevailing conditions of poverty in the country. In a letter to the House, they pointed out that:

\[
\text{it would be realised that fantastic salaries as are being paid will produce a type of professional politician who is more interested in the pay than in the public service. ... Let us appeal to the Premier not to continue to exploit the indifference with which the people of the West treat all governmental activities in this process of establishing a country where all the state money is spent to enrich the purses of politicians. (cited in Madunagu, 1982:77).}
\]

The politicians responded very sharply to this criticism. One key official of the ruling party commented tersely that:

\[
\text{Nigeria is not the first country to have the experience of undergraduates who seek to run Governments of their respective countries from their University campuses. ... Therefore Nigerian students in the University College, their enthusiasm and ignorance endeavour to apply to our public affairs data copied from textbooks are only following a tradition. (cited in Madunagu, 1982:77).}
\]

Buried in this confrontation was the nucleus of a more serious schism between the ruling class and the undergraduates which was to be resurrected and acted out in later years.

The Dissonance in Post-Independence Student Activism 1960 to 1970

With independence, political and administrative power was transferred from expatriate colonial officers to an indigenous class of politicians assisted by
the educated elite now manning the bureaucracy, and as we argued earlier, this
led to intra-class struggles for the control of the state as the various factions
attempted to maximise their economic and political opportunities. These struggles
spilled over into a number of institutions, including the Universities where they
produced two broad tendencies. The first was a renewed student commitment to
the anti-imperialist struggles of the pre-independence era. Sometimes, this
assumed forms which were more racial and xenophobic as in the 1961 'post-card'
affair which involved a member of the Canadian peace corps. The corps member
had posted a post-card to a friend back home in Canada containing derogatory
remarks about Nigeria. Unfortunately, the card fell into the hands of some
undergraduates. Undergraduates publicised this card, and demanded and got the
expulsion of the corp member from Nigeria. In a sense, this incident sensitised
them against the idea of foreign corpsers in general. Elsewhere, however, their
actions were informed by a broader and more genuine anti-imperialist stance.
Examples include: student opposition to the Anglo-Nigerian Defence Pact which
played a large part in its eventual cancellation; the demonstrations against the
killing of Patrice Lumumba in 1961 and the general trend of events in the Congo;
the consistent demonstrations against the oppressive and racist regimes in South
Africa, Rhodesia, the condemnation of Portuguese colonialism in Africa and the
French testing of atomic weapons in the Sahara. In 1960 for example, students of
the Yaba College of Technology, Lagos, and the University of Ibadan held public
protests over the Sharpeville shootings in South Africa and the French atomistic
tests in the Sahara. In 1966, there were demonstrations all over Nigerian
Universities in support of Rhodesian students in their struggle for majority rule
and individual freedom.
At the same time, this generalised anti-imperialist stance co-existed rather uneasily with the privileged lifestyle of many undergraduates. It was not unusual for a student to have a retinue of working people to clean his room, wash his clothes, make his bed and attend on him at meal times, leaving him with the 'arduous' task of reading philosophy and waiting expectantly for the final transition, on graduation, into the privileged club of civil servants where such 'colonial' lifestyles were the norm. Similarly, the role of the National Union of Nigerian Students - NUNS - formed in 1959, was more or less confined to organising European tours called "Summer Flights", the beneficiaries of which were children from the privileged families in control of state power.

At campus level, student politics followed the general pattern of national politics in being marked by factional struggles in which ethnic origins played a major role and embezzlement of Union funds prevailed. At the University of Ibadan for example, elections became an institutionalised conflict between undergraduates from Yoruba and Igbo families, with the numerically superior Yoruba group winning all the key posts in the Union Executive. Throughout the history of Student unionism in this premier institution, only once in 1974, was a non-Yoruba, John Nwodo, elected to the Presidency; and even then, he faced tremendous opposition from the predominantly Yoruba executive who finally succeeded in removing him from office. Similarly, at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, the election of Adaka Boro, a non-Igbo, as President in 1964 was considered a major achievement, yet to be repeated, given the numerical pre-eminence of the Igbo within the student body.

1. A detailed examination of ethnic based politics at the University of Ibadan has been offered by P. VandeBergh, (1973).
This ethnic polarisation was not restricted to the politics of campus
elections. It also structured student support for candidates fighting for senior
administrative positions in the Universities, the most celebrated case being the
struggles between Eni Njoku and Biobaku at the University of Lagos for the Vice-
Chancellorship. Although Dr. Biobaku was a very unpopular choice with most of
the University community, he was backed by major political forces at the national
level and a significant proportion of the Yoruba students. This factor has been
persistently glossed over by commentators on the conflict because Dr. Biobaku
was stabbed by a Yoruba student, Kayode Adams. In fact, Adams represented a
small and entirely atypical minority of 'maverick' Yoruba undergraduates who at
the time supported Njoku, the non-Yoruba candidate.

In the end therefore, one could argue that while the students frequently
employed anti-imperialist rhetoric and at times demonstrated actively on
international issues, they also allowed themselves to be subtly coopted into the
internal struggles of the indigenous ruling class who were in collaboration with
imperialism, in addition to modelling their own politics on that of the national
ruling class. As a consequence, disenchantment with the domestic situation was
directed at individual political actors, regional fractions of the ruling class, and
occasionally specific events rather than the system that produced them.

Hence, when the military replaced civilians as the principal actors on the
political stage, University undergraduates, together with the rest of the population
enthusiastically welcomed the army's intervention, and called on the nation 'to
support the new military government of General Ironsi'. To them, as to many
others, the military was a national institution untainted by the corruption and
infighting of the politicians. The military, for their part, capitalised on this
popular perception by emphasising the theme of 'National Unity and Stability', as opposed to the 'bad old days of instability and chaos'. Behind the optimistic and seemingly innocent appeal however, lay a 'National Security Doctrine' that was to mature during the 1970s.

But even before then the students' romance with the military had come to an end. Soon after the January 1966 coup, another fraction of the army overthrew the government of General Ironsi on July 29th, and the ensuing disagreements within the various factions of the ruling military and political class precipitated a spate of killings in both North and South, and finally escalated into the civil war. Many analysts argue that intellectuals, especially in media institutions and the Universities, contributed greatly to the escalation of the crisis with their inflammatory writings. General Gowon, the Head of the Federal Military Government was moved to charge that:

\[\ldots\] the attempted secession of the East from the Federation was hatched mainly in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka with the active assistance of some of the senior staff. \(^1\)

Before the beginning of hostilities, it was reported that on several occasions, undergraduates at the University of Nigeria had staged long marches from Nsukka to Enugu demanding the secession of the East from the rest of the Federation. On the Federal side, the agitations emanating from the Northern based Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, for retaliation against the Igbos following the January coup of 1966 (which was widely interpreted by people of Northern origin as an Igbo coup)

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1. Address to Staff and Students of Ibadan University, December 17th, 1967, in Federal Republic of Nigeria, FAITH IN UNITY, (Lagos, Ministry of Information, 1970, p.83.)
were also an important catalyst. If the attempted secession of the East from the Federation was hatched mainly in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka with the active assistance of the senior staff' as General Gowon had declared, there was an equally strong case for the contention that the counter coup of July 1966 was orchestrated at the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The crucial point, therefore, is the active participation of Nigerian intellectuals at the time in the rivalries among the various fractions of the ruling classes. Rather than provide a definition counter to the dominant perspectives put forward by ideologues of these fractions, and by so doing diffuse the tensions, a substantial majority of intellectuals strategically placed in key institutions became willing accomplices in the promotion of ethnic and regional hatred. In this action, University students were among the most active intellectual group. Lack of a wider social vision or willingness and commitment to articulating such a vision must be considered a major contributory factor to the ultimate outcome of these struggles - the civil war.

With the outbreak of the civil war in 1967, General Gowon mobilised Nigerians both physically and intellectually. His call for an all-out war effort emphasised the necessity of 'National Unity and Stability', a theme carried over from the very first days of the first military regime. His populist slogans which appeared on wall-posters and television commercials, relayed by all radio stations, and carried by newspapers throughout the country were: "TO KEEP NIGERIA ONE IS A TASK THAT MUST BE DONE", and "GO ON WITH ONE NIGERIA" (the latter being an adaptation from the General's own surname of Gowon). They met with some success and became a battle cry and rallying point for people irrespective of class, ethnic, religious origins and ideological dispositions. It is clear, therefore, that Nigerians could be mobilised for
patriotic action despite the much publicised problem of ethnicity, religion and regionalism.

However, while one accepts the need to keep Nigeria as a single political entity, it is essential to underline that this notion of unity was developed into a protective ideology for the military-bureaucratic class, which was sustained long after the civil war. Its long survival was secured during the civil war years - 1967 to 1970 - through the militarisation of society as indexed by the massive expansion in military expenditure and personnel and the withdrawal of funds from social welfare; the restriction of political activities through legislation; the freeze of wages and the banning of industrial strikes; and the promotion of military thought through all avenues of communication.

The continuation of this process after the civil war met with resistance, mainly from the University students and labour movement. Hence, the confrontations between the students and the forces of law and order during the 1970s should be seen as one aspect of a wider conflict between opposed world views, rather than as a simple dyad of 'civil-military relations' or just 'student unrests' and 'campus crisis' as some analysts have come to portray them.

Towards a Consolidation of the Military State

With the end of the civil war in 1970, the armed forces reorganised and attempted to consolidate their position taking care not to cause resentment that would lead to dissension within the ranks. This is why there was no general demobilisation exercise as many people expected. Demobilisation was a particularly sensitive issue because already, there was high unemployment and demobilised soldiers had very little chance of alternative employment. Instead, the huge army created by the war continued to take about two-thirds of the total annual budget.
We have already provided details of this defence burden in an earlier chapter. However, it is pertinent to add that in both post war development plans (1970 to 1974 and 1975 to 1980), strong arguments were put forward to justify these massive expenditures and the necessity for 'National Security'. In the first plan, it was argued that:

although the defence and security sector can be regarded as largely unproductive from an economic standpoint, recent experience shows that its effective performance is very crucial to the very existence of the nation. The sector can no longer be treated as a residual factor in the allocation of resources, as this could be self-defeating. Allocation of meagre resources to this sector may impair its efficiency.

Similarly, in the Third National Development Plan, 1975 to 1980, the army again emphasised that:

Although Defence cannot be considered as productive in the economic sense, it is realised that strong and efficient armed forces, which are strong to guarantee national peace and security are indispensable for the normal progress of any country.

This stress on Defence and National Security had two related consequences which we discussed in Chapter 4. To restate them briefly, it resulted in the underfinancing of the agricultural sector, education, health and other social services; yet it could be argued that food shortages, ill health and lack of education constitute serious threats to defence and security of every country. These factors also serve as breeding ground for social discontent and
opposition, and subsequently, incur further expenditure by way of the effort to contain the opposition. In the Nigerian case, such discontent was fairly common among the generality of the population. However, effective resistance was left to groups who could organise themselves and articulate their opposition to militarism. And with political associations banned and union activities legislated against, educational centres especially the Universities, inevitably, became important centres of resistance. The military watched developments in the Universities with a very keen interest. On the one hand, the rapid growth of student enrolments was taken as a measure of development, and since the military wanted to be identified with development efforts it was essential to encourage this trend. On the other hand, Universities were also conceived of as centres for possible subversion that needed close surveillance and control.

Control of the Universities was essential for several reasons. Firstly, they maintained a vocal commitment to independence, not only in the running of their internal affairs but commenting critically on national affairs. Secondly, through research into various aspects of society, including the army, they were capable of seeing through the emperor’s new clothes, and if not necessarily revealing his nakedness, at least describing the spots on his skin. In this way, they could undermine the basis of the legitimacy the army was constructing for itself. The attempt to reconcile these two contradictory attitudes to the Universities produced a crisis of definition for the military-bureaucratic rulers’ educational policy.

As a result of popular pressure and their own pledge to develop higher education, the military expanded and consolidated the six existing Universities, and established four new ones. In the Third National Development Plan,
University enrolment was expected to rise to 53,000 by 1978/79 session from a figure of 14,468 in 1970/71. At least on paper, special emphasis was placed on Science and Technology, since these were considered to be the weak points in the country's manpower requirement. By 1976/77 academic session, seven new Universities were opened at Sokoto, Maiduguri, Port-Harcourt, Jos, Ilorin, Kano and Calabar. While Jos and Ilorin, Kano and Calabar were based on converted campuses of three old Universities (Ibadan, Zaria and Nsukka respectively), the first three were completely new institutions. Total enrolment in the new Universities stood at 3,619 during the first year, bringing the total enrolment in Nigerian Universities to 41,499 in 1976/77. Just before the military handed over power to the civilians in 1979 the figure stood at 49,903.

Using the 1973/4 session figures as a base, this represents an annual increase of about 1,700 per University. The Secretary to the National Universities Commission himself gave the percentage increase as 30% in 1976/77, i.e. about ten percent in each academic year. However, even though the number admitted was twice that of five years earlier, the total number of qualified applicants was rising even faster and many qualified applicants could not secure University places. According to one estimate, the number admitted represented only 5 to 10% of those qualified, the rest being rejected on account of inadequate facilities. But instead of increases in infrastructure and staffing to meet this unsatisfied demand, the Universities witnessed a sharp relative decline in financial appropriations made to them by the Federal Government.

### Table 6.2: Enrolment Figures in Nigerian Universities, 1971/2 to 1978/9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ibadan</th>
<th>Lagos</th>
<th>Nsukka</th>
<th>Zaria</th>
<th>Ife</th>
<th>Benin</th>
<th>Jos</th>
<th>Calabar</th>
<th>Kano</th>
<th>Maiduguri</th>
<th>Sokoto</th>
<th>Ilorin</th>
<th>Port Harcourt</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1971/2</td>
<td>3,742</td>
<td>2,918</td>
<td>3,363</td>
<td>3,835</td>
<td>2,985</td>
<td>250</td>
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<td>17,093</td>
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<td>1972/3</td>
<td>3,783</td>
<td>3,053</td>
<td>3,891</td>
<td>5,177</td>
<td>4,568</td>
<td>417</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20,889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973/4</td>
<td>4,618</td>
<td>3,400</td>
<td>4,677</td>
<td>5,828</td>
<td>4,005</td>
<td>700</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>23,228</td>
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<tr>
<td>1974/5</td>
<td>5,304</td>
<td>3,639</td>
<td>5,800</td>
<td>6,257</td>
<td>4,400</td>
<td>1,048</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>26,448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975/6</td>
<td>6,961</td>
<td>4,416</td>
<td>6,059</td>
<td>7,299</td>
<td>5,671</td>
<td>1,365</td>
<td>515</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>32,286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976/7</td>
<td>8,586</td>
<td>5,982</td>
<td>6,661</td>
<td>7,321</td>
<td>7,249</td>
<td>1,871</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>952</td>
<td>1,158</td>
<td>743</td>
<td>397</td>
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<tr>
<td>1977/8</td>
<td>8,865</td>
<td>7,447</td>
<td>6,727</td>
<td>7,477</td>
<td>8,322</td>
<td>2,257</td>
<td>1,339</td>
<td>1,209</td>
<td>1,796</td>
<td>1,396</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>47,670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978/9</td>
<td>7,781</td>
<td>7,743</td>
<td>7,009</td>
<td>8,010</td>
<td>7,234</td>
<td>2,611</td>
<td>1,971</td>
<td>1,675</td>
<td>2,390</td>
<td>1,462</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>912</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>49,903</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In a recent document prepared by the Academic Staff Union of Nigerian Universities (ASUU), attention is drawn to the historical deterioration in University financing, followed by a corresponding decline in teaching and research facilities. According to the University teachers, since 1973;

The Committee of Vice-Chancellors and NAUT drew attention of Government to the deteriorating conditions in the Universities - the meagre resources and poor working conditions. They jointly called for urgent Government action to save the entire system from further deterioration and to enable them to meet the rising expectations from a nation eager to overcome its backwardness and to catch up with the advanced countries. (ASUU, 1981:1).

By 1977, the deterioration had become so serious that the National Universities Commission set up a Commission of Inquiry:

To examine the financial plans, arrangements and practices of the Universities and other institutions financed through the National Universities Commission and to advise the Commission as to how those plans, arrangements and practices might be modified in the interest of economy and efficiency without detriment to the achievement of their legitimate objectives. (National Universities Commission, 1978:7).

After taking evidence from all the institutions of higher learning concerned, the Committee submitted its report to the NUC. In the opening paragraph, it notes that:
From the fiscal year 1976/77 the National Universities Commission has not been able to obtain as much of the funds it requested from Government for the Universities as would enable them adequately to execute their programmes and the situation has grown progressively worse since then. The NUC has made several representations to functionaries of Government, up to the highest level, but these have only yielded marginal results. (NUC, 1978:6).

The slide which started with the expansion of University population in 1973 had reached crisis dimensions by 1978.

To fully comprehend the seriousness of the situation, and the impact it had on the political events of the 1970s, it is essential to present the reports' major findings in some detail:

(a) Physical Facilities and Services

i. Teaching Facilities

From our tour around campuses and discussions with officials it became obvious that, in practically every one of the older Universities, the rate of teaching facilities has fallen behind the rate of growth in student population and expansion in academic activities. Libraries have become inadequate for books and readers alike; laboratories and lecture rooms have also become inadequate to the extent that students are cramped into the former in many cases, while in respect of lecture rooms, there are said to be many occasions when students stand in the corridors to listen to lectures going on inside crowded lecture rooms. In practically every University two or more academic staff share offices meant for one, while in at least one older University there are some academic staff who do not have offices even to share. In the teaching hospitals, facilities in teaching clinics were observed to be inadequate both in terms of accommodation and consulting staff. For example, an orthopaedic clinic we saw had 25 students crowded round a consultant and a patient in a small room. In the same teaching hospital we saw an acquired private building being modified and equipped for the clinical training of dental students. (NUC, 1978:8).
ii. Research Facilities

.... from one University to the other the Committee heard complaints by academics that the NUC had not given them grants for research or that very little had been given, and that hardly any research activity was going on as a result. The Committee has no reason to disbelieve the claim that research in our Universities has ground to a halt.... (NUC, 1978:10).

iii. Student Accommodation

The Committee inspected student living accommodation at every University and found it to be inadequate in the older Universities. In some places 3 or 4 students officially live in rooms meant for two, and rolled-up mattresses are stuffed into every imaginable space; these are slept upon at night by unofficial residents who are called "squatters", with the result that a room meant for two could actually hold six or seven students at night. In one University we saw evidence that students sleep in corridors and on grass lawns in the open. It was found that although Government policy is that 75% of students in the Universities should be housed, in most of the older Universities there is no accommodation for as many as that number, and in some cases accommodation is available for 50% or less. To compound the problem, in most Universities, even the 25% who should be living off-campus do not do so. The Committee was given many reasons for the inability of Universities to enforce the off-campus accommodation rule. In practically every University town, suitable accommodation is nonexistent and whatever little exists is too expensive for students to afford. The low fees for board and lodging, which operated between September 1977 and the time of the visits of the Committee in November/December 1977, make it seem unfair for some students to live out at great expense. Transportation was also both expensive and difficult. (NUC, 1978:11).

iv. Staff Quarters

.... staff accommodation is also insufficient in the Universities, and since it is part of the conditions of service of senior staff, Universities have to pay heavy rent bills on leased quarters ... the housing loan scheme, which could have assisted University staff to build their own houses in University towns and thereby relieve the pressure on University quarters, is non-existent in many Universities due to lack of funds to execute it. (NUC, 1978:12).

These quotations indicate not only the difficulties of students, staff and the Universities as a whole, but also of the urban areas in general.
To consider housing as an example at a time when barracks were in construction all over the country to house over 250,000 soldiers, it is difficult to attribute the inability to house less than 50,000 University undergraduates to lack of funds, as the government argued. Rather, it was a result of political expediency. While the authorities saw dissension within the armed forces as detrimental to its continuing control over the rest of society, and took steps to head it off, similar considerations did not apply to other sectors of society. Instead, it was thought that a little coercion would bring them into line.

The Politics of Administrative Control

Before we trace the growth of student unrest as a reaction to military policies, it is essential to consider what one writer has termed 'The Politics of Autonomy and Control' of Nigerian Universities. In the period covered by this thesis, the Chancellor of each University was appointed by the Federal Military Government, and was the ceremonial head of the University. His duties include opening and closing of convocation, and he is also a member of the effective body controlling allocative decisions, the University Council, with its membership drawn from within and outside the institution. The Council meets from time to time, chaired by the Pro-Chancellor, and its decisions are implemented by the Vice-Chancellor. General academic policy is formulated by the University Senate consisting mainly of senior academics. In his day to day administration of the University, the Vice-Chancellor is assisted by both academic and administrative members of Committees empowered to carry out certain tasks for the administration.

One other important element in the administrative structure is the

position of Visitor. In Nigeria, the Visitor has remained the Head of that
government body which controls the University. Since 1975 when the Federal
Military Government took over the Universities, the Visitor to all the Federally
controlled Universities has been the Head of State. The Visitor, who was
originally intended to serve as an arbiter of internal disputes was converted by the
Military into a powerful channel of direct intervention in University affairs.

Situated between the Universities and the Government is the National
Universities Commission (NUC). Since 1959, the NUC remained an administrative
unit in the Federal Cabinet Office, and in 1974, it was transformed by Decree No. 1
into a statutory body charged with "the responsibility of advising the Federal
Government on all aspects of Higher Education ... and the co-ordination,
development and financing of Nigerian Universities". On paper therefore, the NUC
is supposed to be an advisory and co-ordinating body. In practice, this is far
from the case, as will be shown below.

Apart from the NUC, there is also a powerful non-statutory body called
the Committee of Vice-Chancellors made up of the Vice-Chancellors of all the
Nigerian Universities. This was formed initially to provide each Vice-Chancellor
with an insight into the administrative approaches of other Vice-Chancellors, and
to make joint recommendations to the government through the National
Universities Commission. In recent times, however, the Committee has grown
in status and assumed a semi-statutory role, with its Chairman (rotated among
the members), having access to the highest level of government.

Against the background of this complicated organisational structure, we
will try to show how the Federal Government attempted to usurp the role of
internal University bodies; how the authorities tried to control the Universities indirectly through the National Universities Commission and Committee of Vice-Chancellors; and finally, to indicate the political consequences of this form of direct and indirect subjection of the Universities.

Direct Control

At independence, Nigerian Universities, like the press, adopted the principle of autonomy. This was taken to include the right to choose teaching and research topics; to select, examine and graduate its students; to recruit staff and decide on their promotion; to discipline students and staff; to decide when to open and close the Universities taking into account the general policy on education in the country; and above all, to allow its members free reign in the analysis and criticism of prevailing ideas and government policies. Through these freedoms it was argued, the Universities could best contribute to the development of the country.

Not surprisingly, this far-reaching definition of 'autonomy' was one of the first things the military authorities directed their attention to. Dismissing the traditional conception of a University as 'ivory-towerish' and out of touch, they redefined the Universities' goals in technicist terms, arguing that Nigeria needed 'practical men' instead of 'theorists'. To ensure this, a close watch of the Universities was considered essential.

In 1974, University service was 'harmonised' with the civil service which meant that Universities, to a large extent, became subject to civil service rules and regulations. It also placed the Universities under the direct control of the civil servants, through the Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Education.
As summarised by the University teacher’s union - ASUU:

Universities lost all semblance of freedom and were collectively reduced to a little sub-department of government. The National Universities Commission (NUC) became supra-authority over Universities. But NUC itself was under the Ministry of Education hence, was controlled and manipulated by civil servants. The little advantages by the way of fringe benefits which made University service satisfying were abolished. ... In the circuitous process of University budgeting, we go through the long winding course from Departmental budget to Faculty to University Finance Committee to Council to NUC to Ministry of Education... (ASUU, 1981:2).

The requirements of Departments and Universities become less appreciated the further one moves up this budgetary ladder, resulting into scaling down of overall University budgets.

In addition the Cabinet Office started interferring directly with University administration. In the 1973 University Teachers’ strike, General Gowon not only threatened to dismiss all University teachers, but also to close down the Universities without consultation with the various Councils. The General’s action, apart from precipitating a wave of anti-intellectual writings in the mass media, and the glorification of the cult of money, triggered off a mass exodus of skilled and scarce University personnel to the private sector of the economy.

In 1975, for the first time, Vice-Chancellors were appointed without consultation with the Universities concerned. Many of the Universities resented this imposition and the transfer of Vice-Chancellors from University to University
as junior members of the Civil Service. Moreover, even the 'independent' Vice-Chancellors found their powers curtailed. In February 1975, following student demonstrations in the Universities, four Universities - Zaria, Ibadan, Lagos and Ife - were closed down. On February 22nd, 1975, the Vice-Chancellors of these Universities in consultation with Senates of individual Universities, decided to reopen the Universities. They explained that order had returned to the campuses and that normal academic work could now continue. In fact, a number of students returned to the campuses and were signing the traditional forms of 'good conduct' and financial restitution for damaged property, when on February 27th, exactly five days later, the military countered the Vice-Chancellors with an order that the Universities should remain closed till directives to the contrary came from the Federal Cabinet office.

The Universities saw this as an act of humiliation, and a usurpation of the authority of individual Universities, since they were no longer in the position to determine when to open and close.

Finally, political controversy over the geographical distribution of University places, a constant source of conflict since the days of British administration, set the stage for powerful pronouncements from members of the University community. The Military had attempted to solve the historical problem by introducing a quota system of admissions. Towards this end, they established a Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB). While the Universities argued that the body should serve as a clearing house for applications to avoid the duplication of offers to students with impressive grades, the Government and other sections of the country - the 'disadvantaged areas' - wanted an outright quota system.
Professor Ade Ajayi lamented that: "a University that cannot be entrusted with the right to select its students can hardly be entrusted to decide which student should pass or fail" (New Nigerian, 10th January, 1977, p. 32).

One other senior University Professor, Sam Aluko of the University of Ife, declared that "the government is attempting to not only regulate but also to determine the internal complexion of the Nigerian Universities without adequate consultation with and consideration of those appointed to run these institutions". (Daily Times, January 27th, 1977).

Despite these worthy sentiments, it is important to note that the pressure on the Universities were occasionally initiated from within the Universities themselves by self-seeking officers. As the Secretary to the NUC, Dr. Jibril Aminu pointed out:

the institution of the Visitor was used as a shunt to bypass the University Councils and the Federal Ministry of Education with the highest authorities of government. (Daily Times, June 19th, 1978, p. 32).

In the same article, he went on to accuse the Vice-Chancellors of using those connections to establish personalised "machine-type administrations" whereby:

"there is so much internal alienation of staff that the University authorities are forced to set up a 'political machine' type administration in order to suppress dissent or the critical appraisal of community issues."

As the Universities' traditional authority weakened so the military's power
increased, producing a corresponding rise in frustration and dissent among both staff and students.

This feeling of frustration was not confined to the Universities. It was general within the less privileged segment of society. The distinguishing feature of the Universities however, was the presence of an active and organised student body on the campuses who were prepared to protest against their conditions of life and the policies that adversely affected them, and by extension, their less privileged compatriots. What follows is a chronological account of these struggles during the 1970s. They range from protests on welfare issues directly affecting the students, through issues of internal University administration, to larger societal questions. Particular emphasis will be placed on the shifts in the character of student agitations, the reactions from University authorities, the manner of intervention by 'law-and-order' agencies, and the subsequent development of these crises and their wider implications.

**Students for a Democratic University: 1970-1972**

As late as 1969, the Head of State, General Gowon, could still say:

I would like to congratulate the students of our Universities for the comparatively high sense of responsibility which they have shown in the midst of the formidable exhibition of student discontent and unrest in the University world. ... It would be an abusage of privilege to visit upon the University grievances which may well be against the shortcomings of the society as a whole, or to which a destructive battle in a University which is run with the monies from tax payers and with assistance from abroad. Our students have been sensible
enough not to be misguided by many of their counterparts elsewhere. 1

The statement acknowledges 'shortcomings of the society' and puts the central message across in a conciliatory tone. Nevertheless, that same year, the President of the national student body called on the Federal Government to lift the State of Emergency under which several dissenters were held in detention. The students argued that with the war over, and a fairly satisfactory reconciliation of the warring parties, there was no longer a need for a state of emergency.

The following year, Ife and Ibadan University student unions called on the Federal Government to come to the assistance of needy students in all Nigerian Universities, and in addition, to inaugurate a comprehensive educational policy free from fee paying at all levels. These two calls marked the beginning of what was to prove premature General Gowon's conciliatory remarks about Nigerian students vis a vis students in other parts of the world. By all indications, it is the trauma of the civil war which dampened the activism of the students.

In 1970, the most decisive departure from the passivity praised by General Gowon came at Ahmadu Bello University when students demonstrated for an improvement in their accommodation and food, and for the abolition of demonstration laws. They received widespread support from sister Universities and other institutions of higher learning. For the first time, the students' central body - NUNS - succeeded in co-ordinating collective action among its

1. An address by the Visitor, His Excellency Major-General Yakubu Gowon at the 21st Foundation Day Ceremony of the University of Ibadan, November 17th, 1969.
members and there were sympathy demonstrations at Ibadan, Ife, Lagos, Yaba College of Technology, Ibadan Polytechnic, and the Nigerian Science School, Lagos. This agitation wrested concessions from the Ahmadu Bello University authorities. New halls were built, together with new catering facilities to take care of the growing population of the institution.

A new dimension was added to student struggles during the 1971 demonstration at the University of Ibadan with the killing of Kunle Adepeju, a second year undergraduate of Agricultural Economics. Since this incident marked a watershed in Nigerian Student Unionism, we will briefly reconstruct the events.

Students of Nnamdi Azikiwe Hall, the largest on the Campus were dissatisfied with the way it was managed and especially with the activities of the Cafeteria Manageress. Events finally came to a head on January 23rd, 1971 when the students held their traditional annual party. They were very dissatisfied with the handling of the party by the Cafeteria Manageress, especially the shortage of food items, and drinks. Between January 23rd and 28th, the Hall Executive made efforts to solve the problem with the University authorities. Very little headway was made through the Hall Warden and his Deputy.

Ultimately, the Hall Chairman, Mr. Lufedeju, called a meeting of Congregation for 28th of January. At the meeting, the students demanded the improvement of their facilities and the removal of Mrs. G. Apampa, the Cafeteria Manageress against whom they levelled allegations of corruption. In the interim, the students unanimously voted to go on hunger strike till their demands were met by the University authorities.
In a previous release titled: "Gentlemen, it is Time for Congress Today: Zikites prepare for Action" the Executive emphasised the deterioration in the general condition of Hall services.

The Cafeteria Manageress in particular has been the stumbling block. We can no longer tolerate her in this Hall; she has outlived her usefulness, hence she must go where her opinion overrides all others.*

On the Hall authorities in general, they stated that:

The policy of Hall solidarity and consciousness which we have been trying to effect has been one sided as a result of the lukewarm attitudes and lack of interest on the part of the Hall authority. They are more interested in the benefits they enjoy as Hall officials and not in the affairs of the students. It is rather disappointing to know that the Hall Master has visited the Hall once since the session started; the Warden hardly shows any interest in Hall activities; and worst of all, the mischievous and unpatriotic activities of the Cafeteria Manageress. She is the brain behind most of our difficulties including shortage of food and cutlerys.*

In the same memo, they lamented further, that:

Within a short period we have had about four Wardens; the circumstances surrounding their constant resignation are yet to be explained. The

* Hall Chairman's release, Nnamdi Azikiwe Hall, January 28th, 1971.
previous Executive had petitioned against all these irregularities
but these petitions had always been thrown aside, hence force or
violence should be the next step.*

It was against this background that about 300 students of the Hall decided to march
to the Vice-Chancellor's residence to register their protest. According to them,
"all appeals to the Hall authorities to resolve the issue have proved futile".
When the Zik Hall students, led by the President of the University students'
union arrived at the Vice-Chancellor's residence at 11 p.m. the Vice-
Chancellor refused to see them. In his own words:

I told them that I considered myself old enough to be their father
and therefore to earn enough respect and consideration from them
not to have been woken up in this way and treated in this way.

This paternalistic treatment of the students at the height of the crisis
reflects accurately, the general paternalism in the administration of the
Universities where the students were looked upon as juveniles 'who should have
respect for their elders'. Derived from a preferred interpretation of the
traditional African family and social structure where age and parental authority
dictate relationships, this attitude played down the elders' reciprocal
responsibilities to the young, and took no account of the changes produced by the
marriage of African and Western cultural values, especially the requirement that
students should develop critical perspectives. As the Kazeem Commission was to
remark later, "It ought to be realised that we are now in an age where things are
moving fast. Time was, when the "grandpapa knew better". Today, children

* Hall Chairman's release, Nnamdi Azikiwe Hall, January 28th, 1971.
are more articulate and inquisitive and they are not prepared to accept what they are told without question." (Kazeem Report, 1971:103). Between January 30th and 1st of February, widespread support for Azikiwe Hall students from the remainder of the students' population turned the situation into a general confrontation between the administration and the student body. From now on, negotiations were carried out between the administration and the Student Union Executive, with the participation of the Azikiwe Hall Executive.

Following negotiations, the Vice-Chancellor directed that Mrs. Apampa should "stay away from the hall and her duties" till further notice, while an investigation was carried out to decide on her future. Unfortunately, the failure to live up to promises in the past had made the students suspect the administration and they opted to continue the hunger strike. Justice Kazeem puts it thus:

... I am satisfied that the degree of mutual confidence which should be expected between the University administration and the student body had completely disappeared before the crises, hence the students were only prepared to take whatever promises or assurances given to them by the University administration with 'some pinch of salt'. (Kazeem Report, 1971:22).

Similarly, members of the Nigerian Academy of Arts, Science and Technology commented in their press release that: "the very prolongation of the hunger strike was due to the students' lack of confidence and trust in the University authorities arising from a history of unfilled official promises." (Kazeem Report, 1971:62).

The continuation of the hunger strike coupled with the excitement
engendered by inflammatory releases translated the situation into a festival to be
celebrated with drums and chanting. War images were invoked. The following
release of 1st February, known as the "Mobilisation Release" captures most of
the themes. It states:

"Nnamdi Azikiwe Hall Crisis: Mobilisation

"For the past 72 hours, 550 students of Nnamdi Azikiwe Hall had
been on hunger strike. The bone of contention has been that the
Cafeteria Manageress should be removed from their Hall. The
Students' Union Executive right from Thursday night when the
crisis burst open has sapped its energies towards finding a
peaceful solution to the problem. At 10 a.m. yesterday, we held
a meeting with the Vice-Chancellor, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor,
the Acting Registrar, the Hall Master and Warden of the Zik Hall.

"Put bluntly the position of the University authority is that the
students should call off the hunger strike then a formal statement
would be made on the future of Mrs. G.O. Apampa, the Cafeteria
Manageress. The students want Mrs. Apampa to be formally
transferred from their Hall first before they could return to the
eating table and talk about improvement in the catering services
of the Hall.

"... At this very grave situation, we are not concerned on the
niceties of who and what was right/wrong.

The Students' Union now places all students in the University on
a state of Alert in preparation for a general Mobilisation. "We
are not calling for an upsurge of mob-psychology. At a meeting
with the Hall Chairman at 2 a.m. this morning it was agreed that
the Executive should continue to explore all ways of finding solution
to the situation. At the same time we are not ready to condone any
situation where our brother Zikites would be groaning to death under
our nose.

The spontaneous solidarity demonstration this morning should warn
the authorities of the gravity of the situation. As far as we are
concerned we reject starvation as a weapon of coercing students
into a decision. We reject Genocide. We still support rationality
but we owe it a responsibility to the students body in this campus
that under no circumstances can we become stay-aloof when a
whole Hall is gradually being exterminated by hunger.

"A solution must be found now! By now we mean this Morning."

Yakubu Abdullazeez,
(signed)
Public Relations.
And that 'Morning', as the students gathered outside the office of the Vice-Chancellor, the police, fully armed, suddenly emerged. Their presence on the campus had been requested by the authorities through the Vice-Chancellor’s instruction to the Chief of Security - Mr. E.A. Oke - on the night of January 31st in anticipation that the situation was 'likely to disturb public tranquility and might probably occasion a breach of the peace'.

Confrontation between students and the police resulted in the death of Kunle Adepeju, with several other students left wounded, others arrested, and property worth thousands of Naira destroyed.

Amidst the national indignation that greeted the killing of Adepeju, and the numerous condemnations published in the papers, the authorities of the University released a controversial press statement as follows:

"UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN
IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

The authorities of the University of Ibadan regret to announce that the students of the University today rioted and made a mass attack on University property inflicting injury on persons and endangering life in general. In the attempt of the police to restore order, the students attacked with such fury that one student unfortunately and regretfully died in the encounter and four others were injured...."

S.J. Okudu (signed)
Ag. Registrar.

By placing the blame for the violence entirely on the students and absolving the authorities of all responsibility, this release seriously undermined the credibility of their proposed inquiry which many people saw as a cover up exercise.

In addition, it reinforced the contention that University autonomy was
now nominal and that the University authorities were in close alliance with the
top hierarchy of the Military-bureaucracy in control of state power. As a result,
two groups of academics issued releases rejecting the official University version.

The release from the Marxist informed Nigerian Academy of Arts,
Science and Technology - NAST - dissociated them absolutely from the official
account. They argued that:

"what happened on Monday, February 1st, was an invasion of
our campus by armed policemen who shot at our students when
they were carrying out peaceful demonstration in defence of their
legitimate grievances. ... The deaths that have occurred are
results of cold blooded murder."¹

The Academy demanded a Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the circumstances
surrounding these deaths; and called on "all patriotic organisations, and in
particular, Nigerian workers' Associations to rise unanimously to their civic
responsibilities to ensure that our Universities do not degenerate into fascist
institutions".

Similarly, the National University Teachers (NUT), Ibadan Branch said
it 'completely dissociated itself from the official release...' and urged the Visitor
to the University to institute a Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the crisis.

As a result of the general outcry, an inquiry was finally set up, as a
one man Commission in the person of Justice Kazeem.

1. Nigerian Academy of Arts, Science and Technology,
The Commission had the following terms of reference:

To: (i) establish the immediate and remote causes of the disturbances;

(ii) submit a detailed account of the incidents;

(iii) ascertain the nature and assess the propriety of the measures taken to quell the disturbances with particular reference to the circumstances in which one student was killed and others were injured;

(iv) make recommendations as to the respective degrees of responsibility of all concerned; and make any other appropriate findings."

After taking evidence from the parties concerned and other members of the public, the Commission produced a report which was critical of the authorities; their general style of administration and the handling of the crisis in particular.

It gave the following reasons as the major 'remote causes' of the conflict. 1. inadequate hostel accommodation and unsatisfactory supply of food and catering services; 2. strained relationship between domestic staff and students; 3. stringent administration of discipline with particular reference to rustication of students; 4. the use of law enforcing agencies by University authorities during student demonstrations; and 5. lack of adequate communication between staff and students. Among the immediate causes, the Commission noted "the question of non-participation of students in decision making bodies of the University" which had produced a feeling of alienation among the students.

Despite these strictures on the University authorities, the Commission
also issued a strongly worded criticism of the students arguing that:

it was totally wrong for the students generally to turn what began as a peaceful demonstration into a violent one at the mere sight of the police on the campus. ... the students could not be regarded as peace loving citizens when they failed to disperse after tear-smokes were thrown at them by the police; but instead, they continued to throw stones at the police. (Kazeem Report, 1971).

The Government followed-up with their own statement, which further underlined the absolute priority of 'law and order' by arguing that:

the police have a duty to be on the campus, as elsewhere, in order to maintain law and order by whatever appropriate but lawful means they may have at their disposal. Riot in any form, committed whether by students or by any other group of citizens deserves to be quelled by law enforcement agencies in a manner and to the extent necessary to restore law and order. The Government expects and believes that all men of goodwill must deprecate student indiscipline and rowdyism, especially when accompanied as in the instant case by resort to violence and wanton destruction of and damage to public or private properties and in this case the University of Ibadan. This is the reason for the imposition of levy of £1 per student. It cannot be overemphasised that drastic diseases require drastic remedies. ... If the police are to fulfil their proper role as the watchdogs of all the citizens of this country, they deserve the co-operation of every one in the maintenance of law and order. ... The unfortunate death of Mr. Adekunle Adepeju
in the course of the riot is deeply regretted. However, the incident serves as a very sad reminder to all of us that lawlessness and anarchy should be scrupulously eschewed by all those who cherish individual freedom and the rule of law. (my emphasis). 1

Despite this strong emphasis on 'law and order', and the deterrent effect of severe punitive measures however, the Government's hopes were to remain unfulfilled. Rather than serving to deter campus unrest, Adepeju's death marked the beginning of a steady deterioration in the relations between the students on the one hand, and the University authorities, the police and the Government on the other. Adepeju became a symbol of repressed political dissent and his death was related to the Sharpeville shooting in South Africa of 1960, and to incidents during the colonial period, as in this statement from a 1973 release by the President of NUNS, Mr. Chukwu Ozie Maduka:

No doubt when we recall the event of February 1st, 1971, it conjures to mind the equivalent sorrowful event of the shooting of unarmed striking miners at Enugu except that in one case the perpetrators of that outrageous crime were protecting the interest of an alien sovereign while in this latter case it was the suppression of the black man by his fellow black man. 2

He argued further that Adepeju's death was not just a result of Zik Hall students demanding better catering management but had to be seen in the context of the general development of higher education in the country. According to Maduka,

after independence the former assistants to the Colonial administration had constituted themselves into a dominant class enjoying special privileges and had used their control of higher education to prevent others from entering the charmed circle. Hence, when 'outsiders' succeeded in entering these institutions and demanded the extension of privileges not only to themselves but to other members of the society, the ruling class managers of these Universities found this idea intolerable, and refused even to sit and discuss the issues with these 'up-starts'. They therefore resorted to force to suppress the aspirations of the subordinate classes. Hence, in the Ibadan crisis, the Vice-Chancellor claimed that children from poor homes were responsible for breaking windows and the general disorder in the campuses, which amounted to a call to exclude the sons of the poor from institutions of high learning if law and order was to be maintained on the campuses. Maduka concluded that, this elitist attitude had led to greater solidarity and class struggle in the Universities. In his own words:

Kunle's death was to mark the end of an era; an era characterised by high-handedness on the part of University authorities who saw themselves as living in a class miles above that of the students; an era marked by master-servant relationship between staff and students; an era marked by the solution of problems by violent confrontations. Ironically, in any case, this violent means of resolving contradictions did have its own fruits. It gave birth to a post-1971 realisation that students were no longer to be treated as little immature creatures but as mature and responsible human beings.  

1. Eze Maduka op. cit.
This sense that Adepeju's death marked a break with the past was further reinforced by the events which occurred during the Memorial Day celebrations three years later, and were to recur throughout the 1970s.

Since his death in 1971, NUNS had 'decreed' that February 1st of each year be marked as Adepeju Memorial Day. On that day, no lectures were to be conducted on any of the member campuses; mourning processions were to be carried out, and symposia conducted on any relevant topic. At the University of Ibadan where he was killed, the local Union decided that, on that day, apart from the NUNS directed series of activities, the students should proceed to his grave at Molete and lay a wreath. For the first two years, 1972 and 1973, these activities were conducted without any 'breakdown in law and order'. But in 1974, the students outlined a more ambitious programme of activities and sent a copy to the local Police Chief as directed. The police approved the plans subject to major modifications, including the firing of gun-salutes, the display of fireworks on the campus, and the proposed procession outside the campus, and assembly at Dugbe market. Students were directed to leave the campus in a convoy of buses which were to stop only at the cemetery where the students would disembark, lay the wreath and say prayers. After consultations between students, University authorities and the police, a revised programme along these lines was finalised and the police were to accompany the students to the cemetery to ensure that they kept to the agreed programme.

However, things did not go so smoothly. The characteristic traffic-jam in Ibadan held up the students' convoy of buses for some time. At this point, excited members of the public surrounded the buses and formed a fairly big crowd. They joined the chanting students in the procession. Out of excitement, some students disembarked when the convoy had reached Oke-Bola,
just a few metres away from the main market area.

The police, it appears, interpreted this as an act of defiance and a major challenge to their authority. Thus, without any act of violence on the part of the students, the police tried to force them back into the buses. The students replied by throwing missiles, and in course of the confrontation, several students were injured and others arrested and taken away for questioning in Lagos.

Reaction on the other campuses, as had now become standard practice, was swift. At ABU and Lagos, barricades were raised and the resulting clashes with the police not only saw several wounded and arrested, but this time, the students of these two Universities also secured a number of police and army officers as hostages. At ABU, an army Major was taken hostage, and his Land Rover set ablaze, while in Lagos, 5 police constables were taken as hostages, and it took a combined air, sea and land operation to rescue them. The taking of hostages by University students marked another departure in police-student confrontations. At Nsukka, Ife, Benin and other institutions of higher learning like the Polytechnics, there were demonstrations of support with students raising barricades at the entrances into their respective campuses. Ultimately, Lagos, Ibadan and Zaria were closed down.

As in the 1971 crisis which led to Adepeju's death, the Military authorities issued a statement condemning the students and praising the police for their restraint:

Throughout this period of lawlessness and unbridled provocation by the students the police behaved with the utmost restraint and applied only the minimum of force required to restore law and order. No
single shot was fired and no person was critically injured. The Federal Military Government commends the discipline, sense of duty and restraint of the Nigerian Police throughout the period; it is these qualities which have marked out the force as one of the finest of its kind on this continent.  

The Government statement went on to declare that:

The Federal Military Government takes a serious view of the wave of lawlessness, arson, kidnapping and assault on law enforcing agents unleashed on the community by the students on this occasion. A situation in which a section of the community sets itself up against the law of the country and in which it arrogates to itself the unlawful role of burning the properties of the Government and of kidnapping and assaulting law enforcing agents can only lead to anarchy; and no government, military or civilian, can tolerate such a situation.  

Finally, it appealed to "parents and guardians who have children/wards in the Universities and institutions of learning to leave no stone unturned in impressing upon their children/wards the virtues and rewards of a disciplined life."

Again, the familiar themes of 'anarchy', 'law and order', 'youthful exuberance' and to use Elliot's words, the setting of "those who resort to violence outside of

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society" prevailed over any other form of consideration. The rest of the community - the law abiding majority - had to be awakened to the dangers of this external threat, and enlisted in an effort of collective defence. This is unequivocally stated in the Government's last paragraph:

Law and order must be maintained to enable all the citizens and all sections of the community to pursue their legitimate callings without the fear of molestation from lawless elements. The Federal Military Government is confident that the vast majority of the citizens of this country and students are law abiding and will co-operate with the Governments to ensure that law and order is maintained and that peace and stability on which depends our economic and social progress continue uninterrupted.¹

National Service and the Student Crisis

From the 1974 Adepeju Memorial demonstrations, we may now turn to the 1973 protest against National Service.

In December 1972, at the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria Convocation, General Gowon announced that the Government was to introduce a National Service scheme for new graduates of all Nigerian Universities.

Since Independence, the activities of American Service Corps members, highlighted by the 1961 'Post-Card Protests' had led to calls for an indigenous National Service Scheme for school graduates on a voluntary basis. By the end of the civil war, such calls multiplied and University undergraduates put forward

specific proposals on the way the Service should be organised. Such a service
the students argued, would contribute towards the rehabilitation, reconciliation
and reconstruction exercise after the war.

The demand was considered popular enough by the Military authorities
to be given particular prominence in the Second National Development Plan, 1970
which stated that:

High priority will also be given to the establishment of a National
Youth Service Organisation designed to develop young persons in
simulated work conditions. The primary aim of the organisation
is to provide youth with appropriate training in various skills in
real working conditions, inculcating in them a healthy attitude
towards manual labour. The organisation will also provide a
means of channelling the talents and energies of youth towards
national service through the spirit of community service...

Taking special note of the growing pool of urban unemployed youth in Nigeria,
the official conception of the service emphasised the:

Development of Youth Service organisation as a measure against
youth unemployment. A National Youth Corps will be established,
designed to provide healthy work orientation for young unemployed
school leavers. The corps will be deployed on projects in the
rural communities involving the building of roads, bridges, schools
and dispensaries. In the process various skills will be acquired

in the areas of carpentry, wielding, shoe-making, pottery, electrical works, motor and tractor driving, automobile repair, and bricklaying. ¹

But in December 1972 when further details of the scheme were released, again at a Zaria Convocation, it was limited to fresh University graduates with no mention of 'unemployed school leavers' as originally stated in the plan. In a military conscription style, the scheme was to start in July 1973. Vice-Chancellors of the Universities were to consult with the students and to provide a feedback to the Government.

Although the students were generally critical of the scheme and especially its restrictive nature, they agreed to attend a workshop with the Committee of Vice-Chancellors at the University of Ibadan on February 23rd, 1973. This achieved very little, and the student ultimately walked out of the meeting alleging that the Vice-Chancellors were there simply to rubber stamp the details of a scheme already worked out by the establishment. They also extended their condemnation to include the Federal Government, contending that, the authorities were guilty of 'lack of consultation and behind the scene treatment of the students'. Consequently, they demanded direct consultation with the Military authorities. Such consultation was however not forthcoming and the students concluded that they were being used as a scapegoat for the social difficulties of the country. They saw the scheme as aimed at regulating or containing the growing intellectual opposition to the regime. Their general sentiments can be gleaned from some of the placards carried by the students on

When the various delegates returned to their campuses after the 'NYSC Workshop' and reported the outcome of the meeting, the students embarked on protest demonstrations all over the country. Amidst the running battles with the police, the National Executive of the NUNS met at Zaria and issued a press statement which they placed in all Nigerian dailies through paid advertisements. Their declarations included the following:

1. That they accepted the idea of National Service in principle, for patriotic reasons.

2. That they recognised that the Nation belonged to everyone but resented the situation whereby a few individuals 'maintain fleets of cars at the tax-payer's expense as to the farmers, youths, students and workers who are allowed lean subsidies grudgingly'.

3. That '... there are many unemployed young men who occupy themselves in armed robbery and other anti-social activities and who could be gainfully oriented and deployed in the National Service Corps.'

The students also resolved that there should be proper consultation with the prospective participants in the scheme, that the duration of the scheme be reduced to one year, and that members be given a 'reasonable' salary. But more importantly, they requested that "free education in institutions of higher learning should be prerequisite for the commencement of this programme", and that
"there should be a guarantee of regular employment for all those to be involved in this programme prior to the completion of service of the corps".

It is inviting to argue that the students were more concerned with their own special privileges as evidenced by the demand that remuneration be increased and 'privately' sponsored students should have their expenses returned to them. In fact, this was the line taken by Government officials and those critical of the students' opposition to the scheme. However, while one cannot totally discount such an argument, it might again be argued further, that no matter how concerned particular students might have been with their own personal advantages, they also made an effort to highlight the contradictions of Nigerian society by pointing out how such contradictions structured the overall policy of the scheme. They did this by raising questions about youth unemployment, indiscipline and consumption styles of the privileged minority at a time when the rest of the population were living below the line of poverty, contradictory education policy that discriminated against other Nigerians, and the authoritarian pattern of communication in which the rulership took very little account of the feelings of their subordinates. In essence, it was this fundamental inequality in economic, political and social power that made it possible for the leadership to mark out those who needed 'disciplining', those whose 'moral tone' needed raising, those who should 'acquire the spirit of self-reliance' and finally, those who would serve as cheap labour for state and private capital. ¹

This contradiction was papered over by officials to key themes from the

¹. Based on the Objectives of the National Youth Service Corps, as stated in Decree No. 24, the National Youth Corps Decree of May 22nd, 1973.
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civil war; most notably, 'National Unity', 'National Integration' and 'National Stability'. Anti-tribal consciousness, of which the youth were certainly not the most guilty social group, was to be encouraged among them, by distributing those of them who had graduated from the Universities to states other than their own. As sub-section 3, d (iii) of the Decree establishing the scheme puts one of the objectives:

the youths are exposed to the modes of living of the people in different parts of the country with a view to removing prejudices, eliminating ignorance and confirming at first hand the many similarities among Nigerians of all ethnic groups.  

Since the inauguration of the scheme in 1973, much of the post-mortem analysis has been critical, arguing that the scheme was poorly conceived, poorly organised and supervised, costly and socio-economically of little positive effect. At most, the critics continue, it provides the private economic sector with cheap manpower. In terms of National Unity, the attitudes expressed by serving members has remained mixed, and without positive alteration of deep-rooted prejudices. On the contrary, some have had their prejudices reinforced in course of service. But the most contentious promise of the scheme was that of discipline. Without a clear definition of the type of discipline the scheme was supposed to instil in Nigerian youth, and how this could benefit the country as a whole, and judging by the degree of economic and financial indiscipline still prevalent in the country, it may be correct to assume that on this front the scheme has been of very little

1. Ibid.
consequence. At the same time, if this implied military-style discipline of subservience to higher authority, it is still debatable to accredit the scheme with success given the continuous questioning of the power relations in Nigeria by subordinate social groups.

This chapter has tried to trace the growth of student opposition from the colonial days to the first few years after the civil war. The next chapter which is a continuation of this narrative focuses on the final push against the Gowon regime, and subsequent student opposition to the policies of the Mohammed/Obasanjo regime that replaced General Gowon.
1975 marked a noticeable transition in the students' conception of themselves. To some extent, the new awareness was derived from the military's continuous attempts to suppress all forms of political dissent. It was these efforts that helped to crystallise a more militant consciousness among university students in Nigeria.

For the regime, one writer apocalyptically pronounced that this was "The Beginning of the End"; while another responded by characterising student action as 'The Final Push'. The 'final push', an encyclopaedic set of demand by the students, centred around questions of bureaucratic corruption; the repression of political dissidents; the redistribution of economic wealth in the light of Udoji Salary awards announced by the military; and finally, the prolongation of military rule beyond 1976.

Despite the growing militancy of the students however, the growing polarisation within the general polity also had its counterpart in the student movement. One point of significance, nonetheless, was the polarisation within the student movement as a whole was now taking on an ideological character. Firstly, there was the moderate wing organised around the President of NUNS, Mr. Henry Ejembi. This group favoured 'dialogue' with the military establishment in order to narrow what they saw as 'the wide communication gap which exists between the students and the authorities'. They successfully pushed through a resolution of 'non-violence' at the first NUNS executive meeting for the 1974/75

1. Tai Solarin  
2. Ebenezer Babatope.
session held at Enugu. There Mr. Ejembi argued that 'No-change change' defined as 'a known alternative requiring careful study to understand and painful planning to achieve', was essential, since "a change is more often than not an attitude of the mind." *

On the basis of this position, the President and his co-moderates were in regular contact with the military authorities, up to the highest level in an effort to resolve differences through dialogue rather than confrontation. For instance, after the meeting of the NUNS at Nsukka on 30th November 1974, the President forwarded a memorandum to the Head of the Military government calling for (a) a return to civilian government; (b) the settling of the census controversy by freezing of the disputed figures; (c) the introduction of an anti-corruption Decree; and (d) the release of the detained anti-corruption crusader, Mr. Aper Aku then being held in detention without trial.

In the effort to maintain dialogue with the authorities, the President tried to tone down the militant tone of the communiques whenever sending a version to the authorities. For example, his own version of the Nsukka communiqué relegated one of the Union's principal demands to the background. That demand was "that the Federal Government in implementing the Udoji award should enact such economic measures that will:

(a) redress the economic imbalance of Nigerians with particular reference to the plight of the common man;

(b) check inflationary tendencies likely to accompany the pay rise;

*When I interviewed Mr. Ejembi, he regretted this position, but qualified by saying that it achieved a limited purpose of enabling the students to reorganise themselves for subsequent political action.
(c) ensure a means of distribution of wealth capable of generating a higher gross national product."

Furthermore, the document prepared by the President was distinctively more subservient in tone than the one issued by the collective communique. For example, the Union's collectively written document stated that:

The National Union of Nigerian Students, having deliberated fully on certain burning national issues; taking into consideration, and fully conscious of our commitment to the plight of the common man in our society...

Compare this to Mr. Ejembi's memo to the Head of State which started:

We are committed to the interests of the Nation and we want peace and stability in our society... In submitting these three issues to you... we mean no disrespect to you personally and entertain no spirit of opposition to your government.

In reality however, the increasing militancy of the students in general suggested that there was a strong 'spirit of opposition' to the military and the policies they were offering to the people. As a result, there was a limit to how far the Executive could alter the direction in which events were moving, even though they were able to influence and determine individual aspects of events and particular consequences. Evidence of this historical development was the momentary lull in the public agitational activities of the students.

Even at this moment, the 'militants' led by the University of Ife Students' Union, were certainly disenchanted with the leadership, and more particularly
with Mr. Ejembi himself. And even he himself was forced to acknowledge that there exists "a general feeling that the National Union of Nigerian students, and the leadership in particular has compromised its objective and has consequently been ineffective in the realisation of its aspirations."

This division of views emerged as an open split when the radical wing of the student movement started pushing for a firm action on public corruption; the release of political detainees; the rejection of the Udoji awards, and an end to military rule. They wondered out loud if Nigeria had become a police state instead of the declared 'Military Democracy', and demonstrations for the release of Aku, Tai Solarin, Air Iyare, and other political detainees finally led to the closure of four universities: Ibadan, Ife, Lagos and Zaria.

With the release of Aku, the students turned their attention to the government itself, insisting that it fulfill its earlier promise to return power to a civilian administration in 1976. General Gowon had reneged on this promise in 1974, arguing that the target date was unrealistic. His main reason was the absence of stability which he attributed to a lack of moderation and self control in pursuing sectional ends by aspiring politicians. Returning the country to civil rule in this atmosphere, he explained, would only reintroduce and perpetuate "the old cut-throat politics that once led this nation into serious crisis". (Daily Times, October 2nd, 1974).

However, as we noted in a previous chapter, the presence of military rulers had not ended the usual competition between fractions of the dominant class, and there were persistent clandestine manoeuvres for power and special privilege among the various political, commercial and military groupings. The only
difference between the military and civilian led regimes was, perhaps, the extent to which these conflicts were concealed from the generality of Nigerians.

Despite the careful attempts to manage these intra-class struggles, they emerged into the open in 1975 when another group of military officers led by Brigadier (later General) Murtala Mohammed took power from General Yakubu Gowon. It was Nigeria’s third successful coup d’etat; and it marked the beginning of another chapter of military rule and student agitations.

Compared to the first coup of January 1966, when the students joined the rest of the population in celebrations, they welcomed the 'new military rulers' cautiously. In their pronouncement on events, they noted that "the coup of July 29th is not the end of the struggle. It is rather the beginning of a new phase". This 'new phase' was founded on their continuing determination "to fight for the provision of a better life for all Nigerians and the restoration of fundamental human rights in this country", and "to see what role students can play in the struggle for justice and egalitarianism in Nigeria".

Clearly the students had come a long way since 1969, when General Gowon was congratulating them for their 'responsible' behaviour. This evolution is well represented by the theme of their 19th Annual Convention - the first since the Murtala Mohammed administration - held at the University of Benin. It was titled: "Towards an Ideology for the NUNS and Nigeria". The question of a 'National ideology' that would give the country a sense of direction, inaugurated by NUNS during this Convention, was to become a major theme of debate in Nigeria during the making of the 'new' Nigerian constitution, and as we shall see presently, students in institutions of higher learning were to make major contributions to this debate.
Student Opposition in the Age of Military Reformism

As we noted in an earlier chapter, by the time Mohammed came to power, Nigeria was facing serious economic and political crises. Inflation was in triple digits, ports were clogged with imported goods, especially a questionable consignment of cement ordered by the Ministry of Defence for use in the construction of army barracks. There was a disastrous decline in agricultural production due to government neglect of that sector, with massive food importation as an inevitable outcome. This state of affairs meant a decline in the quality of life of ordinary people who could not afford the inflated charges for imported foodstuffs, predominantly, long grain rice from the United States. In response there was a general rise in the wave of industrial strikes by workers; clashes between the army and the peasantry, and an unprecedented rise in the level of armed robbery with violence.

Disenchantment with the Gowon regime became a common place topic of discussion, with widespread rumours of attempted coups and plots. Following a public warning to the judiciary, one newspaper editorialised thus:

No political organisations.
No mass meetings.
No public demonstrations.
No parliament.
The country is still under the state of Emergency.
The press is threatened;
The judiciary is warned.
What next? (Daily Times, 11th September, 1974).

Mohammed's promise of a reform minded administration was therefore a welcome relief.

In his first broadcast to the nation, he accused the former leadership of 'lack of consultation, indecision, indiscipline, and even neglect', summarily
dismissing the top hierarchy of the army, he retired over 10,000 public officers whom he termed as either 'corrupt' or 'unproductive'.

Contracts awarded by the Gowon administration were either renegotiated or cancelled and the ill-acquired wealth of the disgraced public servants was recovered after judicial investigations. Further, an Ombudsman-like office called the Corrupt Practices and Investigations Bureau was established to investigate allegations of corruption and other forms of bureaucratic malpractices.

Within weeks, the clogged ports were decongested, the controversial census of 1973 was cancelled, and the financially costly Black Festival of Arts and Culture postponed. Further, relations between the central, regional and local governments were restructured, giving more powers to the central government.

In the first three months of the administration's existence, they announced their programme for returning the country to democratically elected rulers; and a Constitution Drafting Committee was appointed to formulate a 'new constitution' for the country.

As long as the government continued with their reforming momentum, they enjoyed massive support not only from the students but the generality of the country.

Consequently, when a group of younger army officers, ostensibly sponsored by the top hierarchy of the overthrown Military regime, staged a counter-coup in February 1976, university students took the risky step of going on to the streets to denounce the men behind the coup even before the outcome was known. During the coup attempt, General Mohammed was killed. Nevertheless, there were demonstrations of support all over the country denouncing the plotters, and once
again, students in institutions of higher learning were among the most active of the demonstrators. Support for the administration continued despite the death of General Mohammed, who was now replaced by his second in command, General Olusegun Obasanjo.

To date, many commentators maintain that this massive level of popular support, and more especially, the initiative of University students, gave the establishment section of the army the necessary impetus to mobilise in defence of the government.

As a sign of deep respect to Mohammed, for what some identified as 'revolutionary government', university students from all over the country, irrespective of tribe, region or religion, and cutting across faculty divisions, trekked to his grave.

Mohammed's death however, marked a sharp reversal in the momentum of Reformism. Many commentators would and did argue that had he continued in office Mohammed would have provided the panacea for the country's chronic difficulties. We would rather contend that his inability to break with the neo-colonial capitalist social formation would have meant a continuation of essentially the same basic problems irrespective of his reformist efforts. What is certain, however, is that after his death some of the contentious issues that the students were raising during Gowon's era reemerged. Once again, one of the most important of these issues was the regime's policies on education whose implementation precipitated one of the most tragic student crisis in Nigerian history.

The discussion of this period will therefore pay particular attention to this crisis so as to draw out the key features of student opposition and the
mechanisms employed by the military to contain them. Particular emphasis will be placed on objectives and procedures of agitation, explaining the position of violence, and the manner of its administration by the parties to the conflict.

But before turning to the causes of this crisis, we wish to address ourselves briefly to students' participation in the making of the Nigerian Constitution, some aspects of which should help in our understanding of the Mohammed regime's essentially class character despite its ostensible commitment to reform.

THE CO-OPTATION OF DISSENT IN THE WRITING OF THE NIGERIAN CONSTITUTION

The commitment to the restoration of a civilian administration saw the appointment of a fifty-member Constitution Drafting Committee, all but one of whom agreed to participate in the making of this legal document.

In his opening address to the Constitution Drafting Committee, Mohammed said:

The Federal Military Government is committed to the emergence of a stable system of government through constitutional law ... through the creation of viable political institutions which will ensure maximum participation and consensus and orderly succession to political power. The new Constitution should discourage institutionalised opposition to the government in power and instead, develop consensus politics and government based on a community of all interests rather than the interests of sections of the country. (my emphasis).

He followed this consensual prescription with the following directive:
it would be unrealistic to proclaim any particular philosophy or ideology in our Constitution.

Though these guidelines had a consensual frame of reference, it was possible to give them a different interpretation. For example, the phrase "creation of viable political institutions which will ensure maximum participation" could easily be interpreted to mean economic participation out of which will emerge conscious political practice. Perhaps, it is this interpretation which led two members of the Committee to come out with a 'Minority Report' with socialist objectives in contradistinction to the draft produced by the remaining members which worked with a liberal conception. The latter assumed an agreement on basic ends, with dissent reserved for arguments over means which could be decided on through formalised debate.

However, whether one subscribes to a socialist interpretation, as with Bala Usman and Segun Osoba; or a liberal one, as with Rotimi Williams and other members of the Committee, one is still faced with difficulties of argument. The socialists were unrealistic in imagining that an assembly made up predominantly of members of the dominant class will, through constitutional agreement abandon their position of privilege. In which case, the best argument for their position was to force onto the public agenda the possibility of an alternative system of socio-political arrangement. In this light, their 'constitution' serves as a national referent point for those whose aim is to transform the current state of Nigerian society.

For the liberals, conflict enters the debate only in the form of differences between religious, ethnic and regional groupings, to be accommodated through careful negotiations. In this reading, class and ideology are classified as foreign
bodies to be deported out of national political discourse. At the same time, while arguing forcefully against foreign ideologies, they eagerly accepted 'liberal democracy' and the right to unlimited ownership of property by individuals.

Both constitutions were subjected to very lively debate in the press and other public gatherings. Both had their own proponents and opponents. Several people suggested a referendum to determine which of the drafts should be accepted, given that each was enthusiastically debated by the wider Nigerian public. The attitude of the 'reformist' military rulers to the two reports is indicative of their class allegiance, and the direction they wanted the new 'civilian administration' to take. By accepting the majority Williams' report without allowing Nigerians to decide through a referendum, they followed the established tradition of suppressing views which challenged the prevailing order. It is within this framework that we can situate the contribution of Nigerian students to the making of the 'new' Nigerian Constitution.

University students contributed to shaping the 'new' Constitution in various ways, including writing to the press, and submitting a memorandum to the Drafting Committee. In addition, they held public lectures and symposia. One of the largest was in Zaria, where the students of Ahmadu Bello University convened a National Conference which lasted from 21st to 24th March 1977, to discuss the issues raised by the Draft Constitution. Although varying viewpoints were aired at the conference, the students remained distinctively critical of the constitution, particularly its lack of social and economic reorientation.

Finally, when the two draft reports were presented to the Federal Government, and the majority report was accepted for debate by a Constituent Assembly, the students publicly backed the Minority Report prepared by
At the time the students were pushing forward the socialist constitution, the military authorities on the other hand announced the list of those who were to participate with the elected members in the Constituent Assembly. Among those appointed to serve in the Assembly was the President of NUNS, Mr. Segun Okeowo. In other words, the students were brought in to participate in ratifying the 'Majority Report' or the liberal constitution which they had already rejected.

We wish to assess the contribution of the students' representative, Mr. Segun Okeowo, by looking at the powerful forces ranged against him in the Assembly, and at the contributions he made during the various debates. We begin with a key exchange between him and Chairman of the Assembly - Mr. Justice Udo Udoma:

"Mr. S. Okeowo (Nominated) rose wearing his cap.

"The Chairman: Mr. Okeowo is wearing a cap. He is in red costume.

What is the idea? Is that the new African custom that one wears one's hat when one is in Assembly such as this?

"Mr. Okeowo (Nominated): If you ask me to put it off I will do that.

I am not prepared to explain my uniform.

"The Chairman: I am ignorant. If it is your custom to do it that way, I will certainly say go ahead. On the other hand, this Assembly is an Assembly of law. So everybody conforms to law, I would request that you put off your cap, if you would, before you speak.
"Mr. Okeowo: If it is the wish of the Chairman, I will put it off.

"The Chairman: Put off the cap and behave like a man." ¹

As Henry Ejembi has correctly pointed out, Okeowo's 'uniform' which the Chairman found objectionable was part of the culture of protest which he represented in the Assembly.

Further, Ejembi concludes quite rightly, that:

"It is a contradiction in essence. Having gained political recognition through defying law, the students are invited to participate in erecting the fundamental document upholding law and order, and to do so via the "due process" of law. "Everybody conforms to law", intones the Chairman, even though the only reason the student leader is sitting in the Assembly is due precisely to many years of refusal to "conform". (Ejembi, n.d.: 2).

The significance of students is their ability to keep in focus the major contradictions inherent in the society. Their incorporation into the Constitution making process, one may argue, is an attempt to confront the forces of political sensitisation.

To what extent did the students conform to the new demand? In his opening contribution to the Assembly debate, the students' representative made the following observation:

... the contention of many progressives is that this Draft Constitution is fit for the waste-paper basket because it lacks orientation and when we talk of orientation, we mean economic orientation.

Many progressives see it as a perpetuation of what we can call a sort of bourgeois and capitalistic orientation. It is this lack of orientation, or lack of economic orientation that should be removed from this Draft Constitution. What we have to say here is that we have already tried Capitalism as an ideology in this country and it has failed us and we want to contend here right away that the mixed economy which the Draft Constitution is trying to recommend to us is hypocritical. We would like this august Assembly to try something else, which will surface during further discussion on this Draft.


Mr. Okeowo continued by drawing attention to the students' earlier launching of the Minority Report.

Okeowo's other submissions in this important speech touched on Religion, Education, the Press and the State.

On Religion, Mr. Okeowo argued that:

... rather than talk about Sharia, I would like to talk about the State and Religion. Sharia is part of religion like Christianity and all other associated religions. Now, rather than specify and pitch battle with the vexed issues of Sharia, I would like to talk on the vexed issue of Religion and the nation. Mr. Chairman, in the course of the debates
which will last for twenty more days, I will crave your indulgence to be able to substantiate all the points I am trying to make this morning.

We would like to prove beyond any reasonable doubt that religion has been an instrument of coercion; it has been an instrument of division; it has been an instrument of deprivation; it is an instrument of oppression; and as Karl Marx said, it is the opium of the people.

What we are trying to say is that it should be relegated to its rightful place and make Nigeria a completely secular state which it is.

One thing is certain for all men. Religion we all agree in one concept is the idea of a supernatural Being that sustains the Universe and a sense of relationship with that Being. Beyond that, there is discrepancy. There are diversities. Now, these diversities are brought about by the many religious literatures we have - I am sorry to quote, the Bible and the Koran inclusive, for example, when you come to the court, you are supposed to swear either by the Koran, the Bible, or by an emblem of iron. Our own contention here is that all these types of things should be relegated to the background. It should be possible for any Nigerian to swear by the National flag instead of swearing by the Bible, the Koran or iron. This is our contention here and would be prepared to substantiate this as time goes on. (Constituent Assembly Debates, 1977:140-1).

On Education which had been central to student agitations over the years,

Mr. Okeowo maintained that:

The present educational system to our mind is very defective and this is the opinion of all Nigerian students. The situation whereby we are
placing a sort of oversensitive emphasis on university education is not auguring well for this country. ... Now what we are trying to say is that a sort of educational system should be evolved whereby all the Nigerian children will be placed on equal pedestal. (Constituent Assembly Debates, 1977:141).

From education, he moved onto the theme of Press Freedom. Here he argued:

... let us be able to distinguish between the institution that is called the press and the Journalists. Whereas at present we have what I can describe, and I have always held that view, as a sort of bread and butter journalist, but this does not mean that we have a bread and butter press. What we should aim at is the type of press we want for our future Nigeria and the students of Nigeria, instead of the bread and butter journalists we have on the scene today, who do believe that we need press freedom. (Constituent Assembly Debates, 1977:142).

Finally, Mr. Okeowo concluded his submission by raising the key question of what kind of State Nigeria was to have. Here he stated:

... Mr. Chairman, and if I may refer to the type of orientation which the present CDC draft has given us, I would say that the solution is the complete destruction of socio-economic order of Capitalism. The system of get-rich-quick of the few upon the aching back of the majority must be wiped out. This job cannot be carried out by the top military or the discredited civilian oppressors declaring empty socialism. It is the toiling people themselves that must take the state firmly into
their hands through their operative organisations and clear all obstacles and parasites, be they Professors, lecturers, bureaucrats, technocrats and all things. ( Constituent Assembly Debates, 1977:142).

At the end of the day, none of the issues raised by the students was taken into consideration in the final document. Nevertheless, their participation was necessary to satisfy an essential canon of liberal democracy - collective responsibility.

Despite this subtle co-optation process, students tried to retain their distinctive perspective as an opposition. This was achieved firstly through symbolic dissent as displayed in Okeowo's dress, which he later defended thus:

The dress drama was a psychological warfare aimed at disorganising me. It is the same dress which I wore to the swearing-in ceremony that I wore on that day of my first contribution. No mention was made to the dress on that first day. I think my dress should reflect my constituency. As other members of that constituency, I do not have the money to buy 'Wonyosi' and overflown gowns, as bourgeois members of the Assembly. The press capitalised on this and ignored the main contributions of Nigerian students.*

Secondly, and more significantly, the students' continued to question the fundamental fabric of the Nigerian social formation and to try to outline an alternative direction which they thought the Nigerian people should take. Not surprisingly, their efforts met with open hostility both inside and outside the Assembly, quite

*Personal Interview, Sunday, 30th May, 1982.
often involving derision, sarcasm, ridicule and trivialisation of the issues raised.

**Final Years of Military Rule: The Fees Crisis of 1978**

At the same time that the debates were going on within the Constituent Assembly on the type of Constitution for Nigeria, another controversy of equal political importance was raging outside. This dispute initially centred on the old issue of the financing of higher education in Nigeria. Later however, it took wider issues on board ranging from the questioning of the Military's overall education policy, to the growing division between rich and poor in Nigeria.

It turned out to be one of the bloodiest encounters between the armed forces and university students. Further, it threw the role of the judiciary in the class structure of Nigeria into sharp relief, and prompted the authorities to take steps to ensure that the universities participated less actively in politics in the future. Also, one important development took place during this crisis, that is, the birth of sectarian divisions along ideological rather than ethnic or regional lines. Their relevance to the direction of the struggle and to the wider question of state power will be discussed shortly.

By way of reconstruction, the crisis may be traced back to 1968 when some students formed an 'Indigent Students Association' at the University of Ibadan. The Association, made up of non-State sponsored students called on the Federal Government to come to the aid of fee-paying students in Nigerian Universities. At the end of the civil war, this demand was amplified, and it became a perennial call for the government to introduce free education at all levels.
Since the inception of formal education in Nigeria, there have been two categories of students in institutions of higher learning: those who are supported by the state; and those whose parents bear the burden of their education. This division, as pointed out earlier, is not based on income levels. Rather, it is connected with the geographical accident of where one is born. Those who had the luck of being born within the educationally less advanced regions of the North, for example, have the privilege of enjoying State sponsorship. By contrast, in the areas termed 'educationally advanced' surrounded by a myth of surplus, a few are 'selected' for sponsorship by the state, while the majority are dependent on the efforts of their parents. It is within this zone that strategic bureaucratic connections become essential. Of late however, the regional gap has narrowed and both zones are becoming increasingly subject to 'selective' state sponsorship which benefits predominantly those candidates with well placed connections in the relevant decision making bodies. Within this system, the majority, who are mostly those from less privileged homes are left to fend for themselves.

Since education invariably means access to bureaucratic offices and participation in the economic and social reward structure, the policy has tended to consolidate and reproduce the class divisions initiated during the colonial era. Given that the practice of selection is not limited to any one region, what emerges in the final analysis is an opposition between privileged and less privileged families.

To return to the train of events which led to the 1978 crisis however, in 1974, the Committee of Vice-Chancellors recommended that tuition fees in all Nigerian universities should be reduced and harmonised while payments for board and lodging should be raised to force students to take up off-campus accommodation.
The following figures were forwarded to the authorities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuition fees</td>
<td>₦ 60.00 per session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation</td>
<td>₦ 120.00 per session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeding</td>
<td>₦ 240.00 per session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry</td>
<td>₦ 29.00 per session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>₦ 449.00 per session</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In April of the same year, the Vice-Chancellor of University of Ibadan, which was one of the institutions worst hit by the general shortfall of government subvention to the universities, wrote the National Universities Commission requesting permission to increase fees to the level recommended by the Committee of Vice-Chancellors.

Without waiting for approval from the NUC however, the University unilaterally announced increases in early June of 1975. On the 19th of June, the NUC countered with a circular, arguing that increases were not only a sensitive issue but also a reflection of the social policies of the government. It concluded that:

Universities should therefore desist from unilateral revision of fees chargeable to students without prior consultation with and clearance from the National Universities Commission and the Government.  

Following this circular, a series of letters flowed from the universities.

2. Ibid.
to the National Universities Commission, arguing that the current "fees were unrealistically low", and that subsidies be made to the Universities to meet both recurrent and Capital expenditures.

That same year, there was a major review of Government policy on education. The relevant highlights of this review were: (i) that tuition should be free as from 1977/78 session; (ii) that boarding and lodging charges be pegged to ₦150.00 as from 1977/78 session, including clinical students; and (iii) that "the supreme Military Council has meantime decided that Technical - Secondary education and post-primary education will be tuition free and board free from 1977/78 academic session".¹

With the Universal Primary education scheme due to be introduced by September of that year, and the promise of an expansion of school population at all levels, it appeared to many that consistent public pressure for the democratisation of education had finally paid off. This sigh of public relief however did not apply to university administrators, who argued that the new policy denied them of essential and necessary revenue and that the new dispensation would bring about severe overcrowding as previously off-campus students returned to the campuses as squatters to take advantage of the new situation.

The authorities were therefore called upon to meet the shortfall in revenue through regular budgetary processes. In the interim, they asked for emergency subsidies, outside the annual allocations to rehabilitate facilities in the universities.

However the universities' lobbying of government, far from producing increased subventions turned out to be counterproductive, since the government accepted the Vice-Chancellors' earlier proposition and increased charges to students. To carry out this exercise, a sub-committee of Vice-Chancellors, headed by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Nigeria, was set up and asked to 'review and recommend what will be charged' to the students.

On 10th February 1978, the Chairman of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors wrote to inform the NUC, that they had decided on the following scale of fees:

- Feeding fees ....... ₦1.50k per day per student.
- Lodging fees ....... ₦90.00 per session per student.
- Lodging fees during Vacation ....... ₦6.00 per day.

At the same time the Ogundeko Commission of Inquiry into University Finances, set up jointly by the Federal Government and the National Universities Commission, had submitted its report with recommendations on the financial and social conditions within the universities.

The NUC tried to bring these two recommendations together, and on April 6th, they announced increases in the amount chargeable to undergraduates in Nigerian universities. The total was ₦495.00 per session, approximately the same amount recommended by the Committee of Vice-Chancellors.

Prior to this announcement, the government had indicated a turn against the new education policy. At the Ahmadu Bello University Convocation of December 10th, 1977, Military Chief, General Olusegun Obasanjo stated that:
Universities are expensive to establish and run.... It is essential for our Universities to be resolute in the efficient and prudent management of their financial resources... The Federal Military Government has decided that the order pegging the boarding and lodging fees in the Universities be lifted.

The University Councils should jointly agree with the National Universities Commission on the appropriate levels of boarding and lodging charges to be made... Government will continue to subsidise student feeding in the Universities but only to a reasonable extent... Tuition will continue to be free in the Universities. 1

Further, contrary to their earlier assurances, the government cancelled both the Loans scheme and the Federal Scholarship scheme introduced earlier in the 1976/77 session to assist indigent students. Not surprisingly, both University lecturers and their students were dismayed describing the policies as "oppressive". Following the announcement on loans, NUNS held an Emergency meeting at the University of Maiduguri to review what they termed 'the contradictory and unrealistic policies' of the government. The Federal Commissioner for Education, Col. Ahmadu Ali, agreed to attend and took time off to explain the government's reasons for the increases. His arguments failed to convince the students however and they sought to see the Chief of Staff Supreme Headquarters. A meeting took place on the 7th of March, 1978 at which the students appealed to the authorities to review "the unrealistic scrapping of both the loans scheme and Federal

1. Address by His Excellency, General Olusegun Obasanjo to the Convocation, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 10th December 1977.
Scholarships ... the alarming increase in post-primary school fees and the terrifying proposal to increase charges in our Universities".

From later developments, it appears that this appeal met with little response and on the 16th of March, the students put out a major press release titled "Nigerian Students and the State of the Nation", in which they openly criticised the government on various socio-economic issues including its educational policies.

Between 23rd and 26th of March, another seminar was organised by NUNS at the University of Ilorin to discuss the problem of the increases. Again, they made very critical and passionate remarks about the increases. The President of NUNS, Mr. Segun Okeowo, pointed out in his contribution that:

the aims and objectives of education in Nigeria called (National Policy on Education referred) are a reflection of the type of ruling class and specific social system existing and that consequently, our struggle for the democratisation of education must be seen as an integral aspect for the general democratisation of society....

Inequality of access to education continues in our fatherland with the result that despite the increased number of students/pupils there has not been a substantial growth in the percentage of those coming from low income or no-income background.\(^1\)

The seminar as a whole ended on the same note, rejecting the increases as 'ruling class' attempts to perpetually control and repress the 'masses'. A summary of

\(^1\) Okeowo, S. "Reform and Democratisation of Education in Nigeria" address to NUNS, University of Ilorin, 23rd-26th of March 1978, p.4.
the decision taken at this meeting was later sent to the authorities as a NUNS document.

Tension was now mounting within the Universities. The students concentrated on cementing internal unity and solidarity which they saw as a necessary weapon in the inevitable confrontation with the Military authorities. Many conceptualised this confrontation as a 'class war'. One release issued by the Students Union of the University of Ibadan for example saw it thus:

We must realise that, students are the only unified, articulate and organised units that can fight against social injustice; civil oppression and societal ills arising from unprogressive policy or governments. We must be united and determined in pragmatism of our action, there should be no destruction of properties or persons. Our action is not directed at the University authority, the police or the soldiers on the streets. It is to the policy makers, who cannot genuinely think of the welfare of the common man.

We are mainly championing the cause of our poor parents and guardians who are being subtly strangled by inordinate, contradicting and selfish policies. ¹

Given that so much play has been made of the violence and lack of negotiation during demonstrations in Nigerian Universities, it is important to bear in mind the attempts made by University students to consult, popularise their case and enlist support from the general public.

¹ University of Ibadan Students Union Release "The Developments so far, the facts of the case", 15th April, 1978, p.1.
At the Ilorin meeting in March for example, the students set out a three-stage process of protest; from Operation Consultation, through Operation Consolidation to Operation Confrontation, and proposed that each stage was to be exhaustively pursued before moving to the next. The last stage was however, reserved as a 'last resort', to be brought into play only when other means had failed. When violence finally broke out, one of the branch members of NUNS defended the resort to this last stage in the following way:

Everyone is fully aware of the great efforts made by the National Union of Nigerian Students to alert the Federal Military Government about the serious unpopularity/unacceptability of its new educational policies vis-a-vis finances, especially loans. We held countless meetings - ZARIA, Owerri, Jos, Lagos, Calabar, (1st quarter 1978) met Brigadier Yar' Adua (2 times), Dr. Ahmadu Ali (4 times), confronted General Obasanjo himself at Jos, Ilorin and Ondo.

Member Unions have made innumerable press releases on the issue, held countless press and TV conferences, etc. But in spite of all this, the FMG still did not care to listen to us...

Subsequently, another meeting of the NUNS was convened at Calabar in the first week of April, during which the students directed attention away from the authorities to the working people of Nigeria. At the end of the meeting, the following press release was issued:

National Union of Nigerian Students (NUNS) We Reject Increases in Educational Finances.

Distribution:

To our ruling brothers in uniform.
To all our parents.
To the toiling working masses.
To all who wish Nigeria well.
To all colleagues, Comrades and Compatriots.

CONDENSED COMPUTATION OF SCHOOL FEES INCREASES

Secondary Schools:

Federal Colleges: From ₦90 - ₦150.
State Institutions: From ₦150 to any Naira at all, e.g.
₦208 in Cross River State.

Universities:

Feeding: From 50k per day to ₦1.50k per day ₦45.00 per month, ₦405.00 per session.
Accommodation: ₦90.00 per session of 36 weeks ₦360.00 per session per room (a room takes about 4 students) ₦40.00 per month ₦10.00 per week.

A student thus needs ₦495 per session besides money for books and other study materials.

SPECIFICOS OF OUR PROTEST

1. The execution of the UPE Scheme is now in tattered disarray.
2. Secondary school fees have soared beyond common man's reach.
3. Military posting to secondary schools is an aberration to the concept of educational discipline.
4. Transference of Federal Loan Scheme to the State Government is a diplomatic (divisionary) hypocrisy.
5. Increase in University fees renders University education a luxurious commodity purchasable only by the sons and daughters of the privileged few.
6. Shortage of teachers is the consequence of confused orientation of teachers' education and subhuman remuneration.
7. Inflation is staring the masses in the face; our poverty stricken parents and the toiling masses of this country cannot just afford the unjustifiably exorbitant fee increases.
8. Why must education be made the Judas of past national extravaganzas and squander - manias on jamborees of FESTACS and Festivals?
9. Transference of University education from exclusive legislative list to concurrent list is a ridiculous politicisation of University education.
10. Elitist educational policies will deepen and widen the already yawning gap between the rich and the poor.

WHY NOT NEGOTIATE?

We have been on o/c for the past six months. Our actions have been studiously systematised into three carefully examined operations.

OPERATION CONSULTATION:
Consulting all the consultables - Vice-Chancellors, University Council Chairmen, Military Governors, Education Commissioners (Federal and State), the Constituent Assembly and the Chief of Staff, SHQ.

OPERATION CONSOLIDATION:
Seminars, Convention, Symposia, Lectures, etc. were held in various parts of the country (Zaria, Owerrri, Maiduguri, Ife, Ilorin, Lagos and Nsukka) to highlight and make the public aware of the barriers militating against educational policy in the country.

OPERATION CONFRONTATION:
This is the last resort and we have been forced into it. We have no choice.

OUR DEMAND
Reform and democratise education.
Education is a right and not a privilege.
Education should be made a popular commodity and not an elitist luxury.
Education should be compulsory and free at all levels.
UNTIL THESE ARE DONE, OPERATION CONFRONTATION WILL CONTINUE. WE ARE RESOLUTE: LET THE NATION HEAR AND HEED!.

The Calabar meeting also resolved that students should embark on a boycott of lectures as from 17th of April, 1978, to be followed by peaceful protests on all the campuses.

The boycott started as scheduled, on the 17th of April. At the University of Lagos, tension mounted between the students and the police who had earlier on sent a stern warning to the students not to demonstrate outside the campus. The Military authorities later explained that, "on 18th April, the atmosphere was
initially calm and there were friendly exchanges between the students and the police until the former endeavoured to demonstrate illegally outside the Akoka campus”.

The change in this congenial atmosphere was the beginning of hostilities between students and the police in which one student was killed by police gunfire. In a subsequent release, the authorities attributed the death of the student, Mr. Akintunde Ojo, to 'the deteriorating situation' during which, 'in self protection after injuries had been sustained' the police fired shots to scare the students.

The death of Ojo changed the course of protest on campuses throughout the country. At Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, for example, there was initially a serious division between pro-boycott and anti-boycott students, with the later group calling for restraint till the outcome of the scheduled meeting between the National Student body and the National Universities Commission. However, the sudden announcement of Ojo's death at the University of Lagos, and the arrival of the police on the Campus changed the situation and the students became more militant, though as we shall see presently, they were sharply divided along sectarian lines. Barricades were raised at the gates of the University, an army Major was kidnapped as hostage on the Main Campus, and circulars were posted all over the campus expressing anti-establishment sentiments.

In the resulting clashes between students and police, which took place on the 19th of April, 1978, several students were shot dead. The actual numbers killed is still a matter of dispute. While the authorities announced that six students

were killed, the students claim a much higher figure. However, it is safe to take
the official figure of six dead and twenty three injured as the minimum possible.
Given that official figures in Nigeria are notoriously unreliable, and that the
authorities in this case, were an interested party to the conflict, there is a strong
possibility that the true extent of casualties was under-reported.

Besides Lagos and Zaria, confrontation took place on the other campuses,
and outside the Universities. At the University of Ife, the clashes between the
students and the police ended in the death of one primary school pupil. At Ibadan,
Benin, Calabar and Ilorin, several students were injured, and many others
arrested and detained by the police.

At this point, it is essential to bring in the reaction of the general public,
particularly the 'masses' the students professed to be fighting for. In all the
urban centres where the clashes took place, there was a massive turn out of
school children, market women, unemployed persons, and others. At Ibadan,
school children threw rotten eggs at the Military Governor of the State, and
barricaded the road to prevent his motorcade from driving through the heart of
the city. At Lagos, the demonstrations triggered off urban riots resulting in the
burning down of government buildings, the stoning of the police; and the death of
one pregnant woman - Mrs. Arike Balogun, a market trader. At Zaria and Benin,
transport operatives offered to convey students away from the scene of the
confrontations without payment.

Despite these manifest shows of popular support, the authorities
criminalised the demonstrations thus:

It has been established that the students solicited and employed the
services of undesirables and robbers to commit their lawless acts and through intimidation and physical attack, forced school children between ten and 14 years old on to the streets... All acts of lawlessness, hooliganism, looting, robbery and arson will be severely dealt with and any citizen who has no business where these acts may be perpetuated are advised to move away in their own interest.¹

The tagging of the demonstrators - students and non-students alike - as 'undesirables', 'robbers', 'hooligans', 'arsonists', with 'no business where these acts may be perpetrated', but simply in the 'employ' of the lawless and irrational students, was intended as a special appeal to forces of reason to co-operate with the forces of 'law and order'. Such 'reasonable' forces included chiefs, Religious leaders, Military Governors, businessmen, and some very senior journalists who persistently chastised the students. As the Military Governor of Ogun State put it:

I appeal to the generality of the people of this State to be on the look out for the saboteurs amongst us. We would all have failed in our civic duties if we could not identify these evil doers, who for selfish reasons want to disturb the political programme which the Federal Military Government has been carrying out relentlessly and systematically... they are enemies of the people.²

The Governor further appealed to religious leaders to offer prayers "so that Almighty God may restore absolute sanity to the country". The official

². Radio and Television Broadcast to Ogun State, 30th of April, 1978.
declaration that students and other aggrieved groups should use 'accepted channels of communication' instead of resorting to violence was reiterated.

The struggle to contain the protests taking place outside the University was now extended into the Universities themselves. Here students were sharply divided into sectarian groups, occupying various positions along a broad pro-establishment and anti-establishment axis. At Ahmadu Bello University, which witnessed the most violent of the clashes, the most prominent groups included: Movement for A Progressive Nigeria (MPN); the Muslim Students Society; and the Progressive Youth Movement. While other smaller, but nonetheless important groups included; the Red Brigades; Council of the Dark; the Protectors; the Recce; the Lecture Brigade; Committee for the Defence of Workers and Student Rights; Committee for a virile Student Unionism, plus a number of others that had only one poster announcing their presence and no more. Many of these were not registered with the University authorities as required by the regulations, but they played an important part in the crisis.

The interesting point about these splinter groups is the ideological diversity they displayed. The Red Brigades for example, named after the Italian terrorist organisation, displayed equally terrorist tendencies. Opposed to all Constituted authority, they romanticised violence. The following extract from one of their releases typifies the general tone of their statements:

Everybody is aware about the state of confusion into which the entire student body has been plunged since our arrival on Monday, 22nd May, 1978. Worst more is the mass resignation of some Exco members due to poor leadership. In view of the present situation in the campus and in order to avoid further bloodshed, The Red Brigades Squad have
taken control of the whole affairs with regards to the Ahmadu Bello University Student stand in the present student crisis in the country...

All students are advised in their own interests to keep off all lecture rooms with effect from 29.5.78. Lecturers are advised in their own interest to keep off all lecture rooms.

The Red Brigade Squad are fully armed for any open confrontation with any anti-boycott students. Members of the squad will take up strategic positions in all lecture rooms on Monday morning, so in your own interest and in the interest of your life, stay off. 1

These extreme releases were countered by equally extreme views from the right wing Muslim Students League, and the Lecture Brigade. The latter assured the University community that they should ignore the threats of the Red Brigade Squad and promised to protect them against an attack by the Brigades.

Of the larger groups, the Movement for a Progressive Nigeria was the most significant. They interpreted the agitations of the students in class terms, and saw in it the genesis of a social revolution for Nigeria. They undoubtedly had considerable influence on the Executive of the Students’ Union, but were consistently challenged by the religious based organisations like the Muslim Students Society, who talked of the need for a Holy war to clean the society of the Marxist offenders. At the Southern based Universities where the impact of the Muslims was negligible, their role was taken over by the Christian Youth Movement, effective especially at Ife and Ibadan.

The Muslim Students' body campaigned actively against what they saw as 'the Communist threat'; and in one of their most striking circulars, titled "WHY YOU CANNOT BE A MUSLIM AND A SOCIALIST OR COMMUNIST AT ONE AND THE SAME TIME", they concluded that "Behold: Islam and Communism are ever at daggers drawn with each other". The Christian students were no less committed to fighting the 'socialist offensive' present in the official Student Union thinking. They argued for 'peace and stability' in the country and enjoined all students to 'abide by the law'. In a typical release, the Christian Congress at Ife, made up of all denominations, stated that:

our student union is now agitating for a Socialist Revolution with a view "to hammering out" the Government and "total destruction of the confused and elitist military set up ... and the creation of the peoples' army. Moreover, our Congress is not democratic but rather a few minority forcefully impose their view on the generality of the students.²

These divisions within the University community, with some supporting the militant position and others actively in opposition, meant that the struggles were mapped on to the wider political struggle between those who seriously questioned the existing class structure of Nigeria, and those who benefitted from it and wanted to maintain it. And it is against this background that the role played by the judiciary becomes significant.

As in 1971, when Kunle Adepeju was killed at Ibadan, killings of students and other demonstrators at Zaria, Lagos and Ife, together with the detention of over 500 students, including the student leader in the Constituent Assembly, Mr. Segun Okeowo, sparked off demands for the institution of a judicial inquiry. Ultimately, persistent public pressure led to the establishment of a three man commission, headed by a High Court Judge - Justice Mohammed.

By the late 1970s it had become established practice to call on the Judiciary in times of crisis. Even some vociferously critical intellectuals supported this course of action on the grounds that the law and its representatives were above the conflict and could therefore act as disinterested arbiters. Unfortunately, this argument ignores the contradictory nature of the legal system and its role in the social formation. On the one hand, it is clearly not a simple instrument of domination. It operates with a degree of autonomy and embodies principles which are not entirely reducible to the ideology and interests of dominant groups. On the other hand, because it operates within an unequal and unjust social order the judicial system is subject to a powerful tension between the requirement to uphold the rule of law as it exists at any particular time (even though it may operate to perpetuate the advantages of dominant groups) and the defence of more general ideals of equality and justice on which its claims to legitimacy ultimately rest. Not infrequently, this tension is resolved by elevating the demands of law and order over those of justice. This was the case with the Mohammed Commission of Inquiry.

The Commission declared from the outset that:
"As far as our terms of reference are concerned, we shall judge peoples' action in relation to what the legal position is as opposed to what it ought to be" (Mohammed Commission, 1978:12) (my emphasis).

As a consequence, the discourse of their final report places the wider issues of justice in brackets and revolves instead around the absolute necessity to uphold the rule of law as presently codified. This is achieved by removing the protests from their wider political and economic context, emphasising the irrationality and criminality of the demonstrators' actions, labelling the situation as the work of a small minority of left wing activists, and presenting police violence as a justified response to provocation, regrettable but necessary to restore order.

After an open resume of the status of different forms of property before the law which notes that, Universities are not "private property" but "public property" built and maintained out of public funds, the report quickly moves on to erect a distinction between members of the University community who have no respect for the law and those who have. The former are said to be in the minority, comprised mainly of "lecturers ... within the extremist camp who engage themselves in preaching ideologies they do not understand... It is within this group of students/lecturers that we observe that the concept of academic freedom is obviously misinterpreted and misunderstood". (Mohammed Commission, 1978:5-6).

Citing cases of student-police clashes on the campuses, the Commissioners drew the following conclusion from the events at Ahmadu Bello University which saw the largest number of killings and detentions:

During the course of the crisis in ABU therefore, the students committed
the offences of kidnapping, incitement, mischief, arson, assault, breach of peace, wrongful confinement, possession of firearms without licence, obstruction and a host of other crimes all in the name of youthful exuberance... What is most surprising was the total silence of their lecturers from condemnation of their behaviours. Instead the extremists or Marxist oriented ones called in press conferences and gave press releases supporting the students' acts and even went further and urged them to fight on for what they negligently called the students' rights. (Mohammed Commission, 1978:8).

'Extremism' which started life earlier on as a general concept now metamorphoses into a clear indictment of Marxist and 'Marxist oriented' intellectuals. Similarly, rather than presenting the students' behaviour as a reaction of last resort to a crisis created by government policy, it is reduced to a catalogue of criminal acts. Hence the underlying causes slip quietly from view whilst the immediate consequences are thrown into sharp relief.

These twin rhetorical devices serve to de-centre and de-legitimise both the demonstrators' demands and their own accounts of their actions. Hence they appear not as rational political actions but as dupes of left wing agitators. And having characterised events in this way - as an outbreak of criminal violence fermented by Marxists - it is a relatively simple step to present the police as "managers of demonstrations and riots" on behalf of the respectable and law abiding citizenry, and to dismiss police violence as just another 'management' technique.

Having established this basic binary opposition between crime and law and order, the Commission moves on to show how the students left the orbit of
legitimacy and law to outline the necessary procedure for 'bringing them under the rule of law' once again.

Writing under the heading, Right of Protest, the Commission observes that: "it is the right of the citizen to protest against unpopular policy or change of the circumstances. Governments should not stop them from such protests". (Mohammed Commission, 1978:9). But it adds that "where there is disturbance of public peace or molestation or destruction of property, then it ceases to be a demonstration but a riot and therefore a crime" (Mohammed Commission, 1978:9). The argument continues, "conditions and mode of student protest in Nigerian Universities have dramatically changed", as peaceful demonstrations are transformed by militants into violent acts of destruction; erruptions do occur 'by simple sight of law enforcement agents'. (Mohammed Commission, 1978:9).

At this point, we are presented with the mental make up of the demonstrating students: "once the students get into this frenzy, they would be temporarily insane almost impossible to be controlled peacefully. The ultimate consequences would be to hold the rest of the community to ransom." (Mohammed Commission, 1978:9). Again, the presence of the 'insane' and 'uncontrollable' demonstration is attributed to the rise of militant student movements. As the Commissioners saw the whole process:

The emergence of militant student movements like MPN, Movement for Progressive Nigeria, Pyrates Confraternity, the Revolutionary Council of the Diege and even the Red Brigades, in the Nigerian Universities has been one of the most dramatic and insurgent social phenomenon in this country. (Mohammed Commission, 1978:9).
The question then arises as to whether the mental state of the agitators as analysed by the Commissioners merits coercive treatment in the form of shooting. It may seem odd, but given the Commission's earlier commitment to "what the legal position is as opposed to what it ought to be", one can understand their recourse to Police Force Order No. 237, a colonial law, which states that:

"a police officer may use firearms when necessary to disperse rioters or prevent them committing serious offences against life and property. By the police training they are to shoot to maim a rioter so as to effect arrest whenever the officer commanding deems it necessary. The opportune time to take such an action is left entirely to the discretion of the officer in command. Likewise the army can be called in by the police to help in maintaining public order especially if 'internal security of the nation is in danger.' (Mohammed Commission, 1978:93).

Despite a change in historical circumstances, no effort has been made to change this colonial approach to managing 'political protest'.

While some police misdeeds are conceded, their significance is minimised by contrasting them with the actions of the agitators, which are presented as being of greater magnitude. For example, the Commission points to the misjudgements of the law enforcement agents at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and describes police action as 'panicky', but attributes the violent situation to the preachings of 'extremist lecturers' and organisations, who wanted to 'capitalise on the student crisis' for their revolutionary objectives. Thus, the responsibility for the violence is transferred to the intrasigence of the students and their unwillingness to listen to reason that led to the bloody showdown." (Mohammed Commission, 1978:56-7).
Similarly, two lecturers at Ibadan - Drs. Bade Onimode and Wale Adeniran together with Ola Oni and other members of the Committee for the Defence of Democracy and Justice are accused of inciting students through 'inflammatory and highly provocative handouts'. Though "luckily", the report concludes, "the police there were not drawn into violent conflict with them". (Mohammed Commission, 1978:75). At Ife, the members of the public that joined in the protest activities of the students are described as "disgruntled elements who were opposed to the Land Use Decree and only used the student crisis as a cover to attack government establishments and cause confusion". Since the Land Use Decree was a law aimed at democratising the ownership of land in Nigeria, this insinuation represents a clear attempt to discredit those who were 'opposed to it' by labelling them as undemocratic and selfish individuals out to 'oppress the rest of the community'. Finally, the Commission is dismayed by the letter the students at Benin sent to the Head of State, through the Governor of Bendel, titled: "SOWETO IN NIGERIA" which they see as indicative of the students' general lack of respect for constituted authority. (Mohammed Commission, 1978:94).

In its final recommendations, the Commission points out the existence of "a certain amount of untidiness in authority and role relationships among various authorities concerned with policy making and Execution in matters relating to University administration", and recommends a redefinition of the authority structure and a clearer specification of role relationships between various levels of decision making. Secondly, they argue that since "social indiscipline is at the root of the present crisis" the "Government should continue in its effort to instil discipline into our social fabric." Thirdly, the "need for better communication between government and the people" is emphasised with a call for improved
publicity for government policies. Fourthly, the Commission recommends that "scholarship should be given on academic merit as determined by performance at a University...", while bursaries are distributed on the need for manpower development.

After these remarks and recommendations, the Commission returns to a demagogic presentation of 'The role of a University in a developing country', to make the major thrust of its findings more intelligible. Arguing that British, American and Russian Universities produce individuals who will function in their economy, the Commission emphasised that Nigerian Universities must also produce people 'useful to the community', i.e. "it must not only aim at producing high level manpower but also equip them with the knowledge and attitude supportive of the social system". (Mohammed Commission, 1978:215).

Turning to lecturers, especially Socialist oriented intellectuals, the Commission reiterates:

"There is a certain lack of purpose of social responsibility which should inform and direct the nature of subject taught, the method of teaching them and the content of what is taught. There were hints here and there that certain lecturers were not teaching what they were hired to teach, but rather indulged in indoctrination of students with their preferred ideologies... It is doubtful if a Professor in Moscow can teach about the evils of the Socialist system and advocate its overthrow and remain on his chair. By the same token, how many American Professors will still retain their tenure if they started preaching the overthrow of Capitalism and the free enterprise system?" (Mohammed Commission, 1978:215-6, my emphasis).
This section of the report concludes with a strong attack on Socialist lecturers:

Even the so-called socialists on campus think that Socialism consists of knowing a few leftist claptrap phrases such as petit-bourgeoisie, comprador, toiling masses and the like. In fact, a number of them who appeared before the Commission are a disgrace to the Socialist cause because of their emptiness and poor understanding even of Marxist philosophy and analysis. Half-baked even as they are in Marxism the potted thinking which they are able to dish out to the youths in their charge is intoxicating enough to buttress the oppositional mentality of the students against the 'authorities'...

there are certain things which one cannot be allowed to teach or even advocate on our campuses, e.g. racial bigotry or racism, inter-ethnic hatred, religious chauvinism, violent revolution, occult arts and witchcraft, ideological dogmatism, etc. People who are involved in such advocacy should be shown the way out. (Mohammed Commission, 1978:216-7).

We may ask what this report adds up to. In effect, the Commission had absolved the police and the authorities from any responsibility for events; attributed student militancy to the machinations of left activists rather than to deep seated grievances against government policy, and virtually dismissed the cause the students were out to champion, by insisting that individual students must contribute something towards the cost of their own education.

In contrast to our earlier presentation, they made no effort to relate these costs to expenditures in other sectors or to analyse the benefits of educational
expenditure to sectors such as Defence. Moreover, although it contextualised the crisis within the general condition of 'societal indiscipline' derived from materialistic values, the insistence on the "need to instil discipline in the society" by the armed forces remains highly suspect. This is because there is an inherent assumption that there is present in the armed forces non-materialistic disciplinary values, which could serve as a model for the rest of the population.

Events during the period under discussion however, point to the contrary. In fact, the military was the epitome of materialism and indiscipline. Not only was it riddled with corruption, but it frequently harassed members of the civilian population. Even in the secondary schools where military officers were posted to instil discipline, they instead brutalised the students. Military style discipline based on the principle of 'obey before you complain', translated into civilian terms meant complete subservience to the army's hierarchical structure; a situation that few felt able to subscribe to. It is difficult to imagine, therefore, how the Commission's recommendation could be implemented short of dictatorial repression, subjecting the society to a militarised state.

Even so, this prescription is further evidence of a considerable degree of agreement between the position advanced by the judiciary and the military authority's definition of the situation. While one is not proposing a case of conspiratorial injustice, we would still insist that the strong coincidence in the two points of view casts some doubt on the neutrality of the judiciary within the Nigerian social formation. Perhaps, Marx's assertion that the legal system, like other superstructural institutions, serve to perpetuate a particular mode of production and domination deserves closer attention in the investigation of Nigeria's neo-colonial social history.
Armed with the Commission's legal document, the military authorities moved against the Universities by dismissing five student leaders (including the National President of NUNS - Mr. Segun Okeowo) together with eight lecturers. Two other members of the Universities' non-teaching staff and two Vice-Chancellors sympathetic to the struggles of the students were also dismissed. Also dismissed was the Political Editor of the Nigerian Chronicle. Apart from that, the legal counsel who had represented the students when they instituted two court cases against the government - Mr. Gani Fawehinmi - had his office raided by the police and legal files relevant to the cases were removed. He himself was detained for several weeks, and then charged with a number of offences, including stealing a police camera, and organising students to assault the police.

Most importantly, the National Students body was dissolved by Military Decree in an effort to make the students politically ineffective. The students resisted this move by changing the name of their union to 'National Organisation of Nigerian Students', but this tactic failed.

By the time the military authorities issued its guidelines for participation in active politics, it became clear that the banning of NUNS was only the first step towards a general attempt to neutralise the radical opposition. Thus, in a memo to all University authorities, the government directed among other things that:

1. There should be no political activities on campuses of Nigerian Universities.

2. University students can, as individuals belong to political parties and take part in political rallies or any form of political activities, outside their respective University
campuses. This will be done on individual basis.

3. University staff, of all categories, being public officers, shall not participate in partisan politics, collectively or individually, in any manner or form, including belonging to political parties, or taking part in political rallies or undertaking any form of political activity whatsoever.  

The University community protested against this directive, saying it was an infringement of their civic and fundamental human rights. Nevertheless, this rule was enforced. As a result, some University staff who wanted to participate actively in party politics had to resign their jobs with the Universities. Apart from the University community, the various working class inspired parties were not allowed to register, being disqualified on the basis of property rights, and therefore pushed onto the sidelines of active political life.

It was under these conditions, with the working class parties unregistered, the Universities effectively made politically impotent, and an unorganised and inarticulate peasantry, that power was finally transferred from the military-bureaucratic oligarchy to another faction of the ruling class - the professional politicians - made up of the commercial and political fractions of the collaborative bourgeoisie that had benefitted immensely from the thirteen years of military rule. Nonetheless, the military stood by as the real power brokers. The requirements of capital rather than of social programmes continued to determine the tenor of political action in the brief period of post-military Nigerian state.

2. For a more indepth discussion of the neutralisation of the left in Nigerian politics during this time, see Richard Joseph (1978).
In this chapter and the previous one, we have attempted to reconstruct the political activities of Nigerian students from the colonial to the neo-colonial era. Drawing on primary and secondary sources, we have tried to show the transformation from relative complacency, through single issue protests, to the emergence of students as a political force posing fundamental questions about the organisation and assumptions of Nigeria's neo-colonial capitalist social formation in the age of militarism. By so doing, the students were able to bring the class position and class practices of the military into sharp focus and sensitise class consciousness among the dominated classes.

At this point, we may turn to a consideration of the images presented by the Nigerian press. Is it true that "... the press coverage of the crisis was a significant factor in the escalation of the crisis; and that from initial stage, the press had egged on the students into confrontation by sensationalism and distorted appraisal of the issues at stake in the crisis" as the Mohammed Commission observed and the military authorities believed?

This question can be most appropriately answered by critically analysing the various ways in which the press, through its forms of practice based on certain assumptions, handled the opposing views in play; and its ability to explain the student movement within the context of the historical development of Nigeria's social formation. We begin with a general analysis of the structure and organisation of the Nigerian press (Ch. 8); followed by a detailed dissection of the way that key newspapers covered the situation.
8. THE CHANGING STRUCTURE OF THE PRESS AND POLITICS IN NIGERIA

In this chapter, we examine the structural relationship between one crucial arm of the cultural apparatus, the daily newspaper press and the state, paying particular attention to the changing pattern of ownership and control. As Murdock stresses:

The communications industries produce peculiar commodities. At one level they are goods and services like any others: cans of fruit, automobiles or insurance. But they are also something more. By providing accounts of the contemporary world and images of the 'good life', they play a pivotal role in shaping social consciousness, and it is this 'special relationship' between economic and cultural power that has made the issue of their control a continuing focus of academic and political concern. (Murdock, 1982:118).

Our understanding of these relationships, it is hoped, will assist us in mapping out the possibilities of the Nigerian press articulating contending world views.

We wish to underline that since the newspaper press is an important cultural apparatus with strong bearing on political and economic life, our overall frame of reference is the political economy of culture. As Nicholas Garnham rightly contends, studies of the operation of mass communications systems have to take a secondary place within a wider framework provided by the political economy of culture, (Garnham, 1979). He suggests, that this entails deciphering (a) the structure of contemporary capitalism and its effect on 'the culture industry'; and (b) the relationship of 'the culture industry' to the state. We may add here that in the case of neo-colonial capitalist states, a third dimension has to be taken into account, namely, the tendency towards the reproduction of
dependent material and cultural relations between the advanced and developing societies.

Following this approach, we will begin with the economic and political foundations of the newspaper industry in Nigeria, before proceeding to an analysis of its output.

Changes and Continuities in Ownership of the Media in Nigeria

Current writings on media ownership in Nigeria, both popular and academic, tend to concentrate on the question of whether 'public' and 'private' ownership will best facilitate press freedom. It is a comparison which is imbued with a misunderstood and uncritical reception of the 'Free Press' doctrine. To the protagonists of private ownership, commercial operations along the lines familiar from the advanced Western world provide the ideal conditions for 'freedom', though they make very little attempt to engage with the critiques of this argument presented by practitioners and scholars in the West. The opponents of private ownership on the other hand, contend that because the development needs of Nigeria are radically different from those in the advanced capitalist countries, there is the need for the print and broadcast media to be closely allied to the government of the day in its development efforts. For this reason, public ownership of the media predicated on the notion of 'developmental journalism' is preferred

1. On the whole, serious critical studies are lacking. Essays by Ekwelie (1979), Omu (1968), and the journal Unilag Communication Review represent this genre. But the most contentious debate has been conducted on the pages of newspapers; the best being that during the debate on the new Nigerian constitution, Ofonagoro et al (1978).

2. Since the early 1970s, this critical literature has grown enormously. On media history, see Boyce, Curran and Wingate (1978); On press freedom, Curran (1979); and for various other aspects of the media, Curran et al (1977), the journal Media, Culture and Society; and the works of Raymond Williams, Stuart Hall, Golding, Murdock and Elliott.
(Oreh, 1978). This sort of journalism is supposed to do two things: to publicise the efforts and achievements of the government; and to draw attention to the problems of the population so that those in power will be able to tackle them more adequately. But no attempt is made to question the programme of 'development' or the strategies adopted to execute it. In other words, the class nature of the state is taken as given and unproblematic.

However, to understand the tension between these two positions better, we need to briefly trace the historical origins of the press in Nigeria, and to look at its development in relationship to politics and economics. And once again, we will begin with the colonial state.

Early Nigerian journalism was conceived within the framework of 'colonial enlightenment', (Omu, 1978). Like education, it was aimed at civilising the native population. Since the task of establishing a consensus, secondary as it was under colonial rule, was left to the missionaries, and subsequently traditional rulers, journalism was introduced by the missionaries as an additional cultural apparatus for 'gentling' the native population. This missionary journalism started at the time when the middle classes in the metropolitan country were in the ascendancy, and as James Curran notes, this class saw the press as a powerful weapon both for controlling the working class at home, and creating an intelligent and influential class within the colonies that would be sympathetic to their commercial interests, (Curran 1978). But from the beginning, the requirements of consensus and social control were accompanied by a genuine commitment to philanthropy, albeit cast within a paternalistic mould. Although most of the missionaries were drawn from this middle class of English society, they had participated actively in the campaign for the abolition of slavery, and attributed
much of their success to pamphleteering and newspaper publicity. Newspapers were therefore seen as powerful weapons for promoting humanitarian causes in the Empire, including 'enlightenment'.

Throughout West Africa, the logos of the newspapers published by the missionaries carried this enlightenment imprint. They included: Africa’s *Luminary* published by the Methodist Church in Liberia (1846); *The Early Dawn* published by the American Missionary Association at Boi in Ghana; and the *Christian Messenger* and *The Examiner* run by the Wesleyan Church, also in Ghana. In the case of Nigeria, it was the Presbyterian Church that first established a printing press in Calabar in 1859. Later, another was established by the Presbyterian Minister, the Reverend Henry Townsend, at Abeokuta; and it was Townsend who produced the first Nigerian newspaper, the Yoruba language *Iwe-Irohin*. This subsequently became a bilingual journal with the introduction of an English language supplement.

The impact of these early papers remained limited however, due to the low literacy rates and the difficulties of transportation that restricted circulation and readership. The missionaries frequently complained of the natives’ lack of interest in literacy matters, though it was unrealistic to have expected these papers to have any significant readership outside of the small circle of educated people who formed the local links with the illiterate peasantry. And it was from this group that the first indigenous newspaper owners were drawn.

By the middle of the 19th century, there were a growing number of frustrated entrepreneurs and bureaucrats whose opportunities had been blocked by expatriates, both in commerce and administration. Some of them saw the newspaper industry as an alternative source of earning a living, and proceeded to
establish their own newspapers. In addition, they exploited the free enterprise doctrine espoused by the home government to launch an attack on their expatriate obstructionists and in the process, brought partisan political content to West African journalism. Unlike the missionaries, they were not in the business of 'knowledge for knowledge sake' but contended that "knowledge should be such as to form the basis of a strong public opinion which the colonial government could not ignore". (Omu, 1978: ix).

It is this era of Nigerian journalism that is much celebrated by commentators on the subject. It started life in the 1880s and continued to grow rapidly, reaching a climax in 1937, with the establishment of Azikiwe's West African Pilot. The Pilot and its rivals undoubtedly did contribute to the nationalist struggles in Nigeria. Nnamdi Azikiwe for example, himself a journalist and proprietor of the era, has praised the contribution "of pioneers of the Nigerian press" and presented their activities as "identical with the intellectual and material developments of this country", (cited in Omu, 1978: vii). Similarly, James Coleman asserts that "there can be little doubt that Nationalist newspapers and pamphlets have been among the main influences in the awakening of racial and political consciousness", (Coleman, 1958: 186). While Kalu Ezera congratulates the press for its contribution to Constitutional development during the inter and post war years, (Ezera, 1960: 49-50).

These accolades however, tend to over-emphasise the political or patriotic role of these journalists and to play down the economic conditions which gave birth to structures with agents disposed towards these specific forms of political practice. They also ignore the limitations of the journalism of this period, which stemmed from the limits set by the received ideology of liberalism as a political and economic philosophy.
The first point to realise is that it was the frustrated commercial ambitions of an indigenous entrepreneurial class in formation that pushed a number of them into journalism. Omu points out quite correctly, that, it was not so much 'a strong sense of obligation to the nation' which they so much advertised, but 'their life experiences, aims, outlooks and aspirations' that is central to our understanding of the rise of newspapers, (Omu, 1978 : 26-28). Omu categorises newspapers of this period into two basic types:

"those anxious to recover from financial ruin arising from the bankruptcy of European firms in or with which they were employed or associated or from the monopolistic practices of Europeans who came to dominate the profitable trade between Lagos and the River Niger; and those in want of employment owing to dismissals and resignations from jobs, prohibitions from legal practices and incapacitation by illness." (Omu, 1978:28).

Many of these frustrated merchants imagined that they could capitalise on the growing advertising market and make a living out of newspaper business. Between the 1850s and the 1880s, a number of businessmen - politicians emerged as proprietors - editors in West Africa. Among the better known are J.P. Jackson of the Lagos Weekly Record; his son Thomas who later took over his father's paper; George Williams of The Standard; and Ernest Ikoli, who at different times edited The Messenger, The Daily Service and The Nigerian Daily Times.

J.P. Jackson for example made it quite clear that his venture was "not a public benevolent institution (or) philanthropic charity" but "a private enterprise undertaken for profit", (cited in Omu, 1978:28). Initially he relied heavily on the
colonial government for advertisements, and even went out of his way to court influential members of the administration until "the cruel greed of European commerce" forced him back into opposition. Similar commercial objectives also inspired his son when he moved into his father's business. It is on record that he not only admired Japanese nationalism and American ideals of liberty, but was greatly influenced by Alfred Harmsworth, later to be Lord Northcliffe, and one of the prime movers of Fleet Street's commercial revolution. Jackson aspired to be the African Northcliffe and to own a chain of West African newspapers. The papers were to form a part of a wider financial empire which included his SAMADU shipping business handling imports and exports, and a commission Agency known as Anglo-Nigerian Commission trading in palm produce on the lower Niger.

Similarly, George Williams turned to the newspaper business when he was edged out of the Lower Niger trade by European competitors. The major exception to this pattern is the Nigerian Daily Times, which started life from a source outside of this petit bourgeois class of frustrated traders.

In 1926, Ernest Ikoli's three year old Nigerian Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd., publishers of The Messenger ran into financial difficulties. A group of businessmen, members of the Lagos Chamber of Commerce, headed by Adeyemo Alakija and the Chairman, Richard Barrow, got together to establish a pro-government newspaper that would defend the colony's foreign commercial connections against the rising tide of nationalism. Rather than start a completely new paper, the financiers decided to take over the Nigerian Printing and Publishing Company and turn The Messenger into The Nigerian Daily Times with Ernest Ikoli as Editor. Because of the paper's conservative views, the paper enjoyed government patronage including advertisements. The paper's foreign connections
continued, and were reinforced in 1948 when the Daily Mirror Group in London acquired a controlling share-holding. Apart from being pro-business, the paper also diversified into various sectors of the economy in its own right, dominating the leisure industry, and participating in all sectors of the newspaper business. During the hey-day of Nigerian nationalism, the Nigerian Daily Times remained marginalised because of its pro-government policies. It was however to play a dominant role after political independence in 1960.

Between 1937 and 1960 however, the press was dominated by Nnamdi Azikiwe’s West African Pilot which rose meteorically and overshadowed other papers, including its main rival, The Daily Service. Although Thomas Jackson had failed in his ambition to be Africa’s Northcliffe, he did leave behind an inspirational legacy which ultimately matured with Nnamdi Azikiwe. Azikiwe, like Jackson, had a strong admiration for American liberal democracy and its economic foundation. He openly followed Jackson’s economic calculations and his biting brand of journalism; two attributes he had experienced and enjoyed at first hand during his long sojourn in the United States. In his autobiography, he subtitles the chapter dealing with the development of his Nigerian newspaper: "The story of my efforts to be economically secure and free from want". (Azikiwe, 1970:286). This could well serve as a motto for all the other newspaper-businessmen-politicians of this era. The only difference being that their 'efforts' were generally not as successful.

On arriving back from the United States by way of Ghana, Nnamdi Azikiwe floated Ziks Press Ltd., as a limited liability company, with an initial capital of £5,000.* Of this amount, over half - £2,644, was paid up by Zik, his father, his

*All figures are from Azikiwe (1970).
brother-in-law, and his close friends. By 1960, the Zik Group of Newspapers was publishing close to ten titles, located at strategic places all over the country. Among these were The West African Pilot (Lagos), The Eastern Nigerian Guardian (Port - Harcourt), The Nigerian Spokesman (Onitsha), The Southern Nigerian Defender (Warri), The Daily Comet (Kano), The Eastern Sentinel (Enugu), and The Nigerian Monitor (Uyo). All these papers are characterised by Azikiwe as either "instant success ... and good business", "a business success", or "a viable business proposition". The only exception to this epithet is The Daily Comet where a libel suit against its then Editor, Anthony Enahoro is judged by Azikiwe to have been responsible for bad business.

Between 1937 and the time of Independence in 1960, Zik had diversified outside of the Newspaper world, and acquired a chain of companies including a Banking business. In 1944, he established the African Continental Bank Ltd., with an initial share capital of £23,000, with the Zik Group of Companies - essentially a one man venture, and at most a family affair - having a controlling interest with an investment of £18,000. Other companies floated by Zik with considerable degree of success were: Zik Enterprises Ltd. (initial capital £14,500); Nigerian Commodities Ltd., (initial capital £4,000); African Book Company Ltd. (£100); Nigerian Paper Company Ltd. (£100), and Nigerian Printing and Supply Co. Ltd. (£100). Altogether, his press and business empire was the first case of media concentration and diversification in Nigeria.

Furthermore, Zik went on to encourage foreign press tycoons to participate in the Nigerian Newspaper business. They included Mr. Cecil King of the Mirror Group in London who was urged "to invest money in the newspaper business in the country, because, I believe it would enhance the progress of
journalism purely from the professional and technical points of view" (Azikiwe, 1970:309). King responded to this request by taking over the Daily Times in 1948, and followed Zik by using the paper to build another major media business organisation in Nigeria. It was a strategy which was also firmly in line with the expansion policies pursued by the parent group within Britain.

In Nigeria, like Zik's Pilot Group of Newspapers, the Daily Times virtually integrated all aspects of the newspaper business, from the supply of newsprint, through printing, distribution, and most importantly publication of both the daily, weeklies and special interest magazines and newspapers. It also diversified, like Azikiwe, into business outside the newspaper industry, to include transport, property and all aspects of the leisure industry. In addition, since the Times' growth came at the time Azikiwe was becoming a major force in Nigerian politics, and no longer paying attention to his newspaper empire, it took over as the new leader of Nigerian journalism with a training school established to train journalists from other newspapers.

Although it is possible to trace the continuous ascendancy of commercial motives in the growth of private newspaper corporations, participants in the early period of nationalism, including Zik, made considerable efforts to play down their economic ambitions and to emphasise their political ideals, which they put forward in patriotic tones. In the first issue of The West African Pilot, published on November 22nd, 1937, for example, Zik announced that: "Economically, we aim at the erradication of such forces of profit motive which overlook the African producer as a human being, and which lay unnecessary emphasis on material values." (Azikiwe, 1970:296), my emphasis. This statement of national goals clearly runs counter to Zik's support for laissez-faire, announced in an editorial
declaration that: "Our newspapers should support the economic principles of live and let live". Years later, Zik was to contend that:

The literary content of a modern newspaper is one of a complicated business structure with financial implications. Having assembled a large collection of plant and machinery in a factory and divided workers to lubricate the wheels of this embryo industry, to be productive meant an outlay of money for capital and recurrent expenditures. My next problem was to ensure a regular income which would provide sufficient revenue to offset the expenditure and to have sufficient profit for the shareholders and reserves for renewals, expansion and contingencies. (Azikiwe, 1970:297).

Unquestionably, this was a very clear statement of his commitment to the motive which he elsewhere denounced as neglecting 'the African producer as a human being'. Within his own company, capital continued to accumulate, reproducing itself at the expense of the workers and to the benefit of shareholders. As he himself explains:

After one year of existence, we declared a dividend of 15 per cent. For the years 1939-1943 we declared 7½ per cent for each year. In 1944, it was 12 per cent. The year the war ended, it was 8 per cent; in 1946 it was 15 per cent; in 1947 it was nil; in 1948 it was 15 per cent; and in 1949 it was 20 per cent. (Azikiwe, 1970:301).

It was these impressive returns from the West African Pilot that enabled Zik to launch a chain of titles capitalising on nationalist sentiments for his own economic interests, and to move outside the newspaper industry into other more strategic sectors of the colonial economy.
But Zik's rise did not go unopposed. By the time he returned to Nigeria, nationalist activities had cohered into two major groups, the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) and the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM). Zik immediately joined the Nigerian Youth Movement and propagated its ideals in the pages of his newspapers. The Youth Movement was successful in the 1938 elections for the Legislative Council and the Lagos Township Council, but immediately after this, disagreements within the higher echelons of the Movement led to a break. The **Pilot** no longer served as the organ of the whole Movement but as the voice of Dr. Azikiwe's faction. In response, the **Service**, hitherto a newsletter of the Movement, was converted into a daily newspaper to counter the attacks of the **West African Pilot**. Zik ultimately resigned from the Nigerian Youth Movement in 1941, to establish his own political organisation.

However, throughout the period 1941 to 1950, the **West African Pilot** and the **Daily Service**, organs of two opposing groups of the emerging elite class continued to engage in a press war. Either Zik had imagined that he could use his newspapers to build up an image for himself and gain an edge over his rivals; or his rivals feared this situation and decided to nip it in the bud. Either way, this intra class struggle during the consolidation period of Nigerian nationalism brought about the establishment of party affiliated newspapers, as the political parties emerged and the beginning of a serious party political journalism, described by one analyst as 'a vituperative and cantankerous party press'. (Utomi, 1981).

Before we consider the new press structure which was dominated by party-based and ostensibly publically owned papers, we wish to underline the significance of the **West African Pilot** to Nigerian journalism. Apart from introducing innovative investment practices, Zik and the **Pilot** Group trained most of the first
generation of Nigerian journalists whose performance has been so much appreciated and praised. Among these were Abiodun Aloba, Kola Balogun, F.O. Blaize, Increase Coker, Anthony Enahoro, Babatunde Jose, Alade Ondunewu, and Saad Zungur. Professionally therefore, Zik and the West African Pilot helped to establish the liberal tradition of journalism that became so sacrosanct within Nigerian journalistic circles.

Politically, its constant attacks on the colonial government created the illusion that the journalists of this period were 'radical', driven by primarily patriotic concerns. No mention is therefore made in conventional accounts of the objective economic conditions that pushed many of them into journalism. Nevertheless, many of them did form the nucleus of the nationalist political parties which eventually became locked in struggles for the control of state power after the withdrawal of the British. As a consequence the struggle had an important subcategory; the struggle for control over the prevailing images of the various factions within the emerging elite.

The Dominance of Party and State Owned Newspapers

Since the 1920s, when the first elections were held in Nigeria, newspapers have supported various political factions. Moreover, most of the early nationalist politicians were newspaper proprietor/editors. As early as 1923, the Nigerian National Democratic Party was formed with Herbert MaCauley and Lagos Weekly Record publisher, Thomas Horatio Jackson as the central figures. The NNDP was closely followed by the Nigerian Youth Movement, designated initially as the Youth Nigeria Party (The Union of Young Nigerians), of which Ernest Ikoli was a key member. As Omu observes:
"The involvement of the newspapermen in the formation of these parties provide one explanation for the heated participation of these newspapers in the Legislative Council elections. Newspapers shifted their focus from that of political group supporters to organs of political parties. A second explanation was that certain people were aroused by the constitutional changes to establish their own newspapers expressly to fight the elections. Such newspapers, by the very nature of their birth, tried very hard to influence public thought and so introduced vehemence into the campaigns."

(Omu, 1978:233).

A final explanation for the proliferation of newspapers during this period, suggested by Omu is 'the natural disposition of newspapers to exploit political excitement for commercial ends' since 'the polemics inevitable in electioneering gave a boost to newspaper sales'. Certainly the rise of Zik's West African Pilot coincided with the inauguration of the Nigerian Youth Movement in 1938, and the 1940s which saw a rising tide of nationalism were years of 'newspaper boom in Nigeria'.

As well as The West African Pilot for Dr. Azikiwe's National Council for Nigeria and the Cameroons, the leading political party newspapers of the time included the Daily Service and the Nigerian Tribune for the newly formed Action Group. While in the North, the Regional government established the Nigerian Citizen with a sister Hausa version Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo (Truth is worthier than money) to defend the interests of the Northern based Nigerian Peoples Congress, the NPC. In addition, there was Dr. K.O. Mbadiwe's Daily Telegraph. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, these party based papers were
Table 8.1: Papers Circulating in Nigeria by 1940

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Type of Production</th>
<th>Estimated Daily Circulation Figures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Times</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>5,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily News</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>2,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West African Pilot</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akedo Eko</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Observer</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Comet</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West African Star</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Eastern Mail</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>3,161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osumare Egba</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>3,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ijebu Weekly News</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Advertiser</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>3,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Provincial Guardian</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>1,868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Leisure Hours</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>1,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Catholic Herald</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Life</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Church Chronicle</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL: 28,769

locked in a vicious combat. As one commentator has noted, the papers were "completely immersed in the vortex of partisan politics and were in no position to prepare the people for the challenges of independence and national unity" (Omu, 1978:247).

As the various factions took over power from the British in the early 50s at both Regional and Federal levels however, greater emphasis was placed on papers supported with public funds. Once the publishers of the leading party papers were in positions of power and economic control, government papers were considered vital for the promotion of the various factions. Hence, although the existing commercial papers like The Nigerian Daily Times, Nigerian Daily Telegraph and Lagos Daily News continued to play an important role in Nigerian journalism, and maintained high circulations and healthy advertising revenues, it was the party and government owned press that set the pace for journalism in Nigeria in the immediate pre and post-independence years.

These transformations of press ownership from personalised papers, to party and government owned, were essentially changes of form rather than essence. The competition for economic and political power that drove the major figures into politics and journalism in the first place, simply became more organised and orchestrated. Its open manifestation can be attributed to the changing structure of power relationship brought about by the transition from the direct control of administrative and political power by the metropolitan centre to indirect control through a 'cultivated intelligentsia'. As we noted in an earlier chapter, Federalism produced cartel arrangements whereby the new governing elite, made up of the competing factions, divided the country into spheres of
influence, and each faction schemed to dominate at the centre. Thus the Northern faction, whose numerically superior regional population gave them a political advantage at the centre, enabling it to control the central government, not only had the *New Nigerian* at its disposal, but established a Federal Government newspaper, *The Post*, to further articulate its interests.

The other regional government owned papers performed the same function for the other factions. As the former Editor of the Northern based *New Nigerian* later explained, his paper (like the rest) was "a government paper out to:
(1) get across the views of the Northern elites and mobilise them in order to achieve its goal; (2) fight the Northern case in all disputes at the centre". (Daura, 1971:41).

As well as establishing state owned papers to advance their interests, the emergent bourgeoisie adopted strategies that would enable them to control the commercial and party press in their respective spheres of influence. The first step was to re-enact the colonial press laws. In 1955 and 1958 respectively, the Eastern and Western Regional governments adopted the law of Defamation passed in 1952 in slightly modified forms, and the North followed in 1959. These restrictions were extended with the passing of the Newspaper (Amendment) Act of 1964, which met with a lot of opposition. The main provisions of the Act read:

"(1) Any person who publishes or reproduces or circulates for sale in a newspaper any statement, rumour or report knowing or having reason to believe that such statement, rumour or report is false shall be guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine of £200 or to imprisonment for one year. (2) It shall be no defence to a charge under this section that he did not know or did not have reason to believe that
the statement, rumour or report was false unless he proves that, prior to publication, he took reasonable measures to verify the accuracy of such statement, rumour or report."

By the time the Military replaced civilian politicians as the dominant faction of the governing class, there were enough press laws to curb the circulation of almost all the papers in the country. Each paper had a ban placed on it from the opposing territories. Moreover, when the disagreements within the civilian administration escalated, ushering in the Military government, and subsequently the civil war, observers argued that the press had contributed in no small measure. Even the Military leaders who were in government at the time, singled out the press for special criticism, deploring its negative impact on efforts to secure a National understanding.

As an illustration, the following conversation was recorded at Aburi, Ghana, during the negotiations between the rebelling authorities and the Federal Government. This was the last meeting of Military leaders in Nigeria before secession. The discussion went as follows:

"Lt. Col. Gowon: On Government Information Media I think all the Government Information Media in the country have done terribly bad. Emeka would you say the 'New Nigerian' has been 'very unkind to the East'

Lt. Col. Ojukwu: And the 'Post' which I pay for.

Lt. Col. Gowon: Sometimes I feel my problem is not with anyone but the 'Outlook'. 
Lt. Col. Ojukwu: All the other information media have done a lot. When the Information Media in a country completely closed their eyes to what was happening I think it is a dangerous thing.

Major Johnson: Let us agree it is the situation.

Lt. Col. Ejoor: All of them have committed one crime or the other.

Lt. Col. Hassan: The 'Outlook' is the worst of them.

Lt. Col. Ojukwu: The 'Outlook' is not the worst, the 'Post' which we all in fact pay for is the worst followed closely by the 'New Nigerian'.

Mr. T. Omo-Bare: Let us make a general statement on all of them, no distinction.

Unfortunately though, these military leaders could not relate their criticism of the state controlled press to the elites who were in control since such an examination might have brought them face-to-face with the fundamental contradictions of the neo-colonial state in which they themselves were principal agents. Consequently, the army's reaction was to bring the press closer to 'discipline'.

Oil, Military Rule and Press Expansion

The Nigerian civil war further underlined the importance of the media to members of the Nigerian elite, as a concerted propaganda effort was carried out over the air waves and on the pages of newspapers. In addition, two important things happened which stimulated the expansion of the media in the country. The

first was the further split of the old regions into twelve administrative units called states. Every 'state' became very conscious of its own interests, and as the old regions sought to mobilise them to fight for their case at the centre. By 1967, there were twelve of these states, and they were later increased to nineteen in 1975. The second factor is that of oil. The increase in oil revenues in the 1970s provided the economic means to establish new organs of communication and throughout the 1970s new papers were established by the new regional governments despite unattractive returns from the media industry. By 1975, there were 15 daily newspapers circulating in Nigeria. Of these, only two were privately owned. The rest were owned and controlled either by a state government, a group of states, or the central government.

Table 8.2 : Number and Circulation of Daily Newspapers in Nigeria 1970-79

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Dailies</th>
<th>ESTIMATED Total Circulation</th>
<th>Estimated total circulation per 1000 inhabitants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>319,000</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>283,000</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>213,000</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>660,000</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>613,000</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>527,000</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 8.3: Daily Newspapers Circulating in Nigeria by 1979

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Type of Ownership</th>
<th>Year of Establishment</th>
<th>Place of Publication</th>
<th>*Estimated Circulation Figures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Sketch</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>March 1963</td>
<td>Ibadan</td>
<td>88,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Star</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Enugu</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Times</td>
<td>Private/Government</td>
<td>June 1926</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>190,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening Times</td>
<td>Private/Government</td>
<td>August 1973</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Nigerian</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>January 1966</td>
<td>Kaduna/Lagos</td>
<td>130,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Standard</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>July 1975</td>
<td>Jos</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Herald</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>October 1973</td>
<td>Ilorin</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Observer</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>May 1968</td>
<td>Benin-City</td>
<td>32,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Statesman</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>June 1979 ?</td>
<td>Owerri</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Tide</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>December 1971</td>
<td>Port-Harcourt</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Chronicle</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>January 1971</td>
<td>Calabar</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Tribune</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>December 1949</td>
<td>Ibadan</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Punch</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>November 1976 ?</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Daily Express</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Circulation figures are compiled from UNESCO Statistical Yearbooks (various years); the reliability of the figures is however questionable.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Type of Ownership</th>
<th>Day of Publication</th>
<th>Month and Year of Establishment</th>
<th>Place of Publication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business Times</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Mondays</td>
<td>September 1975</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irohin Imole</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Mondays</td>
<td>July 1957</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irohin Yoruba</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Wednesdays</td>
<td>1945</td>
<td>Ibadan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lagos Weekend</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Fridays</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader</td>
<td>Catholic Church</td>
<td>Sundays</td>
<td>January 1956</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Mirror</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Wednesdays</td>
<td>June 1966</td>
<td>Onitsha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian People</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Mondays</td>
<td>August 1976</td>
<td>Calabar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Observer</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>October 1968</td>
<td>Benin City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Punch</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>March 1973</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Sketch</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>May 1967</td>
<td>Ibadan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Standard</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Jos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Star</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>July 1979</td>
<td>Enugu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Statesman</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>October 1979</td>
<td>Owerri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Sun</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>May 1979</td>
<td>Benin-City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Tide</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Port-Harcourt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Tribune</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>February 1978</td>
<td>Ibadan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Times</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>August 1953</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Star</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Enugu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
349

By 1979, their combined circulation was estimated to be approximately 600,000 a day, that is a penetration rate of about 100 per 1,000 inhabitants. Though this figure is almost certainly inflated, given that there are no reliable circulation figures for Nigerian newspapers, since most of the papers overstate their figures to attract advertisers and to maintain their prestige in relation to other papers.

In addition to the daily papers, there were some very important weeklies like the Sunday editions of the daily papers, together with a number of monthly and occasional publications. Again, when all these publications are combined, they give the impression that privately owned papers are more numerous and therefore more important than those owned by the government. Sheer numbers of titles are a misleading guide to influence, however, since in terms of mass circulation, geographical coverage, and readership throughout the country, government owned newspapers continued to dominate the press sector. Governments have however insisted that their continuous involvement in the media is not aimed at silencing criticism, but rather educating the masses. This project is however carefully controlled, both through the financing of the papers and the choice of personnel to man them.

Media Revenue Sources

Although most government owned newspapers derive a large percentage of their revenues from their sponsoring governments, considerable pressure is put on the management to generate internal revenue to lessen the burden on the public purse. Thus, as with the privately owned papers, a lot of emphasis is placed on "commercial viability". Since sales do not even cover the cost of production, and constitute only a minor part of the total revenue, all the papers - both government and private owned - rely heavily on two additional sources of
The importance of diversified interests is well illustrated by the **Daily Times Group**, which, since the decline of the Zik Group of newspapers, has remained the major press organisation in Nigeria. With important stakes in all aspects of the newspaper business - from the importation and distribution of newsprint, through printing and publication activities, to the distribution of international newspapers within Nigeria. Further, its diversification outside the newspaper world takes the Daily Times into the following areas of the Nigerian economy: financial investment, property development, packaging manufacture, and leisure activities that include the distribution of consumer electronics, car hire, tourism and travel agencies.

Apart from these commercial activities, the company's publications also devote a great percentage of their column space (approximately 85%) to advertisements. These various non-newspaper activities have produced huge profits and made a substantial contribution to the company's balance sheet. The company realised over 3.5 million naira in 1976. It was at a plateau of over 5 million naira for the years 1977, 1978 and 1979; and only dropped to approximately 3.8 million in 1980. Corresponding turnover, as Table 8.6 shows was 24.4 million for 1976; 30.3, 34.7 and 38.8 for 1977, 1978 and 1979 respectively. The table shows that in 1980 when profits dropped to 3.8 million naira, the company's gross turnover actually rose to a record figure of 44.7 million naira. This indicates that the real profits of the group, for the year 1980, were rather higher than the amount recorded on the balance sheet. Like other capitalist ventures, the company had directed some of its surplus into non-taxable areas before declaring profits. Of these, the most significant came under the heading of 'Depreciation', taking about 2.2 million naira.
Table 3.5: Activities of the Daily Times of Nigeria Limited

Printers and Publishers of:
- Daily Times
- Evening Times
- Sunday Times
- Lagos Weekend
- Sporting Record
- Times International
- Business Times
- Headlines
- Spear
- Woman's World
- Home Studies
- Nigeria Year Book
- Times Trade & Industrial Directory.

Subsidiary Companies:
- Times Press Limited (wholly owned)
  Lithographic and letterpress printers
- Nigerpak Limited (74 per cent owned)
  Packaging manufacturers
- Naira Holdings Limited (wholly owned)
  Investment holding
- Naira Properties Limited (60 per cent owned)
  Property development
- Times Leisure Services Limited (wholly owned)
  Electronics, travel agency, car hire,
  tourism, etc.
- West Africa Publishing Company Limited
  Publishers of West Africa Magazine
  (80 per cent owned).
Table 8.6: Daily Times Nigeria Ltd.: Annual Turnover and Profits (₦), 1976-1980

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Turnover</td>
<td>24,426,000</td>
<td>30,271,000</td>
<td>34,664,000</td>
<td>38,828,000</td>
<td>44,690,307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Newspaper)</td>
<td>6,847,000</td>
<td>8,099,000</td>
<td>8,823,000</td>
<td>9,868,000</td>
<td>11,435,549</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Periodicals; Books)</td>
<td>1,131,000</td>
<td>1,028,000</td>
<td>1,101,000</td>
<td>1,573,000</td>
<td>2,911,993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Advertisements)</td>
<td>5,398,000</td>
<td>5,907,000</td>
<td>7,412,000</td>
<td>8,262,000</td>
<td>7,756,249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Printing and Packaging)</td>
<td>10,599,000</td>
<td>14,404,000</td>
<td>16,734,000</td>
<td>18,416,000</td>
<td>21,257,002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Others)</td>
<td>451,000</td>
<td>833,000</td>
<td>594,000</td>
<td>709,000</td>
<td>1,329,514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Profit Before Taxation</td>
<td>3,668,691</td>
<td>5,566,719</td>
<td>5,266,073</td>
<td>5,080,931</td>
<td>3,782,034</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* All Trading Profit is stated after charging Depreciation, Auditors' remuneration; Directors' emoluments - Fees as Managers, Retirement benefits, and after Crediting Investment income both quoted and unquoted.

This aggressively commercial orientation is admired and copied by other leading Nigerian newspapers. The Punch for example is, like the Daily Times, involved in several other commercial ventures in addition to publishing, as Table 8.7 shows.

Table 8.7: The Punch Nigeria Ltd. Publications and other Commercial Activities

Punch Publications - 1981

- Sunday Punch 1973
- The Punch (Daily) 1976
- Superwoman 1978
- Top Life 1979
- Happy Home 1971
- Financial Punch -
- Nigeria Radio & TV Times

Other Commercial Involvement

- Skylark Records
- Travel Agency
- Pusky Clearing and Forwarding Agency
- Polygraph (agents for German machines)
- Feedwell (Cold storage and related items)
- Skyway Press - commercial printing and publications
- Television Rentals
- Wick Oil (in collaboration with AGIP Oil Filling Stations)
- KUPIC Ltd. - Property Owners and Estate Development Company
- JAL Ltd. - manufactures cosmetics and distributes shaving powder for an American company
- Phantasia - Representative of an American company.

Others

Nigerian distributors for:

1. African Music (magazine)
2. Weekend Flight
3. Variety Entertainment
4. African Farms
5. West African Technique
The business orientation of the Daily Times and the Punch groups is emulated by most of the other Nigerian newspapers, even if their commercial success is not as great. Clearly, this has implication for the editorial output of the papers, though not necessarily in an open and direct way. Here, we will assess briefly the significance of one such commercial practice - advertising.

In a study of the proportion of space devoted to advertising as against editorial matter for example, Onu (1978) found that all Nigerian newspapers tended to devote more column inches to the sale of goods and services than to news and comment. Comparing the two leading newspapers, the Daily Times and the New Nigerian, he found that on average, the latter devoted 56% of its total space to advertising while The Daily Times gave over 77.5%, leaving only 22.5% for news and views. When the commodities promoted were analysed, vehicles lead in the Daily Times with 24.8% of the advertising space, followed closely by finance with 24.5%. In the New Nigerian, the order was reversed with finance taking 20% of the space followed by vehicles with 14.3%. Taken together, finance (operationally defined by Onu as banks, and financial and insurance services), and vehicles - two areas of the economy that are dominated by foreign capital, take almost 50% of the total advertising space in Nigeria's largest circulating and the most important newspapers.

The results are indicative of the overall dominance of foreign capital in the Nigerian economy. But, they also have an important cultural implication. Though most of the newspaper executives interviewed denied that advertisers had any direct influence on their editorial output, commercial values are certainly promoted indirectly through the imagery presented by these advertisements. Qualitative analysis of the advertisements show how they exploit the Nigerian
people's quest for development by presenting the consumption of foreign-made goods as an index and agency of development. They seek to create the desire for more and more of these goods irrespective of their immediate utility value. This acquisitive tendency is then amplified by the adverts of the banks and insurance companies, who promise financial assistance to customers wishing to raise their level of consumption. In reality however, their operations hardly benefit the ordinary Nigerian who lacks the required security - property.

Over and above the potential psychological consequences of the advertisements themselves however, the prominence of advertising affects the production of news and views of newspapers in the more subtle ways identified by Murdock, (Murdock 1982b). Firstly, advertisements squeeze the space available for editorial material. As a result, the remaining editorial space has either to be economised to contain as much material as possible; or, fewer stories are selected for presentation. Either way, only the crest of the stories is presented deleting background and content. Secondly, "because advertisements are normally booked and set well in advance of publication, their positioning determines the overall page layout and pushes news stories and features into the spaces which are left, thereby structuring the options for presentation" (Murdock, 1982b:81). Thirdly, there is an increasing tendency to place 'editorial' material which is directly relevant to a product side by side with the advertisement of that product and to initiate supplements on particular industries or products which are designed to attract advertisers by offering anodyne publicity. Finally, since their general utility to advertisements lies in their circulation levels, newspapers tend to concentrate on entertaining and sensational material which will command a large audience, thereby guaranteeing them the highest revenue.
Although, much more empirical research needs to be carried out to establish how far these observations apply to Nigerian newspapers, the evidence available to date does tend to support the general argument. Thus, the emphasis on reporting the actions and speeches of elites and the reliance on populist images and rhetorics, and commonplace stereotypes that studies have shown are characteristic of the commercial news media of the advanced capitalist countries, appear to be equally relevant in the case of Nigeria. Our findings will be reported in the next chapter, but Onu's earlier work prefigures some of our conclusions. For example, news coverage in the papers he investigated was found to concentrate on 'government policies as well as on economic-trade issues' with majority of the second type of stories devoted to the numerous local and foreign officials, and their families especially the then military Governors, their airport political policy statements: meetings and ceremonies in which they participated including the commissioning of new or completed 'development' projects and so on.

So far in this chapter, we have tried to chart the main changes in newspaper ownership and to suggest their political significance. On the basis of this analysis, it is now possible to make the following tentative statements on the structure of the Nigerian press: (i) that there has been a gradual change from a press based on titles controlled by individuals or agitational groups to a press that is closely integrated within the neo-colonial state. (ii) That state owned titles though relatively few in number, dominate the press sector because of their greater prestige and wider circulation and coverage. (iii) That both commercial and government owned papers operate within the general parameters set by the structure of the Nigerian economy and society. (iv) That consequently, the press functions generally to reproduce the existing social relations of neo-colonial capitalism, albeit often in subtle and unintended ways. Given the present state of
research, these remarks must remain tentative and much more detailed work needs to be done in order to draw more definite conclusions. Such an undertaking is beyond the scope of this thesis. For our present purposes however, this general outline of the changing structure of the Nigerian press needs to be rounded off with an outline of the particular mechanisms adopted by the military-bureaucratic oligarchy to control the press.

Further Questions of Control

Control of media institutions takes place at two basic levels: (a) the general level of resource allocation which includes the definition of the overall goals of the undertaking; and (b) control at the operational level of the day-to-day implementation of these objectives. At both levels, there may be both direct and indirect attempts to influence the eventual output. Here, our concern will be with some aspects of direct control, at both the allocative and operational levels, many of which have already been touched upon.

Apart from the financial pressures discussed above, control may operate through legislation, through the appointment of senior managerial and editorial personnel, through physical attacks on erring journalists; and through censorship, including the seizure of particular issues of the papers. During the military era, most of these practices were fairly common.

As we noted earlier, when the first military coup took place on January 15th, 1966, there already existed a considerable number of legal statutes by which the press could be prosecuted. The most notable of these laws were: (a) the 1961 Defamation Act; (b) the 1962 Official Secrets Act; (c) the 1964 Newspaper (Amendment) Act; and (d) Sections 50, 51, 59 and 418 of the Criminal Code. Together they formed a formidable arsenal. Initially, the Military tried to
liberalise some of the Regional press laws imposed by the various governments of the Federation in their effort to restrict the circulation of unfriendly papers. Indeed, so much priority was given to this issue, that it was introduced as a key feature of the second Decree promulgated by the armed forces. Thus, Decree 2 of 1966 provided that:

Any person who after the coming into force of this Decree, whether alone or with any other person, and whether as a member of a municipal authority or otherwise, does anything calculated to prevent or restrict the distribution or general sale of any newspaper in any part of Nigeria shall be guilty of an offence and be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding £500 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years, or both.

This law remained in operation for sometime. However, it was not long before less liberal legislation was introduced. In 1967, there was the Newspapers Prohibition of Circulation Decree, Number 17. This was followed by the Armed Forces and Police (Special Powers) Decree Number 24 of the same year which gave the police special powers to arrest and detain anyone in the interest of state security. This law was designed to take care of the war situation, but remained in force for a long time after the civil war. In fact, it became its most contentious legacy throughout the post civil-war period of Military rule. Under the umbrella of this Decree, a number of journalists were arrested, detained and sometimes tortured for anti-government activities. For example, in 1974 Minere Amakiri, a Port-Harcourt based correspondent of the Nigerian Observer published in Benin reported the Teacher's strike in Rivers' state. Unfortunately, the publication coincided with the birthday celebration of the State Governor. The journalist was
invited to state house, had his hair cleanly shaven and was assaulted by the Governor's aide de camp. This incident was extensively publicised till Amakiri finally obtained redress in a Court of Law. Apart from Amakiri, there were other occasions involving the physical harassment of journalists.

These instances could however give a misleading picture of the state of Nigerian journalism under the Military authorities. Throughout this period, observers continued to insist that the Nigerian press was the 'most virile and the free-est' in Africa. Similarly, Golding and Elliott arrived at the conclusion that, "such incidents were extreme and unusual and their widespread publicity has been some measure of this". Though they added that "harassment, intimidation, threatening phone-calls, arbitrary arrests, abuse of office, corruption and dictatorial requests were the common currency of relationship between a military regime and journalists". (Golding and Elliott, 1979:68). Another observer of Nigerian journalism commented in a recent paper that "even under Military rule, there was still enough room for Nigerian editors to inform, lead, criticise and even challenge the government". (Ekwelie, 1979:232). To Golding and Elliott, the limitations of the press are better understood in the context of the professional ideologies or news values of journalism received from the Western World than as the result of direct forms of control. Certain features of this thesis will be examined in the next chapter.

In addition to legislation, the press dependence on government subventions and advertising revenue made it difficult for newspapers to operate outside of the parameters set by the capitalist economy within which those in control of the state themselves operated. To sustain this social system, they insisted that the journalists move away from 'adversary journalism' practised during the colonial
days and pursue the 'developmental journalism' necessary for the post-

independence era. To achieve this end, trusted members of the governing social
group were appointed as the top executives of all the papers and placed on the
boards of directors. As Babatunde Jose, former Managing Director of The Daily
Times observed, just before he himself was replaced by a senior civil servant in
the Cabinet Office: "the journalists now have to impose self-censorship on what
they write and in effect what they tell the public in news and views". (cited in

These new managers served as the key links between the state and the
journalists with acceptable editors acting as intermediate controllers. Describing
this relationship (which we may accept as typical of all government papers), a one
time practitioner who had worked as a junior journalist, editor and General
Manager of the Daily Sketch, Mr. Dayo Duyile has explained this chain of command
thus:

The Board .... dictates the proprietors' tunes, the General Manager
trumpets it loud to the ears of his staff, the Editor marries the
music to synchronise with the Board's editorial policy with the
assistance of the Editorial Manager... These are the three
principal actors who really matter in directing the editorial policy
of a newspaper. (Duyile, 1979:51).

As this description makes clear, although at the operational level editors and
senior management directed editorial policy on a day-to-day basis, the overall
shape of this policy was worked out at the prior level of proprietorial control,
which was in turn subject to the ultimate control of the military.
The marginalisation of radical commentary produced by these overt forms of control was further bolstered by the journalists' routine practices of self-censorship rooted in their socialisation into the professional practices of the organisation. Through formal schooling and in the job training, the journalists on these papers are made to work within the canons of commercial journalism carried over from the colonial period and reinterpreted in the neo-colonial era. To quote Onu once more:

The perpetration of Euro-American news-value-orientations which give precedence to sensational and amusement materials or the trivialisation of serious political and economic issues inculcate in readers an uncritical outlook inimical to political development in new nations. Failure to provide fairly depth and critical analysis of political and economic issues and to offer alternatives to policy matters encourages uncritical acceptance of the existing structures and modes of social relationship both within the country and between the country and the external world. (Onu, 1978:34).

To sum up then, the capitalist system which incorporated Nigeria into its sphere of dominance through colonialism, not only introduced a dependent and repressive economic and political structure, but encouraged accompanying cultural institutions that help to cement the established structures of dependence. One of such apparatuses is the press, carefully integrated with the state, operating within the parameters set by the economic environment and its major agents, with a dominant professional ideology produced under metropolitan conditions; and in forms capable of reproducing the existing structures of internal class inequality
and national dependence. The remaining chapter offers a detailed empirical
illustration of the way these forces work within Nigerian journalism, using
material drawn from a content study of press presentation of student opposition
to Military rule after the civil war.
9. STUDENT PROTESTS IN THE NIGERIAN PRESS

In the preceding chapters, we have tried to present both press practitioners and students as intellectuals working within a particular socio-economic milieu - a neo-colonial capitalist society with increasing class contradictions that were being managed by an authoritarian military. Moreover, we argued that since the military did not break with the socio-economic formation nurtured before and after flag independence, their attempt at social engineering were fraught with difficulties, and met with resistance from disadvantaged groups. We also suggested the importance of intellectuals to these struggles as systematisers and articulators of ideologies. In the Nigerian case under investigation, we specifically noted that as social conflicts became increasingly pronounced, university students shifted towards a greater identification with the lower social classes, and actively tried to force the conditions of the poor onto the political agenda through public demonstrations and other forms of political protest.

In relation to the press, we argued, that its development had two identifiable legacies: (a) close integration into the state structure at the level of allocative control; and (b) the perpetuation of Euro-American news values with their particular frames and perspectives for selecting and processing knowledge about events and about society. As we shall show in this chapter, these notions of 'newsworthiness' produced an account of the student movement that tended to evacuate most of its political content, and to support the status quo. In reply, apologists for the press's performance have argued that the militarised nature of society and the controls placed on newspapers left little room for manoeuvre or public criticism. Though we do not deny the presence and importance of such threatening conditions, it is our contention that the adherence to the core values
of the press in advanced capitalist societies remains the more important factor.

In common with Golding and Elliott (1979) we acknowledge that the triadic relationship between State-Media and Students was a complex one. Certainly, the conflict between state personnel and the media practitioners - two groups with opposing professional ideologies and self images - was as significant as that between the state and the students, and required careful negotiation, described by Golding and Elliott as "accommodation". But over and above the overt trade-offs between journalists and those in control of state power, there remained the more fundamental constraint which stemmed from the received ideals of professional performance and which structured the press's presentation of the conflict between students and the state.

As we argued earlier, intellectuals committed to expressing the aspirations of the poor in a society where alternative vehicles have been neutralised face difficulties at the levels of force and consensus. In the case of the Nigerian students, they not only came up against the coercive force of a militarised capitalism, but also its culture including the inherited journalistic values which underpinned the way their actions and aspirations were reported and projected into popular consciousness.

News Values and Definitions of Social Reality

Since the early days of the gatekeeper studies, research on news production has moved away from attempts to identify discrete sources of personal bias towards a more subtle investigation of the 'unwitting bias' that arises from the normal definitions of 'newsworthiness' which underpin the routine production of news. Particular attention has been paid to the definition of news as exclusively concerned with contemporary events, and the consequent evaluation of historical
background and context; the emphasis on dramatisation and more especially violence and conflict; and the tendency to organise stories around the actions and pronouncements of personalities, particularly members of the political elite.

These underlying news values facilitate the distribution of a particular form of social knowledge which tends to coincide with established ways of looking at the world. As a result, news tends to ignore or deconstruct alternative and oppositional world views, and to explain the actions of their adherents through conventional frames. For example, Gitlin in his analysis of the media coverage of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) Movement in the United States during the 1960s, concluded that the movement only became important to the media when it became a dramatic street event; at which point, the routine practices of journalism treated the demonstrators as if they were actual or potential criminals. By so doing, the media delegitimised their actions and refused to consider their views as a valid alternative definition of the world. As a result, he argues, the news coverage "diverts coverage away from critical treatment of the institutional, systemic, and everyday workings of property and the state", Gitlin, 1980:271.

In their study of British demonstrations against the American involvement in Vietnam, Halloran, Elliott and Murdock (1970), and Hall et al (1975) on mugging have come to similar conclusions about the press coverage of activities of social groups which fell outside the established consensus. They noted that outgroups are first labelled by primary definers with the political and state establishment, then criminalised through the use of established frames of interpretation, leaving intact the existing structures of society that have given rise to their activities.
In the following pages, we will try to show that these findings are not unique to advanced capitalist societies. They provide a useful framework for approaching the Nigerian press's reporting of student demonstrations. We begin our analysis with the coverage of the build-up to the demonstrations; followed by a general account of the way the events were reported. These preliminaries are followed by a discussion of the interrelated themes of: Violence, Law and Order; News Sources, especially the use of eminent persons; the personalisation of events which turn the coverage into a "star system", reducing the conflict to a clash of personalities rather than of interests and principles; and finally, an evaluation of the consequences of this form of press performance.

Anyone conversant with the extensive literature could argue that there is nothing particularly novel in such an exercise. We do not claim innovativeness in the conception of news values. Our aim is to add to an already rich debate by analysing news reporting in a neo-colonial capitalist society of the Third World where such studies are still few and far between. Because of this relative neglect, the politics of the media in these societies rest heavily on struggles for the commercial 'freedom of the press', and attempts at innovation are limited to copying or reproducing developments in the Western world such as 'investigative journalism' or to the search for an elusive and ill-defined concept known as 'Developmental journalism'. Hence critical analysis of existing press performance, such as is offered here is therefore essential if we are to understand what the problems are in the Third World, and where we should begin our search for solutions.

A Note on Method

The bulk of the material reported here is derived from a content analysis
of Nigerian newspapers which we undertook between January and June 1982. In addition, we conducted a series of informal discussion with journalists involved in reporting the events analysed (sometimes supplemented by interviews) which greatly reinforced our confidence in the significance of Western derived news values for Nigerian journalism.

Content analysts try to 'say something about what has been called 'events as news' - that is, the versions of the world daily laid before the public as a kind of agenda for their thought, discussion and action' (Hartman, Husband and Clarke, 1974:94). However, Elliott has correctly warned that "society should be regarded not only as the audience but also as the source for media productions" (Elliott, 1978:8). Consequently, media content can be seen as a 'symbolic form' that embodies the cultural and social experience of all the people who participate in the communications process, whether they are producers, performers or audience. This conception of content is helpful in circumventing the strait-jacket sewn for us by the stimulus-response (S-R) model of communication where content is situated between producer and receiver simply as a transmission channel. In the past, many people who recognised the limitation of such a conception were, nonetheless, trapped by its intricate web, contending that to say something meaningful about content, one had to examine the processes of production, and consumption as well. However, as some of the results of this effort show, one may carry out all three and still end up with an interpretation that is not far removed from the Stimulus-Response model.

Although research on all three levels, if properly grounded in a theory of society, will provide rich information on the overall performance of a communication system, we wish to argue that if media content is taken as a
'symbolic form' it is possible for analysts to draw some conclusions without necessarily incorporating every aspect of the communication triad. In doing this, we draw on Elliott's useful comparison of press content with the anthropological concept of 'ritual' which draws "on what is customary, familiar and traditional in the culture" (Elliott, 1978:7), and invites both the spiritual and emotional participation of members of the community in order to maintain a consensus or preserve the fundamental hegemonic principles of society. Press ritual is defined by Elliott as:

rule-governed activity of a symbolic character involving mystical notions which draws the attention of its participants to objects of thought or feeling which the leadership of the society or group hold to be of special significance (Elliott, 1978:7 emphasis original).

Given the historical nature of the protests under discussion here, it was not possible to participate in them personally or to observe at first hand, the way the newspapers selected and processed events as Halloran and his team had done during the 1968 October demonstrations in London. Neither could the actors we approach provide accurate accounts untouched by the benefits of hindsight. Consequently, we were forced to rely heavily on archival material for the Students' own definition of the situation. These definitions have already been reported in Chapters 6 and 7, and the reading of the press accounts that follows should bear them in mind.

However, even though our concern is with the ritual performance of the press using content as its expressed form, it is still essential to take account of some of the established criticisms of content analysis's limitations. The first line of attack centres on Berelson's influential but now dated definition of the method
as a "research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication" (Berelson, 1966:263). This definition has been criticised from three main directions. Firstly, it is claimed that it canonises quantification, making it a sterile exercise in counting for counting sake. Like journalists, facts and more facts (or more accurately, numbers and more numbers) become yardsticks for confirmations and refutations. No longer is the 'repetition of significance' the guideline, but rather the 'significance of repetition' (Sumner, 1979). In other words, the approach provides no theory of signification or any explanation of the underlying social relationships which structure the production of the communications analysed. The second and closely related charge is that of 'crude positivism', whereby the anatomy of denotation is substituted for an analysis of connotation, and analytical categories arbitrarily and unsystematically selected. The third and more serious attack is on the communication theory that informed Berelson's definition, namely, the hypodermic needle model of assumed direct influence, within which content analysis supposedly teased out the intentions and biases of the communicators.

Some of these limitations have been overcome with the growth of communication studies. For instance, the shift away from crude assertion of bias has meant a greater emphasis on the general political agenda set by the content rather than on the effects of particular stories or story types. Similarly, recent quest for a theory of signification has marked a decisive break with S-R models, though it has taken divergent roads. While some have turned to various alternative forms of textual analysis, including semiotics, others have preferred more socially grounded theories such as the Marxist analysis of society and culture of which communication is considered a sub-category.
In acknowledging the need for such a theory, we have opted for the later position. Read as a whole, this work seeks to demonstrate that media content is an outcome of society and has significance for that society. Within a capitalist society, we propose that press performance is, in the final analysis, structured and signified by the peculiar nature of production relationships and in return, reinforces the class divisions and contradictions which constitute the texture of such a society. What is signified has potential of either reproducing or transforming that texture.

Thus whatever counting we have carried out has been done with such an understanding as the backdrop. It is directed at illustrating our overall argument about the nature of press interventions in ideological struggles within Nigeria. Furthermore, the work reported here should not be seen as an isolated study. It draws on, and hopefully contributes to, the growing volume of research that has already been done in this area.

**Time and Newspaper Samples**

With very limited resources, our analysis of daily newspapers in Nigeria over a ten year period presented several difficulties, both in terms of time period to be covered and the media to be sampled. Of the ten years, three were relatively uneventful since no major demonstrations had taken place and relatively little coverage of student protests was provided in the newspapers. The three years 1972, 1977 and 1979, were therefore omitted, leaving us with seven years to work with.

We then carried out a pilot study of the papers for these years, and discovered that relatively little attention was given to student affairs between the months of July and September when the students were away on the three month long
vacation; and during the first two to three months of the new session. We therefore decided to exclude these months, except for December which we looked at for the purposes of pre-event coverage.

This gave us, for each year, a sample of seven continuous months - December to June, when the Universities were in almost continuous session and political activities on the campuses in full swing. Our initial intention was to construct a systematic sample within this period by taking every tenth issue of each paper, following the procedure developed by Hartman (1974) and used by Elliott (1977) and Troyna (1980). It was soon apparent that by adopting this strategy, we were leaving out very illuminating material. Furthermore, it could not capture the dynamic development of the stories, and made it impossible to explore how news reports of events were taken-up and elaborated in editorials, letters and features. It was therefore decided to take each issue of the papers in the study period and to code every relevant item. Each news story, letter, editorial, or photo-story was considered as a discrete unit of analysis.

If each of the five daily newspapers in our sample had carried an item per issue, we would have ended up with a total of 6,510 items. In the event, our analysis produced only 650 items. Possible reasons are, that two of the papers included in the study started publication in the middle of our time sample; the Nigerian Standard in 1976 and The Punch in 1978. Secondly, despite a thorough search of the extensive newspaper libraries at the University of Jos, at the Kashim Ibrahim Library of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and the National Archives in Kaduna, we were unable to locate issues of the Daily Sketch for 1970, 1973 and 1976. Indeed, the only papers for which there were complete runs for all the years in our sample were the two most successful and prestigious papers: the
Daily Times and the New Nigerian. Missing copies therefore played a part in limiting the sample.

Due to these omissions, the total number of newspapers sampled within the period selected was reduced to 3,806 and as indicated earlier, not all of these carried stories of demonstrations or of the issues that triggered them off. Secondly, some of the demonstrations lasted for only one or two months, and were immediately forgotten by the papers. On average then, we ended up with one story per seven newspapers or a story per week, though not necessarily in a systematic distribution of one story per seventh issue. Overall, we consider the sample meaningful for saying something about the imagery of the protests and the protestors as presented by the Nigerian press between 1970 and 1979, though we accept that the problem of missing copies places limitations on the strength of our generalisations.

The Selection of Newspapers

Five daily newspapers out of thirteen or so English language newspapers in circulation during the study period were selected for inclusion in the sample. They were: The Daily Times, The New Nigerian, The Punch, The Daily Sketch and The Nigerian Standard. Criteria for selection varied. Of the fourteen dailies circulating in Nigeria by 1979, the Nigerian Statesman was established only in June 1979, and as a result, did not qualify for selection. The Daily Express and the Evening Times had only a very limited circulation, restricted to the Lagos area, and consequently we left them out of consideration.

We were therefore left with eleven papers to select from. Initially, we set out to choose seven, using three principal criteria; type of ownership, geographical location, and extent of circulation, i.e. whether it was principally a
regional or national newspaper. We hoped that such a sample would enable us to make comparisons on the basis of ownership, circulation and geography. However, difficulties in obtaining support for field work costs, ultimately limited our choice of papers to five, though we endeavoured to ensure that these three key dimensions were adequately covered. Of the eleven papers, only *The Punch* and *The Tribune* were privately owned. The remaining nine were all publicly owned either by the Federal Government or by the State (Regional) governments. *The Daily Times* was a special case in that it was previously owned by private capital (through the first half of the sample, 1970 to 1975); and came under the control of the Federal Government through majority share holding in 1975.

In terms of ownership then, we have two private papers in the sample; *The Punch* and *The Daily Times* (1970 - 1975); and four state public owned papers: *The Daily Times* (1975 - 1979), the *New Nigerian*, *The Nigeria Standard*, and *The Daily Sketch*.

As mentioned in the last chapter, no reliable circulation figures are available since each paper inflates its own figures for status purposes. However, the few independent assessments available suggest that of the five papers, the *New Nigerian* and *The Daily Times*, and to some extent *The Punch*, could be regarded as national newspapers with circulations of well over 100,000 copies per day. *The other two*, *The Daily Sketch* and *The Nigeria Standard*, like other state papers are basically regional papers. Accordingly, they concentrate their news attention on their catchment area of about three to four adjoining states out of the nineteen states of the Federation. These regional papers tend to regard the nationals, *The Daily Times* and the *New Nigerian*, not without envy, as the Nigerian press, with the rest acting as a supporting cast.
Though we tried to vary the location of the papers, it was not considered such a crucial selection criterion. More attention was paid to circulation and ownership. Nevertheless, our final selection does cover all the various newspaper regions, except for the South Eastern corner of the country. Within the Ibadan-Lagos axis where the majority of the papers are published, three newspapers - The Daily Times, The Daily Sketch and The Punch were included; while the North with relatively low newspaper density was represented by The Nigeria Standard and the New Nigerian.

In both news coverage and layout, the papers differ in certain respects. On average, 80% of the space in The Daily Times is taken up with advertisements with most of the rest going to domestic and foreign news and commentary. On the other hand, the New Nigerian does not encourage commercial advertising, preferring the public service announcements coming from the various government ministries and parastatals. Attention given to advertisements seems to reflect ownership and financial demands, and in the case of the regional papers, availability of the adverts. Thus, in contrast to The Daily Times with its reliance on advertising revenue and other commercial ventures, the government subsidised New Nigerian can afford to discriminate against advertisers. The Punch, like The Daily Times, depends on advertising, but approximates closer to the British popular newspapers, including culling of The Sun's saucy looking page 3 girl. Its news coverage, like the British populars is scant, preferring the sensational: scandals, human interest stories, lifestyles of music and film stars (this includes Western musicians and actors), which is ostensibly used to boost sales. It is to a large extent, a 'Nigerian edition' of one of the British popular daily newspapers.
Both the Daily Sketch and the Nigerian Standard are low on advertising, though not by choice, and relatively thin on national news, concentrating rather heavily on local news. A lot of the remaining space is taken up by foreign stories received from international news agencies, and with foreign and domestic commentary, written either by the papers' features staff or by outside contributors.

Despite these differences, all the papers in the sample paid considerable attention to the demonstrations. Though occasionally, The Punch went for the outright sensational: centre-spread photo stories, photographs of dead students, and a less restrained and flamboyant use of language. As we will argue later on, overall, we did not find any marked distinctions in coverage either on the basis of ownership or geographical location. A possible exception which needs pointing out is the use of numbers. It appeared that the further away the paper was from the scene of incident, the higher the number of casualties it reported. For example, in 1971 the New Nigerian reported a total of three dead as a result of police shooting at the University of Ibadan. The Lagos based papers reported that only one student was killed. In 1978, the reverse was the case. This time it was the killings at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria which were nearer to the New Nigerian but further removed from the Daily Times, the Daily Sketch and The Punch. The New Nigerian (21.4.78) gave the number of dead students at Zaria as six, while The Punch (22.4.78) declared eleven were killed. Similar discrepancies were noticed throughout the coding. Where one paper reported two thousands, another would give the number of people involved in the same event as six to ten thousands.

The coding schedule was designed to cover both quantifiable and non-quantifiable material. The qualitative dimension was considered essential for
making indepth analysis and illustrating the general development of the stories.

The items coded are either news stories, editorials, letters, feature articles, cartoons and photo-news-stories. Each item in a paper is treated as a single unit. Despite the difficulties of coding features, editorials and photo-stories, we decided to include them so as to obtain a more complete picture of the presentation. We have tried to overcome the problem of misrepresentation in two ways. First, we have supplied liberal quotes from editorials, letters and features to allow them to 'speak' as much as possible in their own voice rather than unduly fragmenting their meaning through paraphrases. Secondly, three friends in Zaria agreed to code some randomly selected item 'blind' using our schedule. This exercise was designed to evaluate the reliability of my own coding, since I was working alone. Their codings and interpretations of what formed the kernel of the material did not seriously deviate from mine. Further, we selected about fifty random cases and re-coded them independently to see if there was some measure of consistency, and again, we were fairly satisfied with the end result.

General Press Performance *

In terms of numbers, column space, page location, and type of stories, it can be argued that all the papers in the sample gave considerable attention to student demonstrations. The 560 items finally located occupy a total column space of 50,078 column centimetres with the mean space devoted to each varying from a low of 77.3 for The Punch to 98.7 column centimetres for The Daily Sketch.

* All originals of newspaper quotations have been faithfully reproduced even though grammatically incorrect or apparently so.
### Table 9.1: Distribution of Items by Paper

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Number of Column Cms.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Times</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>15,895</td>
<td>90.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Nigerian</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>15,819</td>
<td>86.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*The Punch</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>4,952</td>
<td>77.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Sketch</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>10,362</td>
<td>98.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**The Nigerian Standard</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>3,050</td>
<td>95.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 559 N = 50,078 89.6

* Publication started in 1977, and figures are therefore for 1978 only.

**Daily publication started in 1976; figures refer to 1976 and 1978.

### Table 9.2: Yearly Distribution of Items (in Column Cms.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Times</td>
<td>3,140</td>
<td>2,587</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>1,316</td>
<td>2,334</td>
<td>972</td>
<td>5,078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Nigerian</td>
<td>2,200</td>
<td>2,416</td>
<td>2,247</td>
<td>2,372</td>
<td>791</td>
<td>1,256</td>
<td>4,537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Punch</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4,952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Sketch</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,310</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3,207</td>
<td>1,371</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3,474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Standard</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>2,490</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Similarly, as Table 9.2 shows, over the seven years, each paper gave fairly good attention to the protests; the mode for each of the years recorded for each paper being approximately 2,000 column centimetres. Further, as Table 9.3 indicates the stories were given a good deal of prominence with 45% of the items appearing on the front pages and 16% on the back pages.

**Table 9.3 : Position of Item (N = 560)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Front</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>560</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In other words, 61% of the stories were positioned on the two pages of a newspaper which are considered most important by journalists. These pages signal to the reader, what the newsmen consider the most important and significant news of the day. It is imagined that readers who may not have the time to consume the whole paper may nevertheless glance at these two outside pages. It can therefore be argued that news of the student demonstrations was considered 'newsworthy' enough to relegate other contending stories to a secondary position on the inside pages.

Also, most of the stories were presented under large and dramatic headlines which sometimes occupied as much as 60 to 80 column centimetres. Headlines draw the attention of the readers to the stories under them, and summarise the key points providing readers with directions as to what to look for and how to interpret it.
Table 9.4: Type of Item (N = 560)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Column Cms.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>40,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorial</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5,845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1,270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>612</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

560 100  50,126

Finally, Table 9.4 illustrates the general dominance of news items within the coverage. 477 of all items coded were news stories, occupying 40,880 column centimetres or 85% of the total column space in the sample. There were 45 editorials, 11 feature articles and 20 letters. The remaining seven items were made up of picture stories and cartoons. The fact that there were relatively few articles is of some interest because features dig out more of the background, and provide greater analytical depth than news stories. Hence, their rare appearance sandwiched between a vast amount of news coverage meant that they could not possibly compensate for the lack of analysis and background context in the primary reporting, which, with few exceptions, did not in any way go beyond the terms of the debate set in the news and lead stories.

Essentially, therefore, our analysis will concentrate on the news coverage, and on this note, we now proceed to examine the presentation of the key themes of Violence, Law and Order which occupied a prominent place throughout the reporting.
Violence and Law and Order: The Missing Background

From the January 1970 demonstrations at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria up to the celebrated 'Fees crisis' of 1978 involving all thirteen universities and other institutions of higher education, questions of violence and of law and order remained the most significant features of the press accounts of student protests.

On January 19th, 1970 the New Nigerian opened with the headline: "STUDENTS OF ABU GO RAMPAGING". The first sentence read: "Police were called in to maintain law and order at the Samaru Main Campus of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, at the weekend as over 1,000 undergraduates of the institution began what turned out to be an all day demonstration." The paper then proceeded to catalogue the casualties of this 'all day' festival of violence: 3 cars, comprising the Vice-Chancellor's Mercedes Benz saloon, another Mercedes Benz and a Peugeot; students in the female hostel beaten up for refusing to participate in the demonstrations; and a blockade erected at the entrance to the University campus. The aims of the demonstration were summarised crisply as: "Better accommodation; good food; and abrogation of demonstration laws."

The themes established by the authoritative New Nigerian in reporting these initial events were important because they were picked up by other newspapers further away from the scene of the demonstrations. They also served as the interpretative frames for covering this, and other demonstrations. To announce that students had 'gone on a rampage' did not suggest an outbreak of violence which might possibly have rational explanations, but rather a particularly mindless, mad and irrational form of behaviour. Such wild behaviour could only produce chaos, reminiscent of the civil war which had just ended, at a time when the rest of the country was trying to rebuild and reconstruct. As a corollary, the presence of the police on the Samaru Main Campus was presented as absolutely
necessary "to maintain law and order" and prevent this happening.

The element of the irrational is underscored, when we are told by the paper that it was an all day demonstration. There is an undercurrent of festivity here, but it is not just a normal festival of leisure. It is an eerie celebration of violence. Only evil men can possibly participate in such a festival. This point is reinforced by the attention paid to the destruction done to property, and particularly to the senseless beating of uncooperative and defenceless female undergraduates. Also, by pointing out that a section of the student body refused to participate in the demonstration, the press had introduced what was to become a permanent division between 'an active and militant minority' versus 'a silent majority'.

Against the background of a war-ravaged country, the demands of the demonstrators for better food and accommodation are made to appear trivial. As the paper stressed in a follow up editorial: "when the country was busy organising relief for their starving thousands who simply want something to eat to live, these students were striking for more comfortable accommodation and more tasty food". (20.1.70). This editorial appeared alongside another front page story, headlined: "INTOLERABLE BEHAVIOUR OF ABU STUDENTS". The paper claimed that the demonstrations were 'anything but peaceful' and called for a strong condemnation of the students, arguing that:

If there is one strike that deserves to be roundly condemned it is this strike. Its timing was gauche. When the students ought to have been protesting for the unity of their country just emerging from the chaos of civil war, they are preoccupied with beating up girl students, destroying property and insulting their teachers. (23.1.70).
The editorial further cemented the militant/moderate, minority/majority frame by attributing the demonstrations to the "uncouth behaviour of a handful of students".

Both the Daily Times and the Daily Sketch emphasised the element of violence. Writing under the heading: "ZARIA RUMPUS", the Daily Times labelled the demonstrations as outright "acts of hooliganism", and added emphatically: "The Daily Times condemns without any reservations the attempt of the students to intimidate University authorities through a show of force". It concluded on a homily: "One of the qualities of which University education is expected to inculcate in students is the ability to present legitimate grievances in a peaceful and constitutional manner. It is disappointing that some of the students who are being trained to hold responsible positions in society in the future find it difficult to show their resentment against lawful authorities without having recourse to acts of hooliganism." (23.1.70).

Unusually, in this instance, the primary definition of the situation as violent, ill-timed and a problem of law and order requiring firm action to head off a fresh current of chaos in society was provided by the press rather than by elite spokesmen. However, this definition was soon picked up, amplified, and fed back into the media by elite members such as Vice-Chancellors, Military Governors, and Commissioners. Some argued that the demonstrations amounted to acts of sabotage. On this more will be said later. Here, we wish to stress, that what was conspicuously missing from these newspaper reports was any discussion of the conditions at Ahmadu Bello University prior to the demonstrations.

Established in 1962 with a population of 425 students, the university had adequate accommodation, teaching and dining facilities for a total population of
less than 1,000 students. However, by the time of the demonstrations in 1970, the student population had expanded to over 2,000, stretching catering and residential facilities to breaking point. In addition, rules and regulations governing the administration of the university had become dated. Students stressed during the demonstrations, that the university retained "anachronistic rules and regulations unsuitable for modern times" which despite several efforts to influence changes were forced on them by the "expatriate foreign oriented 80% corps of the total membership of the Ahmadu Bello University senate". Due to the inflexible nature of the administration, sustained peaceful representations to the authorities had produced very little result and their recalcitrance had finally forced the students to take more militant action.

None of this background context was presented in the newspaper reports and editorials however. Instead, the press obtained a new angle on violence and agitation when an academic staff of the university - Dr. Richard Culver (an American lecturing in Physics), and a student, Olufemi Ozomero - were accused of planting explosives behind the Vice-Chancellor's office. The arrest and trial of Dr. Culver was widely reported by the press and his expatriate status seemed to confirm the allegations of outside sabotage which Governor Ogbemudia among others, had broached in his comments on the demonstrations. In fact, the Governor threatened to stop the scholarships of students of Bendel State origin found participating in 'this act of sabotage'. The explosives scare prompted the New Nigerian to proclaim a "DRAMATIC TURN IN ABU CRISES". "The malaise among the ABU, Zaria undergraduates spread dramatically to affect the university's academic staff ..." (19.3.70).
Prior to this, both the University Council and the Students Union had felt concerned enough about the reporting to issue independent explanations of the reasons for the crisis. In the Council's announcement (New Nigerian, Tuesday, February 5th, 1970), it was stated that between 1962 and 1967, priority was given to enlarging the academic facilities inherited from Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology in order to provide adequate teaching and produce manpower and that there was no corresponding expansion of accommodation, dining facilities or library. The Council attributed this to war time conditions and lack of funds.

To the credit of the students, the Council added that:

The policy of continuing expansion even though this meant some temporary hardship was explained to the students body on more than one occasion, and it was accepted by them that this was to be preferred to the alternative of limiting admissions and depriving qualified candidates of a university education. The students had up to 17th January 1970, shown admirable patience on this issue. (my emphasis).

In other words, the press allegations of lack of patriotism and undue search for comfort at a time of national emergency made against the students, were not born out by the facts on the ground. In fact, the students were in the forefront of those organising and distributing relief in the war affected areas.

Not surprisingly, ABU students wrote accusing the New Nigerian of trying to "tarnish the image of Nigerian students", and University of Ibadan students accused the Daily Times of being "UNFAIR TO UNDERGRADS." The crisis and its
manner of representation in the press led to an emergency meeting of the National Union of Nigerian Students (NUNS) at the University of Ibadan. At the end of the meeting, the following communique was issued to the press:

We believe we have an important role to play in this country given a fair chance. We are aware that in many parts of the civilised world students are a force to be reckoned with. To our utter dismay, we have been denied every bit of our right in the society. We have been the victim of a misguided public whose various institutions have failed to see anything good in the aspiring youth. The public has been misled into thinking continuously that all the problems of this nation are caused by students and could be solved at the expense of the students. We are fully conscious of the unjustified antagonisms from many sectors. We see these as the challenge of our time and we are assuring the revered Nigerian public and students all over the World that we are prepared to hold up our heads against any forces of oppression and victimisation.

We are aware ... that certain authorities think nothing good of us or our future but rather, they are out to stifle any voices of dissent and suppress with hideous brutality any attempt to demand our rights ... the students have been a victim of a neo-colonialist 'Sir' oracle who does everything to suit his own interest and that of his fellow men...

The communique singled out the press for special attack, for "deliberate distortion of facts, and in particular the *New Nigerian* for its spurious comments and partisanship." (Daily Times, Friday, January 30th, 1970).
As we shall see, this struggle over images continued throughout the 1970s, but first we need to look at the theses highlighted by the papers in the overall period under discussion.

Table 9.5: Distribution of Items by Main Subject Matter (in Column Cms.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Daily Times</th>
<th>New Nigerian</th>
<th>The Punch</th>
<th>Daily Sketch</th>
<th>Nigerian Standard</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Violence/Law and Order</td>
<td>5,633</td>
<td>6,656</td>
<td>2,056</td>
<td>4,508</td>
<td>996</td>
<td>19,849</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Education</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>1,440</td>
<td>864</td>
<td>768</td>
<td>812</td>
<td>4,684</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad University Administration</td>
<td>1,091</td>
<td>785</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,564</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3,440</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Welfare</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>928</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bribery and Corruption</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change of Government</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Issues</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Cost of Living</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 9.5 shows, 'Violence, and Law and Order' received more attention than any other theme and was the main focus of 68% of all items. Free education, which was a consistent theme in student releases and slogans during the demonstrations managed a poor second with only 16%, followed by 'University administration' with 12%. However, contextual themes such as 'the high cost of living' that followed the civil war, and the widespread 'bribery and corruption' received little or no attention in the reporting of student protests. Although the papers did report on these issues elsewhere in their pages, they ignored the
systematic linkages the students were trying to make between their protests and the structure of Nigerian society, especially the need for a radical reorientation in state policy. It may or may not have been intentional, but, the fixation on incidents of violence tended to isolate the student movement from this wider universe of critical political discourse.

To strengthen these observations, it is necessary to take a closer look at outbreaks of student protests since the initial 1970 ABU demonstrations. In 1971, the theatre of action changed from Zaria to Ibadan, but the central themes of protest was still internal to the University. Unlike Zaria, however, where from the outset, protest was rooted in general dissatisfaction with catering, boarding and regulations, the Ibadan demonstrations developed from a very narrow base: complaints about a single Hall administrator and the demand for her removal. As happened the previous year in Zaria, there was a gradual build up to the outbreak of hostilities, beginning early in January and reaching a climax on February 1st, when following the confrontation with police, Kunle Adepeju was shot and killed.

Table 9.6: Monthly Distribution of Items in each Paper (in Column cms.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>No. of Items</th>
<th>Daily Times</th>
<th>New Nigerian</th>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Daily Sketch</th>
<th>Nigerian Standard</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>778</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>643</td>
<td>1,247</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>7,838</td>
<td>6,907</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6,010</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>21,325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1,884</td>
<td>2,350</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>828</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5,062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>692</td>
<td>2,029</td>
<td>2,822</td>
<td>1,376</td>
<td>1,040</td>
<td>7,959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>3,194</td>
<td>2,508</td>
<td>2,058</td>
<td>1,546</td>
<td>1,322</td>
<td>10,628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1,192</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>1,872</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 560

50,078
Before the killing of Mr. Adepeju, the press paid very little attention to the situation or to the smouldering discontent that underlay it. Here, as elsewhere the non-violent stages of student protest were concentrated in the months of December and January. But as Table 9.6 shows, neither the number of items (11 for December and 22 for January) nor the total column space they occupied provided much coverage of these initial stages. By February, the usual month of violence on the campuses however, the figures escalate dramatically and each paper ends up with the protests as front page stories.

This pattern was very evident in 1971, when the Ibadan events were ignored at first and only picked up when they escalated into hostile exchanges between the students and the administration and the police. On February 2nd, 1971, all the papers carried the story of the shot student. "IBADAN UNIVERSITY STUDENT SHOT DEAD" reported the New Nigerian. The next day, the paper followed up with further reports of dead students: "SEQUEL TO POLICE SHOOTING IN IBADAN : NOW TWO MORE STUDENTS DEAD, PROTEST MARCHES." Apparently, the paper had expected an escalation in the death toll, but in reality, no additional students had died as a result of the shootings.

Like the New Nigerian, the other papers also highlighted the shootings and the 'death toll'. Apart from lavishly publicising the killing (which many of the papers then condemned in editorials) they raised the spectre of the violence at Ibadan spreading to other campuses around the country. The case at Lagos University, where the students attacked two police posts near the campus confirmed these fears and added a new angle to the reports. The Daily Times lead with: "TWO POLICE POSTS BURNT AS STUDENTS AND POLICEMEN CLASH. TRAFFIC CHAOS IN LAGOS: APPEAL REJECTED" (4.2.71). The New Nigerian
returned to its set theme of rampage with: "LAGOS STUDENTS ON A RAMPAGE - POLICE POSTS RAZED." In the New Nigerian report, there are quotes from the placards carried by the demonstrating students, references to their mode of dress, descriptions of barricades set up, and their 'martial-like match on Dodan barracks', the Headquarters of the Military administration.

This reporting of the students' activities needs be contrasted with those of the police. All the papers condemned the shooting of Ibadan. The New Nigerian argued that the appearance of police on the campuses and the subsequent shooting was "an indication of administrative incompetence;" (4.2.71) and it concluded that students demands should not be left to degenerate. Similarly, the Daily Sketch and The Daily Times condemned the police for misuse of force. The Daily Times called it "CRIMINAL AND HIGH-HANDED", and ranked the killing as "indisputably the most tragic incident in the history of education in Nigeria in recent times" (3.2.71).

At the same time, these censorious press comments limited themselves to police methods and shied away from underlying explanations. At best, the New Nigerian associated it with 'administrative incompetence' on the campuses, a theme which soon found elaboration in Professor Lambo's comments that "the university administration could not function effectively" because of "the colonial structure of the institution". More will be said on this soon, especially the role of the Vice-Chancellor in that 'colonial structure' and in the events which led to the outbreak of the violence on Ibadan university campus. Meanwhile, we would argue that the way the press condemned the police reaction suggest that only when the violence of the state is amplified beyond the acceptable threshold of legitimacy is it labelled as violence by the media. Below this threshold, no matter how
discomforting it may be for those that suffer from it, it will continue to be presented as necessary to maintain law and order.

In the Daily Times editorial for example, condemnation of police action is followed by these paragraphs:

Behaving mysteriously out of character, the students sang songs and shouted slogans - but took no recourse to violence of any sort.

After three days - Friday, Saturday and Sunday - of seemingly purposeless hunger and fruitless peaceful picketing, during which all they got from the authorities was a surprise undertaking to "look into your grievances within a week" the students presumably lost their patience.

And so, on Monday, the frustrated angry men joined by about 2,000 other undergraduate colleagues went on the rampage - their undoing - damaging glass windows of offices in the administrative block of the university.

Not surprisingly, an anti-riot squad of the Nigerian Police which was swiftly reinforced by 10 lorry loads of police riot fighters was summoned by the university authorities. In the ensuing battle, one undergraduate was killed and four others were injured. (3.2.71).

By presenting police action as a reaction to the violence already initiated by the students, the paper pulls it once again within the bounds of legitimacy, as regrettable but necessary to prevent chaos and restore law and order. As we shall see, "frustrated angry men", "students on a war path", "students behaving
mysteriously out of character", and "students on a rampage" became common forms of characterisation for the protestors.

Other ways of restoring the legitimacy of police action were to emphasise their restraint despite provocation by the protestors, and the high degree of professionalism they displayed. These devices were brought into play in the coverage of subsequent demonstrations where no deaths were recorded.

These attempts to maintain the legitimacy of official forces were underscored by the white-papers released after Judicial Commissions which were widely reported in the press. For example, the white paper released after the Kazeem Commission Report on the crisis at the University of Ibadan stated that:

... the police have a duty to be on the campus as elsewhere in order to maintain law and order by whatever appropriate but lawful means they may have at their disposal... Riot in any form, committed whether by students or by any group of citizens deserves to be quelled by law enforcement agencies in a manner and to the extent necessary to restore law and order. (my emphasis).

It concluded that "drastic diseases deserve drastic measurements", and referring to Kunle Adepeju's death, added that: "... the incident serves as a very sad reminder to all of us that lawlessness and anarchy should be scrupulously eschewed by all those who cherish individual freedom and the rule of law".

As well as setting the stage for wider demonstrations during the remaining part of military rule, these two initial crises established the basic framework for later press coverage. The reporting labelled the protests as
exhibitions of irrational behaviour, out of character with the national mood of reconciliation and reconstruction, and as a threat to the stability of the nation fermented by militants (and possibly 'outsiders') requiring firm action on the part of law enforcement agents. In addition, the police and the armed forces were presented as institutions characterised by moderation and good judgement, and sufficiently competent to containing future threats.

After the two major 'institutional crises', 1972 passed without any further major political outbursts on the campuses. This peaceful interlude was shortlived however, as a series of state policies provoked hostile student reaction. The first of these was the National Youth Service Corps which immediately triggered off major debates and reactions on the campuses.

In its initial reaction to the controversy, the press reiterated the stated ideals of the programme and reported the resentment it had generated in the university student community. All the papers stressed the Youth Corp's role in 'fostering national unity', without detailed evaluation of its overall implications. With students labelled as egocentric, only marginal attention was given to their objections to the scheme, and their 'patriotism' was greeted with open scepticism as soon as they took to their now established means of public communication - demonstrations.

On the 27th February, 1973, the New Nigerian carried the headline: "PROPOSED NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE CORPS ISSUE - STUDENTS GO VIOLENT". The story stated that: "Students of the University of Ife, Ile-Ife went on a rampage yesterday as a seminar on NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION was about to begin at the campus. The Seminar which would have been the biggest ever held on
education in the country was aimed at **formulating an educational policy likely to transform Nigeria into a modern state and make her a leading country in Africa**" (my emphasis). According to the paper, the conference had been described in a confidential letter as "one of the most important projects to be undertaken since the achievement of independence." It listed the dignitaries and experts billed to deliver papers at the conference (nearly all of whom had been at the centre of formulating educational policy for the country since independence) and concluded that violent demonstration erupted thirty minutes before the beginning of the seminar, thereby disrupting this important project.

This theme of unpatriotic and anti-progress action - disrupting a seminar that would have 'transformed Nigeria into a modern state and made her a leading country in Africa' - tied in neatly with the general way in which discussion of the NYSC scheme by Government and the press had emphasised the twin objectives of 'national unity' and rural development. Opposition to it was therefore an expression of opposition to these sacred objectives. The **New Nigerian** called it "**A MEANS TO UNITY**" (23.2.73). Denunciation of the students by Commissioner Tanko Yakasai was given front page attention by many of the papers. According to the Commissioner "students were not prepared to sacrifice" and it was amazing that youths or any Nigerian should oppose rendering service to "our less fortunate compatriots in rural areas". He referred to the students as "very unpatriotic" Nigerians, and added: "If we all refuse to serve our country in any capacity other than the one we choose for ourselves, then the programme of the Federal and State Governments to take modern amenities to the countryside cannot be realised". **New Nigerian** (2.3.73).
In contrast to the construction of events, our own examination of the history of student movements established that it was the students who as far back as the 1960s, following the 'Post card protests' of 1961, had proposed the scheme in the first place, and provided written proposals at the end of the civil war in 1970. In its initial conception, the scheme was supposed to help train unemployed school leavers, as well as involving university graduates in community work. Moreover, though the students objected to the limited scope and dictatorial nature of the official version, they were prepared to sit and discuss it with representatives of the Federal Military Government. Finally, their initial opposition was to the manner in which, without consultation, the authorities had tried to impose the scheme on them; the mandatory nature of the scheme; and the allegedly below subsistence level stipends they were to be paid. It was not a total rejection of a scheme "designed to take modern amenities to the countryside" as presented by the press.

However, as positions hardened on both sides of the divide, this limited opposition escalated into opposition to the scheme in general. By this time, students began to see the scheme in terms of ideologies of classes in conflict rather than ideologies of patriotic nationalism. To the students, the government appeared to be looking for convenient and socially acceptable outposts for neutralising critical intellectual dissent. Thus, the scheme to them was aimed at socialising students within a semi-military culture before allowing them to pass into the community.

To test this tenuous but inviting hypothesis, the students had insisted that "unemployed young men who occupy themselves in armed robbery and other anti-social activities" also be included and that the scheme be placed alongside
compulsory and free education at all levels. This contrasts sharply with press reports of "angry and violent undergraduates ... protesting against the National Youth Service Corps", and in the process committing another unpatriotic act: "killing" a seminar on NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION aimed at "finding a revolutionary educational policy for the country". (New Nigerian, 2.3.73).

By concentrating on the incidents of violence which came to the end of a long evolving process, the press misrepresented the issues involved in the National Youth Service Corps protests, and failed to explain why and how the students had become involved in public demonstrations. The immediate consequence was to project the students as unpatriotic, anti-national unity, anti-development of the rural areas, elitist, self-centred, guided by anti-society forces and therefore outside the consensus; and above all, interested only in mindless violence and destruction. Since this stereotype was painted in black and white, leaving no grey areas, the binary opposite of the students became those in control of state power, those who were 'patriotically' pushing for all the good things students were negating. This perspective encouraged a 'law and order' solution, as in the case of the previous institutional crisis, further reinforced what was fast becoming the established framework for reporting all student protests against state policy.

This framework was once more in evidence in 1974. During the 1974 commemoration of the death of Kunle Adepeju, Students of the University of Ibadan set out to lay a wreath at his grave. Although the two previous commemorations had passed without major incident - this time there was a gradual build up of tensions over some of the activities the students planned to carry out, most notably the firing of a twenty-one gun salute and marching through the town to
the grave. The police anticipated an outbreak of serious violence and directed that
the salute and the march be cancelled. The police directives were reported by the
newspapers, including their expectation of violence.

The procession from the University to Molete where the dead student was
buried is a distance of approximately eight miles through the most crowded part
of the city, hence the fear that a procession could lead to some violent incidents.
Ultimately, a compromise was reached whereby the students would pass through
the city centre in a convoy of buses. On the day of the commemoration, the
students observed the agreed conditions until the last mile when some of the more
enthusiastic alighted to proceed on foot. The police, who were accompanying
them immediately interceded them and asked them to get back into the vehicles
and clashes took place.

Of all the various aspects of the commemoration, the one which attracted
most press attention were the clashes that occurred in the last mile since they
fulfilled the prophecies of violence and provided dramatic copy. Banner headlines
like the following were common place:

VIOLENCE MARS ADEPEJU'S ANNIVERSARY, STUDENTS VS POLICE
   (Daily Sketch).

5 CARS, NATIONAL ARCHIVES SET ABLAZE - UNIBADAN CLOSED
   (Daily Sketch)

DEPUTY I-G ADDRESSES PRESS ON STUDENT UNREST - POLICE
   SUSPECT SABOTAGE  (New Nigerian)

IRRESPONSIBLE  (New Nigerian)

POLICE CAPTIVES LIBERATED BY ANTI-RIOT MEN  (New Nigerian)
BACK IN LAGOS FROM NORTH-WEST STATE TOUR - GOWON WARNS ANARCHISTS (New Nigerian)

DECREE TO CURB LAWLESSNESS SOON (Daily Times)

GOVERNMENT CONDEMNS STUDENTS' LAWLESSNESS (Daily Times)

The reports gave prominent attention to the victims of student violence among which was the National Archives that had been 'set ablaze'. In fact the Archives were never set ablaze, neither was any building nearby. These reports of violence, along with the police warnings and insinuations and the recriminations by highly placed Government officials including the Head of State, junta leader Yakubu Gowon, studiously avoided other important features of the demonstrations. First, the fact that in the past two previous demonstrations, there had not been any serious incident of violence. Secondly, that to a considerable extent, the students had complied with most of the police directives, and given some restraint on the part of the police would probably have been no confrontation. Thirdly, the students had received loud cheers of support from members of the public, particularly from Dugbe market women as they drove through the town to the cemetery. Finally, some of the speeches delivered at the graveside were of considerable political significance since they criticised not only the Government and the police but the whole social structure of Nigeria of which they claimed Kunle Adepeju was a victim.

These aspects of the commemoration were displaced however, by the concentration on state officials' pronouncements on the violence by 'anarchists' and 'vandals'; on the police role in maintaining law and order; and on the impending Government decree to curb acts of 'lawlessness'. A few days later, these comments were reproduced as editorials in all the papers.
Writing under the heading "STUDENT - POLICE RELATIONS", the Daily Times stated unequivocally that: "no law abiding community can connive at acts of violence and vandalism. The students were wrong in taking the law into their own hands. It is the duty of all citizens to help preserve law and order in the country". (6.2.74). The editorial congratulated the police for handling the students with 'tact', and urged students and police 'to devise a workable modus vivendi' since 'permanent hostility between them is not in the Nation's interest...' Alluding to the civil war, the paper emphasised:

.... This Nation has paid very dearly for the domestic peace it has been enjoying for several years now. It is not in anybody's interest that this peace should be disturbed. Hence, it is absolutely essential that our citizens and the Law-enforcement agencies should continue to join hands in safeguarding the country's peace and stability. (6.2.74).

The New Nigerian went a little further in its editorial, "STUDENTS AND SOCIETY":

An activist section of students, presumably led by the nose by outside forces has in turn managed to lead the silent majority of their law-abiding colleagues into extravagant forms of commemoration for Mr. Adepeju who was shot by police three years ago... What irks many students is that an active minority has managed to plunge the whole university community into crises. It is understood that the vast majority of students did not know what hit them and their being sent home came as an unpleasant outcome of disturbances in which they have no say. The solution lies with them. It is no good being a majority if you remain indefinitely silent... In a fluid period
of preparations for a return to civilian rule, it is important for
students, no less than other arms of society, to avoid any
unreasonable and arbitrary challenge to authority and resort to
force as a means of expressing points of view. (16.2.74).

The third and final illustration is taken from the Daily Sketch's
"ADEPEJU: A DANGEROUS TREND". Though the Sketch deviated from the
New Nigerian's emphasis as an 'activist minority led by outside forces', by
attributing the demonstrations to "sanguine exuberance on the part of the
students", it followed the New Nigerian and the Daily Times in warning against a
possible outbreak of nation-wide violence and instability. The paper urged the
students to "re-examine themselves and the role they are supposed to play in the
development of the country. They should ask themselves whether defiance of
authority or wanton destruction of public property fit into such a role." The paper
concluded that, "the present trouble in our universities should not be allowed to
escalate into another countryside orgy of violence. This calls for tact on the part
of those in authority and commonsense on the part of the students." (4.2.74).

These press comments are very similar to the official government release
that was carried by all the papers at about the same time. Parts of the release are
given below:

1. Throughout this period of lawlessness and unbridled provocation
by the students the police behaved with the utmost restraint and
applied only the minimum of force required to restore law and
order. No single shot was fired and no person was critically
injured. The Federal Government commends the discipline,
sense of duty and the restraint of the Nigeria police throughout this period; it is these qualities which have marked out the force as one of the finest of its kind on this continent.

2. No Government can tolerate a situation that is likely to lead to anarchy; lawlessness will not be tolerated in future.

3. Majority of students are law abiding and were not involved in the current disturbances.

These were the same themes the editorials contained: Student disturbances as acts of lawlessness; an activist minority leading a law abiding majority; commendation for the police; and a stress on the need for a law and order society. In fairness, the Daily Times (18.2.74) did acknowledge that the police reaction had vestiges of the colonial times when the police force 'was not for justice' but 'an instrument of colonial oppression and coercion'. The paper then stressed the need for educating the police 'on what it takes to be a policeman in a free country'. However, although the editorial pointed out the colonial antecedents, it failed to recognise the continuity in the nature of social relationships congealed in the state of which the police were an important component. Hence, its return to the ideology of law-and-order and the need to avoid 'anarchy, violence or chaos'.

There is therefore a close correspondence between the official government version and the press reports of the events. However, as we will be arguing, this correspondence does not necessarily prove the presence of a conspiracy between the press and the government against the protestors even though instances of government pressure may exist. Rather, it is attributable
largely to the press's received values of professional practice, notably: the
consecration of the expert; the reliance on official sources; the tendency to
criminalise political dissent, and the elevation of 'the national interest' to the
status of a universal interest rather than the particular interests of those in control
of state power. As a result, any social group which challenges this abstracted
'national interest' is seen as a threat to society as a whole, and the ideology of
'law-and-order' brought to bear against it.

The following year, when the students expanded their critique of the
administration by questioning bureaucratic corruption, repression of political
dissidents, prolongation of military rule and the gross inequality in the
distribution of economic wealth in society, 'hidden motives' and 'outside forces'
which hitherto had been peripheral insinuations were elevated to the status of
major explanations for the protests. As Brigadier Abba Kyari, Military Governor
of Kaduna State put it: "The fact that these students take so much delight in tampering
with issues that do not have anything to do with their studies makes one to entertain
thoughts that the students' agitations have some hidden motives." (New Nigerian
15.2.75). It was an interpretation which was actively fostered by the press
through the sustained and unquestioning use of powerful persons as news sources,
of which more will be said in the next section.

These definitions however recurred in other forms of treatment. As with
previous demonstrations, incidents of police-student clashes and student
destruction of property were interlaced with editorials which reiterated the themes
of past editorials. The Daily Sketch, for example, questioned the reasonableness
of the students' demands.
How reasonable are these sensitive demands at a time when the Federal Military Government and State Governments are grappling with the problems arising from the implementation of Udoji awards. Are these demands not ill-timed? How relevant is the demand for the publication of army salaries? ... Students should know that violence will not do them any good and cannot win them the sympathy of any right-thinking Nigerian. What the nation needs is concrete efforts geared towards economic advancement and not effort geared towards destruction. (18.2.75).

But of all press comments on the protests the most sensational came from the Daily Times. As if to emphasise the united national rejection of violence, its main headline employed English and all three of Nigeria's major languages "VIOLENCE? BABU, MBA, RARA, NO:" The lead continued: "Students of our universities were clearly wrong in the intemperate, abusive language of their placards and their violent destruction of property." The paper re-emphasised that the forceful take-over of power will lead to anarchy, and likened the students' actions to the pre-civil war disturbances in the former Western Region in 1965, which, many believed, contributed to the outbreak of the war. It concluded with a terse reminder to "all right thinking Nigerians" to "realise that the transfer of political power from the armed forces to democratically elected representatives of the people unless it is negotiated and the programme mutually agreed with the armed forces could lead to anarchy". (Daily Times, 19.2.75).

But what were these 'unreasonable' and 'irrelevant' (Daily Sketch) demands of the students which 'all right thinking Nigerians' (Sketch and Daily Times) were being called upon to reject in favour of "concrete efforts geared towards economic
advancement" and peaceful return to democratic government? They included; the abrogation of the emergency decree and the release of political detainees - specifically Mr. Aper Aku; the revocation of the ban on affidavits; the setting up of a body to look into all cases of bureaucratic corruption; the creation of more states; the review of the existing press law; the shifting of the Federal Capital from Lagos to a central location; the establishment of more universities; and settling the population census controversy. They also touched on fundamental economic problems when they stated, that: "the Federal Government in implementing the Udoji award should enact such economic measures that will:

(a) Redress the economic imbalance of Nigerians with particular reference to the plight of the common man.

(b) Check inflationary tendencies likely to accompany pay rise.

(c) Ensure a means of distribution of wealth capable of generating a higher gross national product."

There is nothing particularly revolutionary in these demands, neither do they show any leanings towards acts of violence. The last paragraph of the communique does however declare that students were to boycott lectures till Aku was released from prison or put on trial before a court of law. Apparently, it was this question of 'detention without trial' that the military authorities were particularly sensitive to, since opposition was now mounting from informed individual citizens, the trade unions and socially committed intellectuals. The power to detain or arbitrarily move against such opposition was considered crucial by the military. By denying the students the necessary space to explain their demands, the press were legitimising the existing state apparatus and
undermining their claims to act as a Fourth Estate, defending the citizenry against abuses of official power.

Perhaps this was done unwittingly rather than consciously however, through the search for the dramatic, the reliance on the views of 'those who are in a position to know' who happened in this case to be those in control of state power; and the labelling of social groups with alternative perspectives as anti-social. Counter views did occasionally surface however, as in this letter, printed in The Daily Times in March 1975:

**THIS IS OUR STORY:**

In recent times, much has been said about students unrest in the country. Emphasis has been placed on what some people describe as our "act of vandalism". Many people have suggested that students should seek redress through "the proper channel". This I consider a mere theory and up to now I find it difficult to make out what these people mean by "proper channel".

It is most unfortunate that 'damages' are involved at a certain stage of our action. At this particular stage however, students must have been pushed to the wall.

Each time, we start by making our views known to the Government and the public through the press. And as nothing is done we repeat this same method. Is this not a proper channel? Often this method has failed to draw the Government's attention. The next thing is that after some weeks we go on hunger strike for a number of days to back up our demands. Is this not a proper channel? When nothing is done again we embark on
peaceful demonstration to be followed by lecture boycott. These various methods have failed more often than not to draw the government's attention.

However, we do not expect miracles to happen. We allow a considerable length of time for the government to deliberate on the issues put down.

The sad thing is that up till the time we start to boycott lectures, we are not given any attention. Every elastic situation we know has a limit. We are forced at a certain stage to try other avenues which some people have branded "violent". Occasionally this last avenue has worked out fine. The big question is this: 'Is the so-called 'violence' the only language the Government understands? This is the question people who condemn our action have to answer...

We realise that we are receiving our education at the expense of millions of Nigerian taxpayers. We know their problems, their sufferings and we cannot close our eyes to these. We realise also that it will be unfair on our own part if we just keep quiet enjoying their hard earned money while they continue to suffer. We want a Nigeria where no man is oppressed. No more, no less. (Daily Times, March 13th, 1975).

M.A. Ademola, University of Ife.

Ademola's general arguments are in complete accord with those of four senior Professors at University of Ibadan who in a joint press statement argued that: "In a society like ours, where social justice is still a far-fetched dream, university students would be negativists should they fail to agitate and appeal to the conscience of the nation. Let us not overplay their style and forget their ideals." (Daily Times, 13.3.75). Yet it was precisely their style which most attracted newsmen and dominated their reporting.
When it is acceptable to "Go on a Rampage" or Legitimate Acts of Lawlessness

It is not the acts in themselves but the circumstances under which they are committed and those involved in labelling them that constitute them as lawful or lawless. Hence, student protests which all along had been labelled as criminal acts were to be declassified from the criminal file as soon as they become supportive of the military state. Although the protestors themselves made a distinction between the differing situations, the general tendency was to include their behaviour within an undifferentiated and simple doctrine of 'National Security'.

Following the attempted coup of February 1976, in which General Murtala Mohammed was assassinated, many Nigerians took to the streets denouncing the coup plotters. As we pointed out in an earlier chapter, this spontaneous show of support came about because of Mohammed's populist and reformist activities during the six months of his administration which had made a serious attempt to realise their aspirations. Students were in the forefront of these protests in support of the Military Government, and in marked contrast to established frames and angles of presentation, this time, their demonstrations and even their 'violence' became acceptable forms of political expression.

Because they stressed the need for tighter security following the assassination of Murtala Mohammed, it was imagined that the students had rediscovered their 'true' patriotic selves, and turned against the 'outside forces' which hitherto guided their political activities. By jettisoning these 'hidden forces', they had not only become legitimate and rational political actors, but their methods - including the use of 'violence' - also became more acceptable.
Even the terminology they had employed, such as "reactionary elements", "imperialists" which had hitherto been considered intemperate was now re-incorporated into the dominant discourse and distributed as an acceptable commodity to be used against those who were now the new anti-society forces.

The Daily Times reported: "WORKERS, STUDENTS TAKE TO THE STREETS - 'Send Home All The Yankees ...' " Unlike the former reports, this one did not follow-up with catalogues of the destruction done to property and persons, and denunciations of intolerable lawlessness. Instead, the story reported the spontaneous and widespread demonstrations which took place all over the country with declarations of solidarity, condemnations of "reactionary forces" who "wanted to seize power for their own selfish ends". Glowing tributes to the late General by both social groups were also presented.

In other papers too, there were no antagonistic headlines even though rallies were held, street demonstrations carried out, and property destroyed as in previous student demonstrations. When students caused some damage to the British Embassy's building in Kaduna for example, Ambassador Le Quesne's compensation claim was widely condemned by the press for "lack of sensitivity and regard for the nation's feelings". (Daily Times, 20.2.76). Neither the press nor powerful Government officials perceived students as being 'led by the nose' by a 'tiny activist minority' guided from outside. In a report headed "GOVERNOR WEEPS WHILE RECEIVING DEMONSTRATING STUDENTS", the New Nigerian quoted Governor Innih as describing the students as "National heroes the country needed... You made me weep with your speeches." (New Nigerian, 20.2.76).

But the students' support for the Murtala Government must be placed within the context of their own understanding of the situation. To them, Murtala
was the first leader 'to bring sanity to Nigerian society'. The students of the University of Ibadan observed that '... General Murtala Mohammed ... had ably begun the struggle for the establishment of an egalitarian society devoid of embezzlement of public funds, of corruption, tribalism and nepotism'. Ahmadu Bello University students urged General Obasanjo (Murtala's successor) not to deviate from his predecessor's policies. The National Union of Nigerian Students condemned the coup plotters and their 'foreign collaborators', and urged the Government to nationalise all foreign concerns in the country, and to pursue the principles and the ideals of the late leader by carrying out the "current revolution". They noted that, 'Nigerian students would not stand for any government that would seek to impose upon the masses of this country the views of home bred reactionaries and foreign imperialists'. (Nigerian Standard, 23.2.76).

The only continuities between the reporting of this demonstration and previous demonstrations were in the prominence paid to such themes as tighter security, punishment of the coup plotters, the presentation of dramatic pictures (such as the one showing the effigy of Colonel Dimka, leader of the plotters being burned), and in the emphasis on the declarations of support for the Generals. And as before, these features of the coverage served to de-centre the students' view that they were more concerned with the principles and ideals pursued by Murtala than anything else. The rehabilitation of student protest was therefore carried out by carefully selecting and stressing those angles which fitted the established definitions. For example, the emphasis laid on 'National Security' was fully in line with the military's doctrine of National Security expressed in the detested Decree 24, in the arbitrary political detentions, and the massive and disproportionate expenditure on Defence. Although the students themselves can
be justifiably accused of overplaying the 'National Security' theme, the press, by choosing to ignore the ideological basis of student support for the Mohammed administration and their ardent opposition to the coup-plotters missed out a very significant element in the situation. This convenient incorporation soon disintegrated however, as students, once more, returned to public agitations against policies of the military state, and tried to widen the scope of their criticism.

Return of the Outlaws: The 1978 'Fees Crisis' and the Press

Of all the student protests which took place in Nigeria, those which occurred in 1978 posed the greatest challenge to the military state. Firstly, they were well co-ordinated at the national level and had the sense of a National Social Movement. Secondly, they articulated the fundamental aspiration of many Nigerian parents and young people - the demand for educational opportunities. Thirdly, this issue of education was systematically linked to the overall structure of Nigerian society with its inequalities in the distribution of social and economic life chances, and political rewards in general. The students conceived of the prevailing education system as class based, benefitting those who were already well placed, and therefore, perpetuating or reproducing the class system. What they argued for was a system that was broad based, mass oriented, and critical enough to transform society.

In a previous chapter, we pieced together the historical evolution of this crisis, noting that the decline in subventions to the universities relative to the increase in the student population over the years had produced a serious crisis in the running of the Universities which many University administrators responded to by increasing fees in an effort to top up their finance. Initially,
the Government resisted these moves, but later endorsed them rather than improve the basic financing of the Universities. Secondly, that there was no meaningful dialogue between the Government and the students. Thirdly, that the ambivalent attitude of the government to mass education has its origins in colonial times when selective education was first aimed at producing support staff for senior colonial officers to cut down the cost of transporting personnel from the metropolitan countries, and later, at developing intellectuals who would man the state structure after the departure of the British colonial administration.

In addition, we tried to follow the gradual build up to the demonstrations, from the December 10th, 1977 Obasanjo speech announcing the fee increases, through the series of meetings the students held and their consultations with senior government officials, up to the final stages culminating in 'Operation Confrontation', and the outbreak of the protests on 17th of April 1978. We discovered that far from the violence having no history, it was the last stage in a complex pattern of events running back in the immediate term to 1974, and in the long term to the very foundations of the elitist colonial education system which the military state retained and promoted, and which the students wished to transform along with a complete restructuring of Nigerian society. It was above all, this profound social critique which incurred the displeasure of the military state; and wittingly or unwittingly, the press participated in the containment process.

During the build up to the April 17th boycott of lectures and the subsequent clashes with the police, the statements by the Federal Commissioner for Education, Colonel Ahmadu Ali, and the Secretary to the National Universities Commission, Jibril Aminu, defending the fee increases, were widely reported by
the newspapers. However, none of the papers traced the cause of the increases beyond what the New Nigerian later termed, "financially difficult times" in which there was "need to co-operate with Government". (New Nigerian, 18.4.78).

The press also sympathised with the students' concern with "serious socio-economic issues", though these were discussed as if they were separate matters, so that education financing was only tangentially connected to issues such as rural development and military spending. Having effectively isolated the issue of increased fees, the press fell back on the public pronouncements of experts who were in the position to know 'the true position of things', most notably, Ahmadu Ali, Jibril Aminu and the Vice-Chancellors. For example, Jibril Aminu's lengthy press release of the 10th April was given very generous treatment by the press. In it, he explained the increase with facts and figures, but interpreted them to fit the official decision. The high cost of the Universities during 'difficult times' was used as a rationalisation for the increases, without relating it to the wider reality of these hard times. He underlines in his conclusion as follows:

The problems we face in the Universities in Nigeria are faced by a number of other developing nations. There is a great demand for University education. National resources are limited, and the social infrastructure is too underdeveloped to enable the municipalities to relieve the Universities of their crushing burdens of non-academic expenditure. Our aspirants to University education must appreciate this reality. (Daily Times, 11.4.78).

Although both Dr. Aminu and Colonel Ahmadu Ali were adamant that there was not going to be a change in the new policy, they continued to appeal to the students to talk. As noted earlier, a series of talks, including two with
Chief of Staff, Shehu Yar Adua, had already taken place and produced no change of policy. Yet, the press followed the official line which sought to emphasise the intransigence of the agitating students. Dr. Aminu repeatedly stressed that the impending demonstrations were going to "interfere with the smooth running of the institutions", forgetting to mention that the decline in University financing had made 'smooth running' impossible. He issued a statement, appealing "as we have done before to all students to accept the new fees scales with a deep sense of responsibility bearing in mind the overall importance of their education and their examinations". (New Nigerian, 15.4.78).

Given that previous press reports of student demonstrations had firmly labelled them as both violent and destructive, Jibril's warning that further demonstrations would lead to serious disruptions in the 'smooth running of the Universities' turned out to be something of a 'self fulfilling prophecy'. Hence, the press reporting saw a return of the familiar themes of lawless students committing mindless acts; of a tiny activist minority controlled by outside forces pulling the majority by the nose; and renewed demands for law-and-order and national stability. However, like the 1971 Ibadan protests, there was also a breach in the acceptable threshold of legitimate violence, and with it the internal coherence of law-and-order ideology. As a result, ideological repair work had to be carried out, features of which have been described in our analysis of the Mohammed Commission of Inquiry.

Initially, however, the newspapers reported the demonstrations, which began with the boycott of lectures on the 17th of April from somewhat different angles. The Daily Sketch, because of its location in an environment where the Action Group Party campaigned and instituted free primary education, made
free education the major angle of coverage. In its first report on the boycotts, the Sketch reported: "WE DEMAND FREE EDUCATION - BOYCOTT OF LECTURES OVER RISE IN FEES CONTINUES". The opening sentences quoted the placards carried by the demonstrating students: "We demand free education at all levels", "Don't make education a privilege; it is a right".

The Daily Times carried the same story but from a somewhat different angle. The headline announced: STUDENTS BEGIN CLASS BOYCOTT - PROTEST AGAINST FEES", followed by a statement that it was an activist wing headed by "the militant Pirates Confraternity" that was leading the boycott. Beside this main news story was a minor story headed "COUNT US OUT", which claimed that the boycott was firmly opposed by a Committee of Elders at the University of Lagos. The Committee was said to consist of 'adults' who had dissociated themselves from the protests because: "(i) strike action never produces positive results; (ii) the increase in fees issues is a complex matter; and (iii) the Federal Government has a clearly formulated policy of helping indigent students." In a way, the reasonableness of these adults committed to peaceful solutions was contrasted with the 'unreason' of the students out to cause disorder. In the previous years, there had been reports that the activities of the Pirates Confraternity had led to deaths and their subsequent banning on a number of campuses. By attributing the leadership of the pro-boycott group to them, the paper brought to the fore images of a lawless social group associated with free-drinking, bohemian and disreputable behaviour.

On the 20th of April, the papers published reports of outbreaks of violence at the University of Lagos. The New Nigerian announced: "ONE STUDENT AND WOMAN DIE - THREE SERIOUSLY INJURED". The Daily Times described
it simply as "BATTLE OF THE CAMPUS", and proceeded to say how "students clashed violently with anti-riot policemen outside their campus as they started a defiant protest march to Dodan barracks..." Not only are the marches described as defiant, but it is the students who are seen to have initiated the violence by clashing violently with the law. Similarly, the Daily Sketch said: "STUDENTS (were) ADAMANT" as they "trooped into the streets", in "confrontation with the authorities". The report continued that "matters became further complicated as students' leader Segun Okeowo maintained a 'non-meeting point stance' with the National Universities Commission". In this story, defiance, confrontation, violence and the intransigence of the protesting students began to displace the Sketch's previously sympathetic angle on events.

The Punch was even more dramatic, possibly because one of the paper's reporters had been mistaken for a student, and badly beaten up by the police. The paper carried three separate stories on the Lagos events. The front page and back pages carried a continuous spread headed: "CRISIS ... CRISIS ... CRISIS". The opening sentence of the front page part stated: "All hell broke loose on the main route to the University of Lagos on Tuesday when armed policemen and students clashed". The back page was devoted to the Punch reporter: "One man who bore the brunt of the heat and blood of Tuesday's demonstration in Lagos was Punch reporter Yemi Ajetunmobi". It was accompanied by a detailed description of the beatings, the type of injuries sustained, and shocking photographs of the wounds. The third and final story too was of violence, an account of the dead student.

The following day, April 21st, 1978, the story about Akintunde Ojo's death was developed by the papers using fresh angles. The killing had triggered
demonstrations on other campuses with equally fatal consequences. The New Nigerian reported that a combined team of police and army had killed six more students at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The Daily Sketch, yet to get the story of the Zaria killings, stayed with the one in Lagos but included an interesting dimension. In a splashy 52 column centimetres headline, the paper stated: "AFTERMATH OF STUDENTS, POLICE CLASH, UNILAG STUDENT DIES ... CRISES BITES HARDER IN IBADAN". On the back page was another story headlined: "4 COPS DETAINED AT UNICALABAR", telling the public how "four policemen were placed under lock and key for over four hours by students". It was a story of the unusual, 'man-bites-dog' type.

But it was the killings at Zaria which ultimately commanded the interest of all the papers. News, pictures and editorial comments were widely carried. Fairly typical of the Punch's coverage was the story reporting: "5 MORE STUDENTS DIE IN ZARIA", thus bringing the total number of dead students in that institution to eleven. The paper attributed the story to medical officers at the University's Teaching Hospital, which it said "were working round the clock to save as many lives as possible". Other incidents widely reported by the papers included: the burning of 500 copies of the Daily Times by students in Lagos; police beatings of University workers in Lagos, and the occupation of the campuses by military and para-military officers, and the comments of famous people.

Already, the demonstrations had become a field-day for the press, fitting all the essential news values. First, the events were negative and dramatic. Secondly, they satisfied the criteria of recency, and were considered to be of interest to the public. In addition, eminent personalities and
institutions were involved in the drama, and the events themselves had several unusual elements such as: students arresting and detaining policemen, the killing of stone throwing students; and centres of learning being turned into "war zones". But above all, the demonstrations fitted existing frames of reference while allowing scope for new angles that would enable the papers to follow the events without looking stale to the readership.

Murdock has contended that "the news process ... establishes its own links between situations, links not at the level of underlying structures and processes but at the level of immediate forms and images. Situations are defined as the same if they look the same. In this way news rewrites history for immediate popular consumption". (Murdock, 1973:165). The Nigerian press coverage of the demonstration confirms this thesis. By following the violent, dramatic, recent and the unusual within pre-established frames, there was a general disregard for the underlying structural determinants of the crisis. Moreover, as the events became detached from their fundamental causes, remaining connected only at 'the level of immediate forms and images', the traditional calls for the restoration of law-and-order became more vocal. At the same time, law-and-order had already gone beyond the acceptable threshold by killing seven defenceless undergraduates, one pregnant woman, and two other children. Hence the cracks in the internal coherence of the law-and-order ideology had to be repaired. How the press participated in this restoration work is considered below.

The part played by the press can be broken down into two different but interrelated moves; firstly, vehement strictures on police methods; then the reproduction of official statements with follow-up confirmations and appeals for 'sanity'.

On the 22nd of April, the New Nigerian carried a sensational lead titled: "OUR MOTHERLAND - OUR HONOUR - WHERE ARE YOU?" In it, the paper condemned police methods in very strong terms, after reconstructing the immediate circumstances surrounding the outbreak of violence on the campuses. The wider issues behind the protests were given as the inequitable burden of taxation, costly national expenditures, inflation and subsequent increase in fees at University level. The same day, the Punch also editorialised, demanding "PEACE NOW". The paper condemned police and army tactics, their presence on the campuses, and the killings. Although the paper noted that "this is not a mere law-and-order issue, it has never been", it did not try to explain to its readers what the other issues were. Instead, it returned to the theme of 'National Security' by warning that: "there is a possibility of playing into hands of those who might have been looking for an opportunity to destabilise the nation".

According to the Daily Sketch, the killings took place because "our policemen are ill-equipped to face students' demonstration. They also lack training." Thus, Police tactics and lack of professionalism stood accused of the killings.

Although the theme of national 'honour' and 'security' were announced by the press, they were soon picked up by Government officials. Before this strategic intervention however, reports describing popular support for the protests and condemning police action continued to appear in the papers. Demonstrations by Ibadan market women in support of the students stood out from the rest. The Daily Sketch gave the age of the women (marching from Ibadan to Lagos) as between 60 to 70 years. The Punch called it "a mammoth demonstration". They were also said to have mobbed the Military Governor of Oyo state, Brigadier David Jemibewon. The Punch also reported the statements of Afro-beat king Fela Anikulapo Kuti, who apart from condemning the killings,
likened them to the 1976 Soweto killings in South Africa. Fela was quoted as saying:

No Government has the right to kill or destroy its citizens. In Soweto, eight students were killed, the whole world condemned the racist regime. What will the world say when Nigeria has killed eleven students for reasons less than that for which students were killed in South Africa?

Such comment was rare, though our analysis did reveal a few exceptions, mainly written by outside correspondents rather than staff journalists. Two examples are given here to illustrate a style of analysis which we have argued was mostly absent from the general coverage offered by the Nigerian press. The first comes from the students themselves; writing in the New Nigerian (23.4.78), students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, noted with dismay "the brutality, indifference and contempt for human life by police and army". For far too long, the statement continued:

the right to education had been made a privilege in the country which claimed egalitarian objectives and in which the masses had been compelled to settle the account of the excesses of the bourgeoisie by tax, school fees and other increases all in measures calculated to safeguard the interest of the few power elites. ... This is oppression and fascism at its zenith which is even worse than it is in Vorster's apartheid South Africa, and all Nigerians should therefore, wake up from their slumber and raise high their voice against these uncivilised, brutal and despotic tendencies raising their ugly heads in the country.
Another contributor, Sule Bello, argued in a feature that "the so-called financial problem is rooted in the pattern of neo-colonial capitalist dependency development to which the ruling class of this country is materially dependent on." (New Nigerian, 26.4.78). Bello added that the student crisis was essentially a manifestation of that fundamental economic reality, which no amount of suppression was going to alter.

Amidst these efforts to pierce beyond the stock images of student violence, there were indications of a mass response to the students' call for Nigerians to wake up and confront 'oppression and fascism' of the 'power elites'. Apart from Ibadan Women's protest, similar incidents occurred in most of the University towns. Ife, Zaria and Kano all witnessed some form of participation from the urban population. But the most significant challenge came from Lagos, the capital, which has the largest number of unemployed and working people. During the burial procession of the murdered student, Akintunde Ojo - a large number of these people came out and joined the students. As the procession progressed, the pent-up frustration and anger was converted into mass protest action during which 'symbolic outposts of state repression' were attacked. Among these were the prestigious Customs house on Ikorodu road and police posts. Expensive cars like Mercedes Benz and Volvo saloon cars considered in Nigeria as status symbols were also destroyed. The demonstration provided the ideal opportunity for the state to make a strategic intervention and possibly repair the tarnished image of its coercive apparati.

Beneath this initiative was the realisation that perhaps, despite the sustained deconstruction of the ideals pursued by the students, members of subordinate social groups, particularly those in the urban areas, were beginning to
identify themselves with their demands. Furthermore, there were some indications of popular participation in resistance to the military state. It was a phenomenon which could be attributed partly to students' own efforts, partly to the panic over-reaction of state agencies, but more fundamentally to the real material world of poverty that confronted them in their day-to-day lives while those in powerful positions displayed their wealth without taking any committed action to eliminate the conditions that fed their poverty.

Physical repression could restrain these opposition forces, but at a cost to the military's claim to legitimacy. Hence, the state had to fall back on core symbol systems to support their efforts at containment. Thus, the press's emphasis on 'National Security' and 'National interest', which had always been the centre-piece of the military state's public pronouncements was easily picked up for further elaboration.

In the first of a series of statements on the theme, the Government blamed the troubles on 'saboteurs' who wanted to disrupt the plans for a return to civilian rule, knowing fully well that the restoration of civil rule had a particular appeal to many Nigerians. Reported as front-page story by all the papers, it was alleged that: some people, described as unpatriotic and hostile "citizens who are opposed to smooth transition to civil rule next year are behind the current student unrest in the country". It added that most students were innocent and law abiding and that it was only a minority of militants who planned violent action in collaboration with saboteurs. Finally, the statement tried to salvage the image of the police by noting that: "any attempt to hold the law enforcement agents to ridicule and in contempt could only undermine their effectiveness in dealing with crimes, maintenance of law and order and our
This statement, occasioned by the Lagos uprisings, immediately redirected press attention to student acts of violence, hooliganism, lawlessness and related images. On the 1st of May, alongside a front-page story headed "LAGOS POLICE WARN AGAINST LAWLESSNESS", the New Nigerian had a lead under the caption: "APPALLING DESTRUCTION". A cursory comparison between the police account and the paper's lead indicates a great deal of affinity. Part of the lead reads:

There is no justification for the mindless destruction perpetrated at Ife, Ibadan and Lagos at the weekend by some dastardly characters. ... The students opened floodgates for hooligans to terrorise the public and destroy private and public properties. This development no doubt has lost the students public sympathy and has given credence to the government's claims that the protests had been the handiwork of saboteurs. We should all rise to the occasion and help the authorities to maintain law and order and to ensure safety of life and property. (New Nigerian, 29.4.78).

Dead bodies, a common and virtually everyday feature of Lagos streets were now blamed on "students and their collaborators". Thus, two unidentified bodies found along Mushin Road, and later conveyed to the Lagos Mortuary, were alleged to be victims of the rioters who had robbed and clubbed them to death. The police statement concluded:

It has been established that the students solicited and employed the services of undesirables and robbers to commit their lawless acts
and through intimidation and physical attack, forced school children between ten and fourteen years old on the streets. . . . All acts of lawlessness, hooliganism, looting, robbery and arson will be severely dealt with and any citizen who has no business where these acts may be perpetrated are advised to move away in their own interests.

It was not only the *New Nigerian* that reproduced this police perspective and followed it up in its reporting. It applied to all the other papers. For example, on May 2nd, 1978, the *Daily Times* christened the uprisings in Lagos as: "THE NIGHT OF THE HOODLUMS". Under this heading was a story attacking the demonstrators and commending the police. The paper stated:

Those students and their hoodlum accomplices who held the citizens of Lagos to ransom last weekend ought to be thoroughly ashamed of themselves. It will take a long time to forget their crude, mindless and absolutely negative rage. Now that they have tasted blood, now that they have allowed themselves to be ruled by the basest instincts in man, they have lost whatever moral authority they had, to cry out against the many wrongs in our society. They can no longer claim to be in anyway superior to those who killed their colleagues. In one barbaric and vicious outburst, they have lost the sympathy and support they were beginning to build for their cause. . . .

The police authorities had earlier on outraged our sense of justice, and must even now bear some responsibility for the cause of last week's rampage. But on Friday evening and night they retrieved some of their reputation and showed that they were capable of good
sense and good judgement when under extreme pressure. Had they chosen to meet riotous force with more systematic force, the outcome would have been more disastrous than it already is. They deserve our congratulations for having exercised such restraint.

Finally, referring to the issue of education which the students had raised, the *Daily Times* concluded:

> OUR EDUCATIONAL POLICY is today in disarray less because it is in itself wrong than because few understand its rationale. Nothing is at the moment more likely to restore public confidence than a decision by Government to reopen the debate on educational financing.

The paper then advised students to "give up their selfrighteous anger". It has to be added here that throughout this exercise of criminalising the protests and repairing the image of the police and the military state, the press cemented a negative image of the protests in other ways as well. Many of the papers continued to carry pictures of the damaged buildings, to report comments by traditional rulers, religious leaders and Government functionaries, in addition to selectively printing opinion surveys carried out by the papers themselves. Put together, the images indicated that 'public opinion' weighed heavily against the students' agitations.

It was left to the Head of the military junta to provide a seal for this presentation. It came, in most papers on May 5th, 1978. In the *New Nigerian* it was given as: "OBASANJO APPEALS TO NIGERIANS: DON'T LET ANARCHISTS TO WRECK THE NATION". The *Punch* had it as: "AXE WILL FALL ON THE
THUGS - OBASANJO ASSURES THE NATION”. The General had promised the
nation, the Punch added, that the "regime would not abdicate its responsibilities
in ensuring strict compliance with the law of the land"; and that "anarchy
threatened the destruction of society itself". Finally, the General thanked
"traditional rulers, religious associations, and Government functionaries for
helping to end the crisis". The containment process was now back on course. It
remained for other state apparatuses, notably the judiciary, to pilot the lingering
waverers into line.

Up to the beginning of the inquiry into the protests, this official line of
reasoning dominated the press. During the sittings of the Judicial Commission of
Inquiry into the disturbances however, reconstructions of the events in a court
room atmosphere provided the media with a new theatre well suited to existing
patterns of court reporting. Hence, the coverage centred on the institutionalised
conflict between two contestants, the prosecutor and the defence, for and against
law and order. Further, eminent legal personalities that were involved, each
heading a team of personalities, were all recalling dramatic accounts of the
events under trial.

Secondly, the criminalisation process initiated and publicised by both
state and press now had to be authenticated by the judiciary to satisfy the basic
tenets of liberal-democratic ideology, since despite the commanding importance
of militarised justice, the regime still supported the ideal of an independent
judiciary. As our earlier review of this inquiry showed, it pronounced the
protestors and their collaborators guilty on all possible charges along the way,
producing homilies on a number of subjects ranging from the state, law, education,
Marxism, civilisation and social organisation in general, all of which were
reproduced in the press. Hall, Critcher, Jefferson, Clarke and Roberts (1978) have argued that judges' sentences and homilies are directed at affirming the distinction between what is normal and abnormal, and stressing that 'society' will not tolerate the 'abnormal'. This was precisely the part played by the Mohammed Commission of Inquiry. It reconstructed the events and pointed up their ideological lessons for society, with the co-operation of the newspaper press and the other media of mass communication. By uncritically reproducing the courtroom drama, the homilies of the judges, and the conclusions of the final report and the accompanying Government White paper, the press contributed substantially towards de-centering the political arguments and ideals of the protesting students and the material and social practices that structured them.

In this section, we have concentrated on the way press reporting emphasised dramatic incidents of violence and questions of law-and-order, thereby missing the necessary background. But these were not the only features of press performance that helped to bolster the doctrine of 'National Security'. In discussing the newspapers' reporting of events and issues, we have already drawn attention to the reliance on 'credible' sources, usually people in 'responsible' positions who 'know what they are talking about'. In the following section, we develop this theme further.

The Search for Credible News Sources and the Exaltation of Celebrities

Research on journalism in the advanced capitalist societies has shown that newsmen generally look for sources which they consider credible, and for personalities on which to hang their stories. The first practice conserves the organisation's resources since speeches from official sources can easily be handled within normal production cycles. Moreover, speeches can easily be
redefined as events in themselves and presented as the latest manifestation of the conflict between significant perspectives. Thirdly, reporting speeches by eminent persons shifts the responsibility for the accuracy of the substantive content away from the newspaper and onto the source. Fourthly, the papers’ image of themselves as a watch-dog on the abuses of power and as an indispensable channel of political communication is enhanced.

However, as Becker’s notion of the hierarchy of credibility suggests, the quest for credible news sources is not as straightforward as it appears. According to Becker, credibility like power, including economic power, is differentially distributed within hierarchical institutions and social systems, with the superordinate groups monopolising 'truth' and therefore prescribing social morality, while subordinates who are likely to be telling the truth as they see it are cast simply as violators of the prescribed morality. To quote Becker:

In any system of ranked groups, participants take it as given that members of the highest group have the right to define the way things really are. In any organisation, no matter what the rest of the organisation chart shows, the arrows indicating the flow of information point up, thus demonstrating (at least formally) that those at the top have access to a more complete picture of what is going on than anyone else. (Becker, 1967:241).

Becker makes two additional points which are crucial to our analysis of the use of credible sources in journalism, when he adds that:

... from the point of view of a well socialised participant in the system, any tale told by those at the top intrinsically deserves to
be regarded as the most credible account obtainable of the

A few paragraphs later, he concludes that as well socialised members of our society, we tend to accept this hierarchy of credibility, and in doing so take over the accusations made against subordinate social groups by responsible officials, without realising that "the reason responsible officials make the accusation so frequently is precisely because they are responsible". (Becker, 1967:242). Further, drawing on another concept popularised by Becker, we can state that the reason why subordinates are often accused and heard less frequently is precisely because they are "labelled" as irresponsible both by responsible superordinates and those who are "well socialised participants" in the system.

News organisations in class societies socialise their personnel into the core values and routine practices of the organisation, including the given relationship with sources and audience. In a wider context, journalists are also members of the society, who have been socialised by other agencies before beginning their careers. Hence, they tend to belong to that select category Becker identifies as the "well socialised participants" in a double sense.

In this investigation, we found that 37% of all source attributions were to people in responsible Government or institutional positions, 21% being to state Government officials, and 16% to University officials. In reality, this figure underestimates the degree of reliance on 'official' spokesmen. For instance, most of the 6% listed under 'Member of Public' belong to the social group congratulated by General Obasanjo in 1978 "for helping to end the crisis" - traditional rulers, religious leaders and other eminent personalities. Similarly, 'Medium comment' is so interlaced with official accounts, particularly those
Table 9.7: Distribution of Items by Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Column cms.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medium Report/Comment</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15,249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State/Government Official</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9,962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students (Official)</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8,076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University (Official)</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7,979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of Public</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2,923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade Union</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University (Non-Official)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University (Union)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Organisation</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students (Non-Official)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>578*</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>48,012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Due to multiple coding, N > 560.

provided by the police and military Governors, that it is very difficult to make a strict separation. Thus, if we venture to include these categories as "probable sources of anti-student definitions", the total figure is 69%.

This leaves 31% of the items quoting sources articulating the counter-definitions developed by students and their sympathisers. The greater part of this figure, 21%, comprised of comments by student leaders with 5% coming from trade union officials in and outside the Universities, results which give further credence to Becker's credibility thesis.

All together, accredited spokesmen on both sides of the debate, though in disproportionate representation, commanded 95% of all column space devoted
to the crisis. In other words, only 5% of the total space was devoted to statements by the ordinary students, ordinary workers within and outside the Universities, peasants, self-employed artisans and traders, and the unemployed people whom the press and responsible people described as either 'vagabonds' or 'hooligans'. Thus, when the press refers to 'public opinion', it is referring to the 95% of quoted views produced by approximately 5% of the population. Unwittingly, the opinion of the rest of the population is subsumed under the general umbrella, whilst denying them necessary access to the means of making their conception of the world public. Moreover, as Table 9.8 shows, there was no significant departure from this general pattern. Instead, we noticed that all the papers, both those owned by Federal and State Governments, and privately controlled titles, irrespective of their geographical location, relied rather heavily on official and responsible sources.

As a further examination of this contention, we also looked at the use of news photographs. The results are presented in Table 9.9. This shows that 60% of all the photographs, (accounting for 4,722 of the total 8,687 column centi-metres devoted to photographs) depict University and Government officials such as University Vice-Chancellors, Chancellors, Visitors, the Head of State, Military Governors and Commissioners. Add to these the 7% showing traditional and religious leaders, and 67% of all the photographs used are of people whom we could associate with the concept 'ruling class'. Of the remaining 33%, 4% are devoted to images of violence, such as clashes between police and students, injured persons (e.g. the photo-story of the beaten Punch reporter), and damaged property, especially burnt cars and buildings. Student leaders take 13%, while 14% are of groups of students, notably those seen trooping in and out of campuses
Table 9.8: Distribution of Items by Source in each Paper

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Daily Times</th>
<th>New Nig.</th>
<th>Punch</th>
<th>Daily Sketch</th>
<th>Nig. Stand.</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Comment</td>
<td>41 (7.3)</td>
<td>42 (7.5)</td>
<td>19 (3.4)</td>
<td>29 (5.2)</td>
<td>10 (1.8)</td>
<td>141 (25.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State/Government Official</td>
<td>42 (7.5)</td>
<td>38 (6.8)</td>
<td>16 (2.8)</td>
<td>25 (4.9)</td>
<td>5 (0.9)</td>
<td>131 (23.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students (Official)</td>
<td>37 (6.6)</td>
<td>37 (6.6)</td>
<td>10 (1.8)</td>
<td>13 (2.3)</td>
<td>11 (2.0)</td>
<td>108 (19.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University (Official)</td>
<td>24 (4.3)</td>
<td>29 (5.2)</td>
<td>8 (1.4)</td>
<td>24 (4.3)</td>
<td>3 (0.5)</td>
<td>91 (15.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of Public</td>
<td>8 (1.4)</td>
<td>21 (3.7)</td>
<td>3 (0.5)</td>
<td>4 (0.7)</td>
<td>1 (0.2)</td>
<td>37 (6.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University (Individuals)</td>
<td>6 (1.1)</td>
<td>1 (0.2)</td>
<td>5 (0.9)</td>
<td>4 (0.7)</td>
<td>1 (0.2)</td>
<td>17 (3.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade Union (Non-Varsity)</td>
<td>2 (0.4)</td>
<td>5 (0.9)</td>
<td>2 (0.4)</td>
<td>1 (0.2)</td>
<td>1 (0.2)</td>
<td>11 (2.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University (Unions)</td>
<td>4 (0.7)</td>
<td>1 (0.2)</td>
<td>1 (0.2)</td>
<td>4 (0.7)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>10 (1.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Civic Organisations</td>
<td>4 (0.7)</td>
<td>1 (0.2)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>2 (0.4)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>7 (1.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students (Non-Official)</td>
<td>4 (0.7)</td>
<td>3 (0.5)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>7 (1.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 560 (100)
Table 9.9: Distribution of Pictures by Actors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Column cms.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Official</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2,428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Official</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2,294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group of Students</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1,706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Leader(s)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1,008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eminent Person</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damaged Property/Police Student Clash</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordinary Person(s)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>8,687</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

carrying suitcases. It is a distribution that follows very closely the pattern of source attribution.

Journalists consider photographs as an important component of news stories. A widely used American textbook of journalism for example, acknowledges that the photograph has become increasingly important in reporting news "in a visually oriented world". (Harris, Leiter, Johnson, 1942, 1981:179). This is because, pictures "take the place of many words in portraying the day's news. Pictures speak quickly, vividly, simply, and they give the newspaper a more colourful and more readable typographical appearance". (Harris, Leiter, Johnson, 1942, 1981:180). A few lines later, the author advises the would-be reporter/editor that, "ideally, the photographer should always seek drama, human interest, conflict and other news values in his pictures' such as "interesting personalities in a new pose..." (Harris, Leiter, Johnson, 1942,
1981:180). Apart from the fact that historically, Nigerian journalism has been modelled on Anglo-American practices, it is common to see practising journalists reading these textbooks and such magazines as Newsweek and Time, and as a matter of prestige, claiming to be regular readers of the British Guardian and The Times, and The Washington Post and New York Times. Support for the practices and presentations of these publications is widespread and it is therefore safe to argue that the framing and selection of news photographs is heavily structured by Western news values.

For a fuller understanding of the way that news photos work however, we can usefully turn to the work of Roland Barthes. He points out that the photograph has one particular quality: the tendency to convey the impression that this is reality itself, "this event really happened and this photo is the proof of it", what Barthes calls "the having been there of all photographs". (Barthes, 1977). As a result, news photos tend to 'naturalise' their underlying ideological content by declaring that this "image is not the reality but at least it is its perfect analagon ..." (Barthes, 1977:17). But, news photographs are cultural products which cannot be read only literally. They require a deeper and more grounded reading which considers how the structural arrangement of society expresses itself in social practices including symbolic forms. Only then can we go beyond the myth of the 'perfect analogn' that conceals the ideological character of news photographs.

In reading news photos of the protests, we developed this line of analysis in order to overcome some of the obvious shortfalls in Barthes' semiotic method, namely the tendency to assume a class society in which the ideological messages of the dominant class are carefully concealed within discursive texts,
and all that is required is for the analyst to peel off these mystifications like onions, to arrive at the essential kernel of ideological domination. Firstly, the photographs are discussed within the context of the whole network of images of the demonstrations which we have been trying to decipher and make meaningful. Secondly, and more importantly, the photographs and the newspapers in which they appear are seen as elements of Nigerian culture. In Chapter 4, we explored the historical and material foundation of that culture, and in Chapter 8, developed our analysis by arguing that the institutions and practices of the Nigerian press constitute an element of a wider neo-colonial cultural apparatus; conditioned by the structure of this neo-colonial state; and working within and on the rules of this state in ways that ultimately serve to cement its class structure and dependent relationships. This is the basis on which our reading of the photographs is founded.

The use of the photographs was a symbolic expression of that system of domination. Our quantitative findings suggest that in selecting news photos, the Nigerian press, concentrated attention on elite persons, as if to remind us that: these are the people who really matter; here they are, and listen to what they have to say, for what they say is truth itself.

Typically, these photographs were the head and shoulder type and always carried imposing captions, giving the person's title: **Professor** Iya Abubakar, **Vice-Chancellor; Colonel** Ahmadu Ali, **Federal Commissioner for Education; Dr. Jibril Aminu, Secretary National Universities Commission; Brigadier Shehu Musa Yar-Adua, Chief of Staff Supreme Headquarters; or M.D. Yusuf, Inspector General of Police.** The titles signify power and credibility. When it came to the overall symbolisation of the nation itself, some of the papers took
the captioning a little further, specifying clearer and more definite angles. For example, one photograph of the Head of State which appeared in all the papers when he made his "DON'T LET ANARCHISTS TO WRECK THE NATION" speech, carried his rank, title of 'Head of State', and a thematic extract of the speech. In the Daily Times the picture had the caption: "General Obasanjo .... We should not allow anarchists to wreck our Nation". (5.5.78). The Daily Sketch opted for a photograph of a concerned, caring, and resourceful General and leader, out to improve the quality of life of all Nigerians including those residing in the rural areas. A leadership that contrasted sharply with the 'anarchists', 'wreckers', the destructive students who in 1973 had refused to serve the needy, and demonstrated against the National Youth Service Corps which was seen as "trying to frustrate the programme of the Federal and State Governments to take modern amenities to the countryside". Fixed within a story with the headline: "STUDENTS ROW A CALAMITY - OBASANJO", the lengthy caption describes the photograph thus: "The Head of State, Lt. General Olusegun Obasanjo, here moves into a rice farm at Ezillo, Anambra State, to inspect crops and speak with the farmers". (Daily Sketch, 19.9.78).

Our third and final example is of the Deputy Registrar of Lagos University talking to a group of students, which was used by the Daily Times (2.5.78). It had the caption: "UNILAG Deputy Registrar, Mr. Mama Makele in vain tries to persuade the students". There were a number of such photographs in which the responsible official is seen trying to reason with the adamant and intransigent students.

But it was not only photographs of the powerful that symbolised the conflict between the authorities and the students. Many of the remaining 33%
devoted to students, students-police clashes and casualties of violence, had story-like captions. Three examples, two from the Daily Times and one from The Punch are indicative of such captions. (1) "Police clashed with the University of Lagos students on Tuesday along Akoka Road. They had to use tear gas to disperse the students who were marching to Dodan Barracks to present their protests against the increase in school fees. In the confusion that ensued (like the scene above), bottles and stones were freely used" (Daily Times, 2.5.78). "The scene above" was that of Missile throwing demonstrators, and the caption emphasises the violent disposition of the students. When one recalls that it was during the "confusion that ensued" that one student - Akintunde Ojo - was shot by the police, it becomes very evident that not only bottles and stones, but bullets too 'were freely used'. However, the more serious violence of the state remains undepicted and invisible. What the photo has done is to displace or neutralise this violence by bringing to centre stage the lesser violence of the students.

(2) In our second example, the caption reads: "A fireman passes water through the rubbles of the five storey Customs House at Ikorodu Road razed during Friday night's rampage". (Daily Times, 2.5.78). In capitalist society where property is consecrated, and particularly in a developing country where storey buildings are seen as symbols of development, those who attack and destroy property are considered as not only being anti-development but also of being anti-society and evil. This caption seems to convey the message: "this is the evidence of destruction or the hooliganism we are talking about", or "this is the anarchy General Obasanjo is warning us against". The photograph, isolated from the wider political context of the crisis thus conceals the alternative reality, and mobilises us against this 'destructive' and 'anarchist' social group.
(3) Our final example is a photo story in The Punch (22.4.78), developed in five related parts, each with its own caption. (i) "A police boss face to face with the University of Lagos Registrar". (ii) "Students in action at the University of Lagos". (iii) "Copper bleeds from the upper right eye lid and nose". (iv) "This policeman really shows his worth as a trained copper. He takes cover when the student demonstrators rained stones on him". (v) "Lady students also refused to be left out in their search for 'justice', here; a lady student protests to the policeman as if saying 'copper, I have something to say". Taken as a composite whole, this photo story has a central message very similar to 'The Kick Photo' cited by Halloran, Elliott and Mudrock (1970), which was widely used by the British press during the October 1968 Anti-Vietnam demonstrations in London to emphasise the violent nature of the demonstrations.

News stories accompanying 'The Kick photo' had such headlines as:

THE DAY THE POLICE WERE WONDERFUL (Daily Mirror)
WHAT THE BOBBIES FACED (Daily Express)
VICTORY FOR POLICE (Telegraph)

In our example, "policemen show their worth as trained coppers" even when students rain stones on them, and despite the fact that there are colleagues bleeding around them. It is a dramatic image of the heroic forces of order fighting against villains.

Returning now to our general theme of the Press's reliance on official sources, we need to look at the actual statements of the officials to flesh out the quantitative information we have already provided. Beginning with the January 1970 Zaria demonstrations, the people who made headlines with their comments were
predominantly Governors, Commissioners, and Vice-Chancellors.

Two days after the outbreak of violence on the campus, the New Nigerian had on its back page "BAKO FLAYS UNRULY VARSITY STUDENTS" (22.1.70). Soon, other condemnations from well placed people became features of the coverage. Typical headlines were:

ZARIA MARCH ILL-TIMED, SAYS AUDU (Daily Times, 26.1.70).

STUDENT VIOLENCE IS CONDEMNED (by six Governors of the Northern state) (New Nigerian, 5.2.70).

CURB THESE STUDENTS - SAYS CLARK. THEIR ACTION AMOUNTS TO SABOTAGE (Daily Times, 5.2.70).

Clark was then the Mid-West Commissioner for Education. To Governor Bako, it was "a blatant disregard for law and discipline", and he followed the Daily Times lead in arguing that "we have wrong value for education. ... By every standard in the world, the more educated a man was, the more capable he would be in enduring sufferings. Our students are arrogant and unscrupulous. Their action amounts to madness and hysteria" (New Nigerian, 22.1.70).

A few days later, Bako was among the six Military Governors who condemned "the violent and barbaric actions of the students" and threatened to withdraw student scholarships in addition to publicly declaring that "there were external forces trying to destroy the already acclaimed good reputation of the University".

The Midwest Commissioner for Education, Edwin Clark, already noted for having a viewpoint on almost every issue, had a lot to say about the protest. As he put it:
(i) While other Nigerians are joining hands with the Federal military Government to rehabilitate war returnees, our University boys are out to damage the image of the country.

(ii) In a period of National Emergency, demonstrations amount to sabotage.

(iii) It is strange that students from very poor homes, some of whom have no shelter at home, are now demanding higher standards of living than what is obtained in their homes.

(Daily Times, 5.2.70).

It was these kinds of comments which formed the basis for some of the editorials in the newspapers. In return, many of these people elaborated what the newspapers had been saying about the demonstrations. In other words, there was a regular interchange between elite commentary and press reporting both in news formats and editorial material.

When another outbreak of student protests occurred at Ibadan the following year, apart from building on well-worn themes - National rehabilitation, National Emergency, demonstrations as sabotage, and students as a privileged social group - many of these personalities began introducing new dimensions. The most notable was the initiation of an anti-intellectual current which went on to flourish during the remaining years of military rule. A good example was Governor Esuene's declaration that "UNIVERSITIES HAVE FAILED US". The Governor argued that "if Nigerian Universities as the higher institutions of learning had reached out and illuminated the whole community with the light of their influence and knowledge, a lot of calamities and tribulations which had
befallen the country might have been avoided'. He accused the Universities of 'partisan and sectional interests, tribalism and destructive criticism'. After attacking what he termed 'IRRESPONSIBILITY OF INTELLECTUALS', he closed on a rather ironic philosophical note when he put it that: 'all men are born equal, and that the privileges of freedom and opportunities which God had intended for all have been trampled upon or usurped by a few'. (New Nigerian, 13.12.71).

At the time Esuene was attacking the Universities, several other eminent persons were either doing the same or sermonising on "The relevance of the University to our society". Under this title, the Waziri of Sokoto, Alhaji Junaidu, compared contemporary Nigerian Universities to the 'Universities' or centres of learning which existed in Africa around the middle ages. Although the speech, widely reported by the press, had very insightful and well founded premises, it had the same ring as Esuene's lamentation that 'the Universities have failed us'. His insistence that though knowledge "has a social and cultural stamp" and "a purpose and commitment to a particular world view" and his argument that the Nigerian University is "a cultural transplant whose roots lie in another tradition", and whose current work could be justifiably viewed with a great deal of disquiet are firmly in line with our analysis. Neither do we quarrel with his injunction that the scholar should not isolate himself from society. However, we disagree with his tendency to emphasise, infact to over-emphasise the uniqueness of 'our culture, our society' in an almost generic sense without spelling out the nature of that society and what its aspirations should be. Although Junaidu did stress that the scholar has 'a duty to the nation', by not spelling out clearly who the scholar should be responsible to or the kind of nation he should serve, his words were taken as another indictment of the Universities, intellectuals, and by extension the restless students. Read carefully, however,
the Waziri's lecture ended on an egalitarian note when he said: "Knowledge is at its best when it is universally useful and the best scholars are those whom the ordinary man fears neither to encounter nor to address" (my emphasis) (New Nigerian, Thursday, December 9th, 1971, p.5).

Explicit comments on the failures of the Universities and condemnation of the protestors continued even after Kunle Adepoju had been shot. Up to the time of the appointment of the Kazeem Commission of Inquiry into the crisis, the majority of the comments printed in the papers were from those who had either lost confidence in the Universities as a whole or were "acutely distressed" with the "irresponsible deviation from academic pursuits" by University students. They all also, happened to be members of the superordinate social groups in the Nigerian social structure. By relying so much on them for news and views, the press allowed them to colonise the available cultural space and in C. Wright Mills' words, "the means of history making".

It was only during the inquiry, when sordid revelations about Mrs. Apampa's management of Azikiwe Hall occurred that the views and reactions of the subordinate social group took on some semblance of credibility, though, here too, it was submissions from responsible officials which were of most interest to the press. Perhaps if the newspapers had not followed 'responsible' officials so closely and so quickly in casting the students as violators of prescribed morality, had accepted that they have a right to be heard and validated or falsified their own version of the truth as they saw it, the press might have been able to press for alternative solutions and it is possible that the outcome could have been less tragic than it was.
Our reading of the press coverage of student protests over time does suggest that by 1975, after recurrent outbreaks of campus protests, Government officials were becoming rather skilful in what to them was another 'propaganda war' to disorganise the enemy and win the hearts and minds of the Nigerian population. An identifiable strategy came into play even if not consciously worked out. It was designed to keep the official line in continuous circulation. Repeating themselves and sometimes employing new angles, officials would issue press statements at intervals from each other and in different geographical locations. It was an ideological division of labour that worked quite well for the military-bureaucratic state since all the papers were reporting them with great zeal.

On 15th February 1975, both the Daily Times and the New Nigerian had as their front page news, comments by Brigadier Abba Kyari, Military Governor of Kaduna State in which he strongly stated the case for 'hidden forces' in explaining the cause of the demonstrations. As he put it: "the fact that these students take so much delight in tampering with issues that do not have anything to do with their studies makes one to entertain thoughts that the students' agitations have some hidden motives". It was the beginning of a series of related statements.

On the 18th of February, the Daily Times carried a story "HIRED MEN CAUSE THE STUDENTS' CRISIS - SPIFF." According to the paper, Governor Diette Spiff of Rivers State had stated that:

"the majority of these students who are now 21 years old were barely eight in 1966 and could not therefore have known much about the politics that precipitated the crisis that almost tore the nation apart."
As a result, they cannot meaningfully compare the past with the present - an anomalous situation that makes them easy prey for trouble makers."

Two days later, it was the turn of Governor Johnson. "JOHNSON CALLS FOR PRAYERS" said the Daily Times. The Governor had called for prayers from religious leaders to avoid "disaster and chaos" similar to the civil war so that the nation could have "peace and stability". (Daily Times, 20.2.75). This pattern of the strategic timing and placing of comments can be gleaned from the following headlines and accompanying newspaper dates:

ASIKA FLAYS STUDENTS AND SAYS WE WON'T TOLERATE ANARCHY (New Nigerian, 25.5.75).

V-Cs CONDEMN VIOLENCE (New Nigerian, 25.5.75)

STUDENTS' ACTION UNREALISTIC - BRIGADIER ALLY (Commander Lagos Garrison) (New Nigerian, 27.5.75).

Of the numerous comments only a few tried to go beyond the violence. Two were particularly significant. The first came from the radical ex-NEPU leader and ex-Federal Commissioner Mallam Aminu Kano, with: "AMINU KANO SUPPORTS STUDENTS", published in both the Daily Times and the New Nigerian. The Daily Times report had it that, the Mallam had contended that students were "capable of understanding contemporary history". He went on to add that "Nigerian students were often blamed for being frivolous in their agitations, but now their grievances had shifted from food and accommodation problems to main issues affecting the existence of the country and its society" (21.2.75). The second came at the end of a meeting of Nigerian Roman Catholic Bishops.
Although not known for their radical remarks on political issues, the deteriorating social and economic conditions of the poor in Nigeria forced the clergy to give a recipe for the end of the crisis. The Bishops' prescriptions were very similar to the issues raised by the students. The *Daily Times* report had it that:

The Bishops at their annual meeting listed better life for people in rural areas through improved social services, decentralisation of amenities and industries, rural electrification and water schemes as ways of ending the current unrest in the country as shown in the strikes, students' agitations and disturbances. "It would be a mistake if what has happened in the world, where a minority enjoy affluence and eat up the bulk of world raw materials while two thirds of the world are deprived and millions go hungry were to be allowed to happen here." (*Daily Times*, 25.2.75).

The Bishops' remarks compelled the Political Editor of the *Daily Times*, Haroun Adamu to compare the students' demands and the suggestions put forward by the Bishops and argue that:

It is easy to dismiss these students' demands as a manifestation of idealism with which most student groups are animated; it does not represent the feelings, desires and aspirations of the generality of the Nigerian populace. But when their fathers and grandfathers in the clergy of all the Christian denominations who have a closer touch with the people more than any other organisation in this country today are demanding virtually the same things, then one needs to take a harder look at the students' demands again. (*Daily Times*, Wednesday, March 12th, 1975, p.7).
After dismissing the myth of generation gap, and with it, youthful idealism, Adamu concluded that "while it is desirable for the Government to search for those 'hidden hands' that instigated the students, such preoccupation should not blind it from the basic issues the students and the bishops are raising", and that is, that Government should "see that the wealth of the nation is distributed evenly to the benefit of all".

Our final set of examples is taken from the 1978 crisis. We mentioned earlier that the initial press reaction was within the established frame of reporting and condemning student violence; that following the killing of students the law and order perspective was dented, and that finally there were concerted attempts to reinstate that perspective for mobilisation against the demonstrators. Although Government officials contributed to defining the meaning of the crisis in each of these three phases, our illustration comes from the final phase, the crucial period of reconstruction.

As we noted, it began with the Police warning at the end of April 1978 and continued through Obasanjo's famous "DON'T LET ANARCHISTS TO RUIN THE NATION" speech in early May, to the release of the Mohammed Commission's report and the attendant Government White Paper. Some of the relevant statements have already been presented alongside the press treatment of violence, and Law and Order. What follows are additions to the items already quoted. They are presented in chronological order beginning with May 3rd, 1978.


May 4th, 1978: (a) BALOGUN WARNS TEACHERS OVER STUDENT CRISIS
The Cross River state police command claimed to have found "hundreds of different publications intended to incite the public especially workers and students against the Federal Military Government" with translations into local languages. This was considered firm proof of their claims that the students were being manipulated by outside forces in order to destabilise the Federal Military Government. Even then however, these 'subversive' publications were never made public either by the police or the press. The later remained content with the police announcement and no more.

Governor Jega of Gongola State accused parents of not giving their children proper home training. In a similar tone, the Chief Imam of Ibadan, Alhaji Muili, warned against "acts of vandalism and lawlessness" and advised all moslems "to warn their children to refrain from acts that tended to mar the peace, tranquility and progress of the state".
May 23rd, 1978: OBAS WADE INTO STUDENT CRISIS (Daily Times)

According to the paper, traditional rulers in Kwara State met to explain to pupils in the state the reasons for the increase in boarding fees. The chiefs had stressed that: "pupils should bear in mind that apart from education, Government is spending huge sums of money on other facilities. The policy of even development would not be achieved if the little resources at the disposal of the Government were concentrated only on one sector". The Chiefs therefore implored the students to "impress on their parents the need for purposeful sacrifice for the meaningful development of the state in the light of the present economic situation". Finally, they advised the students to guard against: "unscrupulous men who might want to use you against the Government".

It is this coincidence in the timing of statements denigrating the protestors which inspired General Obasanjo to thank responsible Government officials, religious leaders, and traditional rulers. At the same time, the press, by authenticating their contributions, assisted the state in criminalising the protests and defining the substantive political content out of existence.

This is not to say that the press failed to present comments from the students. The canon of balance which prescribes that journalists should "present both sides of the story" was upheld from time to time, but, overall, it was the statements of officials which commanded the greatest attention, and overshadowed the substantive case put forward by the students.

Celebrating Stars

If the press relied too heavily on eminent persons in their search for sources, they also personalised issues by reducing social conflict to a gladiatorial
clash of stars. The press tends to work with a "great man" theory of history in which history is made by the conscious activities of individuals more or less independently of social forces. This is why news centres around the activities of personalities. Recognition of, and sometimes the creation of such personalities therefore becomes a pertinent part of news reporting, for news is made by news-makers.'

During the protests, the Student Union leadership assumed the status of important personalities. This was particularly the case in 1978 when the press seized on Segun Okeowo, the President of the National Union of Nigerian Students. Apart from Okeowo, two other well known persons connected in one way or the other with the crisis became celebrities - the Students' Counsel, Chief Gani Fawehinmi and Professor Ayodele Awojobi. All three had previous histories of stardom. The first - Mr. Segun Okeowo - as we saw earlier through his dramatic encounter with the Chairman of the Constituent Assembly, Mr. Justice Udo Udoma, in 1977, when he appeared at the Assembly in an all red dress. During this encounter, the press had presented Okeowo as a red revolutionary leader, ignoring the major contributions he made to the Assembly debates on the questions of the State, Religion, Education, Press Freedom and Nigeria's social structure. Now it was time to pick up the star phenomenon and use it in explaining the coverage of the crisis.

Gani Fawehinmi qualified as a personality through a different route. He had been a distinguished Nigerian lawyer widely associated with taking up the cases of the poor whenever they needed legal aid. He had also been an energetic campaigner for free education in Nigeria for a long time, and because of this passionate commitment, had given out charitable assistance to needy students.
By the time of the crisis, he was awarding twenty four secondary school
scholarships every year to children of the poor, selected from all parts of the
country. Fawehinmi had also represented students in the 1971 Kazeem
Commission of Inquiry hearings at the University of Ibadan.

Our third celebrity, Professor Ayodele Awojobi, was the Head of
Mechanical Engineering at the University of Lagos. However, what made him
stand out was less his outstanding contribution to the study of vibrations, than
his frequent essays and press conferences on every aspect of Nigerian social and
political life. As a recognised and controversial figure, the Professor had
theatrical approaches to issues well illustrated by his use of a blackboard filled
with mathematical calculations in Court during the Presidential election
controversy over what constitutes twelve and two-thirds of nineteen states of the
Federation. Such performances made him a suitable candidate for sustained press
attention, and he proved very useful during the 1978 crisis as will be shown below.

There is an additional reason why news celebrities became so central in
the coverage of the demonstrations. Most of the drama that they were involved in
took place under the auspices of the courts either regular courts or judicial
commissions. Consequently, these individuals could be easily isolated from the
groups they represented and be presented as themselves.

We start with the NUNS President, Segun Okeowo. By the time the 1978
crisis captured media attention, he had already been in the news in his own right,
firstly, through the 'dress drama' mentioned above, and secondly through his
disappearance during the build up to the crisis. As a result, Okeowo's comments
and his pictures were now considered newsworthy by all Nigerian papers, and his
beard, his constant appearance in red, and his determination to oppose the fees
increases which he would present in elegant phrases provided a ready image for
them to work with. Already, the press was getting used to pitching him against
eminent persons: OKEOWO vs JUSTICE UDO UDÔMA; OKEOWO vs COL.
AHMADU ALI; OKEOWO vs DR. JIBRIL AMINU. When he was withdrawn from
the Constituent Assembly at the outbreak of the student demonstrations, it was
easy to read it as OKEOWO vs the Head of State, General Obasanjo.

The image of Okeowo was already becoming more significant and more
heavily publicised than the views of the more than 200,000 Nigerian students he
represented. 'Okeowo' was now replacing Nigerian students in the popular
consciousness. It was Okeowo as an individual built up and celebrated by the
press, rather than as the leader of the Nigerian students articulating their
political message. That message was soon forgotten as the press preoccupied
itself with Okeowo's style and his personal tribulations with responsible state
officials, his arrests, court appearances, releases and rearrests.

When Okeowo was withdrawn from the Constituent Assembly, The Punch
announced: AXE FALLS ON OKEOWO. Alongside this story was another under
the heading ".... NOW HE DRAGS ALI TO COURT" (26.4.78). The previous
day, the New Nigerian had carried a story headed: "OKEOWO TOLD TO STAY
AWAY" and an accompanying editorial comment had condemned the decision on
two grounds: (i) that he "represents real human beings and not an ordinary
institution which can be banned out of existence at the whim of anybody; and
(ii) that he represents the voice of students who over the years, have played
important roles in Nation building through supportive activities and criticisms,
symposia, public lectures and publications. Though the paper had on many
occasions tried to belittle these contributions, it was in the interest of its liberal
image to come out against the Government decision to deny student participation in the making of the Constitution. More fundamentally, the paper had a clearer grasp than the military authorities and how much the document could gain by incorporating students' dissent through this symbolic representation; in essence, allowing them to share in the collective guilt.

But it was the subsequent court appearance which drew the largest column space in the papers. Apart from his case against Colonel Ahmadu Ali, Okeowo was arrested as soon as he was dismissed from the Constituent Assembly. A habeas corpus instituted by the students lawyer Gani Fawehinmi for his release was making very little impression on the police and prison authorities, even though the judge had ordered that Okeowo be presented in court. In desperation, Chief Fawehinmi withdrew from the case, noting that there was no guarantee that another order by the judge would be obeyed by the Inspector General of Police and Director of Prisons. Coverage of these goings-on was intense with prominent headlines such as:

OKEOWO'S LAWYER PULLS OUT - Daily Times
OKEOWO'S COUNSEL WITHDRAWS - The Punch and Standard
OKEOWO'S LAWYER WITHDRAWS - BATTLE FOR FREEDOM NOW LOST - New Nigerian.

A few days later, the case took another twist when Counsel to Okeowo was himself arrested by the police and charged with assault, obstruction, imprisonment and stealing. His wife followed up with a habeas corpus for his release. At his trial, 56 lawyers appeared for him.

The obvious political nature of these events is hardly touched on in their
representation in the press. The arrest of Okeowo for leading an organisation that opposed the state politically, his detention without trial, the refusal of the state to produce him in court on the order of the judge, the withdrawal and framing of his lawyer, and finally, the appearance of 56 lawyers which clearly symbolised an act of protest against the repressive direction the law and the state were taking, all failed to capture significant press attention. What interested the newspapers was the personal angle. Common descriptions of Fawehinmi were: "well known lawyer and philanthropist"; "popular Lagos lawyer"; "prominent Lagos lawyer"; "well known lawyer". It was this star image which preoccupied the press, rather than the political circumstances which necessitated the intervention of this "well known lawyer" in the first place.

Okeowo reappeared on the scene in June, again defying the due process of law by his refusal to argue motion. "I CAN'T ARGUE MOTION" (Daily Times, 2.6.78), he said. By now, his dress, his general appearance and the number of policemen with him (he was usually described as "under heavy police escort") had made him a star, and like other stars, his life was a public spectacle commanding attention not because of how consequential his actions were to the rest of society but because of what he had become through media processing. This processing had been negative, trivial, legalistic and abstracted from the overall struggle of the collectivity of Nigerian students which Okeowo represented, and through whose struggles he was projected into public consciousness. These struggles were reduced to the institutionalised procedures of the law where an individual's personal tribulations are put right after an arduous clash with legal opponents with the Judge as an independent arbiter. The Punch summed it up in a cartoon depicting Okeowo's father consoling his son, who is being dragged by two policemen before a judge. The father tells his dishevelled son: "Take heart
The rekindling of faith in 'the due process of law and order' was completed with the release of Okeowo a few days later. Life size photos announcing his release, some amidst jubilant supporters, were immediately printed in the papers, along with headlines celebrating his FREEDOM. "OKEOWO REGAINS FREEDOM", said the Daily Times; "FREED AT LAST" Daily Sketch. Again the papers were preoccupied with the minutiae such as the fact that "Okeowo was detained for 43 days, 6 hours and 2 seconds", particulars that are made necessary when the subject is a star person.

The star system, like other spheres of social life in a class society, is organised according to the logic of competition. Since competition demands multiplicity, the popularity of the star is relative and spectators are invited to watch a battle for supremacy between rival stars. During the crisis, Professor Awojobi provided the necessary addition to the cast of established star actors such as Okeowo, Fawehinmi, Col. Ali and Justice Udoma. His was not a battle against the state and its supportive social structure. Rather, he took issue with inefficient persons occupying official positions in a world, which, though not perfect, could be reformed or better managed by more competent individuals. To be effective, he needed some sparing partners, which he created by focusing on the inadequacies of University Vice-Chancellors.

In this discussion, we do not intend to question the sincerity of the Professor's motives. What is of interest are the limits of his perception and the way they squared with those of the press, thereby reinforcing an individual oriented interpretation of the crisis.

As soon as the crisis started, Awojobi issued a statement listing twelve 'guilts' against University Vice-Chancellors. The Daily Times headed with: "STUDENTS' CRISIS ON FEES, VARSITY CHIEFS ARE TO BLAME - AWOJOBI SPEAKS OUT". The paper continued: "The Vice-Chancellors are to blame - that is the pointed verdict by Professor Ayodele Awojobi on the students' crisis".

(3.5.78). In the New Nigerian, it was "PROF. AWOJOBI BLAMES V-Cs OVER FEES CRISIS"; while the Daily Sketch had it as "STUDENT CRISIS: V-Cs ROLES REJECTED". As a moral adjudicator, the Professor was in a position to pass judgement on the actors involved in the contest. But more significantly, all the headlines combined the personality of the Professor with the negativity of the protests - a reputable Professor against the crisis. The Vice-Chancellors were then pushed by association towards the negative side. Awojobi's list of the Vice-Chancellors' 'guilts' included the accusations that: (a) the students rioted because of the Vice-Chancellors' "timid interpretation of the Head of State's address in respect of student fees". (b) that the Vice-Chancellors abetted and encouraged confrontations between the students and the government during the crisis. (c) that the Vice-Chancellors encouraged students to have direct dialogue with the Government and to demonstrate. (d) that the Vice-Chancellors were ignorant of the degree of poverty of the average Nigerian parents. (e) that they did not consult the wider University body. (f) that an unrepresentative Committee of Vice-Chancellors endorsed the Committee Report, and (g) that the Vice-Chancellors maintained an "unpatriotic silence" by not issuing a statement during the crisis.

Before examining the coverage of Awojobi's contributions, it is necessary to first of all contextualise these comments. As we have shown through the National Universities Commission, the Federal Government, crippled
the Vice-Chancellors financially and administratively, forcing them to fall back on tuition fees as an alternative source of finance. At the same time, the Government pressurised the Vice-Chancellors to increase student intake and make the contents of University teaching relevant to the needs of the country. On the other hand, an increase in the student population, coupled with a declining financial budget had its drawbacks, not the least being unsatisfactory services - both physical and intellectual - and with them, increasing discontent among the students who were consuming the substandard fare made available to them. Student discontent coming up from below, and the inflexibility of the Government above, boxed the Vice-Chancellors in and they were then compelled to find a way out.

Secondly, apart from putting pressure on the Vice-Chancellors, the students had through written memos, press releases, personal meetings with Government officials, and boycotts of lectures tried to impress on the Government "the degree of poverty of average Nigerian parents" without much success. To lay the 'ignorance of poverty of Nigerian parents' at the door of the Vice-Chancellors is misleading, since the decision to increase fees was in the last instance a Federal Government decision. In other words, the decision was taken by members of a particular social class rather than by one ignorant faction. All of that class was therefore 'guilty'.

This brings us to the second and more important point. If the decision to increase the fees was limited in insight, it was a limitation which had a history rooted in the class based and contradictory nature of educational policies which defied solution by well meaning individuals. Hence, to see the situation in terms of personal capacities and competencies turned a structural problem into a
struggle between personalities.

This is precisely the turn the Awojobi intervention took, at least as represented on the pages of Nigerian newspapers. In his testimony before the Mohammed Commission, he reiterated his accusations against all Vice-Chancellors (though by now, the number of charges had grown from twelve to twenty one), and he launched a vitriolic attack on the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Lagos - his own Vice-Chancellor. According to the Daily Times, the Professor told the Commission that: (i) "the University of Lagos authorities played a sinister role in the recent student crisis". (ii) that the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ajayi mis-directed University senate by feeding it with inadequate information about the handling of the situation, (iii) that the Vice-Chancellor influenced and encouraged students to go on demonstration while at the same time alerting the police, and (iv) that the Vice-Chancellor encouraged Okeowo to go on strike. (Daily Times, 20.5.78). Subsequent exchanges between Awojobi and Ajayi became the focus of press attention. "AJAYI, AWOJOBI FLARE UP AT PROBE" said the Daily Times in a story which claimed that the two Professors were "engaged in a war of words". Other papers also dwelt heavily on this clash between the two Professors. No effort was made to inquire into the validity of Awojobi's accusations, or to ascertain whether his charges against the University of Lagos Vice-Chancellor applied to the other thirteen Universities and justified his initial statement condemning the Vice-Chancellors. As far as the press was concerned, Professor Awojobi had given out a "pointed verdict". Besides, what the papers were interested in was who said it rather than the relevance of what was said.

This preoccupation with star persons and with who is making the statement rather than the validity and relevance of what is said, has the capacity
to produce what Alberoni terms a 'narcotising illusion'. It is an illusion that
"sees in the star system a cultural product of the economic power elite, having
as its object to supply the masses with an escape into fantasy and illusion of
mobility, in such a way as to prevent their taking stock of their real conditions
as exploited masses". (Alberoni, 1972:93). By personalising the conflict, the
population are encouraged to believe that it is because of certain individuals that
their chances of mobility are blocked. Consequently, the solution to their
blocked chances entail replacing these individuals with more acceptable ones
rather than examining the underlying social conditions. The result is to obscure
the underlying issues, inflate the stars, and unintentionally reinforce the
prevailing pattern of power and domination.

The general conclusion to be drawn from this consideration of elite news
sources and the phenomenon of the stars is that by relying so heavily on official
spokesmen, the press took over their attempts to denigrate subordinate social
groups, thereby reducing the later's political effectiveness. Secondly, by
concentrating on the actions and pronouncements of star persons, the conflict is
reduced to a clash of personalities, thereby obscuring the underlying structural
causes which have produced the situation. These emphases, together with the
focus on the violence of the subordinate social groups, and the attempts to
criminalise their political activities and present them as a law and order issue
mean, that the press effectively intervenes to the benefit of dominant social
groups even though in its Fourth Estate role it professes to be acting in the
interest of the less privileged members of the society.

At the same time, to maintain its image of itself as a key channel of
political communication, the press must provide some space for open dissension
no matter how nominal it may be. In the following section, we provide examples of such access before drawing an overall conclusion.

Access and Participation in the Press: 'Deviant' Journalists, and Letters to the Editor

To argue that the press presentation of student protests lacked depth and alternative perspectives is not to argue that counter definitions were totally excluded. Because of its contradictory structural location and its equally contradictory professional ideology, the press had to provide space for some dissenting voices to balance against established definitions. One way of doing this is for newspapers to allow their own reporters to step out of their normal routines especially if that journalist is considered 'a respectful personality' by both the organisation and the rest of society. In other words, for a journalist to deviate, he must himself be an elite person, occupying a responsible position and in possession of credible knowledge. From time to time, he will be able to carry out a successful 'guerilla war' with his editor, though, in general, we found little of this in our investigation. However, of the few cases we encountered, the case of Harous Adamu, the Political Editor of The Daily Times deserves attention. We present two reports by Haroun Adamu, one written in 1974 at the time of the student demonstrations at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka; the other published the following year when demonstrations attracted widespread allegations of 'outside forces'.

In 1974, students at the University of Nsukka demonstrated against the University authorities. The circumstances were very similar to those that had led to the earlier demonstrations at Zaria (1970) and Ibadan (1971). Adamu's reporting can therefore be contrasted with the general press coverage of these
previous demonstrations. One immediate difference was that instead of the normal "The Vice-Chancellor has said", or "The Registrar explained in an exclusive interview", there were no comments from these persons in the report though this could have been due to the inaccessibility of the senior administration. More importantly rather than concentrate on dramatic incidents during the demonstration itself - counting how many windows were broken, how the Vice-Chancellor fled from his official residence, presence of the police on the campus, clashes between police and the students, and how many students or policemen were detained - Adamu tried to look at the "STORY BEHIND THE CRISIS" (Daily Times, 21.10.74). To do this, he spent three days on the campus interviewing students, junior workers and senior staff of the University, in addition to reading various campus publications. The result was an account of the historical origin of the crisis; and an analysis of the demonstrations within the context of the University as a community, and as an institution in a developing country.

The report started by identifying the immediate grievances of the students: "acute shortage of hostel and classroom accommodation; poor library facilities, deteriorating morale of academic staff". From here, we are told chronologically, how students tried to acquaint the authorities with their grievances through the peaceful means of writing and meeting the Vice-Chancellor, Chancellor, Chairman of Council, Chief Patron of the University, and the two joint Visitors to the University - the Governors of Cross River State and East-Central. These consultations had resulted in appeals for patience, and promises of action to alleviate the conditions. However, in the new session, which saw a considerable increase in the student population, the students came back to worse conditions.
Faced with this situation, they resorted to boycotts of classes and peaceful demonstrations, since what the press would normally call "appropriate or peaceful channels of finding solutions" had been exhausted. On this occasion, even the Council agreed that "the students have a case against the administration and were extraordinarily pleased with the maturity and restraint exhibited by the striking students". Adamu then proceeds to look at the underlying causes of the crisis. He begins with the personality of the Vice-Chancellor presented against the backdrop of his Oxford origins, which probably influenced his decision to model Nsukka after the collegiate system of Oxford. In addition, he points out that Kodilinye had personalised his administration allowing very little participation from the rest of the University community. However, the proposal to introduce the collegiate system was contested by many members of the University because the cost involved would mean drastically limiting the student intake, and remove the institution even further from the reality of increasing demand for University places in a developing country like Nigeria.

The second part of the report, filed under the heading: "KODILINYE: AFFLUENCE IN MIDST OF MUCH MISERY" (Daily Times, 22.10.74), detached the organised opposition to the Vice-Chancellor's elitist policy and personalised administration, and "his readiness to set himself up in physical comfort so grossly out of keeping with the general squalor in which his colleagues and students live..."

In conclusion, the reporter called on the Visitor to set up a Committee to probe the administration of the University which "will give the Vice-Chancellor an opportunity to address some of the charges of maladministration and overcentralisation levelled against him". He added:
All over the world, universities have been recognised as occupying strategic positions in the political equations of most nations; peace on our campuses is as much desirable if not more, than in some sectors. This cannot be obtained as long as the authorities turned deaf ear to the complaints of some reasonable people on campuses.

The second of Haroun Adamu’s reports also presented students as 'reasonable people', by questioning the orchestrations of 'hidden hands'. He again turned to history, and argued that "officials who are now in Government make such pronouncements because they had very little exposure to liberal ideas" in their student days. He noted that:

During the colonial days and in fact until the very last days of the Balewa regime anybody found with works on Marx, Engels, Lenin and Mao, which were then classified as "subversive literature", ended up in jail. With the academic freedom now available, teachers are actually able to teach anything in the social sciences.

Thus, in Adamu's view it was the broadening of the Universities' intellectual scope that had given students a perspective quite different from those who were in control of state power.

Secondly, Adamu highlighted the contribution that students had made towards the evolution of the Nigerian state over which the elites now presided, by reminding his readers of the 1946 King’s College riots that had brought about the formation of the National Council for Nigeria and the Cameroons. He then counselled the Government to "tolerate the students, and understand that there are many philosophical sources from which the students of today can choose".
Moreover, Adamu does not treat the students' demands as unpatriotic and stability-threatening. Rather he compares theirs to the demands of the Bishops arguing that:

It is easy to dismiss these students' demands as a manifestation of idealism with which most student groups are animated; it does not represent the feelings, desires and aspirations of the generality of the Nigerian populace. But when their fathers and grandfathers in the clergy of all the Christian denominations who have a closer touch with the people more than any other organisation in this country today are demanding virtually the same things, then one needs to take a harder look at the students' demand again.

He concludes that the Government should not be diverted from confronting the basic issues that the students and the Bishops are raising, by the largely illusory spectre of 'hidden hands'.

Both of Adamu's reports attempt to place the protests in the context first of the University community, and secondly of the larger realities of the country. Both attempt to present a historical explanation. In both, issues and perspectives that are normally relegated to the background are placed on the centre stage of discussion. Finally, by not relying on official sources, Adamu is able to investigate the complaints of subordinate social groups, to probe behind the labels placed on students by responsible officials, and to question the official morality and ideology of the powerful. Not surprisingly, such reports were few and far between, and the dominance of reporting based on conventional news values effectively renders them inconsequential.
Letters to the Editor

The second main device through which the press presents a pluralistic image is through letters to the editor. Such letters are a spectacle of unmediated public access and participation. As a form of public communication, they are designed to "shape policy, influence opinion, swing the course of events, defend interests, and advance causes", (Hall, Critcher, Jefferson, Clarke and Roberts, 1978:121). But, as Hall et al correctly note, the selection of letters is still structured by the exigencies of news values, and more especially, by the criteria of balance. Normally, many letters will come in, either supporting or criticising news reports and editorial items. However, the balance of views that appears in print "is not a statistical balance between all the letters received, and certainly not a true index of the balance of opinion in the country or amongst the readership". (Hall et al, 1978:121). Yet, it is deemed by newspaper men to represent 'public opinion'.

Our observations of the twenty letters in the sample tends to confirm this argument that the balance between contending views is notional rather than real. Moreover, since they were written in response to items that had already appeared in the papers, they were already heavily structured by the way the press had presented events and issues. They were, further, items on an agenda for discussion already set by the coverage, a kind of 'any other business'.

By way of example, we can take the letters written to the New Nigerian and The Daily Times in 1974 and 1975. During the 1974 student demonstrations, the New Nigerian published a total of nine letters between February 10th and March 10th, the period following the protests. Of these, six were hostile to the paper's editorial comment: "STUDENTS AND SOCIETY" (Saturday, February 16th, 1974),
including one from the Ahmadu Bello University Students Union; while the remaining three supported the paper's anti-student position.

Of the latter group, two were outright indictment of the students. One termed the demonstrations: "destructive street gambling ... and unbridled lawlessness" (23.2.74). The second letter affirmed unequivocally, that "STUDENTS ARE VEHICLES OF SABOTAGE". It continued: "There is no doubt in the minds of many Nigerians that students have become vehicles of sabotage and disorder in Nigeria". The writer then alleged that hidden in the background were politicians, who, through University lecturers, were trying to create nationwide confusion. The third letter (which was more like a comment by one of the paper's columnists) was a subtle and sarcastic 'letter' from a hypothetical 'father' to his Political Science 'student son' who had become so enmeshed in politics that he had forgotten to write home. According to the 'father', his 'son' had confused Political Science with politics and since "A good politician needs refined ideas" he urges his son to acquire such ideas before engaging in politicking.

The anti-editorial letters were equally strong in their condemnations of the press. In the collective letter sent by students of the Ahmadu Bello University, they lamented that: "it is rather unfortunate that when such situations arise the press always tends to be one-sided. They probably identify themselves with the establishment against the ethics of good journalism. This attitude of the press completes the picture of persecution for the students have nowhere to turn" (February 11th, 1974). Headlines for the remaining five were:

WE ARE DISMAYED WITH NEW NIGERIAN EDITORIAL

(New Nigerian, 1.3.74)
STUDENTS DON'T DEMONSTRATE WITHOUT CAUSE

(New Nigerian, 1.3.74).

WHO SAYS STUDENTS HAVE NO CASE

(New Nigerian, 1.3.74).

CAN YOU SHOW PROOF OF OUTSIDE INFLUENCE?

(New Nigerian, 1.3.74).

ONE-SIDED COMMENTS ON STUDENTS BOYCOTTING CLASSES

(New Nigerian, 19.3.75).

One of the writers called the publication of the Inspector-General of Police's allegations of 'external forces'; "rumour mongering assisted by the press". Another referred the press to student demonstrations in Japan, the United States and other parts of the world, where "right thinking people" also attribute students' unrest to "outside forces" instead of trying to come to terms with the real causes of unrest.

The letter headed "WHO SAYS THE STUDENTS HAVE NO CAUSE?" summarised the mood of the other letters. It started by expressing general disappointment with the New Nigerian, whom the writer "had always credited ... with more courage and objectivity than any other newspaper in this country ..."

He concluded that the students "lack a forum". The rest of the letter is reproduced below:

The press coverage of this students crisis will remain the most banal and unimaginative of a major crisis in this country. Intelligent and law abiding citizens don't just go burning and rampaging without a cause. ... The fact is that democratic rights in this country are gradually being eroded without hope of redress. Take the courts, take even the press, take the University teachers, take the trade
unions, and you would realise that the students as a body provide the last forum of free expression left in this country today while the rest of society acquiesce to this corrupt status quo because of fear, the students say 'Hell ... No,' and you dare to call them irresponsible (1.3.74).

Thus anyone who consistently read the paper between February 10th and March 10th was bound to be impressed with the New Nigerian's pluralism and openness to contending views. But such an impression can be misleading and arguments to this effect will be presented after our second set of letters, this time from the prestigious Lagos-based Daily Times.

Again, our selection is for the period between February 10th and March 10th, 1975. There were four letters during this period, including one by students of the University of Lagos. All four were highly critical of both the Government and the press. One pointed out that "STUDENTS ARE NO BABIES"; and that the voicing of grievances is "not subversion in hands of destructive forces". Another with the heading "STUDENTS DESERVE TO BE HEARD", attacked Governor Abba Kyari for declaring that students had no business with matters of state and society.

The University of Lagos students gave a more detailed defence of the students. Under the heading "THIS IS OUR CASE" they denied allegations of outside influence, arguing that:

"we need nobody to teach us that detention without trial or reason is not good. At our age and level of education, we do not need any special lecture on the advantages of free education at all levels;
and free medical services. These we have called for with the best
of intentions and for the good of the government and the country.
Like students all over the world, we owe our nation a duty to justify
her investment in our education by being alive to happenings around
us. (Daily Times, 8.3.75).

This impression of balance and openness given by these letters is mis-
leading. Apart from their relative infrequency, their arguments are outweighed
by the overwhelming volume of news and the authority of the editorial commentary.
Secondly, unlike news, they carry no banner headlines, and do not qualify for
presentation on the front or back pages, consequently, they are less likely to
attract mass readership. Thirdly, as subjective expressions of opinions, mostly
by interested parties, they are more likely to be read as mere self-justifications
after 'deplorable' actions, rather than as genuine alternatives to the accounts
constructed by responsible officials and the press. This is why, this form of
public participation can be described as 'field dressing'; of only symbolic value,
but satisfying the press' democratic self image. In the context of our overall
findings, we suggest that this was the case with letters about the student
demonstrations. What follows is some empirical evidence to further support
this contention.

Further Implications of Professional News Values

If the press preoccupies itself with incidents of violence; relies heavily
on official sources; celebrates personalities and allows only symbolic public
participation, then the overall presentation is likely to have identifiable
consequences. Some of these have already been discussed. What follows is a
further demonstration of the implication of this form of press performance.
Table 9.10: Stand of Statement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Column cms.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reports Action/Violence</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>17,550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condemns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9,519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State/Government Agents</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6,526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (e.g. Outside Forces, Saboteurs)</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2,020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Authorities</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2,476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supports</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State/Government Officials</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3,095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1,925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Authorities</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>43,543</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.10 shows that when the items in our sample are considered as a whole, 20% condemned the students as against 4% for the University authorities and 17% for state or government agents. If we include the 8% of items condemning 'outside forces and saboteurs', said to be in collusion with the students, we end up with a total of 28% condemning students and 'their collaborators' as opposed to a total of 21% for University and Government authorities. As we have already pointed out however, most of the condemnations of University and state officials came from the students, while the press's disapproval of the authorities focused mainly on methods on the occasions when there were killings in the course of 'maintaining law and order'.
If we now turn to the distribution of statements supporting the various parties to the conflict we can see that University authorities and state government agents lead with 10%, with the demonstrating students taking 6%. However, this apparent balance is deceptive, since we also need to consider accounts of violence under the category "Reports action/Violence", which, as we have seen, were normally accounts of the violent activities of the students. This category, which consisted to a large extent of criticism of the protests formed 35% of all the statements analysed, reinforcing our conclusion that, in overall, the protesting students received a negative press.

Adjectival descriptions of the actors involved in the conflict were also analysed. This was a fairly difficult exercise because of the problem of ambiguities and overlapping meanings. To try to minimise this problem, meanings were assigned according to the use made of a particular word in the text. For example, a concept such as 'ivory tower' could carry both a positive meaning - a citadel of learning; and negative overtones - an elitist cultural milieu cut-off from the rest of society. However, in our sample, it was mostly employed by Government officials and it was clear from the content that they intended it in this second sense of the Universities being out of touch with the rest of society. A second difficulty relates to the problem of assigning concepts to particular actors. For example, "poor food, poor accommodation" if used as an explanation of why the students turned to protest activities could be regarded positive for the students since it is a justification of their action. However, when employed to describe conditions on the campuses, it could be taken as a negative critique of University administration and of misplaced state priorities, given the general pattern of resource allocation in the country. However, since it was mostly students who made such allegations, and given that our own investigations showed that their
claims had some validity, we classified this kind of description as against the Universities or for the students.

These descriptive adjectives were then coded as either negative or positive and distributed by the three major groups of actors involved in the conflict: the students, University authorities and State/Government authorities.

Table 9.11: Characterisation of Actors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State/Government Agencies</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Authorities</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State/Government Agents</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Authorities</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>633</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 9.11 shows, the protesting students have 59% of the negative mentions as opposed to 33% for State/Government agents, and 8% for the University authorities. On the positive side the reverse is the case. While the University and State authorities take a combined total of 58%, the students have only 42%.

To give a further illustration of this general pattern, we selected a number of key concepts which best characterise the general distribution. The demonstrators emerged as anti-structure; and the authorities, both University and state, as structure.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure (Authorities)</th>
<th>Anti-Structure (Students)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legitimate</td>
<td>Illegitimate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal</td>
<td>Illegal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderates</td>
<td>Extremists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peaceful</td>
<td>Violent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-operative</td>
<td>Confrontational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Order</td>
<td>Disorder, Chaos, Anarchists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructive</td>
<td>Destructive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rational</td>
<td>Irrational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patriotic</td>
<td>Unpatriotic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationalists</td>
<td>Traitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsible</td>
<td>Irresponsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United</td>
<td>Divided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stabilisers</td>
<td>Destabilisers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For progress</td>
<td>Anti-progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIETY</td>
<td>ANTI-SOCIETY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By working with these dramatic and easily intelligible binary oppositions, the press succeeded in over-simplifying the situation.

To define the military state as a coherent structure fighting against anti-structural elements within society is to leave intact or to reconstitute what Gouldner terms 'the domain assumptions' about the Nigerian society. It is a reconstitution process that had the effect of denying the fact of permanent crisis and excluding dissatisfied, disadvantaged, and dissenting social groups; and it would be interesting to see how this process of containment applied to other groups such as the trade unions.

Our analysis also examined the way the causes of the demonstrations, both immediate and underlying, were presented.
As Table 9.12 clearly shows, militancy, intransigence, provocative behaviour and confrontational attitudes on the part of the students emerged as the major immediate causes of the protests, accounting for 33% of all coded items. In contrast, police action accounts for only 7%; and the 'Presence of police on the campus', which in many instances heightened the tension, only 5%. However, references to failures in the Government's immediate policy do appear in 23% of the items.
Inadequacies in University facilities; bad food, poor accommodation facilities and shortage of lecturers and lecture facilities managed only 3%. Bad University administration in general, including patriarchal attitude of administrative staff towards their junior colleagues and the students, lack of consultation with staff and students, and insensitivity to the criticism and grievances of subordinates also received comparatively little attention and was mentioned in only 9% of the items. 'Outside forces' and the 'militant minority' were mentioned in 11% and 8% of items respectively, which is high, given that those making these allegations left them at the level of assertion, and offered no concrete evidence apart from the arrest of left-wing lecturers and journalists.

To summarise, the attribution of the protests to "outside forces working through left-wing lecturers to provoke a militant minority to lead a silent majority by the nose" appeared in a combined total of 52% of all items, while bad food, shortage of residential and teaching facilities and bad University administration were mentioned in 12%; immediate government policy in 23%; and a combination of 'police presence and brutality' in 12%.

If the presentation of the immediate causes was so skewed against the students, so too was the attribution of underlying causes. As Table 9.13 shows, much space was given over to what the papers termed students' failure to use legitimate channels of communication, with 35% of all items mentioning this as the major cause of the troubles. Furthermore, 23% of the items came under the category of 'previous student protests' including protests from other parts of the world, so that, altogether, student militancy or violence was mentioned as an underlying cause in 58% of all the items.
### Table 9.13: Distribution of Items by Underlying Causes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students non-use of legitimate channels of communication</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous student protests, student protests in other parts of the world</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of consultation by policy makers; lack of communication between Government and governed; Government intolerance to criticism, repression of dissent</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence of forces outside of the Universities, politicians, left wing lecturers, etc.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruption in National life, exploitation of the masses by greedy military officers/politicians/contractors</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic crisis, inflation, high cost of living</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign ideologies, Socialists, Communists</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of foresight in University planning, inadequate funding of Universities, poor utilisation of allocated resources</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capitalism, class inequality, class conflict</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperialism</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total:** 260 100

In contrast, only 4% of all the items coded mention the exploitation of the society by members of the military-bureaucratic class in association with domestic and international capital, even though this is a constant theme in all student publications and pronouncements. Nor do more immediate economic factors such as inflation and the high cost of living emerge very prominently,
taking only 4% of all mentions. The concepts of 'Capitalism', 'Class Inequality' and 'Class Conflict' appear in only 2% of items; while 'Socialism' and 'Foreign Ideologies' used perjoratively occur in 4%. These omissions are indicative of a predisposition towards that which is already known and accepted as it is, and opposition to frameworks of alternative interpretation, especially if they come from subordinate group and take a different form of public expression.

Since mistaken diagnosis necessarily means faulty prescriptions, the identification of the causes of the conflict also had consequences for the solutions proffered by the press.

Table 9.14 : Solutions Offered

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rescind Government policy</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students to negotiate with Government</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students should return to classes</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students to be punished</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratise the Universities</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tackle fundamental economic problems</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve amenities on campus</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better funding of Universities</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students to negotiate with University</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return to democratic rule through elections</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abolish capitalism as economic and political bases of state action</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduce socialism, communism</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The typical solutions put forward in the press were directed at the demonstrators. Students were advised to return to classes, to negotiate with the authorities or find peaceful ways of expressing and resolving their grievances. Considerable emphasis was also placed on the effectiveness of strong punishment for erring students. Put together, student directed solutions constituted 54% of all the solutions put forward in the press. A good example is Obasanjo's strong assertion that "AXE WILL FALL ON THE THUGS" (The Punch, 5.5.75).

Of the remaining solutions, demands for the rescinding of immediate government policy was mentioned in 21% of items, though most of this could be attributed to the public outcry against fees increases in 1978. However, solutions directed at the administration of the institutions such as the improvement of amenities and the democratisation of the University machinery took only 11%. More revealing is the absence of concern with the capitalist nature of Nigerian society. Consequently, solutions offered by both press and commentators had little bearing on what the protesting students considered the bedrock of society's difficulties. To use their own words:

The aims and objectives of education in Nigeria called (National policy on Education referred) are a reflection of the type of ruling class and specific social system existing, and that consequently, our struggle for the democratisation of education must be seen as an integral aspect of the struggle for the general democratisation of society. ¹

¹ Okeowo Segun "Reform and Democratisation of Education in Nigeria" being text of the address delivered at the opening ceremony of the NUNS' Seminar held in the University of Ilorin, 23rd-25th March, 1978, p.4.
They noted that, Nigeria was in a dilemma, and "brute military force" aimed at "ensuring a stable climate for exploitation and domination" was waning. To them:

The solution to our dilemma can only be found in the complete destruction of the socio-economic order of capitalism. The system of get-rich quick of the few upon the aching backs of the majority must be wiped out. This job cannot be carried out by the top military, the top police or the discredited civilian oppressors declaring empty socialism. It is the toiling people themselves that must take their fate firmly into their hands through authentic organisation, and crush all obstacles and parasites be they Professors, lecturers or bureaucrats of all shapes.

Capitalism has failed us
Mixed economy is hypocritical
Socialist economy is the answer. ¹

Despite this systematic linkage of the disturbances to fundamental economic questions, and wider ideological struggles, the press preferred to concentrate their attention at the level of the immediate, dramatic and the taken-for-granted that bother neither with underlying structures nor their histories. The professional practices of focusing on eminent personalities as news makers, of looking at each event within pre-established and negative frames, and of providing only symbolic participation meant that the fundamental political concerns behind the protests were trivialised and de-centred by the forms of press intervention. Instead of presenting old realities through new optics, the press reproduced the old realities

¹. Okeowo, Segun "Nigerian Students demand a Progressive Economic orientation" Address to NUNS' Extra Ordinary Convention, held at Alvan Ikoku College of Education, Owerri, December 1977, p.4.
through existing frames and perspectives. Such treatment misrepresented the movement to the public, and in doing so, contributed towards maintaining the prevailing structures of power in Nigerian society.
10. MILITARISM, RESISTANCE AND THE MEDIA

The preceding chapters have several themes and sub-themes criss-crossing each other. By way of conclusion we want now to pull together some of the central arguments which we have tried to develop throughout the work. Before we elaborate on these however, we wish to stress that we consider this thesis to be essentially exploratory for two reasons: because there is a lack of critical studies of the media in Nigeria; and because the evidence on offer is inadequate for definitive statements. Compared to advanced capitalist societies, it is very difficult to gather and compile the necessary data, and despite our best efforts to provide detailed material to support our arguments, there are still a number of gaps to be filled. We hope to address some of these in our own future investigations, and also, we hope that the modest beginnings we have made here may prompt other interested researchers to conduct studies that will help to confirm or refute some of our present conclusions.

Media and Social Structure

Considered narrowly, this study is about the mass media, specifically, the newspaper press of Nigeria. But because the media cannot be analysed adequately in isolation from the wider society, the study is, of necessity, also a commentary on Nigeria; its social structure and its place in the world. In order to do this we have tried in Chapter 4 to develop an historical and class analysis of Nigerian society, beginning with the pre-colonial social formations, working through their transformation by colonialism, to the neo-colonial period dominated by militarism. It is the last of these phases which is at the heart of the thesis.

In this historical review, we have argued that prior to colonisation, several modes of production co-existed among the various communities which
were eventually to make up the geo-political entity known as Nigeria. Within these communities one of these modes of production prevailed over the others, setting limits and exerting pressures on the nature of the overall articulation between them. Hence, in some communities, such as the Tivs and the Igbos, the communal mode of production prevailed with social relations organised along egalitarian communal lines. In others, such as the Hausa emirates, the Kanem Bornu empire, and to a limited extent the Yoruba and Benin Kingdoms, slave and feudal structures had emerged organising relationships along class lines in which slaves and serfs were an exploited social group within the social formation. In the latter case, this presentation does not evacuate the presence of the communal mode of production; rather, it argues that it was, generally, subjected to the dominant mode, mostly, feudal relations.

Colonialism as an aspect of imperialist expansion in the 19th century incorporated these various social and economic systems into the prevailing world economic system of the time - capitalism. Where there were class societies as in the slave and feudal based states, it worked through the aristocratic classes in addition to creating a new bureaucratic class, predominantly from their offsprings. In places where such class divisions were absent, however, new elites were created. Thus, the aristocratic and newly created bureaucratic classes, in combination, collaborated with the colonial rulers and later with international finance and industrial capital to subject the rest of the population to its rule. Hence, although at the grassroots level these local communities retained some of their distinctive political, economic, social and cultural practices, (some of which are still evident in Nigeria), they were also subjected to a new state structure which included new cultural practices that regulated their articulation.
In this process of subjection, we stressed the interplay of both coercive and consensual devices, hence, the significance of the media and educational institutions.

The military which intervened in 1966 and ruled continuously for thirteen years, was a child of the colonial encounter. It was an institution which emerged in the 19th century as an organic part of Capitalism. But, at the same time, the military also developed its own professional values. It strongly believed in hierarchy, order, discipline and obedience rather than equality and fraternity, and preferred the use of repression to argument and debate for conflict resolution. In order to intervene to preserve the economic system therefore, the military had to discard some of liberalism's cherished norms and incorporate others into its world view. Contradictory as it is, it is this ideology of human engineering which becomes crucial for capital at a time of intense crisis, as we have argued is now the case in many Third World countries, including Nigeria.

Using its patriotic appeal and belief in results through authoritarian control, the Nigerian military displaced the feuding political class fractions and assumed direct control of state power, at the same time, leaving intact the social formation created by colonialism which had generated the crisis. We have argued that this led to renewed crisis and provoked reactions among the subordinate classes which the military had then to contend with. Moreover, like the colonialists before them, they discovered that force alone is inadequate, and they therefore attempted to engineer a consensus albeit relatively skilfully and unobtrusively. Since this is a contentious position, we tried to set the scene for it in Chapter 1 by examining militarism as a social process, and more specifically, militarism within the neo-colonial societies of the Third World.
Militarism as a Social Process and its Neo-Colonial Manifestations

Linked to the interests of national and international capital, militarism is both a domestic and a global phenomenon, and without a comprehensive explanation of its social base it is not possible to come to grips with either its causes or its consequences such as increased military spending to bolster its position and the consequent neglect of social welfare sectors; the rise of mass discontent and protests; increased internal repression of protesting groups; and a bellicose attitude to international issues. We pointed to the presence of most of these consequences in the Nigerian case by showing how the revenue derived from oil was diverted to satisfy military requirements and the needs of domestic and international capital, and how this state of affairs frustrated popular aspirations prompting some to resist and be repressed by the same military that had come in ostensibly to redeem them.

In order to understand the historical nature of militarism and its contemporary consequences, we opted for a macro perspective informed by class analysis. In the Third World where the crisis of capital accumulation has assumed critical proportions, the military frequently take on the administration of these states, but they do so through the permanent bureaucracy and in association with the political and commercial classes; in addition, they retain close connections with international capital. Hence, although relatively autonomous from these class fractions, the military nonetheless operate with them and to their advantage, using both coercion and consensus.

Nigeria, like other authoritarian military regimes such as those in Brazil, Sudan, the Philippines, Indonesia, has witnessed various forms of resistance ranging from labour unrest, urban protests and student demonstrations, to
peasant uprisings. And like them, it has had to devise ways of containing them. In analysing this situation, there is a temptation to focus almost exclusively on the repressive forms which are easier to identify, and to ignore the cultural aspects of the containment process. But such an approach is bound to be misleading, especially in the Nigerian case where the military considered their rule 'benevolent'. Even in other situations where much coercion has been employed, the propaganda side has never been ignored; the military tries to capture peoples' minds. This is why, the propaganda offensive is considered an important feature of the 'war' effort. In arguing that military rule was a kind of 'total war' demanding 'total response' we drew attention to the way in which the military set out to 'capture' available cultural spaces and redeploy them against the enemy. The most important of these spaces were the media of mass information; and militarism exercised its hegemony by utilising the weaknesses of the media's professional ideologies.

The Hegemonic Process in Theory

Writing against the backdrop of fascist Italy, Antonio Gramsci argued that although the capitalist state may use force to dominate the subordinate social classes, it interweaves it with efforts to engineer popular acceptance. The result, which Gramsci calls hegemony, rests on the ability of the ruling classes to define and direct the reality of society as a whole, to make themselves and the subordinate social classes live it, believe in it, and accept it as the only possible state of affairs. As recently elaborated by Stuart Hall:

"hegemony" exists when a ruling class (or, rather, an alliance of ruling class fractions, a "historical bloc") is able not only to coerce a subordinate class to conform to its interests, but exerts a "total
social authority" over those classes and the social formation as a whole. "Hegemony" is in operation when the dominant class fractions not only dominate but direct - lead: when they not only possess the power to coerce but actively organise so as to command and win the consent of the subordinate classes to their consent.

(Hall, 1977:332).

However, as Raymond Williams (1980) has recently pointed out, "hegemony" is never total. There is always room for 'alternative' cultural practices which seek to co-exist with the hegemonic culture, and for 'oppositional' practices which set out to challenge and modify it. Hegemony is therefore, consistently challenged, resisted, altered and modified. Faced with this fluidity and instability, those in power react by either trying to 'incorporate' or 'extirpate' the challenge.

One final point of importance concerns the question of agents. Although every action of the members of the ruling classes that has relevance to class relations is potentially a hegemonic exercise, hegemony is exercised primarily by intellectuals whose function in society is to organise and systematise social knowledge. Within such institutions as the judiciary, the media, educational and religious centres however, the management of hegemony presents problems because of the contradictory nature of these class societies, and the contradictory location of intellectuals. As we explained in Chapter 2, this makes the position of intellectuals doubly contradictory, and leaves open the possibility that they will ally with either of the two main opposing classes.

This sketchy outline of a controversial and heavily debated concept focuses attention on several themes strewn through the present work: (i) the dialectical
unity of hegemony and coercion for ruling class domination; (ii) the consistent challenges and re-modifications of that hegemony; (iii) the agency for that hegemony, i.e. cultural apparatuses and their functionaries - the intellectuals; and (iv) the contradictory location of those intellectuals and the tendency for them to fragment and work on behalf of both the major contending social classes. This is what makes hegemony a social process.

**Hegemony in Practice: Militarism, Resistance and Containment**

Although there is no simple one-to-one correspondence between the hegemonic process in advanced capitalist societies and in neo-colonial situations, there is an underlying factor which unites them both. As Saul (1974) has correctly noted, both require territorial unity and legitimacy, hence the common concern with 'legitimacy', 'Nation building' and 'National Integration'.

In stressing the relevance of this concept for an analysis of the cultural situation in neo-colonial societies, we hope to contribute something to Fanon and Cabral's discussion of culture in the liberation process, a discussion which deserves a wider treatment in radical scholarship in Africa than has been so far the case. Perhaps because of the profundity of the economic and political convulsions in these societies, the cultural question has tended to slip from view leaving the field to the treatments in which culture becomes nothing more than archaic relics of dance, carved masks, kinship and marriage relations, religious myths and rituals, and so on. Similarly, the literature on 'Modernisation' treats the cultural practices of the capitalist world not as the products of a specific historical formation but as agencies for 'civilising' the conquered 'natives'. Within this paradigm there is no attempt to explore the systematic linkage of culture and material life, or to interrogate the crucial role of
apparatuses such as the media, religion and the educational institutions, and the intellectuals that work in them.

Analysing the situation in the colonial countries, both Fanon and Cabral argued that there is a dialectical relationship between the cultural situation and the economic and political situation. However, while Cabral employs a clear Marxist analysis, Fanon did not come to terms with Marxism and remained more nationalistic in outlook. Obviously, this affected the way the two analysed culture. Nonetheless, both stressed the need for looking at cultural liberation as political and economic liberation. Drawing on a particular version of the base-superstructure problematic, Cabral analysed the internal class arrangements in Guinea-Bissau; defined the relationship between culture and colonialism, and that between culture and social classes. Through this work he challenged the myth of African cultural homogeneity, and in addition showed how the middle classes (those he referred to as the 'petit bourgeois') were torn apart between collaborating and opposing colonialism and its culture. Like Fanon, Cabral was committed to looking for ways of using culture for liberation. He therefore turned to those groups whose cultural outlook was most likely to be in confrontation with the colonialists; among them were committed intellectuals like himself.

Thus, the same cultural question which troubled Gramsci, and has continued to intrigue such Western intellectuals as Raymond Williams, has been

1. Here, Cabral differed from Fanon considerably. For, though Fanon treated the peasantry and lumpenproletariat, and attacked collaborative intellectuals, he did not offer a detailed class analysis of Algeria and the significance of the different internal classes and their cultures.
and should still be at the heart of the debate about liberation in Africa. While
in the Western world, this concern has led to exhaustive analysis of the media
as a cultural apparatus, it has yet to receive such detailed consideration in
Africa. This is why we have chosen to look at the press in neo-colonial Nigeria
and educational institutions as sub-categories of an overall political economy of
culture (Garnham, 1979), and it is in this context that the activities of the
intellectuals operating these apparatuses require critical examination.

Because of their contradictory location in Nigeria’s neo-colonial class
structure, there is a discernable rupture in their ranks. The majority of
intellectuals formed during the final years of colonial rule and the immediate
post-independence era, characterised in the 1960s as ‘The New Elites of Tropical
Africa’ (Lloyd, 1966), have now come of age and occupy strategic positions
within the complex of state power. By their performance it is clear that their
interests correspond more closely with those of national and international capital.
Culturally, it is they who exercise allocative control over such important cultural
apparatuses as the educational and media institutions, formulating overall
policies and directing their general execution. It is in this capacity that they set
limits and exert pressures on the operational production of culture. They do not
necessarily have to decree that the output should be consistent with their own
personal or collective interests. The emphasis they place on devices for realising
surplus is sufficient to limit the range of expression. This is one important source
of limitation which we treated in Chapter 8 while analysing the structures of the
press in Nigeria.

But more significant as a source of constraint and more central to our
thesis are the working assumptions and routines which inform operational production.
It is these which above all else produce a view of the world that is consistent with the existing situation and which de-centre counter definitions.

These alternative definitions have, since the end of the civil war in 1970, been moving from the margins onto the centre stage of political discourse, propelled by the actions of subordinate social groups, and of the intellectuals, who have identified themselves with their aspirations. Although the organic link with these subordinate classes has remained tenuous (so that strictly speaking, one cannot talk of 'organic intellectuals' here in the Gramscian sense) it is possible to look at them as a nucleus or as an organic intellectual group in formation out to challenge, oppose, modify and ultimately replace the hegemony of the currently dominant classes. For sometime, they have tried, both practically and theoretically, to question the prevailing assumptions, values and social relations of Nigerian society. Among the several elements within this nucleus, we have focused attention on the transient, structurally difficult to locate, but nonetheless, most consistently vocal opposition - university students.

As we saw, the issues raised by the agitating students were basic to the concerns of the workers, petit commodity producers and distributors, unemployed persons, and peasant populations which we have referred to as the neglected subaltern classes of Nigeria's neo-colonial structure. They included: elitist educational policies, unequal distribution of economic wealth, political repression, and the direction of Nigeria's international relations.

At this juncture however, the practical workings of hegemonic relations expressed themselves as the state applied coercive measures which led to a number of student demonstrators being killed. But since the effective containment of opposition requests not only coercion but also consensus, the military attempted
to bolster their legitimacy by labelling the student opposition as anarchists, criminals and an alien force out to destabilise the nation at a time when they (the military) had just succeeded in preserving its unity and were making efforts to 'develop' it.

It is here that the legitimating role of the various cultural apparatuses such as the judiciary, religious institutions, traditional rulers, senior educational administrators, and the mass media, became crucial. Whether they contributed willingly or unwillingly, at the time of the 1978 'Fees Crisis', it was nevertheless possible for General Obasanjo to congratulate them for their contribution towards containing the crisis in his "DO NOT LET ANARCHISTS TO WRECK THE NATION" speech. Although we have pointed to the role played by all of these cultural apparatuses, especially the judiciary, our detailed analysis has focused on the mass media.

Of course, any of the others - the judiciary, educationists, religious and traditional rulers - or all of them, could have been selected for detailed treatment, and we hope that other researchers will examine their role in social crisis management. Nevertheless, our choice of the media (and more particularly the newspaper press) goes beyond mere disciplinary interest. Firstly, as already mentioned, because the news media reach large numbers of people on a daily basis they are an important agency of political communication. Secondly, because they profess to values of 'objectivity', 'impartiality' and 'balance', the world view they disseminate is more likely to be taken by the rest of the population as a more or less accurate reflection of the reality on the ground. Furthermore, because the press subscribes to a Fourth Estate role of arbitrating disinterestingly between government and the governed, their intervention in such
conflicts as the one discussed here is more likely to be taken as a genuine effort to establish the facts of the matter. Hence, it is the limitations that underline these assumptions and the routines of news gathering and processing which they support that this study has attempted to explore.

This line of investigation is informed by similar studies of the media in advanced industrial countries which have examined the way in which the professional tenets of 'objectivity', 'impartiality' and 'balance', operate within the terms of the prevailing consensus and thereby contribute towards preserving the existing social order.

The Problem of Media Ideologies

Researchers have argued that news does not seek to decipher the existing structures of power, neither does it try to explain their history. Rather, it presents reality as a sequence of isolated events while offering few systematic interconnections and little or no contextual information. As a consequence, news is concerned with the immediate and dramatic events and not their origins. Furthermore, because news is defined as being about individual actions it is preoccupied with personalities and so reduces the main issues and principles in a conflict to clashes between key individuals. And finally, it relies heavily on people in powerful and 'responsible' positions as news sources. As long as these rules and routines are fulfilled, newsmen regard themselves as being both 'impartial' and 'objective'. But as argued above, these procedures in fact operate to produce an account of the world that is consistent with the dominant ideology and excludes alternative and oppositional definitions, and makes change almost impossible to comprehend.
Since the early days when researchers tried to measure the personal biases of individual editors (White, 1950), criticisms of news have shifted steadily towards the current position in which the focus is on the rules and routines of professional journalistic practice and their linkages with the wider society. To some, bias in reporting is an organisational problem (Breed, 1955, Sigelman, 1973, Turnstall, 1972, Epstein, 1973 and Roshco, 1975). According to these studies, news organisations socialise journalists into their demands and values whether commercial or political and social, and it is these which give news its character. To the phenomenologists on the other hand, news is essentially a social construct produced by the application of certain rules and routines (Tuchman, 1972, 1973, 1978; Molotch and Lester, 1974 and 1975). For them, newsmen employ these rules and routines primarily to make meaning out of their work and only secondarily to satisfy the demands of their organisations and the public.

While both these positions are critical of the notion of news as an 'objective' and 'impartial' output, and of explanations of news in terms of personal biases, they fall short of an adequate explanation of why news produced within different organisations and in various capitalist countries show such a high degree of similarity (Golding and Elliott, 1979). This consistency, as revealed by content analysis of news output has prompted researchers to re-examine their interpretations and to look for a more general explanation of news production.

This revised position holds that in the final analysis, it is the combination of general systemic and specific organisational, and professional demands which structure the outcome known as the news, (Halloran, Elliott, and Murdock, 1970; Murdock, 1973; Hall, 1975; Golding and Elliott, 1979; Golding and Middleton, 1982; and Gitlin, 1980).
But despite the observed fit between the products of professional rules and routines, and the underlying capitalist system, there is still the difficulty of connecting them. In other words, how they actually work in practice is still problematic. Those that take an orthodox Marxist position usually cite Marx's perennially quoted assertion that:

The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e. the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it. (Marx and Engels, edited by C.J. Arthur, 1970:63).

Although Marx did not examine the nature of this control in detail, he conceded elsewhere in his work that its operation is complex. However, these orthodox 'Marxists' generally prefer a simple instrumental interpretation; and in doing so, endow the ruling classes with enormous powers and allow little room for challenge. As applied to the media, such approaches tend to see journalists as instruments manipulated by those who own the media houses.

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1. See Lukacs' essay on "Class Consciousness" which employs the concept of 'totality' and treats it in such a way that the idea of challenge becomes buried beyond possible recognition. Contrast this with Raymond Williams' (1980) treatment of the same problem in his "Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory", and Murdock and Golding (1979) in "Ideology: The question of Determination."

But as Murdock and Golding (1974) have argued, although in one sense, the media are like other capitalist enterprises because they produce commodities, at the same time they are more than just capitalist ventures. For the owners the main concern is with the realisation of surplus. But for those who work in them, they are centres for creative expression. It is this tension between the demands of commodity production and creative expression that poses the greatest problems for the view of news as instrumental to the needs of capital. Certainly, journalists who work in these organisations do not see themselves as instruments, and as we pointed out, fiercely defend their editorial autonomy.

So far, researchers have been unable to examine adequately the relationship between board-room decision-making and journalistic practice. However, even if such studies were done they would do little to explain the sameness of news, its regularity and routine nature. This requires us to dissect the professional ideologies of newsmen in the context of production in capitalist society. Although Murdock and Golding indicate that the correspondence between news accounts and the core assumptions of capital may be coincidental, they insist that it is no mere accident. Since the values which structure the production of news are rooted in the structure of liberal democratic societies, they must be seen as organic to and contributing towards the reproduction of that capitalist system.

It is an argument, which in general we agree with, and have employed in our own study, with the exception of Golding and Murdock’s proposed response to the ideological character of news, namely the reformation of news production.  

1. A clear position of the authors on what is to be done is presented by Golding in the work he has written with Philip Elliott (1979:211-218).
To us, such a suggestion, though informed by a class analysis, offers only a partial solution. Though peripheral to our conclusion, we would like to stress that like Gramsci, Fanon and Cabral, we contend that the cultural question must of necessity be settled within the framework of the general political and economic situation rather than at the institutional or organisational levels. Hence, oppositional movements dominated economically by capital, coerced by capitalist controlled means of violence, and their view-points de-centred by capitalist informed professional values and routines, must seek to construct alternative cultural spaces which are, in the long term, capable of transcending and replacing these values and their main support base.

The Content Study

Our content study of press representations of the students as an opposition movement shows that they were largely ignored during the long build ups to the outbreak of violence. As soon as violent conflicts between the students and the law enforcement agents ensued, the demonstrations became front-page news, commanding huge headlines. But in representing this situation, it was the violence of the students that registered negatively while the greater violence of the police and army was codified as 'law-enforcement', except when it went beyond the acceptable threshold, as with the killing of unarmed stone-throwing students. But even in these instances, condemnations were limited to a critique of the methods used, while the police's general right to employ violence was justified as a response to the violence instigated by the students, regrettable but necessary to restore law and order.

This 'law-and-order' perspective also helped to label and criminalise the students, and removed the protests from their wider political and economic
context. In the process, the political arguments advanced by the students evaporated amidst showers of images stressing their 'irrational violence'.

Secondly, the press, invoking images of the just concluded civil war, treated the students as alien forces threatening the rest of society, thereby rationalising the need for a 'National Security' solution. This was accomplished by dividing the students into 'an active minority' and 'a silent majority' and by linking the former to 'alien' or 'outside forces' out to wreck the nation. However, the only supporting evidence provided were assertions that left-wing lecturers were conniving with these 'outside forces' and using the 'active minority' to destabilise the nation. There was hardly anything else beyond this.

In addition, the press concentrated attention on elite persons, usually those in responsible and powerful positions such as Vice-Chancellors, Chancellors, Commissioners, Military Governors and the Head of State; and on the side of the students, on the personality of the student leaders such as Mr. Segun Okeowo in 1978. One outcome of this, was the tendency to rely, almost exclusively, on elites as news sources. Throughout the demonstrations, these powerful official sources remained insistently visible and audible, condemning the meaningless and irrational violence of the students even though they were hardly disinterested commentators on the conflict. At one stage, it appeared that they became conscious of the press's reliance on them for news, and their strategic timing and places of their comments suggested a co-ordinated propaganda effort backed by the military. This finding collaborates Elliott's (1977) study of news reporting of the conflict in Northern Ireland in which the British army information officers and official spokespersons became important sources of news.
The second outcome of this focus was the reduction of the issues involved in the conflict to a clash of personalities. Thus during the 1978 'Fees Crisis' for example, despite the elitist history of education since colonial times and the consequences it has had in terms of reproducing class relations in Nigeria, the conflict soon became one between: Okeowo vs Col. Ahmadu Ali, Okeowo vs. Dr. Jibril Aminu, Okeowo vs. Inspector General of Police, Okeowo vs. the Head of State, General Obasanjo; and Professor Awojobi vs. Professor Ajayi. We have argued that this personality oriented definition of the situation made intuitive sense to a public not familiar with the complexities of the issues involved, and was capable of mobilising 'public opinion' against the students.

Although polls of 'public opinion' on the conflict are not available, the trivialisation through negativity and the reliance on official definitions soon made it possible for the press to pronounce that 'public opinion' was overwhelmingly against the protesters. By all accounts, however, it was essentially the 'opinion' of about 5% of the population - the elites whose values and interests the protesters were out to challenge.

Finally, it is our contention that the overall pattern of presentation restricted public participation in the political debate since, even channels such as 'letters to the Editor' and features became so structured by the prevailing images of news reporting that they tended to simply take sides for or against the news. In addition, the sheer volume of the news reports relegated them to a point of relative insignificance.

On the basis of these findings we can draw a more general conclusion that the press's representation of the students' protests contributed towards reaffirming the existing class relations in Nigeria by trivialising the students'
arguments through negative images of violence; by labelling and criminalising them as threatening alien forces; and by relying on the official definitions of the conflict which sought to reaffirm the labels and to treat the situation as requiring both 'law-and-order' and 'National Security' solutions. This treatment was consistent with militarism's overall 'National Security Doctrine', which we have argued was a hegemonic doctrine in defence of the privileges and interests of the Nigerian ruling class and its international collaborators. At the same time, the students' own accounts, and their roots in the political and economic context of Nigeria, simply evaporated in the press reports.

There are a number of possible explanations for such press performance. There is, firstly, the close integration of the Nigerian press into a state structure that is controlled by members of this ruling class and which enables them not only to set overall policy and allocate resources, but also provides them with the opportunity to intervene directly in production. Secondly, there are the commercial requirements of the papers, particularly the drive to attract advertising revenue, which affects their overall presentation to a considerable extent by reinforcing the tendency to go for drama and sensation in the coverage of events. Commercial imperatives also push the press towards the least controversial and most easily comprehensible frames since it is believed that these will attract both readers and advertisers, which accounts challenging to the commercial world may repel. Then, there are the demands on the journalists to report news within standards set by individual organisations which are themselves determined, to a large extent, by commercial considerations. Finally, there is the journalist's own socialisation into the society through the agencies of the family, schools, peers and work settings, all of which affect their outlook on the world.
We contend that all these factors have explanatory value, and that the
fact that they may be difficult to verify empirically should not mean dismissing
them out of hand. At the same time, we should not overstress their singular
importance. Rather, we should seek to link them up with the central values and
routines which inform journalists in their day to day performance. Golding and
Elliott, among many others, have argued that these rules and routines deny news
of two key elements: "the invisibility of social process, and the invisibility of
power in society". (Golding and Elliott, 1979:209). In the case of social
process, this is because of the concentration on immediate events rather than on
their long term origins. In this way, the world of news becomes static and
recurrent rather than dynamic. Secondly, news lacks the ability to visualise
power because of its focus on individuals rather than corporate groups.

It is in these ways, through its stress on events, personalities, and
consensus rather than corporate groups, ideas, and ideals and conflict, that news
is ideological. While the former emphases serve to preserve the world, the
latter seek to challenge and change it. It is this inability to present the
possibilities for change, which, Golding and Elliott argue, makes news
supportive of the interests of the dominant classes.

Our own findings confirm these arguments. In addition, we have tried to
argue that rather than seek open linkages between news values and professional
routines, and ruling class interests, news should be looked at as a cultural
product of a particular historical conjuncture organic to the dominant mode of
production of that conjuncture and working in such a way that it is preserved. This
is why, despite its transfer to different parts of the world in the colonial era, it
remains essentially the same commodity - regular, event-centred, preoccupied
with elites, and going for consensus (albeit a militarised consensus) rather than providing concrete explanations for the presence of conflict. Hence, in neo-colonial societies, as in the advanced capitalist states, news values and routines serve to reaffirm the domination of private capital; and any challenge to that domination must contend with that reaffirmation.
EPilogue. Reflections on Recent Developments: The Continuing Crisis and Return of the Military

Since the material for this study was collected, significant developments have taken place on Nigeria's political, economic and social scene outside the period covered by the thesis. A brief overview of these developments is necessary to underline our central contention that the crisis of Nigerian society, some of whose elements have been examined in the study, is in actual fact a continuing crisis* of the country's neo-colonial capitalist relations. This will be followed by speculative remarks about the future.

On October 1st, 1979, the military handed power back to a civilian government. In the process, like the British in 1960, they ensured that power passed to the group likely to maintain continuity in economic and social life. The more radical political groupings were emasculated through property qualifications, leaving the contest for electoral office to the five major parties. These five were: the National Party of Nigeria (NPN), the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), the Nigeria Peoples’ Party (NPP), the Great Nigeria Peoples’ Party (GNPP) - a breakaway party from the NPP, and the Peoples’ Redemption Party (PRP). Ideologically, there were only marginal differences between the first four parties, except for the more reformist thrust of the UPN. As a party, only the PRP saw anything wrong with the existing social arrangements, and set out to mobilise the subordinate classes towards changing them. Later, the PRP became

* Dr. Bala Usman (1982b) calls it 'the current crisis'. The term "continuing crisis" is preferred because it better captures the fact that the crisis is not only 'current' (which implies temporal and recency), but also recurrent. In other words, it is so far, a permanent crisis that has continued to exist to its current form.
deeply divided between those who wanted the party to be more like the first four, and those who wanted fundamental changes in Nigerian society to remain the guiding principles for party thought and action.

Of the first four parties however, the NPN contained more 'men of timber and calibre'. These were people who since the colonial days, and through the first civilian and all the military administrations, had benefitted from state patronage and amassed enormous wealth. It was to this group that the military handed over power after a controversial and costly litigacious election. Once in power, they remained closely associated with the top hierarchy of the military; and as the overall military command came under the new President and by extension, his political associates, they made efforts to consolidate their position by retiring a number of less sympathetic military officers and rewarding the trusted ones. This close alliance, and carrot and stick treatment of the officer class, was designed to shift the balance of power within the ruling classes away from the military and towards the political faction in power, namely, the wealthiest and least concerned about the problems of the subordinate classes.

The NPN administration, headed by Shehu Shagari continued with the well-worn theme of 'National Security' but could not manage to conceal the partiality of its application. Apart from using it against the subordinate social classes as was the case under the military, the new government extended it to cover those fractions of the ruling class that were outside of the ruling political

* A Nigerian expression for people of wealth, political power and enormous influence at both lowest and highest levels.
party. But unlike the subaltern classes, the excluded fractions, many of who controlled regions or states, had the necessary means to challenge this doctrine. Hence, it was now, more difficult than it was in the 1960s, to mystify the class situation with regionalism and tribal sentiments.

It is in the nature of 'National Security', as a political doctrine, not to brook opposition; 'total war' demands 'total response'. Therefore, the NPN set about executing this doctrine in its true spirit, and the first targets were the corporate political parties, which represented groups opposed to the dominant fraction. Secondly, it was determined to decimate the PRP which provided critical alternatives, and through its control of two state governments - Kaduna and Kano - was demonstrating their viability by mobilising the subaltern classes to manage their own affairs despite hostile opposition from the NPN; and in addition, was trying to expand their influence to other parts of the country. One significant point to be noted, which was particularly alarming to the NPN was the fact that Kano and Kaduna state happen to be geographical centres of the ruling class. It is from these two states that most of the core of this class is drawn. Hence, to leave it in the hands of the revolutionary minded PRP was to destroy this base. Therefore, more than any other party, the PRP had to be confronted comprehensively.

It is only after drawing out the necessary strategies for tackling these corporate political parties that the NPN would calculate how much was left over for the subordinate classes, especially the trade unions. This preliminary casting is necessary for an understanding of the repressive practices of the NPN under the leadership of Alhaji Shehu Shagari. Uncontested control of the state meant uncontested access to the main source of wealth - oil revenues - as
the rest of the economy remained neglected and relatively low yielding.

'National Security' and Political Repression

As soon as the NPN took office, Alhaji Shugaba Abdurahman, a senior Party member of the GNPP was simply pushed across the border or 'deported' into Chad as an 'illegal immigrant'. This 'deportation' act was vigorously and unapologetically defended by the Shagari administration in and outside the law courts. It marked the beginning of a rabidly xenophobic policy which ultimately led to the deportation of 2 million migrant workers from sister ECOWAS' countries, in February 1983. This unprecedented mass deportation is important and must be seen in its wider context.

At the time of the 'oil boom' in the early 1970s, the military-bureaucratic class, then in control of state power, were attracted by the promise of turning Nigeria into a sub-imperialist power by virtue of its oil might and the international capital investment it attracted. They actively worked for a West African Economic bloc with liberalised trading, investment and labour migration laws, which, it was hoped, would be run in the interests of Nigeria's national ruling class. The 'oil boom' and its sub-imperial dream corresponded with the Sahel drought of 1973 to 1974 affecting several smaller neighbours in the proposed Economic community (including the Sahel North of Nigeria), and Ghana's own period of economic difficulties. The constellation of these push and pull factors; drought in the Sahel and economic difficulties in Ghana on the one hand, and the trumpeted oil boom and Nigeria's ruling class's sub-imperialist ambitions on the other, brought into Nigeria a large labour force. Most of these workers were absorbed into the massive construction industry fuelled by the oil boom. Others were retained as cheap labour by small scale businesses; while
the rest distributed themselves into self-employed service sectors such as wayside mechanics, welders, hair-dressers, restauranters, and security men guarding the wealth and houses of the nouveau riche of Nigeria. Apart from being underpaid, relative to their Nigerian counterparts, they were prepared to do some of the 'odd jobs' which Nigerian workers, now more selective or involved in pett commodity trading, were unwilling to do or at most, would do only at considerable expense to those that employed them. Evidence for this is provided by the grave scarcity of superexploited labour after the February 1983 deportation order which forced some of the small scale businesses to close down. Hence, in the end, the main impact of the mass deportation turned out to be its detrimental consequences for a segment of the bourgeoisie rather than the benefits for ordinary Nigerians that had provided its raison d'être.

Apart from this cavalier treatment of 'illegal aliens' - Shugaba Abdurahman and the expelled two million - the two state governments controlled by the more radical PRP were undermined and openly intimidated. In Kaduna for example, its more purposeful leadership in the person of Governor Balarabe Musa was forced out of office using the numerically superior NPN legislative presence in the State's House of Assembly. The ultimate aim was to instal a stalwart of the NPN, the leader of the House of Assembly, which another impeachment of the new Governor would have secured for them as provided for in the 1979 Constitution. Short of this, a more accommodating PRP Governor could be tolerated till the next elections in 1983. In Kano where the PRP held both Executive and Legislative powers, this course of action was not possible. Consequently, the only option was extra-parliamentary action. The NPN could use its enormous wealth to employ the services of people to physically attack key PRP figures and institutions. This it did with a series of riots within
In one of them, they succeeded in murdering the radical and articulate Political Adviser to the Kano State Government, Dr. Bala Mohammed and his younger brother. In addition, strategic government institutions such as the radio and newspaper printing houses were attacked and razed to the ground. This was made possible by virtue of the NPN's control of the police force in the states, which, from all available accounts, did little to stop the attackers.

At the same time seven students were killed on university campuses during public demonstrations; five at the University of Ife, and two at the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, scene of six student deaths in 1978. In addition, over one hundred farmers were killed by the police and army at Bakolari while opposing the confiscation of their lands without compensation by the Bakolari River Basin Development Authority. ¹

This catalogue of systematic political repression by the Shagari administration can be extended to include several of the Nigerians killed at the road blocks erected by armed police at intervals of not more than fifty kilometres on every public highway, and the intimidation of citizens by an expanding and increasingly vigilant secret police known as the National Security Organisation (NSO). The country was more of a garrison state now than at the time of the civil war between 1967 and 1970.

This militarised and violence-prone state machinery was later to serve as a crucial vehicle for suppressing all opposition to the NPN during the 1983 elections. At the conclusion of the elections, it looked as if the NPN had at last

¹. Details of this project and the incident are provided in Chapter 5 of this thesis.
accomplished its objective of neutralising all opposition, as they emerged overwhelmingly 'victorious' at both national and state levels. Inadvertently perhaps, this was their last undoing. As the incoming military regime of General Buhari pointed out, the Shagari administration was "inept and insensitive", and the 'elections' that brought them back to power were "anything but free and fair". This insensitivity and lack of fairness to other ruling class fractions further exposed the interests of the class they represented, and at the same time, sensitised the subordinate classes, including their allies among the middle classes who possibly had extensions into the armed forces.

Determined opposition from the marginalised fractions of the ruling class already emerging from the equally violent activities of UPN supporters, would throw the country back to the situation in 1966 to 1967, with a possible outbreak of another civil war. But such an outcome was just one possibility. A more portent one was the possible reaction of the subordinate classes and their radical allies, among them the middle class intelligentsia and their constituents in the armed forces. The last mentioned could try to seize power on behalf of the group as a whole; a kind of 'revolution by coup' as had happened in Ethiopia in 1974, Ghana 1981 and more recently in Upper Volta in 1983. 1 The more

1. Despite denials of the second possibility by official spokesmen for the administration, it has been raised to a level of distinct probability by the admission of retired General Theophilus Danjuma, the second most powerful figure in the past military administration, that there was such a move within the lower ranks of the army. His admission has been further confirmed by the actions of the new Buhari administration as evidenced by mass retirements made within the armed forces. For example, there were 53 military personnel from different units among the detainees released and retired after the coup. Since then, several others have been retired.
perceptive observers, including those in the army, had to take steps to neutralise this threatening possibility, hence the military coup of December 31st, 1983. This has strengthened the thesis of those who have baptised the return of the military as a "pre-emptive coup". Judging by the pronouncements and actions of the military leaders so far, there is every reason to believe that such a tag is not totally misplaced. We will return to this question in our final round up. But first, we will try to come to grips with the underlying reasons for the political activities of the Shagari regime.

The Material Bases of Political Repression

It is easy to locate this spate of violence in the psychological make-ups of individual members of the top NPN hierarchy by terming them as mindless, greedy, inept and insensitive as the new Buhari administration and a section of the Nigerian press have chosen to do. Others have preferred the argument that the problems of the country were made impossible to manage by the 'international recession' and the 'oil slump'. For example, Quentin Peel, Africa Editor of the authoritative London Financial Times "looks at the background to the return of military rule after four years of democratic leadership" and concludes that:

the overriding problem of any government in Nigeria has been beyond its (the Shagari administration's) control: the international oil glut, which over the past three years has caused a slump in the country's exports of crude, down from a peak of 2.4m barrels a day (b/d) to just under 1.3m b/d now. (Financial Times, Tuesday, January 3rd, 1984, Supplement P.2).
The 'international recession' and 'oil glut' are myths which the Shagari administration and a section of the press it controlled helped to create between April 1982 and the time it was overthrown in December 1983. Below, we will try to unravel the reality behind these simplistic explanations. It is these realities which give credence to our thesis of a continuing crisis in Nigeria, and which should help a deeper understanding of the attendant political behaviour of the Shagari administration and other ruling classes which have ruled and aspire to rule Nigeria.

This reality is the class nature of Nigeria's neo-colonial capitalism which we have examined in the thesis and traced back to its pre-capitalist and colonial past. The best starting point here is to provide the type of evidence that will, apart from dismantling the prevailing myths about 'oil slump', 'international recession', corruption, and the nature of the NPN politicians, take us to what we consider to be the real reasons for the continuation of the crisis.

Firstly, no group of people are innately corrupt, neither does corruption per se explain the causes of a country's difficulties, even though it does contribute towards compounding them. Certainly, widespread corruption, particularly in Nigeria's public life, must take its share of the blame. However, one must transcend what Omafume Onoge calls 'secondary corruption' and address the 'primary corruption' of class societies.¹ According to this argument the former, characterised by kick-backs and embezzlement of public funds, is

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¹ Dr. Omafume Onoge, Presidential Address to the Nigerian Anthropological and Sociological Association's Conference on 'Corruption and Under-development', held at the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, April 1982.
open and considered immoral and derided; but the latter, which is more grave in consequence, more discreet and requires careful analytical unwrapping, is given scant attention and even treated as acceptable and normal. Not that one should condone the former, but that both, as forms of accumulation, are equally socially immoral. It is the inhumanity concealed in the second form, Onoge's 'primary corruption' which constitutes the reality behind the myth of 'oil slump' during the Shagari administration.

The first point is the fact that since 1966, oil has remained, to all the regimes, the mainstay of the economy, commanding 95% of all export earnings and 80% of all government revenues from the 'boom' period in the early 1970s to the last days of the Shagari administration. Nigeria was, virtually, reduced to a mono-commodity economy by all the regimes, including the Shagari administration, with the consequence that any world crisis for that commodity was automatically translated into a crisis for the Nigerian economy and society as a whole. Since neither the Shagari administration nor his predecessors made any serious efforts to diversify the country's economy, making it genuinely productive and to a large extent self-regenerating, our arguments in Chapter 4 that the ruling classes had turned Nigeria into a rentier state apply equally to the Shagari period.

Secondly, and more directly relevant to the 'slump' thesis, despite the glut, the increase in oil revenues due to price rises in real terms more than compensate for the shortfall in production quotas. For instance, the price of crude between 1966 and 1975 ranged from U.S. $3 to U.S. $13 per barrel (p/b) bringing a total revenue of about N11.8 billion to the Gowon regime. Between 1976 and 1979, the prices had increased to between U.S. $14 to U.S. $23 p/b,
from which the Murtala/Obasanjo administration realised N23.3 billion. Under the Shagari administration, the price of oil skyrocketed to unprecedented heights of between U.S. $34 to U.S. $40 p/b during 1980 to 1981 with no corresponding loss of production quota as shown in Table 11.1. The 'slump' in actual fact affected only the last two years of the administration, 1982 to 1983, when the price of oil went down to U.S. $29 and production fell to under 2 million b/d. Despite this 'slump', the administration took in a total of N43.6 billions from oil, which represents 55.2% of total sales since 1958.

Furthermore, at the time the Shagari administration took over power from the Obasanjo regime in October, 1979, Nigeria's foreign reserves stood at N3 billion; and a year later, this figure had increased to N5.5 billion. The problem then is how this money was used by the NPN and other members of this class (including those in the opposition parties) between 1979 and 1983.

A Question of Imports

A central explanation of the crisis lies with the question of imports. Despite the healthy position of the country's reserves between 1979 and 1980, expenditure on imports made it look like trying to fill a sieve placed on sand with water that is in limited supply. The more water is poured in, the more it is devoured by the sand beneath, leaving the sieve as empty as before. Monthly import bills rose from about 600 million naira a month for 1979 to over 1 billion naira just under nine months later. By 1981, Nigeria's foreign reserves fell to N1.2 billion, just enough for one month of imports. By 1982, Nigeria's foreign reserves plummeted to N0.2 billion, forcing the Shagari administration to impose emergency austerity measures. The fall in the country's foreign reserves had very little to do with the glut, since the effects of the glut only began to bite in April of 1982, but it had everything to do with the volume of imports.
Table 11.1: Nigeria's Annual Production of Crude (in '000 barrels a day) 1972 to 1983

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>b/d</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>1,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>2,053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>2,254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>1,785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>2,067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>2,098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>1,909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>2,303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>2,058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>1,440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>1,294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>1,237</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 11.2: Revenue from Oil by Regime, 1958 to 1983

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regime</th>
<th>Total Receipts (in Million Naira)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>^Balewa 1958 - 1966</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>00.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gowon 1966 - 1975</td>
<td>11,856</td>
<td>15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murtala/Obasanjo 1976 - 1979</td>
<td>23,300</td>
<td>30.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shagari 1980 - 1983</td>
<td>43,600</td>
<td>55.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Receipts 1958 - 1983</strong></td>
<td><strong>78,900</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.28</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Overlapping periods between regimes have been taken to the nearest whole year; in the case of the Balewa regime, to the last two years before independence.

This massive importation of goods and services meant that visible imports alone stood at N8.5 billion in 1983; and together with invisible imports the figure is much higher. These imports take different forms ranging from massive profit repatriations on direct foreign investments in Nigeria; sale of capital equipment, consumer goods, raw materials for industries, to services such as "management and consultancy". To give just a few examples, British companies alone have investments of over £2,000 million, accounting for just over 40% of all foreign investments. Had it not been for 'indigenisation' which forced these foreign companies to sell out specified percentages of their equities to Nigerians between 1972 and 1976, their stakes would have been higher, with correspondingly higher profits repatriated. In the banking sector for instance, of the twenty-four commercial banks operating in the country (the twenty-fifth, the Citibank re-issued with a licence after years of absence, is yet to start business operations), the three giants - UBA, Union Bank, and First Bank, are basically extensions of giant international finance houses. The combined assets of these three stood at U.S. $14.4 billion in 1983. The UBA, whose main shareholder is Banque Nationale de Paris, had U.S. $5 billion; the First Bank, a branch of the Standard Bank International, had U.S. $4.8 billion; and the Union Bank, which is a branch of Barclays had U.S. $4.6 billion. From these assets, the banks have been able to reproduce their capital and repatriate profits to their parent organisations. Similarly, the insurance sector continues to be dominated by West German, Swiss, British and American based companies. In 1983, premium income stood at U.S. $750 million, the highest in Africa after South Africa.

Apart from these sources of exported revenue derived from oil, the Shagari period witnessed equally massive importation of food, especially rice,
despite a much publicised Green Revolution programme, and the increased spending on the River Basin Development Projects, both initiated by the military. While an average of ₦1.5 billion went on food imports yearly (this included money taken out to foreign bank accounts by party men who had acquired import licences on rice without actually carrying out the imports), domestic production continued to fall as under the previous military governments. Furthermore, there were importations for manufacturing industries. Most of these remained assembly plants for foreign companies, and the importation they did was basically for spare parts. There were no capital intensive industries, nor any serious programme for them, leaving Nigeria as a dependent and consuming nation.

In the construction sector, just as under the military, the administration continued to award contracts to those companies which had been operating in the country since the oil boom. Apart from the profit they made on these contracts, most of them were overinflated to cover commissions demanded by influential officials. The best illustration of this is the amount that has gone into the new Federal Capital at Abuja with no visible returns.

Thus, while the foreign companies repatriated their profits, the members of the ruling class from all the parties, many of whom had considerable personal shares in these companies or controlled them by virtue of their control of the state that had majority shares in them, continued to receive substantial payments. In addition, they used their collaterals and influence to secure huge loans. They then used these loans to invest in either the import and export sector, transport business, building of houses, and more recently the acquisition of peasant lands for commercial farming.
From these various activities, they accumulated wealth from salaries by virtue of their official positions; kickbacks and commissions by their influence; profits from their trading and productive investments; and rents from their houses. It is this continuous reproduction of capital in various forms that enabled this class to import luxury items such as expensive limousines (Mercedes Benz, Rolls-Royce, Volvos) and more recently private jets; to buy mansions abroad, and in addition, send a retinue of children and girl-friends to study in expensive private schools abroad. The practices sketched out here simply re-echo those discussed in Chapter 4. The differences are ones of degree rather than of kind.

The relationship of this class with the lower classes remained equally continuous. For example, if the military tried to emasculate the labour movement, the Shagari administration tried to neutralise them by manipulative action. Apart from retaining the Labour Decrees passed during the military regimes, attempts were made to impose a new leadership on the trade unions as evidenced by the struggle between Hassan Sonmuno and David Ojeli at the Kano Conference of 1981. Although Sonmuno had overwhelming support of the Unions, the government preferred Ojeli who had less support, but was nevertheless prepared to co-operate with the Government over labour matters. The failure of the government to secure this co-operation and their refusal to compromise on the unions' demand for a 'minimum wage' resulted into the General Strike of 1981.¹

As for the peasants, any change that occurred in his life, was for the worse as reduced public expenditure on such sectors as health and education increased the pressure on his meagre income. Besides which, the decline in agricultural production and massive increases in food prices, and prices of other consumer items such as soap, salt, cooking oil, and textiles due to galloping inflation, compounded his problem. With no wages, no collaterals to secure bank loans, no money to buy fertilisers and no state supply; no money to hire tractors for modern farming and the likelihood that all his children might have migrated to the urban centres in search of non-existent wage labour, he had to scrounge and live in a difficult environment. This environment was however, permeated with oil revenues, which as we have shown, a small percentage of his well-placed compatriots had succeeded in monopolising for themselves and their foreign associates.

The Return of the Military

Broadly, this was the situation at the time the military returned to the centre stage of the political scene on 31st December, 1983. The continuity between the preceding regimes and the Shagari administration remained real in both economic and repressive terms.

But, there was an extra dimension: the unchecked rivalry for more and more acquisition, accompanied by conspicuous and arrogant consumption of the acquired wealth; the determination and extent to which they were prepared to go to monopolise these privileges and exclude all the other contenders, as was the case during the 1983 elections; and the lack of percolation downwards to the subordinate classes (even the salaried working and middle classes who traditionally served as support for kith and kin left behind in the rural areas went months
without wages). It made the contradictions of Nigerian society look so obvious that it was now threatening the whole social fabric and by implication, the interests of the ruling class as a whole.

It is here that the origins of what has been tagged by commentators as "a pre-emptive coup" lie. However, judging by their pronouncements so far, the new military administration does not seem to recognise this. Rather, they have focused on Onoge's 'secondary' features of corruption, in addition to management problems; leaving aside the real causes that generated consequences which General Buhari himself described as "difficult and degrading" for the Nigerian people. The speech announcing the coup stated:

Our economy has been hopelessly mismanaged. We have become a debtor and beggar nation. There is inadequacy of food at reasonable prices. Health services are in shambles, and our hospitals are reduced to mere consulting clinics without drugs, water or equipment". (Brigadier Sani Abacha, as in The Guardian (London), Monday, January 2nd, 1984, P.1).

In his own address to the nation, the new Head of State, General Muhamadu Buhari stressed three main reasons for the military's return to power, namely: corruption, unfair elections, and mismanagement of the economy. But asked what they were going to do about the mismanaged economy in his first full interview with the press, he had this to say:

We will first try to resuscitate the industries, and this will be done by getting the necessary raw materials as fast as we can. We are very short of foreign exchange, and the small amount we have has
to go on services, raw materials and machinery, and servicing international commitments. (Financial Times, (London), January 23rd, 1984, Supplement P. 2).

This is just a restatement of the government's commitment to improving management techniques, instilling discipline and order, and increased importation; and, the retention of the privileges of the ruling classes, nonetheless in a more autocratic form. Again, it is oil revenues which the administration will rely on.

But coming back to power with the enormous disadvantage of falling oil revenues, no carry-over of reserves from a previous administration as Murtala/Obasanjo inherited from General Gowon, and Shagari from the former; and, having a huge deficit of U.S. $15 billion in foreign debt and about U.S. $20 billion internal debt to contend with, there is every reason to be pessimistic on the political front.

As we have argued, the question goes far beyond 'management'. It calls for a re-examination of the fundamental bases of "difficulties and degradations" of human beings by other human beings. If one may dare to suggest, it requires first and foremost, socialising the means of social and economic production and exchange. This must include not just foreign capital, but also national capital, both state and private controlled. It is only after this that it will be meaningful to look at the most effective ways of not only managing the available resources, but of searching for new ones and stepping up overall production. This may not solve the whole problem, but will be a step towards a solution. Judging by the regime's pronouncements, including their open admission that they are simply a continuation of the last military regime, one
sees very little hope of this happening.

That said however, we must concede that, perhaps it is yet too soon to pass any considered judgement. The effectiveness of the new regime's management skills have still to be tested. If they work, then the better for all Nigerians. If not, it is difficult to foretell the political direction the military will take. However, one thing is certain, namely, that the subordinated classes will be the worst affected by a worsening economic condition. Their living conditions will further deteriorate, and so will their overall life chances.

Under such conditions, it is difficult to anticipate their reaction or those of their middle class sympathisers, or, perhaps, even the reaction of another group of military men, never in short supply under these conditions and ever promoting some dreamed-of solutions. What can be said with certainty however, is that most of the very vocal and better organised opposition movements have been repressed, and their political viewpoints de-centred. Whether we will see a re-invigoration of such movements is yet to be seen. And how far will they be tolerated by a military regime faced with enormous economic and political difficulties remains to be seen. Whether their re-emergence will force the military to democratise power or to take a more aggressive posture in order to monopolise power as is common practice in Latin America and some parts of the Third World remains a difficult question to answer.

As for the secondary question of whether or not the military will eventually turn out to be more repressive, with the possibility of further curtailing the existing room for cultural expression, including counter-definition of the dominant hegemony, especially within the universities and media houses, one can only say that it is a harrowing proposition. Albeit, it is one which will,
among other things, serve to heighten the contradictions of Nigeria's social and political life, and perhaps prepare the way for a decisive step that will address the fundamental question of material inequality.

Finally, in the wake of a repressive turn about, it would probably be necessary for the press to share in the Nigerian peoples' 'collective guilt' of effective inaction. For, by denigrating the substantive political content of the protesting students (and possibly other oppositional movements), albeit largely unwittingly, through received ideologies of professional performance, they contributed to preserving the very social and economic structures which, apart from generating such a regime, has offered us a permanent and continuing crisis.
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