TITLE: LABOUR NEWS: PRESS AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN NIGERIA

BY

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May 1986.
Let us create and talk about life
Let us not admire the beauty
But peruse the meaning
Let art be life
Let us not eye the form
But read the content
Let creativity be a portrait of one’s life.

— Matsemola Monoka, Staffrider 1979.
To my wife, Bimbo and daughter Simisola for their support and companionship. Also to my mother and the other three, Bisi, Ayo and Sunday whose self-sacrifice got me here in the first place and to Moyosola whose unexpected arrival tightened the tension of waiting.
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My greatest debt and gratitude to those whose struggle is chronicled in the following pages; the Nigerian workers. We can only pay back by being committed to the struggle for a better Nigeria.

To Ogun, we give our greatest thanks.
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<td>AATUF</td>
<td>All African Trade Union Federation</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACSTWU</td>
<td>African Civil Servant Technical Workers Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANTUF</td>
<td>All-Nigeria Trade Union Federation</td>
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<tr>
<td>ATUC</td>
<td>African Trade Union Federation</td>
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<tr>
<td>BTUC</td>
<td>Biafran Trade Union Confederation</td>
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<tr>
<td>COLA</td>
<td>Cost of Living Allowance</td>
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<td>PTUN</td>
<td>Federated Trade Unions of Nigeria</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICPTU</td>
<td>International Confederation of Free Trade Unions</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>IULC</td>
<td>Independent United Labour Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>JAC</td>
<td>Joint Action Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>JMA</td>
<td>Jameiyar Mutane Arewa</td>
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<tr>
<td>LUF</td>
<td>Labour Unity Front</td>
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<tr>
<td>NANS</td>
<td>National Association of Nigerian Students</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCTUN</td>
<td>National Council of Trade Unions of Nigeria</td>
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<tr>
<td>NECA</td>
<td>Nigerian Employers Consultative Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>NDC</td>
<td>Niger Delta Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEPU</td>
<td>Northern (later Nigerian) Elements' Progressive Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>NFL</td>
<td>Northern Federation of Labour. Later: Northern States Federation of Labour</td>
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<tr>
<td>NLC</td>
<td>Nigerian Labour Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>NLP</td>
<td>Nigerian Labour Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>NMA</td>
<td>Nigerian Medical Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>NNA</td>
<td>Nigerian National Alliance</td>
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<tr>
<td>NNNDP</td>
<td>Nigerian National Democratic Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>NNFL</td>
<td>Nigerian National Federation of Labour</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPC</td>
<td>Northern Peoples' Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPN</td>
<td>National Party of Nigeria</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPP</td>
<td>Nigerian Peoples' Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>NTUC</td>
<td>Nigerian Trade Union Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>NUJ</td>
<td>Nigerian Union of Journalism</td>
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<td>NUT</td>
<td>Nigerian Union of Teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>NWC</td>
<td>Nigerian Workers' Council</td>
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<td>NYM</td>
<td>Nigerian Youth Movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRD</td>
<td>Peoples' Redemption Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>TWU</td>
<td>Railway Workers' Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWAPP</td>
<td>Socialist Workers' and Farmers' Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>TUC(N)</td>
<td>Trade Union Congress (of Nigeria)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TUCN</td>
<td>Trade Union Congress of Nigeria</td>
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<tr>
<td>TUSC</td>
<td>Trade Unions' Supreme Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>UAC</td>
<td>United Africa Company</td>
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<tr>
<td>UCCLO</td>
<td>United Committee of Central Labour Organisations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UMBC</td>
<td>United Middle Belt Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNIP</td>
<td>United National Independence Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>ULC</td>
<td>United Labour Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>ULCN</td>
<td>United Labour Congress of Nigeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNAMG</td>
<td>Amalgamated Union of the United Africa Company African Workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPE</td>
<td>Universal Primary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPGA</td>
<td>United Progressive Grand Alliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPN</td>
<td>Unity Party of Nigeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPP</td>
<td>United Peoples' Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAI</td>
<td>War Against Indiscipline</td>
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<td>WFTU</td>
<td>World Federation of Trade Unions.</td>
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INTRODUCTION

The news media provide the window to the outside to many people. Through the mass media we learn of events (and their meaning) that are outside our immediate environment and experience and about the society we live in. In addition the media construct for their audience and readers representations and accounts of social reality. This process of construction is not a neutral activity. It is structured and constrained by certain conventions, professional ideologies, values and operational routines and organisational imperatives. These factors define what is news, how it is selected and produced for public consumption. The end product is a particular definition of reality.

Many writers have argued that news values and professional ideologies unconsciously structure the news making process and orient the news towards the dominant definition of events.* In constructing their representations and interpretations of events, journalists draw on the values and routines of their profession. The tendency is for journalism to concentrate on the dramatic, on conflicts and personalities and a simplified, commonsense interpretation of events. This tendency is further reinforced by the journalists reliance on the widely shared social values as the framework for such interpretation. There is also the media's dependence on sources for news; such news sources are mainly the powerful "accredited spokesmen" in society. In general it is contended that,

News does not exist as external reality that can be objectively portrayed on the basis of ascertainable fact; for facts have to be selected and then situated, whether explicitly or implicitly, within a framework of understanding before they 'speak for themselves'. This process of selection and interpretation is culturally encoded and social (sic) determined. Yet such constructions largely define our knowledge of the external world of which we have no first-hand experience (Gurevitch et al, 1982, p.201).

This study examines the process of construction of social reality; the values, ideologies and interests that inform this process and the meaning and image conveyed by the end product, that is the news. We try to inquire into the image of the Nigerian social structure that could be found in the press and seek to explain how this comes about. We chose to

study industrial relations news during the two periods, just before and immediately after the 1964 General Strike, and the months immediately before the December 1974 Udoji salary awards and after. We limited our analysis to industrial relations news so that we could be able to manage the study within the limited resources at our disposal. It also seems to us that the conflicts in society will be most apparent in the industrial relations news. We also realise that the primary source of contradictions in society is generated by the conflict between capital and labour. The inherent contradictory social perspectives in this conflict should ideally be made available to the public through the press because of its proclaimed adherence to values of objectivity, neutrality and balance. The press is also viewed as the fourth estate of the realm. In other words we should expect to find in the press the competing images of and ideas about the Nigerian society.

In this case the general issue touched on in this study is the role of the press in the Nigerian society. This has been a heavily debated issue in mass communication studies, especially in the advanced capitalist societies; whether one takes a class-based Marxist position which starts from Marx's famous dictum that "the ideas of the ruling class are, in every epoch, the ruling ideas" or a consensualist - functionalist approach exemplified in Warren Breed's statement that "By expressing, dramatizing and repeating cultural patterns, both the traditional and the newly emerging, the media reinforce tradition and at the same time explain new roles. Members of the society thus remain integrated within the socio-cultural structure. As a form of adult socialization, the media are seen as guarantors that a body of common ultimate values remains visible as a continuing source of consensus, despite the inroads of change" (Breed, 1958, pp.110-111).

This study was therefore designed to explore the range of differing ideas in the press on industrial relations and the various participants in the field - the labour movement, the government and the management. We attempt to look at how their ideas, views and activities are conceptualised, interpreted and presented in order to explain to the reading public the events which took place during the two periods chosen.

In order to put these events in a proper perspective we start our analysis by taking a look at the structure of the Nigerian economy and
politics. This is also done in the realisation that the press is part and parcel of the society within which it operates. More importantly the analysis in Chapters 1 and 4 is to provide us with an understanding of the social ideas, concepts and assumptions which inform the production of industrial relations news and/or are to be found in such news. The media do not necessarily create these ideas and concepts but articulate and reproduce them for general public consumption. In the two chapters, we are concerned with isolating these ideas and themes, their social and ideological roots and their likely ideological character. As Stuart Hall has said,

If the inventories from which particular significations were generated were conceived, not simply as a formal scheme of elements and rules, but as a set of ideological elements, then the conceptions of the ideological matrix had to be radically historicized. The 'deep structure' of a statement had to be conceived as the network of elements, premises and assumptions drawn from the long-standing and historically-elaborated discourses which had accreted over the years, into which the whole history of the social formation had sedimented, and which now constituted a reservoir of themes and premises on which, for example, broadcasters could draw for the work of signifying new and troubling events (Hall, 1982, pp.72-73).

Chapter 1 looks at the structure of the Nigerian political economy. The main concern being to inquire into which group or groups benefit from the economy and the efforts such groups have been making to legitimise their position. In Chapter 2 we discuss the history and structure of the Nigerian labour movement. The focus of attention is on the factors that have hindered the development of the trade unions, especially labour unity up to the late 1970s. We also entered into a brief discussion of the issue of class, especially on the controversy surrounding the existence of a working class in Africa.

Chapter 3 on the State and Industrial Relations examines the practice of industrial relations in Nigeria. Despite some apparent changes, we could detect a lot of continuity in the system. The basic contention is that the practice of industrial relations especially government intervention or non-intervention favours capital more than labour. In Chapter 4 we continue the analysis of the ideas, concepts and beliefs which are available to the media as their interpretative framework. We argue that these social beliefs and ideas are ideological constructs available to
the dominant class and the press for the process of constructing the hegemony of the ruling class. The basic idea is that such themes, ideas, beliefs and images are more often unconsciously picked up by the press in its coverage of industrial relations. We end the chapter by looking at the competing social perspectives or meaning systems that could be found in society and therefore one would expect to find in the press.

Chapter 5 explores the history of the Nigerian press focusing on the issue of ownership and control. We attempt to show the changes and continuity that have characterised the Nigerian press since the colonial days. We also attempt to show the development of professionalism with its attendant values and ideology of objectivity, neutrality and autonomy. This discussion is carried forward in the next chapter where we examined the idea of development journalism and the two main research and theoretical positions—liberal and Marxist—which have informed the discussion on the role of the mass media in society.

All the above chapters set the scene and provide the wider social, historical and theoretical context for the presentation of our empirical findings on industrial relations as news in the next four chapters. Chapter 7 is the analysis of the quantitative data obtained through content analysis of industrial relations news in seven selected Nigerian newspapers. Chapters 8 and 9 discuss in a more qualitative and interpretative manner the editorials written on industrial relations during the two periods. As evident in our discussion most of the editorials were written during the industrial conflicts which occurred during the two periods chosen. In Chapter 10 we present the result of our informal interviews and discussions with journalists.

The last chapter sums up some of the issues raised in the study. We offer a critique of the dominant model in Nigerian and African communication research and some of the issues and assumptions that have been the main concern of such an approach. We also examine some of the solutions that have been proposed to solving the problem of the inherent inadequacies of journalism practice in Nigeria. We found that stemming from the inadequate conceptualisation of the issues and problems involved, the solutions beg a lot of questions. The main issue involved, as we see it is how to make the media genuinely pluralistic and
democratic as to be able to contain all the competing social perspectives or values in society. In other words, we argue that any solution must involve how to ensure greater public access to and participation in the mass media.
CHAPTER 1

NIGERIA : ELEMENTS OF A POLITICAL ECONOMY

To a large extent the independence movement in Africa was a movement toward Westernization. If political independence had any purpose beyond its ownself, African political leaders stated that it was meant to bring the fruits of economic growth and modernization long stinted under colonial control... All eyes were on the future and the model was the West (July, Robert W. (1983)).

This study examines the way industrial relations and by implication social relationships are portrayed in the Nigerian press. Implicit in this coverage are certain values and ideas about the Nigerian society. The concepts and themes which make up these values and ideas or social perspectives must have originated from the interaction of the history, socio-economic and political system. In other words, they must be rooted in the peculiar nature of the Nigerian political economy. In that case, we need an analysis of this political economy to reveal these themes, their historical and social origin, those who employ them and what ideological function, if any, they perform.

It is also necessary to carry out such an analysis because as we shall be arguing later, the mass media tend to reproduce the dominant social view in the society. We can also note that the Nigerian industrial relations system in general and the Labour movement in particular and the Press are more or less products of this system and it continues to influence their development.

As we shall see later in this chapter the main themes that have formed the over-arching anchor of the ideology of the Nigerian ruling class were products of colonialism. Further, at a deeper level the Nigerian state and the political economy are also products of this historical experience. However, in agreement with Lionel Cliffe's opinion that "The full task of a political economy of Africa must ... start with an analysis of the pre-capitalist modes" (Cliffe, 1976, p.127) we begin our analysis with a brief discussion of the various pre-capitalist modes of production in Nigeria. We also do this in the realisation that the imposition of an alien socio-economic and political structure on the indigenous pre-colonial one, which was not totally destroyed but nevertheless altered and distorted, continues to influence the complex nature of Nigeria's political economy.
Pre-Colonial Modes of Production

Three main modes of productions could be found in pre-colonial Nigeria. With variations across the country these could be classified as communal, slave and feudal modes of production (Post, 1964, p.169).

The communal or "primitive communist" mode of production is the oldest system of social relations in the country and indeed in Africa in general. The basic unit of social organisation was the clan with the family providing the unit of production. The production process was marked by low level of productive forces. The production of surplus was small and based on "the appropriation of nature; there was as yet no social appropriation" (Onimode, 1982, p.11). However, the absence of surplus was not due to inadequate technology, productive forces or poor natural or environmental conditions. Its realisation was limited by the particular type of social relations existing at the time (Cliffe, 1982, p.263).

The means of production, labour and land, were jointly and communally owned and the basis of production was cooperative and collective. Members of the community were obliged to the social group as a whole. Division of labour and other forms of distinctions were based on age and sex and social hierarchy. Samin Amin summarised the main features of this mode of production as follows:

(1) the organisation of labour, partly on an individual basis (the "small family") and partly on a collective basis (the "large family", the "clan", the 'village') - the essential means of production, the land, being collectively owned by the clan, and use of it allowed to all the members of the clan, but subject to precise rules (cultivation of plots of land assigned to households, etc.); (2) the absence of commodity exchanges, and correlative with this, (3) distribution of the product within the group in accordance with rules that are closely related to the kinship organisation (Amin, 1974, pp.139-140).

This form of joint ownership of means of production, collective form of labour and communalist social relations meant an egalitarian social structure. Material distinction between constituting families was minimal while exercise of power was vested in the hands of a council of elders. The distinction between these elders or those exercising authority and the rest of the population was not class but status. It is safe to suggest therefore that under the communal mode of
production the society was classless.

This type of society corresponds to the characteristics of acephalous or 'stateless' societies. Such societies, for example, the Igbo had no duly constituted central political authorities. The exercise of political power was on the basis of segmentary lineage system.

However, with time came an increase in population, expansion of clans and further contacts between neighbouring peoples. These demographic and social changes demanded that more land be brought under cultivation which in effect led to conflicts between neighbouring clans and communities which sooner or later developed into wars of conquest. Increasing antagonism subsequently led to the establishment and development of organised force and a standing army under commanders. The effect of these changes and development was that the issue of war and defence became increasingly prominent. The changes also presuppose some form of central organisation of the community to organise the military; hence centralised authority around a chief with a group of elders, wielding political and military power became established. With this development also came a transformation of the earlier basis of social relations and mode of production. Captured slaves, seized lands and properties were transformed into what could be called a slave mode of production.

The earlier communalist and egalitarian form of production gave way to an antagonistic form based on the productive forces of slave labour, land and arms. Larger social surplus was now produced to be appropriated by the chiefs, elders, military men, thus giving us the first form of exploitation and the emergence of classes - slaves and freeborn; there also emerged distinctions based on class and status. What could also be regarded as class struggle in the form of slave revolts was evident (Onimode, 1982, p.13).

It is worth mentioning that slaves of this period, as one would find among the Yorubas, the Binis or the so-called Osus among the Igbo were war captives quite different from the slave chattels of the European slave trade era who were sold and bought like any other commodity, for instance at the Badagry slave market beach.

As Anthony Hopkins has shown the pre-European slave trade conditions
of slavery among the Yorubas was very flexible. A slave could enjoy a life similar to that of a free man: "... the dividing lines between slaves, serfs and free men were blurred and indistinct. A slave might suffer certain legal disabilities, but it was possible, if not common, for him to attain an economic position which was far superior to that of many serfs and free men..." (Hopkins, 1966, p.139). There were many successful slave-traders and farmers, some of whom were able to buy their freedom and later attained high social positions.

This of course did not detract from the fact that they were men and women bounded to their masters "by a contract which had not been freely negotiated and which benefited the masters to the extent that they were unwilling to encourage the development of a competitive labour market". The main difference from the Euro-directed slave was that the slaves enjoyed some measure of economic independence.

The third mode of production was feudalism. The main feature of this mode has been summed up by Laclau as "a general ensemble of extra-economic coercions weighing on the peasantry, absorbing a good part of its economic surplus" with the peasantry as the direct producers still retaining its means of production (Laclau, 1977). Samin Amin who has noted that land still remained the essential means of production, also identified three main features:

1. organisation of society into two classes, masters of the land (whose property is inalienable) and serf-servants;
2. appropriation of the surplus by the masters of the land by virtue of law and not through commodity relations; and
3. absence of commodity exchanges within the "lordship" which forms the elementary nucleus of society (Amin, 1974, p.140).

The tributary mode of production also identified by Amin could be said to be a variant of the feudal mode. Such societies certainly produced surplus which supported a complex division of labour higher than what is found under a division based on age group or sex. Appropriation of such surplus was "through a straightforward levy not based on certain property rights" (Lionel Cliffe, 1932, p.264).

The basic outline of the feudal mode of production was evident in
many pre-colonial Nigerian societies, especially among the Hausa - Fulani emirates in the North and the Yoruba and Bini Kingdoms in the South. In the Oyo Kingdom, different parts of the Kingdom were made to pay isakole or tributes to the Alafin of Oyo. The collection of such tributes were supervised by Ajeles who were minor chiefs who also served as advisers and/or war commanders.

In such societies the peasants, artisans, slaves and land constituted the productive forces. Social relations of production were exploitative and antagonistic involving both social and political relations between the peasants and slaves on the one hand and the landlords/chiefs on the other. The latter made up the ruling class while the peasants, slaves and women constituted the subordinate class.

Despite the variations offered by the different modes and also by the different stages of development reached by the areas now making up Nigeria, there were some similarities among the various communities. For instance, there was a general dependence on agriculture. We could also note that no family was denied access to land which was an essential means of production. Further production in these pre-capitalist societies was small scale, mostly family based and limited to the needs of the immediate community and not the market (Cliffe, 1982). In short, the general feature of production was "an essentially democratic economic organisation based largely on small peasant proprietorship, with strong egalitarian elements in the access to and use of land and in the resulting distribution of income by factor/shares" (Aboyade, 1976, p.2).

It is also worth noting that as against the myth of classless, romanticized pre-colonial Africa the above discussion has identified the process of class formation and the nascent classes that emerged. This point is important because the colonial state was to rely on and consolidate this social formation while new ones were created as time went on to meet the requirements of the colonial political economy.

Some features of the three modes of production are still evident today in parts of the country in varying degrees and prominence. That is to say that none of the three modes was completely destroyed either by one of them or by colonialism. The point is that in every epoch, a mode of social production becomes dominant setting limits on the internal
articulation of the others. As Samin Amin has noted "social formations are concrete structures, organised and characterized by a dominant mode of production which forms the apex of a complex set of subordinate modes" (Amin, 1981, p.31). For instance, colonialism did not destroy the right of family to land or the system of agricultural production, though it did introduce new products like cocoa and encouraged the cultivation of others according to the requirements of metropolitan industries. What it did was to incorporate the agriculture system into the system of commodity production and through both economic and political pressures (imposition of taxes, monetisation of the economy) forced the rural economy to release men for the needed labour force. Charles Bettelheim has spoken of this process as a partial conservation and a partial dissolution of the indigenous modes of production (Bettelheim, 1972). Elaborating on this dual process, Meillassoux said capitalism,

On (the) one hand ... elicits a sector of production built up in its own image through the presence of capital and its corollaries - private control of the means of production and wage earning. On the other hand it feeds off the pre-capitalist sectors through the mechanism of primitive accumulation - with the contradictory results of both perpetuating and destroying them at the same time. The introduction of capitalism had the dual effect of maintaining a dependent African commercial sector and of competing eventually with traditional trade (Meillassoux, 1971, p.76).

The pre-capitalist rural economy was to become an important source of capital accumulation by the colonial state and the mercantile firms dominant during the colonial period. The rural 'agriculture' economy was also the main source of finance for development and 'primitive' accumulation immediately after independence.

The Coming of Europeans : The Slave Trade

By the 15th century, European traders were on the West African coast. This earliest form of European contact, usually called the mercantilist period, was made by the Portuguese. By 1485 they were already trading in ivory, gold, silver and spice, with for instance the Kingdom of Benin, in exchange for guns, mirrors, beads and other European manufactured goods, mostly demanded by the ruling and trading elites. Before long the Portuguese were challenged by the British who were able to displace them. Soon the trade in manufactured goods turned into human beings.
The slave trade was said to have started by the Portuguese after their settlement in Sao Tome. Sao Tome had no indigenous people, so the Portuguese had to import people from Benin to work there. With increase in the population of the Island, it was found necessary to have more slaves, hence the Portuguese "built a factory" at Gwato, port of Benin to handle the trade in slaves and other goods (Onimode, 1982, p.23). The Spanish later joined the Portuguese, especially after the discovery of the New World. The granting of a royal charter by King Charles II to the company of Royal Adventurers was the beginning of British involvement in the inhuman trade; by the 18th century they had become the leading slave-traders. The trans-atlantic slave trade heralded a turning-point in Afro-European relations, beginning the systematic incorporation and sub-ordination of the continent to the world capitalist system.

The slave trade had an enormous impact on African societies. Because of the wars to capture slaves, the orderly production of agricultural goods was disrupted. Such wars also led to an imbalance between man and his environment. Apart from quantitative imbalance there were also generational and sexual imbalance. Able-bodied men formed the fighting force and were more likely to attract European buyers than women, children and the aged. This in turn weakened social relations and strained the maintenance of social order through traditional institutions based on egalitarian and democratic structures which are now subjected to the military prowess and authority of either an internal or external minority powerful groups.

Further the depopulation of Africa through the slave trade led also to a loss of productive capacity. Such a loss constituted a good part of the wealth and resources of European and American societies. It became properties and investments to these societies. The slave trade and mercantile imperialism coincided with the early period of European capital accumulation "a period during which the transfer of resources from the periphery is decisive in stoking the engines of the industrial revolution" (James Petras, 1975, p.293).

Another crucial effect was that as the production capacity of Africa was being depleted and contributing to the development of Euro-American economies, manufactured goods from outside began to displace African crafts and inter-regional trade. The aristocrats, especially the coastal merchants,
became more interested in Western-made goods and were prepared to acquire such through any means. This was to lay the foundation for Africa's economic dependence on European economies and the love for imported goods by the African elite; which of course forms part of the reasons for the adoption of import-substitution industrialisation after independence. As Aboyade puts it "Even as the era of slavery receded in response to the growing inefficiency of a slave-production system in the Western World, the entrenched dependence of the economies of Tropical Africa only changed in style and not in character" (Aboyade, 1976, p.4).

From Legitimate Trade to Colonialism

By mid-19th century the economic relations between Europe and Africa was modified in response to the expanding industrial production in Europe. This needed extended external markets and investment outlets for surplus capital and raw materials from the periphery. In other words, with the industrial revolution and changes in European societies, it became imperative for European merchants to abolish the slave trade. And as Petras has noted "the growth of industry required new forms of exploitation in the periphery" (Petras, 1975, p.294). It was found more profitable to trade 'legitimately' in African raw materials and to leave Africans in their societies in order to provide 'markets' for the expanded production in industries and as producers of the raw materials. By 1833 the slave trade was formally abolished after an estimated 24 million people had been shipped away from West Africa and Angola with some 22,000 carted away annually from Nigeria over a period of 450 (sic) years (Onimode, 1982, p.24)

The dominance of Britain during the industrial revolution meant she was in the forefront in the campaign for the legitimate trade and the removal of restrictions imposed by mercantilism.

By this time the Nigerian coastal trade was moving toward the hinterland, drawing the aggressive attention of various European powers - French, German and the British. Through the maxim guns, deceit and the Bible, the British were able to exert their control over the various territories of Nigeria. By 1861 the Protectorate of Lagos had been established, and leaving out some pockets of resistance, especially in the North, Nigeria was effectively under British colonial control by 1920. The conquest and subsequent establishment of colonial administration was
accompanied by the introduction of a new socio-economic formation corresponding to the requirements of British colonial and commercial interests.

The development of legitimate trade according to Gavin Williams (1980) united the material interests of Victorian capitalism with the moral issues of the church or in a more elegant prose "The missionaries advocated the establishment of a 'legitimate' trade and set out to save souls, while their commercial neighbours kept the British soap factories supplied with palm oil, a combination of cleanliness with godliness which must have pleased the Victorians" (Post, 1964, p.168). The various missionary societies established schools, and printing presses to preach to Africans. The activities of the Church were very crucial in the development of the new social formations that came with colonialism. Education was to become an important factor in the development of the Nigerian ruling class and as we shall show in Chapter 5 the church was also very influential in the development of the Nigerian press.

The main line of economic activity was trading especially the buying of agricultural produce in exchange for European manufactured goods. Jan J. Milewski observed that "Throughout the colonial period, commerce was the main area of investment of foreign capital in Nigeria. Mining, the second area of activities of British firms, always played a secondary role in terms of both investment and policy" (Milewski, 1981, p.111). The mercantile trading firms and the colonial economy in general were interested in the most profitable agricultural products. To obtain these, inducements were offered to the farmers to encourage them to plant such products and discourage the cultivation of others. To take advantage of this development, Africans adjusted existing social institutions to organise the regulation of access to land, the mobilization of savings and credit facilities, and the recruitment of labour to clear, weed and manure land and plant trees (G. Williams, 1980, p.27). In other words, the colonial economy helped develop agriculture but according to external needs.

From the above, it is clear that the legitimate trade had a profound effect on agricultural production. As Bade Onimode rightly observed,
The production of 'cash crops' in Nigeria for export spearheaded the incorporation of the majority of Nigerians into the colonial capitalist economy, constituted the springboard for the series of factors that led to the entrenchment of capitalist relations of production, and dominated the sources of transfer of economic surplus to Britain (Onimode, 1982, p.43).

It was from the accumulated surplus extracted by the colonial state from the peasants that the state was able to finance the provision of social services and infrastructure. In order to obtain the cash-crops for export from the rural areas the colonial state had to construct roads, railways and seaports. Forced labour was used to construct these projects at the initial stage.

In establishing its authority the colonial state abolished the authority and the intermediary role of coastal traders, the payment of tolls and interference by Nigerian chiefs, especially coastal ones, with free movement of goods. The activities of European firms, for example, the Royal Niger Company, and their agents were brought under the jurisdiction of the government and the courts.

The monetisation of the economy and the introduction of wage-labour which went hand in hand with the expansion in export trade and the growth of the colonial administration further drew Nigerians into the colonial economy. Apart from this the gains that petty-commodity producers, agents of mercantile firms and ruling chiefs derived from the colonial economy "helped to reconcile Nigerians to colonial rule, though without ever eliminating resistance to the imposition of colonial authority throughout the country, and gave a certain substance to the 'Dual Mandate', which served alongside cruder notions of racial superiority and white-man's burden to justify colonial rule and the profit of colonial commerce" (G. Williams, 1980, p.27).

As we said earlier, land continued to be vested in family-holdings. There was no attempt to deprive the peasants of their land and attempts at commercial agriculture were unsuccessful. The land policy of the colonial administration, as announced by Hugh Clifford, was that it "should aim primarily, mainly and eventually at the development of the agricultural resources of these countries through the agency of their indigenous inhabitants" (quoted in Coleman, 1958, p.436, fn.10). Clifford also rejected the proposal for the setting up of commercial plantations. One
possible reason for this could be that the expropriation of land from the indigenous people would have been against the indirect rule policy which principally was aimed at minimal disruption of the native population. It could also mean that the colonial administration found it cheaper to maintain peasant production than the setting up of plantations. Capitalist production was limited to the Jos tin mines while the state developed the coal fields at Enugu (Williams, 1980, p.27).

The form of exploitation of the peasantry and capital accumulation was at the level of exchange. This was through the agency of the Marketing Boards which bought the cash-crops from the peasants, thus depriving them of the full benefit of the profitable world prices for their produce, (see Table 1.1). In November 1939 partly in an effort to prosecute the Second World War, the British government set up a statutory corporation, the West African Produce Control Board, as the sole body to purchase, export and market all West African agricultural products. Large expatriate firms were appointed by the board as their buying agents to the exclusion of Nigerian traders who were unable to compete with the foreign firms. This arrangement enabled the state to buy crops at below world prices thus withholding the income from the farmers and transferring it to the state and its beneficiaries (Williams and Turner, 1978, p.138).

This extractive role of the colonial state through the marketing board also prevented the formation of indigenous capital. A good percentage of the earnings from the agricultural produce was retained in Britain in the form of British security to finance Britain's sterling and balance of payments. In 1954 these retained surpluses were £120 million reaching £288 million in 1961. This mode of appropriation was to continue after independence. It was to be used by Nigerian politicians to "finance their political and commercial activities, the expansion of the state administration and development projects with which they would reward themselves and their constituents (and) the creation and expansion of a commercial and a bureaucratic bourgeoisie" (Williams and Turner, ibid, see also G. Williams, 1985). Though agriculture and peasant production as the main source of capital accumulation was to give way to rent and royalty from oil in the 70s, the state continued to appropriate a good part of the payments for export crops through the commodity boards which replaced the marketing boards in the 70s.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cocoa</th>
<th>Palm-Oil</th>
<th>Palm-Kernel</th>
<th>Groundnut</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>98.4</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>39.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>32.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>22.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>68.5</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>45.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>60.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>1948–52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>70.8</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>43.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>45.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>96.2</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>58.4</td>
<td>46.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>72.1</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>54.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>59.2</td>
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<td>1954–57</td>
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The appointment of European firms as agents to the Marketing Boards was to further consolidate their dominance in the colonial economy. The foreign firms had an edge over local businessmen. For instance, the expatriate firms had better access to credit facilities from commercial banks which were predominantly foreign owned and controlled. In this instance, metropolitan capital had a near monopoly of commercial activities during this period and this gave the foreign firms an advantage in the competition with the emerging indigenous business elite.

The appointment of the foreign firms as sole buying agents by the Marketing Board, their near total monopoly of trading activities and other restrictive and monopolistic practices, increased the resentment of the rising Nigerian elite to colonial administration and foreign commercial interests. As James Coleman said "This near-totality of economic power exercised by a small group of European firms, together with apparent governmental support or toleration of that power, gave rise to a popular image of alien collusion and exploitation" (Coleman, op. cit. p.81).

Suffice it to say that this was the root of economic nationalism in Nigeria.

The produce trade created a pool of Nigerian middlemen who also fed off the sweat of the peasantry. It was estimated that they numbered about 100,000 during the inter-war years (Coleman, ibid, p.83). They served as intermediaries through whom the mercantile firms bought goods from and sold to their customers in the hinterland. Some of them were also able to exploit the opportunities created by the development of roads to become transporters of goods and men. These indigenous traders were linked to the European firms by ties of credit and clientage at one end and the peasants on the other. Despite these complex market relations there were conflicts at all levels - among the traders, between farmers and the Nigerian middlemen and between the latter and the trading firms. African traders at various times made efforts to be independent of the European firms; for example by establishing their own banks and/or by attempts to export their goods directly overseas. But all such efforts failed. They could not match the resources of the mercantile firms who seemed to enjoy the support of the colonial government and definitely that of their parent companies at home. The monopoly created by the establishment of the 1939 Marketing Board also limited the ability of Nigerians to accumulate capital for investment and therefore, to challenge the European firms.
Another effect of colonialism and the shift to a money economy was
the advent of wage labour. The colonial economy and administration
required few permanent wage-earners and those needed were usually employed
to perform menial duties, especially at the beginning. The government
was the main employer of labour. Efforts were made to employ as few
workers as possible so as to keep many people on the farm to produce cash
crops. According to James Coleman, by 1938 about 150,000 persons were in
some kind of wage employment. In 1948 the figure increased to 260,000,
that is about four percent of the total adult male population. The
figure for 1951 was slightly above 300,000 out of a population of
30 million. Coleman went on to calculate that in 1948 salary and wages
made up ten percent of the total money income of the country; the
remaining 90 percent went to the agricultural producers in the
commercialised sector of the economy (Coleman, 1958, p. 68).

Just as the fortunes of the peasants and traders were dependent on
the vagaries of the export trade or more precisely on the needs of the
British economy, so also were the wage-earners. But unlike the peasants,
the wage-earners did take action to advance their interests. More will be
said on this in the next chapter.

As the colonial administration expanded, more educated Nigerians
were produced and employed by the government, the missions and the
commercial houses. This need for more educated Nigerians saw to the
expansion in education and also to the emergence of one of the
contradictions in colonialism which accelerated its formal liquidation.
Just as the aspirations of the middlemen traders were being blocked by the
European firms, educated Nigerians were being denied access to the
lucrative posts in the colonial service while those who were politically
ambitious were not allowed to 'participate' in the decision making
process. They were treated as inferior to their European counterparts.
This discrimination and the general resentment against the colonial state
were universalised by the educated and business elite; and formed the
rallying point for nationalist agitation from the late 19th century. As
we shall see later, the desire to win back part of the surplus being
appropriated by foreign capital was to be a major component of Nigeria's
nationalism and the ideological arsenal of the ruling class.

The sense of deprivation shared by all Nigerians created an
alignment of class forces under the educated elite to oppose colonialism and agitate for independence. This was to have some implication for the nature of politics. It promoted a type of nationalist politics overriding the issue of class. The small number of workers and their financial and organisational weakness further aided this development. As Petras has noted "The large concentrations of urban petty-capitalists and state employees over and against the industrial proletariat set the tone and direction of independence politics" (Petras, 1975, p.297).

Nevertheless colonialism altered the class structure of the Nigerian society just as it introduced new social relations of production. At the apex of the new structure was the imperialist bourgeoisie, mainly representatives of British colonial interests and administration. This ruling class was made up of Governors, Residents, District Officers, security officials (police and army), merchants and financiers. They and the representatives of other Western countries, Germany, France and the United States, constituted what Bade Onimode called the "imported aristocracy". This ruling class monopolised state power, dominated both economic and social structures and appropriated social surplus from the peasantry and the workers for themselves and other metropolitan interests.

Far below them are those groups of Africans made up of chiefs, the 'coastal aristocrats' of Lagos, Brass and Calabar, who continued to benefit from colonial trade due to their earlier contact with European traders during the mercantilist period; the group of professionals - lawyers, doctors, engineers, teachers and lastly the salariat - court clerks, soldiers and policemen and clerks in commercial houses. In this group were the businessmen. Distinguished from the rest of the indigenous population by their education and/or income they formed a petty-bourgeois class and it was largely a creation and the main beneficiary of colonialism. For instance, the system of 'indirect rule' consolidated the position of Emirs and Obas in the North and West respectively while in the East where none existed, warrant chiefs were created. These groups were to play a leading role in the struggle for formal political independence in alliance with the last class created by colonialism - the masses of workers, peasants and the labouring poor in general. The leading faction of the alliance, the educated elite was the main inheritors of state power and the privileges it conferred after independence.
The changes brought about by the Second World War and after dictated a change in the overall British policy towards her colonies. The basic thrust of the change was to associate the indigenous elite with the administration and increase its stake in the economy. This was, in the final analysis, to promote a process of decolonisation based on consensus rather than nationalist struggle.

The pace of nationalist agitation increased after the Second World War, and through a series of constitutional and administrative reforms the British 'prepared' the indigenous petty-bourgeois class to take-over the reins of government. The colonial government undertook to promote those it considered the 'responsible' elements among the Nigerian population and also influenced those to become politically powerful. As Ken Prost said "the British knew who their real enemies were", they were the Enugu coal miners, the Zikist movement and individuals like Imodu, Nigeria's number one labour leader (Post 1964). In 1947 a Conference of African Governors had fully discussed and endorsed the need "to associate the more energetic and progressive elements of the community with (the colonial) administration" and to secure "an identification of interests between these elements of the local population and the government" (quoted in Schatz, 1977, p.155).

It was clear that the colonial authority was looking for those whose outlook resembled those of the "official classes", that is members of the colonial service, European businessmen, missionaries, teachers. Such people were to be 'prepared' to govern according to British norms and values in politics and economics. To the colonialists, a good government for the colonies would only come about if the middle-class thus created continued to uphold their British upbringing and not deviate from the political education they had received from the British and the mission schools. A responsible transfer of power required the official classes to replace themselves by "an indigenous elite which had enjoyed a political education similar to their own", (Schatz, ibid). The objective of colonial education was to train up a Western-oriented political elite committed to the attitudes and ideologies of capitalism and bourgeois society. The colonialists' aim in fostering the growth of an African intelligentsia is to form local cadres called upon to become our assistants in all fields and to ensure the development of a carefully selected elite (Quoted in Onomode, 1982, p.127).
Though the indigenous elite was agitating for independence, its interests were not divergent from those of the colonialists. As Claude Ake has noted "They derived status from their proximity to the colonizer's culture. They had a vested interest in the colonizer's value system and in preserving some of their links with the colonizer's economy (Ake, 1978, p.85). The similarity between the indigenous elite and the colonial regime was evident in one crucial aspect of nationalist ideology. To convince the colonial government of their credentials and responsibility to assume power, and appeal to the liberal constituency in the metropole, the nationalist campaigned on a platform of liberal democracy. Liberal ideology is the political and ideological correlate of capitalism "which the nationalist leaders intended to retain and have retained" (Ake, ibid, pp.87-88). Writing in the same vein, Trevor Monroe said "... the frame of reference for the argument (for independence) ... had to be metropolitan. Hence opposition to Western rule has not usually meant opposition to Western institutions, but rather the affirmation of their necessity"(quoted in Wasserman, 1975, p.12).

What we are driving at is that the process of decolonisation was begun after the emergence of an indigenous elite capable of managing the established political economic framework without disrupting colonial interests. Within the metropole itself it was expected that less formal political control, for example through aid, and trade policies, educational and cultural assistance, would continue to remain such colonial interests (Wasserman, 1975). A discussion on British colonial policy came to the conclusion that,

... responsible government, far from being a separatist device, was simply a change from direct to indirect methods of maintaining British interests. By slackening the formal political bond at the appropriate time, it was possible to rely on economic dependence and mutual good-feeling to keep the colonies bound to Britain while still using them as agents for further British expansion (Robinson and Gallagher, 1953, p.

In line with the policy shift toward 'consensus', decolonisation was a change in government economic policy which stressed a more interventionist role for the colonial state. One area of this shift was the establishment of the Marketing Board as a monopoly producer buyer. Though the government's new policy was still dependent on the expatriate firms,
it now envisaged higher Nigerian participation. A clear statement in this direction came in 1945 from Sir Arthur Richard: "It is the policy of this government to work with Africans and with 'big business' in a tripartite partnership for the good of the people ... within the framework of government regulation, private enterprise has a great contribution to make to the future welfare of Nigeria..." (quoted in Coleman, 1958, p.80).

In implementing this policy, the colonial government made deliberate efforts to promote indigenous entrepreneurship. In 1946 it published the Ten-Year Programme of Development and Social Welfare for Nigeria. Part of this programme was the establishment of a Nigerian Local Development Board to aid "the growth of indigenous entrepreneurship directly through the granting of loans to Nigerian entrepreneurs" (Akeredolu-Ale, 1976, p.107). The post-war Labour government was interested in promoting some degree of modern development and industries unlike the pre-war years. The emphasis, however, was mainly on government assistance to the private sector which was dominated by British capital. For instance in the 1946 Programme the government indicated its readiness to reduce the initial capital requirements of new projects by executing important projects concerned with the development of infrastructure (Akeredolu-Ale, ibid). The Programme also advertised Nigeria's economic potential to foreign capital, thus opening up the country's economy to more competition.

Feeding on the petty-bourgeois nationalist aspirations of Nigerian elite and the clamour for Nigerianisation which was also growing in other areas, especially the civil service, the Department of Commerce and Industry announced the government's aim:

to develop secondary industries on the widest possible scale by methods that will ensure the maximum participation by Nigerians themselves in industrial enterprise (and) to provide all possible opportunities for Nigerian businessmen to take an increasing share in the trade of the country... The emphasis throughout is to develop industry and trade in such a way that Nigerians themselves will play an increasingly important part in the commercial life of the country. That is the main objective, and it is the general wish that should be pursued with vigour and with utmost possible speed (Quoted in Schatz, 1977, pp.4-5).

In line with these various policy changes by the colonial administration, the foreign firms also "carried out a strategic shift in
the nature of their operations in response to the opening up of international competition for access to the Nigerian market, local commercial aspirations and protectionist legislation" (Williams and Turner, 1978, p.138). Such firms now shifted to importing more expensive and capital intensive goods in response to the expanded market due to the state's transfer of income from farmers to wealthier consumers. Following the lead provided by the United African Company (UAC) many of them, mostly British owned, went into import-substitution manufacturing. Such manufacturing activities were mostly limited to consumer items formerly imported. In his analysis of the activities of these trading firms around the period, Peter Kilby found that all but one of the twenty-eight projects in which the UAC was involved were directly connected with marketing activities. The protectionist policy of the companies was evident in the UAC investment policy. According to Kilby, "As a general rule of thumb, UAC will only consider an industrial investment if it represents the protection of an established merchant interest, which is both sizeable and profitable" (Kilby, 1969, pp.68-69).

Sayre P. Schatz has described the main tenets of Nigeria's economic development orientation around this period to 1966 as "nurture-capitalism". The main elements of this development strategy - reliance on and nurture of private enterprise (capitalism), assistance to indigenous capital, nationalism and conflict and accommodation between foreign and local capital - are still features of Nigeria's economic development policy despite changes "in different phases of Nigerian development depending on the relative strengths of nationalism and universality in business nurturance, the level of government investment in directly productive activities, the degree of emphasis on Welfare, and other factors" (Schatz, ibid, p.4).

As Nigerians took over the reins of government in the '50s the nationalistic aspect of nurture-capitalism became more prominent and was actively promoted by governments both at the centre and in the regions. But Nigerian businessmen could not muster the needed resources - finance, manpower and infrastructure, to bring the aim to fruition as quickly as the government could have wanted. As such, the duty fell on the government to provide these resources and act as the engine of growth. In the mid-50s, government corporations including banks, and industrial development and loans boards were established to be involved in productive activities
either intended to be as profitable ventures or assist indigenous investors. But there was a difference between government stated policy on these bodies and actual performance. Due to political interference, low level of managerial and executive capacity, corruption and outright inefficiency, many of the corporations failed. This led the government to place more emphasis on foreign investment, further reinforcing the country's dependence on international finance capital.

Another factor that led to this was the drop in the country's foreign exchange. Beginning from 1955 the demand for the country's products in the international market dropped. This was due to the economic recession in Europe. At the same time, synthetic substitutes were developed to replace some agricultural products like cotton and rubber. Moreover, other countries also expanded their production of primary products. These led to price fluctuations and a fall in government revenue. This was at a time of an increase in import bills. The country started to have balance-of-payment problems and had to draw on its reserves. This weak financial position as against the pre-1956 buoyancy was reflected in the 1955/56 - 1961/62 Development Plan which envisaged that 22% of all investment funds was to come from foreign sources "the highest percentage at any time" (Nnoh, 1961, p.124).

In order to attract foreign investments, the State provided finance and tax incentives, subsidies and protection.*1 Information was supplied about the country's industrial potentials. All these inducements were reinforced by assurances that no nationalisation of foreign assets would be undertaken.*2 For example, Dr. Azikwe as Premier of Eastern Nigeria gave such an assurance when he said:

The only way of attracting these industrial development pre-requisites from overseas is to ensure for those who provide them unstinted co-operation, confidence, security and opportunities to earn adequate rewards for their capital and skill ... and we against arbitrary nationalisation (Quoted in Usoro, 1974, p.245, fn 2).

Foreign investments increased from ₦23.4 million in 1954 to ₦41 million in 1959/60.


Neo-Colonial Political Economy

What the above discussion has shown is, as Gavin Williams has said, that colonialism had firmly established "the material and institutional foundations for the development of the neo-colonial political economy" (Williams, 1980, p.33). Having been groomed in the capitalist development ethos the Nigerian elite, which in the main had been produced and nurtured by imperialism held on to them:

Colonial rule thus gave rise to indigenous business and administrative classes, committed to a regulated market economy, and a strategy of development based on technologically advanced forms of production, and a complex and rationalised administration of government which would ensure their continued dependence on metropolitan capitalism (Williams, ibid, pp.33-34).

Through a series of political, constitutional and economic measures complimented by the activities of the nationalist petty-bourgeoisie, the country became politically independent in 1960. But the independence failed to change the legacy of British colonial economic policy. This "in economic terms, the birth of the new nation was aborted" laying the "firm foundation for future neo-colonial underdevelopment and instability in post-colonial Nigeria" (Onimode, 1982, p.133). Though the nationalist leaders were interested in gaining control of the means of production for themselves and their party stalwarts, they confused economic independence with political control, "assuming that if political independence was won, it automatically meant economic control as well" (Post, 1964, p.172). As Akeredolu-Ale has observed the "failure to marry political and economic nationalism from the start is one of the aspects of the inauthentic nationalism which has made it easy for foreign capital to consolidate its dominant position" (Akeredolu-Ale, 1976, p.109). Another commentator on the politics of decolonisation in Nigeria concluded that "through their control of the political process of decolonisation, the British promoted class and power relations which would ensure the continued domination of Nigeria by international capitalism" (Williams, 1980, p.35, see Post, 1964 for a similar view). In essence by 1960 Nigeria exhibited the basic features of a neo-colonial economy which had been delineated by Kwame Nkrumah (1965) and James Petras (1975) among others.

According to Nkrumah "the essence of neo-colonialism is that the state which is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all the
trappings of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside" (Nkrumah, ibid, p.xi). Petras went further to outline the main features in detail:

In the neo-colonial model (or development) the national bourgeoisie serves as a means of heightening imperial exploitation in order to extract a share of the surplus for itself... Coercion, and a demobilized population, open access to raw materials, tax and other 'incentives' to foreign investors characterize policy. The form of joint exploitation vary greatly, expressing the difference in bargaining power between the national and imperial bourgeoisie. Under conditions of total foreign control of the economy the national bourgeoisie obtains tax revenue. Under conditions of partnership in which majority ownership and management prerogatives are in foreign hands, the national bourgeoisie obtains a minority share of earnings plus tax revenues. Whatever the specifics, the foreign component is clearly dominant in internal as well as external relations (Petras, 1975, p.299).

This characterisation underlines some crucial features of Nigeria's economy since independence. First they bring out the difference between nominal power bestowed on the political faction of the national bourgeoisie at independence, and effective power still in the hands of the departing colonial masters and foreign capital in the direction and management of the economy. The indigenous policy makers have accepted the inherited economic system believing that some adjustments could make it more efficient and rational. Part of such adjustments were increased in state support for indigenous private capital and Nigerianisation. All the political parties at independence were committed to a 'free enterprise' economic system and deployed their powers over fiscal policies to create favourable conditions for the evolution of a Nigerian bourgeois class (Osoba, 1977, p.369).

The other point about the mechanisms and features of neo-colonialism is that it is collaborative. It needs to maintain and protect its operations from opposing class forces. It is strategically and politically necessary for the dominant foreign capital to seek and be in active alliance and cooperation with the internal dominant political and economic classes. Through its alliance with foreign capital and the process of its historical formation the Nigerian bourgeois class has been incorporated by foreign capital "both as a means of rationalising their participation and domination of the economy and as a form of political
insurance" (Falola and Ihomubere, 1985, pp.245-246). According to S.G. Ikoku, in the '50s and '60s it became fashionable to appoint Nigerians as "honorary directors of foreign companies operating in Nigeria in order to make use of their positions in politics to further the interests of those companies" (quoted in Osoba, 1977, pp.373-4).

Senator Nwafor Orizu, who felt concerned at the practice, was quoted as saying:

The trend now is to call every company a Nigerian company. That is, somebody is appointed from outside, a Nigerian, one foolish man, who is usually given a big salary, so that they can call the company Nigerian. He has nothing to do with the company (ibid).

As we have shown above, this comprador class was created by the colonial state and has been using the post-colonial state to develop and consolidate itself as an ally of foreign capital. Through the policy of indigenisation, which is discussed below, the national bourgeoisie has been able to use the state to reserve for itself certain areas of economic activities to the exclusion of foreign capital but careful enough not to disrupt the relationship between the two. In this wise the Nigerian state now tries to manage the affairs of both in the process of accumulation.

The industrial development strategy at independence was restricted to import-substitution which was in the interest of the emerging dominant class and foreign capital. This policy and the structural factors inherent in the economy "biased investment ... toward consumption goods such as food, drink, textiles and cement, and to the neglect of producers' goods and agricultural inputs such as fertilizers" (Usoro, op. cit. p.251). A study of Nigeria's economy up to 1966 shows that industries producing cigarettes, beer, cement and textiles were responsible for 40% of industrial output and 21% of industrial employment in the sector employing ten or more workers (Kilby, op. cit. p.81). This investment pattern meant higher import bills and a balance of payment deficit.

In his analysis of the first post-independent Development Plan (1962-68), Aboyade said "There appears to be an emphasis on import-substitution activities in high-quality consumer goods, which may involve a relatively higher import content and swell the balance-of-payment deficit" (Aboyade, 1962, p.113). Aboyade went on to describe the plan as "too conservative" and in terms of social philosophy, hollow and soulless.
It was planned that 50% of the total capital expenditure during the plan period would come from foreign sources. This plan and subsequent ones were not designed to change the basic economic orientation and the overarching social order but "rather to enable the existing system to function more efficiently" (Tom Kemp, 1983, p.162).

Post-independent Nigerian economy was once described as "Open to international trade to an unusual degree ... free entry to foreign capital, foreign entrepreneurship and foreign technical skills has been of central importance to industrial development" (Kilby, op. cit. p.1). This openness of the economy has grown wider over the years. This is reflected in a rise of the size ratio from 20 to 32 percent between 1950 and 1970 (Fajana, 1979, p.225).

The point we would like to stress from the above discussion is that the industrial development strategy which stressed the importance of private investment under government encouragement and in many instances, partnership, has encouraged the dominance of multinational companies in the Nigerian economy as it has equally aided the development and consolidation of an indigenous bourgeois class, albeit a comprador one. The predominance of British capital has been challenged by American, Japanese, German and French capital, especially since the oil boom of the 70s. Thus the exploitation of Nigerian human and natural resources has become multilateralized.

The indigenous bourgeoisie under the direction of its political faction especially the bureaucratic-military oligarchy established in the wake of the oil boom has further integrated itself with foreign capital in the form of indigenisation of the economy, which is more or less, an exercise in defining the area of competence for foreign and local capital to reduce conflict of interests between them. In the process, the local bourgeois class has tried to win for itself a greater share of social surplus without necessarily having greater control of the economy. The advent of oil wealth also changed the source of capital accumulation from peasant production to rent and royalty from petroleum which has however, further deepened the country's external dependence. Before we pursue further the effect of the oil boom on Nigeria's socio-economic structure in the 70s, we shall discuss the dominance of the Nigerian economy by foreign multinational companies and round off this section of the chapter with a
brief look at party politics which buttressed the economic order of the 60s.

Multinational Dominance

An outcome of import-substitution industrialisation is the dominant position of multinational companies in Nigeria's neo-colonial capitalist economy:

... since flag independence in 1960, the subsidiaries of giant multinational corporations (MNCs) have emerged as the powerful catalysts of multilateral imperialism in Nigeria. They are the Trojan horses whose monopoly capital and advanced technology, backed by enormous political pressure from their home governments, constitute the dominant mechanism for integrating this (Nigeria) and other Third World countries more closely and more pervasively, into the international system of capitalist domination (Onimode, 1982, p.137).

As the literature of MNCs has shown, their operations are more in the interest of the mother, mainly Western, countries than those of the Third World. They distort the economic and social structures of such fragile Third World countries. They promote skills which could, in most cases only be supplied by the middle-class. The employment of members of the educated elite by the foreign firms compliments their training and educational background in creating socio-economic, political and policy outlooks and interests which are more likely to accord with those of the multinational companies and the metropolitan powers. Local production and imports are more likely to be oriented toward consumer and luxury goods rather than basic or intermediate and producers' commodities. This policy like many others consolidates the dependence of the local economy on Western economies and foreign monopoly capital.

Bade Onimode summarised the Nigerian case as follows:

... domination of import substitution by foreign monopoly capital causes a clash of interests between the importing-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, cooperation with domestic enterprises, industrial exports, employment creation, industrial dispersal, etc. But 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, 1982, p.183).

Onimode went on to conclude that:

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 organisational superiority, market power, investment dispersal and political support of their imperialist home governments. In most cases the client country loses; this is why, in spite of capitalist indigenisation in Nigeria, the MNCs remain comfortably dominant (Onimode, ibid).

To illustrate this dominant position—of multinational corporations in the Nigerian economy we take a brief look at certain sectors of the economy.

Manufacturing

The structure of manufacturing in Nigeria has not changed much since the 60s; though it has experienced high growth rate, rising from 3.6% of the GNP in 1960 to 9.5% in 1970 falling to 4.1% in 1972 and 4.7% in 1975. The decline in the 70s was due to the predominance of oil. Much of manufacturing is characterized by low technology and dependent on high level of imported component (see Table 1.2).

The sector is dominated by consumer-based industries which accounts for 60% of output. According to the London Financial Times (F.T.), beer and cigarettes account for one-third of gross output, cotton textiles for 16% while soaps, detergents and vegetable oils account for a further 12.5% (F.T. January 23, 1984). Quoting World Bank studies the FT survey shows that such manufacturing industries "have obtained substantial higher levels of protection than either the intermediate or capital goods sectors". The survey also shows that industries processing imported raw materials obtain twice the level of effective protection than those using local materials: "Protection is highest in the assembly industries—vehicles and electrical equipment and lowest in export industries" (ibid).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry Group</th>
<th>% Raw Material Imported</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dairy products</td>
<td>40.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grain-mill products</td>
<td>99.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous food products</td>
<td>60.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal feeds</td>
<td>35.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beer brewing</td>
<td>46.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft drinks</td>
<td>45.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made-up textile goods (except wearing apparel)</td>
<td>79.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpets and rugs</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper containers, boxes and board</td>
<td>44.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic industrial chemicals</td>
<td>87.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fertilisers and pesticides</td>
<td>43.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs and medicines</td>
<td>45.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other chemical products</td>
<td>61.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyres and tubes</td>
<td>44.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pottery products</td>
<td>92.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass products</td>
<td>65.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concrete products (other than cement, bricks and tiles)</td>
<td>44.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 1.3: Structure of Enumerated Manufacturing by Value Added and Employment, 1972

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industries</th>
<th>Value Added (percentages)</th>
<th>Employment (percentages)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consumer Goods</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foodstuffs</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beverages</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cigarettes</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textiles</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footwear and clothing</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture and fixtures</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soap, detergents and pharmaceuticals</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plastic products</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intermediate Goods</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leather</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saw timber</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper products</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical products</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petroleum products</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubber products</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-metallic mineral products</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mechanical Industries</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinery, excluding electrical</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical machinery</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor vehicle assembly</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other metallic products</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unallocated</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>62.7</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These assembly-industries (Peugeot, Volkswagen, Leyland, Steyr, Mercedes, Benz, Sanyo, National Electric) are subsidiaries of Western and Japanese multinational companies.

The predominance of low technology light-industries in the Nigerian industrial structure is further shown in Table 1.3. Two types of industries, foodstuffs, beverages and tobacco, and textile, footwear and clothing contributed more than half of the total value added of nearly ₦500 million and about the same proportion of total employment of 168,000. In contrast, production of intermediate goods is very weak while engineering and heavy industries are negligible. Intermediate production is largely in petroleum refining, sawmilling, tyre manufacturing and cement and concrete products.

Three groups lead the manufacturing sector in the Nigerian economy. These are UAC of Nigeria, Lonrho and Unilever. There are a lot of inter-locking relationships among these companies. For instance, UAC Technical is jointly owned by the UAC and Unilever. These interlocking relationships and inter-sectoral linkages correspond to what exists in the advanced capitalist countries. As evident from Tables 1.4a-c these companies are mostly involved in distribution and retailing. Such companies as the Kingsway Stores, GEO, Gottschalk, John Holt and others like the R.T. Briscoe, SCOA, CPAQ, UTA and BEAM are all trading stores.

Finance and Banking

The finance and banking sector is also dominated by foreign-owned banks and insurance firms. Despite government participation in these financial institutions they are still predominantly controlled by expatriates. The leading banks are First Bank of Nigeria (formerly Standard Bank (Nig.) Ltd.), Union Bank (formerly Barclay's Bank), United Bank for Africa Ltd., Savannah Bank (formerly Bank of America), Bank for West Africa, Chase Merchant Bank, International Merchant Bank and the Nigerian Acceptance Ltd. The leading Insurance companies are American International Insurance Co. (Nig.) Ltd., British/American Insurance Co. (Nig.) Ltd. and British India General Insurance.

The finance companies offer an important resource base for other MNCs and under various pretext discriminate against Nigerian companies and also favour short and medium term loans.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Year of Incorporation</th>
<th>Authorised Capital (N)</th>
<th>Issued Capital (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African Timber &amp; Plywood (Nig.) Ltd.</td>
<td>1952</td>
<td>2,500,000</td>
<td>2,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niger Motors Ltd.</td>
<td>1931</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finets Ltd.</td>
<td>1935</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Gottschalk &amp; Co. (West Africa) Ltd.</td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>700,000</td>
<td>700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UAC Technical Ltd.</td>
<td>1947</td>
<td>600,000</td>
<td>700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.B. Ollivant (Nig.) Ltd.</td>
<td>1954</td>
<td>5,000,000</td>
<td>3,300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pan Electric Ltd.</td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingsway Stores (Nig.) Ltd.</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>4,000,000</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Lam Plant Hire (Nig.) Ltd.</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>160,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.J. Seward (Nig.) Ltd.</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West African Cold Storage Co. (Nig.) Ltd.</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bordpark Ltd.</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>800,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingsway Chemist (Nig.) Ltd.</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premier Packaging Ltd.</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>90,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 1.4b: LONRHO LTD. - SUBSIDIARIES AND ASSOCIATES IN NIGERIA, 1975-76

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company Name</th>
<th>Subsidiary/Associate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Holt Properties (Nig.) Ltd.</td>
<td>P.S. Manrides &amp; Co. Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Properties (Nig.) Ltd.</td>
<td>Maiduguri Oil Mills Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Holt Ltd.</td>
<td>Nigerian Net &amp; Twine Co. Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holt Engineering Ltd.</td>
<td>John Holt Investment Co. Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haco Ltd.</td>
<td>Holts Nigerian Tanneries Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haco Plastics Ltd.</td>
<td>Nigerian Enamelware Co. Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Holt Shipping Services Ltd.</td>
<td>Phoenix Motors Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West African Drug Co. Ltd.</td>
<td>Pito Industries Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Holt Rubber Co. Ltd.</td>
<td>Kaduna Textile Mills Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holts Transport Ltd.</td>
<td>Star Motors Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niger Traders Ltd.</td>
<td>David Whitehead &amp; Sons (Nig.) Ltd.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 1.4c: UNILEVER LTD. - SUBSIDIARIES AND ASSOCIATES IN NIGERIA, 1975-76

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company Name</th>
<th>Subsidiary/Associate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African Timber &amp; Plywood (Nig.) Ltd.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boodpak Ltd.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Gottschalk &amp; Co. (West Africa) Ltd.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinness (Nig.) Ltd.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingsway Stores (Nig.) Ltd.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lever Brothers (Nig.) Ltd.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lipton of Nigeria Ltd.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria Motors Ltd.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Breweries Ltd.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norspin Ltd. (Textiles)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.B. Ollivant (Nig.) Ltd.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parmal (Nig.) Ltd.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.A.C. (Nig.) (Holding Co.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.A.C. Technical Ltd.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Onomode, Bade (1982), pp.146-147.
In building and construction, which has experienced a phenomenal growth since the 70s, the MNCs also dominate. Oil revenue stimulated a huge construction boom in the 70s which largely favoured big foreign companies. Such giant companies like West German Julius Berger, Dumez and Strabag; Guftanti, Stirling and Cappa and D'alberto from Italy; Taylor Woodrow, Tilbury and Wimpey of Britain and Solel Boneh from Israel have made huge profits from extravagant and lavish contract awards of the oil boom era totalling over ₦10 billion.

The above discussion has aimed the feature of Nigeria's economy, the alliance of foreign and local bourgeoisie who substantially benefit from this system at the expense of the peasants, workers and urban poor. This discussion provides the backdrop against which we should see the post-independent politics, the struggle of various classes and the intervention of the military in 1966.

**Party Politics, 1960-66**

What is known as Nigeria today was the result of the 1914 amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates which in themselves were the merging together of peoples of different socio-cultural background by the British. But for various reasons the North was not effectively brought into the general framework of the country until the Richard constitution of 1946 (Dudley, 1982, p.42). For instance, the North was not allowed to participate in the Legislative Council created in 1923.

Following the creation of the council the man known as the father of Nigerian nationalism, Herbert Macaulay, organised the Nigeria National Democratic Party (NNDP) to contest the three seats allocated to Lagos in the council. This party and others, for example the Nigeria Youth Movement formed in 1938, created around this period were more interested in the parochial issues concerning Lagos and the emerging educated elite. It was not until after the second world war that the political parties that were to dominate Nigerian politics emerged. The first and the most prominent by this time was the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) (it later changed its name to the National Convention of Nigerian Citizens) formed in 1944. Founded more as a nationalist front than a political party, it was led by Herbert Macaulay and after his death, by Dr. Nnamdi Azikwe.
In March 1950 Chief Obafemi Awolowo led a group of Yoruba professionals and businessmen to found the Action Group (AG) which, more or less, was the transformation of an existing Yoruba cultural organisation, Egbe Omo Oduduwa. The AG according to Dudley was a "caucus party" deriving its support from the business class of merchants, transporters, contractors and the educated elite (Dudley, 1982, p.47).

The pace of political activities in the South, especially the incursion of the NCNC in Northern Nigeria aroused the suspicion of Northern elite which made them to start organising themselves at various levels. Thus, they formed the third main political party of the first republic (1960-66), the Northern Peoples Congress. It came into existence in 1951 out of their cultural organisation, the Jam'iyyar Mutanen Arewa (JMA) formed in 1948. The NPC was very particularistic in its orientation and philosophy. It was out to defend the aristocratic privileges of the Northern elite. Its membership was restricted to "people of Northern Nigerian descent". Its motto was "One North; One People, Irrespective of Religion, Rank or Tribe". It was this aristocratic and particularist orientation of the NPC that made a more progressive wing of the Northern elite to group around Aminu Kano in the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) which identified itself with the interests of the TALAKAWA - the downtrodden.

There were other minor political parties. The most prominent of these was the United Middle Belt Congress consisting of minority, mainly Christian ethnic groups in the Benue - Plateau area of the country and opposed to the NPC.

As Professor Dudley has said, the main impetus to Nigeria's political evolution came from the dialectical interplay between the colonial administration and the Nigerian political elite, "an interplay from which emerged a similarity of interest between the colonial praetors and the first-order coalitions"* (Dudley, 1973, p.35). The identity of interest was mainly concerned with the 'transfer of power' by the colonial administration to Nigerian politicians. A crucial element in this transfer was the regionalization of the country into predominantly cultural areas.

* According to him the first-order coalitions are the NPC, NCNC and AG while he termed the NEPU, UMBC and other smaller 'minority' parties as second-order coalitions (Dudley, 1973, pp.30-36).
Presumably for administrative convenience the 1946 Richard Constitution divided the country into three regions, thus effectively ushering in regionalism and in effect 'tribalism' as a language of political discourse. The division of the country into three separate regions was further consolidated by the 1951 MacPherson constitution:

It was therefore hardly surprising that as the elite intensified their opposition, the strategy of decolonisation should be dictated by the coalitions territorially associated with these culture areas and that, in the process, a division allegedly administratively necessitated should take on a more political form and character (Dudley, 1973, p.32).

During the process of decolonization, the educated elite of the three main political parties (AG, NCNC, NPC) in alliance with the business and commercial elite and traditional rulers were able to consolidate their hold on each of the three regions, inheriting the paraphernalia of offices created by the colonial government. By the 1950s, political competition along regional/ethnic lines had been firmly established while party politics became a veritable arena for capital accumulation. In the words of Richard Sklar "In every region, the party waxed fat in its house of patronage" (Sklar, 1965, p.203). By 1956 it looked as if the parties had reached a "gentleman's" agreement that none was to reach beyond its area of authority and influence. By 1957 the West and East became internally self-governing. In the intense struggle for domination and hegemonic control, the politicians had to resort to the least costly strategy; ethnicity. "Political regionalism", as a student of Nigerian politics has observed, "was a conservative strategy that facilitated the use of ethnic and sectional prejudice by dominant class elements as a weapon against challenges from below" (Sklar, 1979, pp.547-8). In a largely illiterate society the language of primoedalism and communal parochialism:

had the advantage of not only being easy to communicate—imbued as such discourse is with a symbolism to which the non-educated, the peasant farmer and labourer, has been socialized - but also of providing the most efficient way of creating a solidarity group using the least effort (Dudley, 1973, p.33).

In operating this system the petty-bourgeois class in charge of the parties and regional governments established a network of patron-client relationship with rewards - jobs, contract, social services and projects -
going to the favoured groups and loyal 'supporters' where they received 10 per cent from contract awards. The various parties were financed from money illegally siphoned from public corporations and banks and marketing boards.* Through the marketing boards, as we mentioned above, the state was able to appropriate surplus from peasants and this was deployed in satisfying the needs of the petty-bourgeois class. Politics during this period, as Gavin Williams pointed out:

was the competition among, and the alliance 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, p.74).

All political calculations were based on the selfish interests of the bourgeoisie. Compromises were worked out, accepted and broken not on the basis of any noble ideals or principles but "as the price of access to state office and thus to revenues of the state" (ibid). For instance, apart from the shared antipathy the NCNC and NPC leadership had for the AG, the NCNC went into an alliance with the NPC after the 1959 because it calculated that such an alliance would yield better dividends in terms of Federal appointments and patronage than an alliance with the Action Group (Dudley, 1973, pp.62-63).

Another example was the issue of creation of more states. While each of the parties was consolidating its hold on the region it controlled, it was supporting minority and/or separatist opposition movements or parties in the other two regions. Thus the AG was in alliance with the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) in the North and the United National Independence Party (UNIP) in the East while the NCNC and the NPC were supporting the creation of the Mid-West out of the AG controlled Western Region. The NCNC was also in alliance with Aminu Kano's NEPU in its struggle with the NPC in the North while the NPC was supporting the Niger Delta Congress (NDC) against the NCNC. This maze of marriages of

* See Coker Commission of Inquiry Report on the Western Region and the AG and the 1957 Forster-Sutton Commission into the affairs of the African Continental Bank which found Dr. Azikwe, the Premier of Eastern Region, guilty of 'conduct unbecoming of a Premier'.
convenience were identified by Richard Sklar as one of the three contradictions in the pre-1966 Nigerian political system (Sklar, 1965). The other two were those between economic and 'political' power, and between leadership strata.

The last contradiction was clearly manifested in the AG though not limited to it. The exclusion of the party from the centre was to unearth the divisions within the party leadership. The AG was at its inception an amalgam of three elements of the Yoruba petty-bourgeoisie - the traditional rulers, businessmen and the educated professionals. The inner elite, making up the Federal Executive Council was made up of the intelligentsia (62.5%) and the Commercial elite (37.5%). However, the party was dependent on the commercial faction for finance and its electoral fortune. Among the intelligentsia were radical/ Marxist socialists who were more national in outlook than the right wing commercial elite. The radical wing (S.G. Ikoku, Ayo Fasammi, Victor Oyenuga) were to increasingly gain the support of the party leader, Chief Obafemi Awolowo after a period of cautious treatment by the party leadership. At the 1962 Jos Convention one of the Marxist intellectuals, S.G. Ikoku, became the Secretary-General. Also at the convention the party decided to adopt socialism as its ideology. This was unacceptable to the commercial/conservative faction led by the Deputy Leader, Chief S.L. Akintola who was then premier of the Western Region. They decided to pull out of the convention.

The Akintola wing was more accommodating in its approach to the NPC, which was in power at the Federal level and was ready to go into an alliance with it, while they remained secure in their political base in the West. (Of all the parties, AG's electoral support in its home base (West) was the most fragile and tenuous, always under threat from the NCNC and separatist movement from the Mid-West). But the left wing now actively supported by Chief Awolowo wanted to galvanise and articulate the apparent general mass grievances against the NPC and the Balewa government. For this, it sought to change the mode of political discourse from sectionalism/ethnicity to a more populist and universalistic one. True enough, through this ideological posture, the AG became the most national of all the parties before the 1966 coup. But the contradiction between the two wings of the party led to a crisis from which the party never recovered.
However, before the split, the division in the party was manifested over the issue of produce price to be paid to cocoa farmers in the West. This had generated a lot of rancour between Awolowo as the leader of the party and Akintola, the Premier. In 1961 the various governments in the country suffered some financial set back. This dictated that the Western Regional Government should exercise more stringent economy and raise additional revenue. The party recommended to the government a series of austerity measures which included a reduction in the salaries of Ministers. This did not go well with Akintola and his supporters.

Series of attempts were made to reconcile the two factions but to no avail. Akintola was later removed as the Deputy Party leader and Premier of the West but he refused to quit any of the two offices. In the power struggle that ensued, two sessions of the House of Assembly were disrupted during which the Mace, head and limbs were broken. The crisis led to the declaration of emergency in the Western region by the Federal Government. The partisan stand of the Federal Government controlled NPC was shown when the interim administration it appointed handed over to the Akintola faction which by then had formed a new party - the United Peoples' Party. The party was later changed to the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDFP) after some NCNC members in the West defected to join the UPP. Without any popular base or support, the NNDFP government had to rely on the Federal Government/NPC support to maintain its hold on power.

It seemed as if just as the AG was getting out of the crisis, it was getting into another. Just as it was losing the West, Chief Awolowo and twenty-five members of the party were charged with treasonable felony in 1964. In the trials, Awolowo and some of his men were found guilty and imprisoned.

The implication of the AG crisis was that it went beyond the party to engulf the whole of Western Region, thus affecting the 'three-legged' balance of which the country's political stability rested. It was to provide the evidence of the shaky foundation of the country's politics and the consensus apparently agreed by the three main parties.

At the Federal level the alliance between the NPC and the NCNC was
not faring well. The NCNC was becoming increasingly frustrated by its unfulfilled hope of getting a better deal out of the alliance. We should also note the ideological differences between the two parties - the NPC was a party of conservatism and stood uncompromisingly for the preservation of the feudal status-quo in the North, fighting to ward off any Southern incursion. It did not bother to broaden its base or its appeal. Against this was the NCNC's interest in 'entering' the North, its support for NEPU and its support for some form of Welfarism.

The 1964 census was to bring out the differences between the two parties and it ended their alliance. Population counting is a very sensitive issue in Nigeria because of its importance in revenue allocation and allocation of seats in the Federal parliament. The 1964 exercise was a follow-up to the 1962 one which was rejected "due largely to disturbing political influences and suspicions" (Aluko, 1965, p.381).* The Eastern and Mid-Western Governments and by implication the NCNC rejected the 1964 figures because they claimed the Northern figures were inflated. The figures were accepted by the North and West (the acceptance by the Western Region should be seen against the background of what we said above about the relationship between the Akintola's government and the NPC). Later the Mid-West, under the threat of having Federal aid of which the region depended withdrawn, also accepted the figures. The Eastern Region later challenged the figures at the Supreme Court but lost on a technical ground that the court had no authority to entertain the case.

With this defeat the NCNC had to find a way of improving its bargaining power. This it hoped was to be at the 1964 General Elections. Two broad coalitions emerged to 'fight' the elections - the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA) made up of the NPC and the NNDP, and the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) consisting of the AG and the NCNC. The choice of labels as Dudley has pointed out was significant. The 'National' in the NPC/NNDP alliance was to show that it was not a parochial alliance dominated by the NPC while the word 'Progressive' chosen by the UPGA was to demonstrate the antithesis represented by the two competing alliances - the UPGA representing radicalism and modernization against the forces of conservatism and feudalism represented by the NNA (Dudley, 1982, pp.67-8). The campaigns and the

* Up till now there is no reliable census figure in Nigeria, any number given is usually a guess. The last exercise, conducted in 1973 was cancelled in 1975.
outcome of the election led to a lot of violence especially in the West and a constitutional impasse at the centre. The President, Dr. Azikwe refused to call the Prime Minister to form a government. Before this, the President had enquired from the Head of the Armed Forces, Major-General Welby-Everard, whether the military would support him being the Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces. On his own part, the Prime Minister had also informed General Welby-Everard that the loyalty of the Military was to him as the Head of Government. On the intervention of the Chief Justice of the Federation and his regional counterparts, a compromise was reached but on the agreement that any government formed by the Prime Minister was to be 'broad-based' involving all the political parties.

The 1964 election revealed the weakness of the political system created in 1959. It also showed that for the political faction of the dominant class power was an end in itself and not necessarily a means for the realisation of greater 'good' for the society. The election also showed that any instrument was legitimate in the pursuit of political power. All 'rules of the game' were subverted for personal gains and thus the ethics of politics "becomes that of privatization, the preoccupation of the individual with his personal rather than his social situation" (Dudley, ibid).

The resolution of the constitutional crisis also demonstrated one of the main features of politics of national unity or ethnic balancing. As we have argued above, this is mainly the reconciliation of the interests of the dominant ethnic factions of the Nigerian dominant class. In this situation, principles and policies were easily sacrificed for personal advancement. As Gavin Williams rightly observes, "The definition of appropriate solidarities and the choice of political alliances is made according to calculations of relative advantages and political judgement" (Williams, 1980, p.70).

In this highly politicised competition and jockeying for personal advantages "Question of foreign domination, class power and state policy are ignored or evaded. Bourgeois domination, the purpose and foundation of such politics, is taken for granted" (Williams and Turner, 1978, p.171).

The three-legged edifice crumbled following the heavily rigged
election into the Western Regional Assembly in October 1965. The NNDP backed by the Federal Government and the NPC 'won' the election. The electorate refused to accept this 'victory' and they rebelled. The NNDP further alienated the people by cutting the price paid to cocoa farmers from £110 to £60 a ton. This, plus the electoral fraud the party had committed, "opened the flood-gates for violence and revolt". There was widespread rioting, and arson all over the Western Region which the government was incapable of containing. Its main backer and ally, the NPC turned a blind eye. In fact the Prime Minister, Balewa declared that things were normal and everything was under control, (Ademoyega, 1981, p.22). On January 15, 1966 the military struck in a bloody coup thus ushering in a stretch of thirteen years of military rule which temporarily ended on October 1, 1979.

Military Rule

During the Military take-over the Prime Minister, the Premiers of the West and North, the Federal Finance Minister and some senior military officers mostly from the North were killed. However, despite all the killings the Majors, mostly of Ibo origin, who led the coup failed to successfully carry out the operations in Lagos, Enugu and Benin. This led to charges of sectionalism in the execution of the coup and subsequent split between Southern officers and their Northern counterparts who threatened to secede. In the uncertain political atmosphere, the General Officer Commanding, Major-General Aguyi Ironsi took over power as the Head of State.

Ironsi's policies, for example the introduction of unitary system of government, promotion in the army and appointment of advisers seemed to have given credence to charges that the coup was sectional, an Ibo's coup to dominate Nigeria. On July 29, 1966 the Northern Officers struck in a counter-coup which claimed Ironsi's life and that of the Governor of the West, Colonel Adekunle Fajuyi. A Northern officer, Lt. Colonel Yakubu Gowon later became Head of State. However, unexpectedly an indiscriminate massacre of Ibos started in the North. This led to a mass exodus of Ibos from the North and other parts of the country to the East, and eventually to a three year civil war which ended in 1970.

The end of the war coincided with the sudden windfall in oil wealth
which made the task of reconciliation and rehabilitation easier than could have been expected.

Five years after the war, Gowon was toppled in a 'palace coup' while attending an Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Conference in Uganda. Brigadier (later General) Murtala Muhammed became Head of State. Before his overthrow, Gowon's administration was more or less, synonymous with corruption and arrogant display of wealth. For instance, only two of his twelve state governors were cleared as not guilty of corrupt enrichment by a panel set up to probe them. There was also the impression that Gowon and his administration was unwilling to leave office after he had indefinitely postponed his promise to hand over power to civilians by 1976. The government towards the end became very high-handed in treating its opponents. Part of the measures taken to assuage his critics, the Udoji salary awards led to further resentment and industrial crisis.

It was under such a situation that General Muhammed came to power. The regime immediately set about to return the country to parliamentary democracy; reduction in the size of the armed forces and eradication of corruption. The government carried out a massive purge of the public service in its anti-corruption crusade and in its drive to instil discipline in national life. However, about six months after coming to power Muhammed was assasinated in an attempted coup in February 1976. His second in command, General Olusegun Obasanjo took over. He handed over to a civilian government headed by Shehu Shagari in October 1979, under a presidential constitution.

Shagari's government was inefficient and corruption ridden. Its immediate undoing was economic mismanagement which led to a sharp downturn in the country's economic fortunes. Larry Diamond described the Shagari era as follows:

... the decay of the country under four and a quarter years of civilian rule. This decay had three components: staggering corruption, crippling economic waste and mismanagement, and the vitiating of the electoral process through violence and fraud... What the people got was not performance but arrogance, displays of wealth that were stupidly insensitive to the economic realities of recession, scarcity and suffering... All of this fed disillusionment, the steady and perceptible erosion of the legitimacy of the second Republic (Larry Diamond, 1984).
The government was overthrown in December 1983 following a badly conducted and highly rigged election in August of that year. The new government, headed by Major General Buhari was again overthrown in August 1985 by some members of the government. His government was accused of being insensitive, dictatorial, high-handed and having no respect for human rights. Many Nigerians, including journalists and students were jailed while some professional associations, like the Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) and the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) were banned. In December 1985 there was an attempt to overthrow the new government, headed by General Babangide.

Many attempts have been made to explain the reasons for military intervention in politics in Africa as in many other parts of the Third World. The orthodox attempts could be broadly classified into two but are linked with the usual functionalist search for political stability. The first school relied on the organisational characteristics of the military while the second school of thought is based on the general societal and institutional set up in its explanation.

The first school, exemplified in the works of Morris Janowitz argues that there are certain inherent characteristics in military organisations which dispose them to intervene in politics. According to Janowitz (1963) military intervention in the politics of "new nations" could be explained by reference to the internal structure of the military. The military as a product of European colonialism is a modern institution which has instilled in its men certain qualities such as puritanical ethics, professionalism, dedication, nationalism, ingroup cohesion and esprit de corps and respect for authority and the military hierarchy. The technical and administrative characteristics of the military and its nationalism make it superior to politicians and therefore able to remove the politicians, when they fail, in the national interest. It is further argued that the more cohesive the armed forces are, the more prone they will be to intervene in politics, in order to hold together a divided polity. This view is evident in William Gutteridge's assertion that "Once an army has realised its strength ... it becomes a potential danger to the established political order" (Gutteridge, 1969, p.39).

One weakness of this explanation is that it seems to have relied too much on the role and organisation of the military in the West. From
empirical evidence the military in many African countries are not as united or nationalistic as the position will suggest. The Nigerian army as the events from 1966 have shown, is as factionalised along ethnic and/or religious lines as the political leadership. This view is supported by Samuel Decalo's observation that "African armies have rarely been cohesive, non-tribal, Westernized, or even complex organisational structures. Next, hierarchical command charts camouflage deep cleavages - an extension of wider societal chasms shared by most African states" (Decalo, 1976, p.14). The explanation could be said to have paid very little attention to the internal social situation especially the struggle for hegemony and capital accumulation by the dominant class and the challenge from below. Two critics of this organisational approach have said that it appears:

... to have abstracted the military from the mode of production, the relations of production and in fact, the whole history of the specific societies and imposed it on the dynamics which in reality are products of the domination of these societies by metropolitan capital. This domination which limits the accumulative capacities of indigenous classes creates a condition where the state is unable to meet the demands of other social classes. The resultant competition for scarce resources coupled with the inability of the dominant classes to create and impose a hegemony on the social formation led to instability and conflict and the military can intervene (Falola and Ihonvbere, 1985, p.250).

The second school of thought tries to rectify the a-social orientation of the above explanation. Its stress is on systemic weakness. Its basic postulates are summarised by an analyst thus:

... societal and structural weakness - institutional fragility, systemic flaws and low level of political culture - which act as a sort of magnet to pull the armed forces into the power and legitimacy vacuum (Decalo, 1976, p.7).

According to Samuel Huntington who is a prominent proponent of this type of analysis,

... the most important causes of military intervention in politics are not military but political and reflect not the social and organisational characteristics of the military establishment but the political and institutional structure of society (Huntington, 1968, p.194).
Huntington went on to say that military intervention reflects the general politicisation of social forces and institutions. In such a situation, institutions like the church, the trade unions, universities, the civil service and of course the army are political and therefore tend to pursue their individual group interest. The result of this over-politicisation and over-mobilization of society is that:

... the whole society is out of joint and no political institution or group of political leaders is recognized or accepted as the legitimate intermediary to moderate conflicts between groups. Furthermore, in such societies, no agreements exist among the groups as to the legitimate and authoritative methods of resolving conflicts (Oyediran, 1979, p.2).

Basically the argument here is that social and political institutions are weak and ineffective in mediating and resolving social contradictions and conflicts. This weakness allows other social forces to make demands on the already weak institutions leading to further stress. Under such a fragile situation, the military, as the only cohesive force controlling the means of coercion emerges as the stronger and more dominant group able to assert its authority. It could, therefore take over power, restore law and order and resolve the conflicts, presumably in the national interest.

Despite its improvement on the first approach and its relevance to the immediate situation in Nigeria between 1964 and 1965 this explanation appears circular. Huntington recognised this when he wrote:

... praetorian societies ... are caught in a vicious circle. In its simpler forms society lacks community and this obstructs development of political institutions. In its more complicated forms the lack of effective political institutions obstructs the development of community (1968, p.237).

The explanatory value of the approach also becomes limited if we consider that there are countries with 'low' political culture that have not experienced military coups and there are some, like Greece, with 'high' political culture where the military has intervened.

Some writers have tried to combine the two approaches. This is in recognition of Decalo's assertion that "both conceptualisation are two
sides of the same coin" (Decalo, 1976, p.12). This attempt is evident in the works of Finer (1962) and Gutteridge (1975). The two writers combined political fluidity with the strength of the military in their analysis. According to Finer, the relative weakness or strength of political institution at the level of 'political culture' encourages the army to intervene in politics. This weakness means an absence of acceptable mechanism for the transfer of power, thus ensuring instability. The problem with this approach is as Luckham has said "the difficulty of providing adequate operational definitions of the weakness of institutions and deciding how this is to be measured" (Luckham, 1971, p.10). This perspective is also tautological in the sense that apart from winning a war, or carrying out a successful coup, the strength of the military may be difficult to ascertain.

Another attempt at explaining military coups was provided by Edward Feit who argued that the merging of traditional and British administrative institutions was the source of political stability during the colonial period. According to him, this arrangement collapsed after independence. The army was now needed to perform the former role of the colonial authority - restoring and maintaining law and order.

Apart from the above explanations others have been offered. For instance, Eric Nordlinger asserted that "the protection of corporate interest (of the army) is decidedly the most important interventionist motive" (Nordlinger, 1977). Such corporate interests include promotion, wages, politicization, dismissals, budgetary cuts and demobilization among others. Samuel Decalo also stressed a lot of issues including corporate, ethnic and personal grievances. He wrote:

... detailed examination of motivations for coups reveals that the main weakness of attempts to explain them by pointing major areas of systemic stress is that insufficient weight is placed on the personal motives of ambitious or discontented officers, who have a great deal of freedom and scope for action in fragmented, unstructured, and unstable political systems (1976, p.21).

These various approaches and explanations do separate politics from economics and the class structure of the society concerned. The activities of the military are defined as if they are above particular class interests. When and if the economy is taken into consideration, it
is usually as one of the several in a shopping list of factors. They fail to investigate the complex articulation between politics and economy. As part of the larger modernization framework, such analysis seemed aimed at reproducing the Western developmental model in the Third World. Hence, the stress on political development, stability and integration which are thought to have been essential in the development and stability of Western societies, without any attempt to examine the class character of this developmental task. In this connection, we can also note the common assumption that the military in Africa is composed of a modern elite which because of its organisational and internal characteristics is capable of leading the society towards a desired goal and acting as agent of development. According to La Palombara "in many of the new states, what development does occur will be managed by the military bureaucracy" (La Palombara, 1963, p.x, see also Lucian Pye, 1962).

Without denying the importance of some of the factors enunciated by the above perspectives, they fail to provide an overall theory that is "at once sufficiently inclusive and sufficiently precise" (Murray, 1966, p.41). For this reason another explanatory perspective must be provided that will enable us to have a better grip of the incidence of military intervention in politics in many African countries. Such an attempt has been made by Marxist writers with the focus on the decisive role of the economy, especially the struggle for capital accumulation and the crisis of hegemony by factions of the ruling class in such countries.

It is argued that an understanding of military intervention or political instability must begin from an examination of the incorporation of Africa into the World capitalist system, the introduction of a new relations of production and socio-political institutions alien to the continent; the underdeveloped state of social classes and the existence of more than one mode of production in the economy. It is further argued that the state that emerged after independence from colonial rule was unable to mediate and resolve the contradictions thrown up by the commingling of issues and structures colonialism has generated. For the state to legitimise its authority and power, it must be able to regulate contending interests among various groups and classes. The inability to do this means that the state must come to depend on force to assert its authority. That means that those who directly control the state instrument of force, that is the military, are able to seize state power at any sign of a breakdown.
What this position amounts to is that in a situation of mounting contradiction and conflict and political upheaval force becomes a deciding factor. It is within this perspective that we must see military intervention rather than the will of individual and group actors.

The 'African condition' described by Murray some twenty years ago is still as valid and apt as when the observation was made. He outlined the situation thus:

The fragility of authority in contemporary tropical Africa is, of course, related to the fundamental but unbalanced transformation 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, p.44).

In the Nigerian case we have seen how the state, instead of standing above and mediating political conflict, becomes an arena for such conflicts and intense struggle for private accumulation by members of the ruling class since independence, leading to crisis. The state has become an instrument for the development of the Nigerian bourgeois class. The state participates in the economy both as a major investor, producer and purchaser of goods and services. In this situation control over state power and resources becomes a matter of life and death. As Richard Joseph, among many others, have equally observed "Access to the Nigerian state, from the colonial period to the present, has become increasingly central to the social struggle for the control of scarce (and occasionally abundant) resources" (Joseph, 1983, p.24). The state is thus turned into a 'market' where state offices are businesses. The heavy involvement of the state in virtually all spheres of life heightened this practice, further deepening the "vulnerability and fragility of the Nigerian state".

As we have discussed above we could also note that political instability in Nigeria is a manifestation of the inherent contradiction in the struggle among the various factions of the ruling class to consolidate their position, advance their interests, expand their power
Military intervention should therefore be seen as part of this struggle by the bourgeoisie to impose its hegemony or world view on the society and stabilise the political system in the interest of both local and foreign capital. This view could be supported if we consider that the military has always intervened at critical moments when the rule of the dominant class was challenged from below accompanied by intra-class struggle by the bourgeoisie. This was the case in 1966, so it was in 1975 and 1983. The behaviour of the military in power also goes a long way in revealing its class interests and character. None of the military governments in Nigeria has taken any fundamental policy to challenge the neo-colonial capitalist orientation of the economy or initiate any policy to redistribute national wealth. Rather, as we shall see presently through such policies as indigenisation they rationalise the relation between foreign and local capital by defining spheres of interests between the two. The military also continued the corrupt practice of using state offices as avenues to amassing wealth. In short, military rule has not changed the class content of power in Nigeria, rather it has been an attempt to consolidate and stabilise bourgeois domination. The army shares the values and world view of the dominant class.

Before we end this section we will like to say that the military, despite its control over organised force, must make active effort to generate a consensus in order to legitimise its rule over the rest of the society. In this we further note a continuity running through both civilian and military regimes in the themes constituting such an ideological project; though with different emphasis depending on the historical and economic circumstances. The basic themes which we elaborate on later are nationalism, national unity and economic development. We could say that the issue of national unity became very prominent after the civil war. Also in the 70s the 'national' in the theme of economic development became more prominent than in the 60s reflecting the post-war nationalism and confidence among the ruling class; though not unshared by the generality of the people.

The project of legitimising military rule is also buttressed by the explanation and justification offered for intervening in politics.
This could be said to be an appropriation of some of the reasons given by the environmentalists which we briefly examined above. Such explanations have usually stressed the personal failings of those in government and not the structural contradictions inherent in the socio-economic system. Such personal failings include corruption, inefficiency, nepotism and sometimes abuse of human rights. Examples of such explanations could be found in the usual dawn broadcasts announcing a military take-over. For instance Major Kacluna Nzeogwu, the leader of the January 1966 coup was quoted as saying:

Our enemies are the political profiteers, swindlers, the men in high and low places who seek bribes and demand ten per cent, those that seek to keep the country divided permanently so that they can remain in office as ministers and V.I.P.s of waste, the tribalists, the nepotists ... we promise that you will no more be ashamed to say you are a Nigerian (quoted in John St. Jorre, 1972, p.38, see also A.H.M. Kirk-Greene, 1971, p.71).

Also twenty years later the military officer who announced the December 1983 coup told Nigerians:

You are living witness to the grave economic predicament and uncertainty which an inept and corrupt leadership has imposed on our beloved nation for the past four years... After consultation over these deplorable conditions I and my colleagues in the Armed Forces have in the discharge of our national role as the promoters and protectors of our national interest, decided to effect a change of leadership.

The solutions usually proposed - a change in personnel, a more efficient administration, eradication of corruption, constitutional and legal amendments, discipline - do not affect the source of the primary contradictions; that is the struggle over capital accumulation. It is within this perspective that we have to see the enthusiasm and euphoria that usually greet any change of government in Nigeria and not fickleness or short memory as the Financial Times (London) suggested in its survey after the December 1983 coup (Financial Times, January 23, 1984). Such jubilations were in the hope that a 'Messiah' who will deliver the goods has come.

Though such issues as corruption and inefficiency are real and their consequences grave and therefore cannot be ruled out, the fact that the solutions usually proposed, for example change in government or even
in the constitution, have not eradicated them means there is a deeper problem. As Quentin Peel of the Financial Times of London said, this type of "popular analysis of Nigeria's problems tends to be oversimplistic: the cause is seen to be indiscipline and corruption, rather than the more profound structural problems of an oil economy" (Financial Times, January 23, 1984).

The point, as we shall be arguing in later chapters when we discuss our empirical findings, is that stressing such problems as personal failings or corruption obscures people's perception of more fundamental problems in the society. This to our mind serves the interests of those who benefit from the socio-economic system, that is the dominant groups in the Nigerian society.

Another ideological theme which the military has appropriated from modernization theorists is that which regards them as agents of development. This formulation received its best treatment in Lucian Pye's 1964 essay "Armies in the Process of Political Modernization". Briefly according to him the military will "induce" attitudes, provide political stability and encourage foreign aid and commercial investment for economic development. In a statement which reveals Pye's idea of the model and source of development which the army will promote and its ability to do so, he wrote:

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 and carry on straightforward relations (Pye, 1962, pp.87-88).

On this basis the military puts itself forward as a patriotic force, "the promoters and protectors of our national interests" capable of solving the national problems which have made it to remove the politicians. Also using the rhetoric of national interests and the initial drive against the overthrown politicians, it serves to mobilise the people in the direction of realising the so called national interests.
and ideals. This it could do for instance by abolishing political parties, which in the main is interpreted as 'banning' politics. Politics is simplistically defined as the intra-elite 'wheeler-dealing' and conflicts of the civilian era just overthrown. This reinforces the 'simplistic analysis' we mentioned above. What the military does, however, is to reconstitute the 'power-bloc' under its hegemony and provide a more stable and orderly atmosphere for capital to operate and exploit the workers and the peasantry. It also serves to create a world view that corresponds to its supposed image as a national institution or agent of development. In this case it promotes the view that its actions are above 'sectional' politics.

The point we are driving at is that the use of these themes and concepts serve an ideological function. This, as we shall be discussing later, is mainly a cohesive and integrative function. That is making the people see themselves as part of a whole, living in social harmony and forgetting class or structural differences. The social origin of economic, social and political problems, poverty, inequality and instability are lost sight of and at best they are seen as arising from personal inadequacies or technical limitations in the workings of the government which could be solved by, for example, the training and employment of more qualified Nigerians. In the process, before long the economic system, the mode of capital accumulation and the structure of inequality among others which they give rise to, become natural or inevitable.

Before we pursue this issue further we shall like to see the effect of the oil boom in the Nigerian political economy in the 70s.

Oil and Military Rule

Oil wealth has had a crucial impact on the course of development in Nigeria since the early 1970s, immediately after the civil war. It changed the source of state finance and capital accumulation from peasant and petty commodity production. It also gave the Nigerian state and the national bourgeoisie the confidence to initiate public policies to restrict the activities of Multinational companies to defined areas of the economy. Further, with the oil wealth, the state became a major investor and a dominant force both in production and exchange. Another
major impact was that it saw to the centralisation of authority in the Federal Government.

In 1937 the British colonial government awarded the total land area of Nigeria to Shell and British Petroleum (BP) as oil concession. In 1960 the companies surrendered the oil concession, part of which was inherited by two American oil giants, Mobil and Gulf, "in typical spirit of the new multilateral imperialism under American hegemony" (Onimode, 1982, p. 142). Production and export started around 1957. Since then the sector has been dominated by Western multinational corporations like Shell-BP (British), Gulf and Mobil (American), Agip/Philips (Italian), Elf (French), Texaco (American), Ashland (American).

Production and export increased after the civil war. The country was a beneficiary of the 1973 oil crisis which was an outcome of the Middle-East October War and the Arab oil embargo. Between 1970 and 1973 revenue from oil doubled contributing about 67.3% of Federal Government revenue. By 1976 it accounted for 90% of national foreign exchange earnings and about 93% of national revenue. In 1974-75 it contributed 45.5% of the Gross Domestic Product as against 4.7% by the manufacturing sectors.

From Tables 1.6 and 1.7 it is clear that Nigeria entered the 70s with an almost total reliance on oil. But the oil industry by its nature is very capital intensive which implies that its impact on the mass of the people is minimal, if not totally negative. In that sense it was the rent and royalty accruing to the state which became decisive and it was mainly to cater for the expensive tastes of the bureaucratic-military oligarchy and its ally, the business 'community'. According to two leading Nigerian economists, U.P. Diejomaoh and E.C. Anusionwu:

Low-income urban groups, particularly in the formal sector of the urban areas, have not significantly increased their real income positions as a result of the oil boom... That increase in equality has increased as a result of the oil boom is largely the result of the public expenditure pattern of the Nigerian government which, in the mid-1970s, derived about 80 percent of its revenue directly from oil production. The impact of petroleum on the Nigerian economy is felt largely through the fiscal payments of the oil companies to the Nigerian governments because the forward and backward linkage and direct employment effects of direct oil production is very limited in the Nigerian economy (Diejomaoh and Anusionwu, 1981, pp. 101-102).
### TABLE 1.5: PRODUCTION AND EXPORT OF CRUDE PETROLEUM

1962, 1966, 1969-75

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Production Index (1965 = 100)</th>
<th>Value of Petroleum Exports (₦ m)</th>
<th>Petroleum Exports as % of Total Export</th>
<th>Av. Posted Price (US $ per b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>152.3</td>
<td>184.0</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>197.1</td>
<td>262.0</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>2.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>389.1</td>
<td>510.0</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>568.5</td>
<td>953.0</td>
<td>73.7</td>
<td>3.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>662.5</td>
<td>1176.2</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>3.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>750.0</td>
<td>1893.5</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td>4.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>822.8</td>
<td>5365.7</td>
<td>92.6</td>
<td>14.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>650.9 (prov.)</td>
<td>4629.6 (prov.)</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td>12.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### TABLE 1.6: OIL CONTRIBUTION TO FEDERAL GOVERNMENT REVENUE 1961-77

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Oil Revenue (₦ million)</th>
<th>Total Revenue (₦ million)</th>
<th>Oil Revenue Total Rev. %</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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>435.9</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
<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>

In other words the astronomical rise in wealth "was barely reflected in the quality of life of the average Nigerians. In contrast, however, the military governors, commissioners and those closely associated with the regime were not only believed to have amassed huge fortunes, they in fact flaunted their wealth in a manner which most people found extremely distasteful" (Dudley, 1982, p.81). Terisa Turner, who once described the Nigerian economy as "commercial capitalism" has outlined the pattern of "commercial triangle" which characterised the relationship between foreign businessmen and local actors in the 70s. The triangle involved "three parties to a buying or selling transaction... The businessmen who represents the multinational corporations; second, the local middleman from the national private sector; and third, the state official who assists the foreign businessman in gaining access to the local market" (Turner, 1978). Both the local businessman and the state official are paid for their 'services' by the foreign businessman.

The federal government has played a major role in determining the pattern of expenditure of the oil wealth. In the main this has been on security and defence and on assisting local businessmen to gain further financial control of the economy, that is to create a more national economy. For example, defence budget rose from ₦29.2 million in 1965-66 to ₦359.9 million in 1969-70 and jumped to ₦1,166.7 million in 1975-76. Much of the money went into payment of salaries and allowances especially to the senior offices corps (see Table 1.8).

Apart from this there was a boom in the construction of barracks for members of the armed forces, roads, flyovers and ports. This largely unplanned construction boom was responsible for the cement scandal of the mid-70s when the ports were over-flown with 20 m. tons of cement imported from all over the world. The Ministry of Defence alone accounted for 16 million tons! The main beneficiaries of this 'importer-contractor' economy were the European companies and their local allies. These firms include Julius Berger (German), Dumez (French), G. Prono (Italian), Taylor Woodrow and Wimpey (British), Cappa and D'alberto (Italian). Over 90% of the Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC) contracts went to Japanese and American companies. Apart from the huge corruption involved, the country's technical and manpower resources were inadequate to service and maintain them for optimum utilization. Moreover most of the materials used were imported. "The most dramatic feature of the oil boom" wrote
TABLE 1.7: CAPITAL EXPENDITURES APPROPRIATED TO DEFENCE, 1970/71 - 1979/80

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Total Federal Capital Appropriation</th>
<th>Capital Appropriation to Defence</th>
<th>Defence as % of Capital Appropriation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970/72</td>
<td>247,460,640</td>
<td>40,000,000</td>
<td>16.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971/72</td>
<td>285,783,260</td>
<td>40,000,000</td>
<td>13.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972/73</td>
<td>543,631,880</td>
<td>81,942,820</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973/74</td>
<td>793,654,440</td>
<td>114,552,240</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974/75</td>
<td>1,691,625,680</td>
<td>237,136,390</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975/76</td>
<td>7,079,335,920</td>
<td>789,217,530</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976/77</td>
<td>6,391,229,844</td>
<td>615,619,991</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977/78</td>
<td>7,230,364,020</td>
<td>900,000,000</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978/79</td>
<td>5,200,000,000</td>
<td>708,512,000</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979/80</td>
<td>6,610,000,000</td>
<td>602,000,000</td>
<td>9.1</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Total Actual Expenditure</td>
<td>428.7</td>
<td>443.1</td>
<td>445.5</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>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Total Defence Expenditure</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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a. Police and Police Serv. Comm.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>193.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Agriculture</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>79.5</td>
<td>133.5</td>
<td>149.2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Economic Dev. &amp; Re-Construction</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Education</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>79.8</td>
<td>341.8</td>
<td>1,119.3</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>239.1</td>
<td>779.2</td>
<td>454.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Health</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>158.8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>109.5</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>116.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Labour and Social Welfare</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Industries</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Defence as % of Total Expenditure</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>n.a.</td>
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</table>

Bill. Freund, "was the growth in imports on such a scale as to transform the population of Nigeria into what appeared to be a huge host of cargo cult worshippers" (Freund, 1978, p.94). To meet the expected level of imports more parts were built in Apapa, Port Harcourt, Warri while the Lagos port was expanded. In 1978, the Lagos port was doing 97% of its business in imports as against 3% in exports. The value of the imports which was estimated at £1.7 million in 1974 reached ₦5.1 million in 1976, ₦7.3 million in 1977 and ₦9.8 million in 1978.

Apart from construction materials, the bulk of the items were luxury items and food. For instance, imports of high fidelity equipment, tape recorders and such musical equipment increased from ₦1.7 million in 1973 to ₦15 million in 1976. The impact of the oil boom could be seen if we consider the massive increase in food imports and the sharp decline in the country's export of agricultural products.

Before the oil wealth, agriculture was the mainstay of the economy. Nigeria was a major exporter of cocoa, palm products, cotton, rubber and groundnut. Williams and Tumusiime-Mutebile noted the importance of agriculture in the Nigerian economy when they wrote that:

capitalist production in Nigeria is dependent on peasant and petty commodity production. Until the dramatic development of Nigeria's oil resources, cash crop farmers financed the state provision of infrastructural expenditure and direct subsidies of capital investment through the revenues which the marketing boards appropriated from the producers (Williams and Tumusimme-Mutebile, 1978, p.1103).

The state transfers resources from agriculture and the rural economy to itself, and uses it in aid of both foreign and local capital and the development of the urban economy. This "reduces the return on rural labour and investment, which impoverishes the farmers and encourages the transfer of private resources, including skills, from the rural to the urban economy" (Williams, 1980, p.37). The net effect of this is the high rate of rural-urban migration turning Nigeria's ill-planned cities, like Lagos, into urban slums and lands of despair where nothing works. It has also led to shortages of food items like rice and vegetable oil which could only be met by importation. For example Nigeria imported 15 million kilograms of rice in 1975 but by 1976 this had increased three times to 45 kilograms and by 1977 the figure was above 300 million kilograms.
### TABLE 1.9: PERCENTAGE COMPOSITION OF NIGERIA'S EXPORT COMMODITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cocoa</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palm Oil</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palm Kernel</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groundnuts</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groundnut Oils</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tin ore</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timber</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubber</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>94.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### TABLE 1.10: RISING TRENDS OF FOOD IMPORTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total for Imports (Nm)</th>
<th>% Share for Food Products</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Milk</td>
<td>Sugar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>57.7</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>87.9</td>
<td>24.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>95.1</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>126.3</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>154.8</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>353.7</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>526.7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>912.6</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>1004.2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In September 1983 alone, the country imported 49,291 million tonnes costing $10.1 million from Thailand while $66 million was spent on rice importation from that country between January and September 1983. This was the time of the Presidential Task Force on Rice headed by Umaru Dikko.

The point we are making is well put by the former Managing Director of the NNPC, Mr. Lawrence Amu:

... oil revenue is spent on the importation of various consumer goods, capital goods, rice and other agricultural produce which could be cultivated in Nigeria. Thus we earned our oil revenue only to use it to keep foreign industries going (quoted in Falola and Ihunubere, 1985, p.89).

The share of agriculture in the GDP was 65.9% in 1958/59, the figure fell to 53.8% in 1966/67 and to 41.8% in 1971/72. By 1974/75 the figure had dramatically fallen to 28.1%. On the other hand, the figure for mining and petroleum which was contributing 5% in 1966/67 rose to 14.2% in 1974/75. Within this period industrial output rose from 7.0% in 1966/67 to 10.2% in 1974/75. Further while the contribution of agricultural products in exports was 61.6% in 1965 as compared to 25.9% for petroleum, ten years later the reverse was the case; the proportion for petroleum has increased to 94.0% while agricultural exports fell sharply to 4.6%. Between 1976 and 1978 the area under active cultivation fell from 18.8 million hectares to 11.05 million, representing 41.3% fall of the total area under cultivation.

In effect the massive oil wealth has proved disastrous to agriculture which continues to employ over 80% of Nigeria's population. It seems there was an inverse relationship between oil wealth and the development of agriculture.

In 1976 the Obasanjo administration launched the Operation Feed-The Nation (OFN) "to try to come to grips with the growing crisis in peasant agriculture but it did not touch the basic issues" (Freund, ibid, p.97). The campaign led to massive importation of fertilizer. The Shegari administration continued the policy, though it was renamed 'Green Revolution'. The main plank of the policy was large-scale mechanisation favourable to capitalist interests. To this end the Obasanjo government initiated the Land Use Decree and extended such fiscal facilities formerly
given to industry to the agriculture sector. For instance, the government established the Nigerian Agriculture Development Bank and the Agriculture Loan Scheme under which commercial banks were mandated to give six percent of their loans to the agriculture sector. The Central Bank also undertook to underwrite 75 percent of bank loans up to N50,000 to individuals engaged in agriculture. The military government also established River Basin Development Authorities all over the country and constructed irrigation schemes.

The Land Use Decree vested all land in the government, thereby giving effective control of rural and urban land to the state. It was ostensibly designed at removing constraints on land acquisition especially in the southern part of the country. In reality however, the decree has led to an increase in absentee farmers and big companies, for example, UAC, SCOA, AGIP going into large-scale agriculture and displacing the small peasant farmers. To further the incursion of foreign capital into Nigeria's agriculture, agricultural production was removed from Schedule III to Schedule II of the Nigeria Enterprises and Promotion Decree thereby permitting up to 60% foreign ownership in Nigerian agriculture. As the late Professor Bill Dudley once remarked,

It would be one of the most interesting twists of history, if a government of the independent state of Nigeria brought about, through its policies, the introduction of an expatriate 'farmer-settler' community in the country, something which the colonial administration, beginning with the term of office of Sir Hugh Clifford, did all it could to prevent (Dudley, 1982, pp.244-245).

From the above explanation it is evident that the oil boom was like 'manna from heaven' for the Nigerian ruling class. We have seen that the money was spent on conspicuous consumption of items mainly imported from abroad while much of it also went into private pockets. At the height of the boom, Nigerian cities were like "gold rush towns", attracting foreign businessmen, banks, Indian and Phillipino doctors and teachers and Western exports (Freund, 1978, p.97). Virtually all Nigerians became contractors and cash values became "more deeply embedded in social relations and acquisition of necessities" (Ibid, p.99). In the whole scheme of things the real losers are the workers and the peasants. As a writer has noted,
... the effect of the oil boom was to convert the military political decision-makers and their bureaucratic aides into a new property-owning, rentier class working in close and direct collaboration with foreign business interests with the sole aim of expropriating the surpluses derived from oil for their private and personal benefit (Dudley, 1982, p.116).

**Indigenisation**

As we mentioned above the sudden oil wealth increased the confidence of the Nigerian state, the bureaucratic-military oligarchy and its business ally to seek to alter the relationship between foreign and local capital in the latter's favour. The oil boom saw a change in the attitude of the government toward foreign business in the country. In the 1960s, Nigeria welcomed foreign capital with open arms in the realisation that local capital was small and weak. There was no rigid insistence on local participation, though the official policy was to encourage partnership between foreign and local (both private and state) capital. Calls for nationalisation by the opposition in the Federal Parliament were defeated. This did not mean that the government did not express concern at the situation. But all it could do was to offer fiscal assistance to local businessmen. Oil was to change the situation. Apart from oil, other factors like the disappointment experienced by the Nigerian Government over British and American policy during the war and the power of civil servants as allies to the military contributed to a change in policy. Tom Forrest enumerated some of the factors as follows:

Increased federal power, dissatisfaction with the result of the foreign investment strategy, the continued weakness of the indigenous enterprise, and the bitter experience of the civil war provided the context for the indigenisation decree (Forrest, 1982, p.336).

Another motive according to Bade Onimode "was the need to legitimise military rule through its economic performance, since it had failed to overcome the social malaise and civilian disabilities which it used as excuse for seizing power" (Onimode, 1982, p.207).

Though the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree was announced in 1972, the policy could be said to have been foreshadowed in the Second National Development Plan, 1970-74. The Plan declared:
The government will seek to acquire, by law of necessity, equity participation in a number of strategic industries that will be specified from time to time. In order to ensure that the economic destiny of Nigeria is determined by Nigerians themselves, the government will seek to widen and intensify its positive participation in industrial development (Second National Development Plan, p.289).

In the Plan, indigenisation was conceived as a logical extension of Nigerianisation, the promotion of local equity and the development of indigenous entrepreneurship. According to an official of the Federal Ministry of Economic Development and Reconstruction, Emeka Ezeife, the programme was designed to achieve five objectives:

1. to create opportunities for Nigerian businessmen;
2. to maximize local retention of profit;
3. to raise the level of intermediate goods production;
4. to raise the proportion of indigenous ownership of industrial investment; and
5. to increase Nigerian participation in decision-making in the larger commercial and industrial establishments (Ezeife, 1981, p.167).

Between 1972 and 1976 the decrees on the implementation of the programme were enacted. In the 1972 decree, which came into effect in March 1974, twenty-two mainly commercial enterprises listed in Schedule I were reserved exclusively for Nigerians while 33 others contained in Schedule II required 40% Nigerian equity participation if their paid up capital exceeded N400,000 or their turnover exceeded N1 million. It was estimated that about N100 million transactions were made, including N30 million for public issues and N70 million for private issues and enterprise sales. The effect of this first phase was that it "marked a significant step in the accumulation and concentration of wealth amongst the bureaucratic, professional and intermediary classes" (Forrest, 1982, p.337).

With this initial success as it were, the members of these classes felt that the first phase did not go far enough. Therefore, coupled with the apparent corruption in and dissatisfaction with the implementation of this phase the new government of Muhammed enacted another decree which came into effect in 1976. Instead of the earlier two schedules the new decree established three. Forty and fifty-seven enterprises were included
in the new first and second schedules. Under the second schedule, local participation was raised from 40% to 60%. Schedule three included all businesses not in the first two schedules and they required 40% Nigerian participation.

Despite the initial fear entertained by foreign firms during the second phase, the exercise has not jeopardised their operations. For example the old mercantile firms like the UAC were exempted from full Nigerian ownership but allowed to have 40% to 60% Nigerian participation. Also established firms like tobacco, textile and pharmaceuticals still remained with majority foreign ownership. In addition to this, government officials used every opportunity to stress the country's continued reliance on foreign capital. During his tour of Britain in 1973, General Gowon told his audience at the Royal College of Defence Studies:

We are consolidating our political independence by doing all we can to promote more participation by Nigerians in our economic life while attracting more investment in sectors of the economy where Nigerians are not yet able to rely on themselves (quoted in Collins, 1975, p.501 - emphasis mine).

Throughout the tour he explained that the exercise was not a punitive measure against foreign capital but designed to increase Nigerian participation in the economy. He said genuine foreign investors were still welcomed "most fervently" (Ibid).

From such assurances it was clear that apart from assisting the indigenous bourgeois class the Federal Government wanted to secure an established position for a growing and more confident local capitalists while at the same time not disrupting the dominant position of foreign capital which is now urged to move to 'higher' sectors of the economy.

One major effect of the indigenisation programme therefore was to increase Nigerian participation in the economy (increase local ownership of equity share, more Nigerians in management and board appointments) with little effective control in terms of technology, management and decision-making. Most of the Nigerians appointed to the board of these foreign multinational companies are those amenable to individual corporate goals and those with the necessary political connections (Adejugbe, 1984, Forrest, 1982). Further, the exercise consolidated the position of the
Nigerian ruling class while ideologically it was able to present it as an exercise in the 'national interest' and itself as a patriotic force.

The programme was also of positive value to foreign capital in that it enhanced its national credentials. The Financial Times (London) was hinting at this point when it wrote:

An additional positive point not sufficiently stressed, is that the move might theoretically help to smooth labour relations. No longer can industry be seen as an alien presence, as a manifestation of economic imperialism. This could help the government back up industry in the face of unreasonable demands from labour (Financial Times, August 30, 1978).

In other words the state and capital are in a better position to control labour with little resort to force or coercion. Further now that foreign capital has been indigenised it becomes difficult to attack it on anti-imperialist platform. In that sense, indigenisation has strengthened the local social and political basis of international accumulation in Nigeria (Beckman, 1982, p.48). An analyst came to a similar conclusion,

(Though) the terms of the decree ensured a wide distribution of share-ownership. This has left foreign control intact even if the number of senior Nigerian executives and directors has increased. It has also reduced the threat to large companies of state take-over on occasions of mass nationalism. In effect it is capitalism that has been indigenised, not through the takeover or withdrawal of foreign capital, but through higher form of collaboration, accommodation and institutionalisation... The sphere of foreign capital accumulation has not been greatly affected by the growth of the Nigerian bourgeoisie, by indigenisation, or by the extension of the state sector (Forrest, 1982, pp.337-339).

Certain conclusions are evident from the above discussion of the politics and implementation of indigenisation. First, we have been able to establish that the main local beneficiaries of the exercise and the oil-economy in general were senior bureaucrats, military officers, managers in foreign companies, educated professionals and businessmen. These tiny group of Nigerians had access to bank credits and illegal sources of money and under-the-counter deals* for example managerial employees of many

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* See Dudley (1982, pp.117-118) for examples of such deals involving senior government officials.
companies in Schedule II were guaranteed bank loans to buy shares by such companies. Further, in order to aid the implementation of the decree the Federal Government established the Bank for Commerce and Industry. The bank was directed to give 40% of all its loans and advances to indigenous businessmen.

In the objective and implementation of the policy, we can see a continuity in government economic policy based on assistance to indigenous business and the desire to retain part of the surplus appropriated by foreign capital from the country. This policy of economic nationalism is in the main the consolidation of the alliance between national bourgeoisie and international capital and in the process the internalisation of capitalism. The decree has however rationalised the relationship between the local bourgeois class and international capital. This is to limit the area of conflict between the two. The decree was not aimed at any basic structural change in the received economic institution "but is rather a rationalisation of Nigeria's position within a world economic order, while at the same time accommodating to a certain extent the emerging local industrial bourgeoisie (as a source of future stability and progress)" (Collins, 1975, p.507). Collins went on to conclude that:

In these terms ... indigenisation policies represent an alliance between the ruling group (the military and bureaucracy) and certain sections of the growing entrepreneurial and managerial elites - that is, the consolidation of the position of groups favouring a system which works against the interests of most workers and peasants - while at the same time maintaining the position of foreign capital and monopolies in a dominant private sector (Ibid, p.508).

The policy of indigenisation and its implementation also shows how the elite created by colonialism has been able to use the state to consolidate itself as a national bourgeoisie. Accumulation of wealth is dependent "not on the ownership of land or capital but rather on the ownership of 'occupational roles' most of which were in the gift of the state, and were thus actually or potentially, in fact or in suspicion, obtainable by the use of political techniques" (Wrigley, 1968, pp.1-2). Wrigley has argued that this situation was a carry-over from the colonial era. According to him the "curious and explosive blend of colonial paternalism, welfare socialism and mercantilism" enhanced the conviction that it was government's duty to promote economic development which
primarily meant providing jobs: "From then on nationalism became almost synonymous with Nigerianisation, the appropriation of the white man's job" (Ibid). This mentality is still prevalent in Nigeria. Economic activities and provision of social services, the bulk of the employment opportunities and capital accumulation are to a large extent dependent on government expenditure.

Last but not least, the policy has further deepened the level of social inequality in the Nigerian society. This was despite government's social objective of building an egalitarian society and the Udoji salary award which was aimed at narrowing the gap in income differential between low and high income earners. A review of the structure of income inequality in Nigeria by Diejeomah and Anusionwu came to the revealing conclusion (which is shared by many other popular and academic analysts) that "There has been ... a very substantial increase in personal income inequality in the Nigerian economy from 1960-1979, and currently the levels of inequality are quite high by the standard of developing countries and about twice the level in developed countries (Diejeomah and Anusionwu, 1981, p.117). A 1974 national accounts survey has it that 30% of the total income goes to 17% urban sector dwellers. Within this sector, 83% of the population were on low income, 12% on middle income and 5% on high income. The survey then suggests that 5% of the population enjoyed about 29% of the total income in the country. This survey did not include in its calculations money corruptly and illegally acquired by this 5% of the population.

Nationalism and Economic Development as Ideology

The worsening social inequality in the '70s revealed the hollowness of the politics of economic nationalism and how the pursuit of economic development has benefitted a tiny group of Nigerians, in charge of or close to the state, to the detriment of the majority. The point is that indigenisation was an instrument ostensibly aimed at broadening the social base of capital ownership, reduce income inequality, foster national unity and economic independence. These were spelt out in the second National Development Plan where the government aimed at establishing Nigeria as:

1) A united strong and self-reliant nation;
2) A great and dynamic economy;
3) A just and egalitarian society;
4) A land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens;
5) A free and democratic society.

A just and egalitarian society puts a premium on reducing inequalities in inter-personal incomes and promoting balanced development among the various communities in the different geographical areas in the country. It organizes its economic institutions in such a way that there is no oppression based on class, social status, ethnic group or state.

Our argument is that these objectives and policies designed to achieve them (indigenisation is one of these policies), economic development and such themes are ideological fig leaves employed by the Nigerian ruling class to conceal the exploitative class relations in the Nigerian society. As Beckman has noted "The primary role of the Nigerian state is to establish, maintain, protect and expand the conditions of capitalist accumulation..." (Beckman, 1982, p.45). The state does this by creating a conducive atmosphere and establishing and maintaining law and order. This could be by brutal repression and/or legislation. Another mechanism is in the sphere of ideology. In this sphere apart from the fact that the state controls the ideological apparatus, members of the ruling class have a ready access to the mass media while the articulation of certain ideological themes and world view – work ethics, meritocracy, individual achievement (or failure), nationalism, through the educational system and the occupational ladder; classlessness, ethnicity and certain socio-cultural and traditional values in popular and political discourse – act to obscure the contradictions inherent in the dominant capitalist mode of production.

The Nigerian ruling class has employed all the above means in order to legitimise bourgeois nationalist rule and at the same time secure a partnership with foreign capital. In the context of this study we can note the attempts that have been made from the colonial period to control the labour movement. The strategy of social-control, as we shall be discussing in more detail later, has moved from the inherited Anglo-saxon laissez-faire model to a more interventionist-corporatist approach reflecting the dynamics of change in the country's political economy. Much of the change has been to weaken, domesticate and incorporate the labour movement into the state structure as an instrument of working class control. Such efforts cannot be said to have been totally successful because the labour movement despite its structural, numerical and financial
weakness has been able to mount some challenges which have resulted in reforms and concessions from both the state and private capital.

Further, not unlike the colonial state, the post-colonial state has undertaken the financing of social services and infrastructure to aid the reproduction of labour and capital. The state has heavy investment in transportation, electricity generation, steel development, oil, telecommunication, banking and insurance and what is generally termed the 'commanding heights' of the economy sometimes in partnership with both foreign and local capital. These investments generate contracts for private investors. As we have said earlier, success in business depends on state patronage and expenditure. The state is more or less the sole financier of education and health facilities. Apart from these there is legislation on a national minimum wage, welfare and accident compensation, collective bargaining and such schemes for good industrial relations.

Prominent elements in the ideological arsenal of the Nigerian ruling class, either in its struggle for participation in the colonial state, or against foreign capital or in its effort to control oppositional forces and the lower classes like the workers, are nationalism expressed either as Nigerianisation or indigenisation* and national unity. Both are articulated by the proclaimed desire for economic development. "Class interests" as Richard Sklar has remarked, "are likely to prevail when they are promoted in the name of national aspirations" (Sklar, 1976, p.538). These aspects of bourgeois ideology in Nigeria provide the anchor for its hegemonic project, and as such must be constantly renegotiated and reformulated to meet the requirements of the changes in the development of class forces. Their use is of course dialectically related to the use of forces and political or legal repression.

Their realisation has been contradictory and ambiguous. For instance, the use of supranational political discourse has to co-exist with the use of a primodial (ethnicity) one. On this point, if we can borrow a concept from a Nigerian political scientist, the members of Nigerian ruling class live in 'two publics' - a civil public and a primodial public - simultaneously (Ekeh, 1975). Another problem

* Prof. Awa has said that "Whereas the policy of Nigerianisation is meant to place Civil Service in the hands of Nigerians, that of indigenisation is meant to place the economy of the country in these same hands"(Awa, 1974, p.364).
constraining their realisation is that industrial development and the bourgeoisie itself are dependent on foreign capital and technology. Elaborating on this issue, Gavin Williams explained,

The ambiguous position of the bourgeoisie within the neo-colonial political economy is expressed in its ideological ambiguity. Its nationalism is the outcome of its wish to appropriate resources back from the foreigner, its commitment to foreign investment is the outcome of its concrete dependence on the neo-colonial political economy. National unity and reconciliation express its ambition to act as an hegemonic class, providing moral and political leadership at the national level and within the international political arena; its tribalism is the outcome of its lack of control of the productive resources of the economy and hence of the competition among the bourgeoisie for favoured access to scarce resources and the need to manipulate particularistic interests and sentiments among the poor to maintain the bourgeoisie's political domination (Williams, 1980, p.40 - see also Blunt, 1964, p.349 for a similar view).

Despite such ambiguity and conflict, the ideology of nationalism and national interest is functional in the sense of having the effect of obscuring the social relations of production and the exploitation and inequality that accompany it. Its basic function seems to be to deny any structural or class division in society and neutralise class conflicts. The state is constituted as the representative and expression of the 'general-will'. General Gowon was once quoted as saying that the Federal Government "operates a system which knows no loyalty other than loyalty to the nation and people" (quoted in G. Williams, 1980, p.49). Economic development and national interest in this type of political language are accepted as non-problematic, apolitical and above class interest. In the case of indigenisation for example, national capital is put forward as representing national interest and therefore deserving state assistance and protection.

We wish to stress however that we do not intend to deny the problem of national integration or ethnicity in the Nigerian society. Our argument is that it has been used and is still being used by the various factions of the Nigerian ruling class as an ideological cover for social differences between those who substantially benefit from the system and the poverty-striken masses, Fanon's wretched of the earth. We further argue that in order to legitimise its rule, the ruling class must put itself forward as nationalistic and development oriented, hence its apparent commitment to
indigenisation and Nigerianisation. It must be able to create national symbols, political aspirations and ideals which are above 'politics' and social or even ethnic divisions. Such ideals are found in the campaigns for an independent national economy, national unity and the social objectives contained in the Second National Development Plan and in Chapter II of the 1979 Constitution on Directive Principles of the State. Actually we can see that the adoption of the Presidential constitution by the military in 1979 was part of the effort to create such national symbols and ideals, for instance in a nationally elected President. This point is well put by John Saul in his discussion of 'Nationalism, Socialism and Tanzanian history':

... to the extent that a 'united' society benefits one or several classes at the expense of others, and to the extent that 'self-determination' ultimately confirms rather than challenges the hegemony of imperialism, then one may suspect that to such an extent nationalist slogans have succeeded only in rationalising the socio-economic status quo and anaesthetizing the mass of the population (Saul, 1977, p.140).

For its success, the dominant class must be able to present its interests as those of the people - the nation as a whole. In other words, a ruling class must be able to universalize its interests for it to successfully maintain its dominant position. To do this it must be able to use familiar themes, some of which are taken from the socio-cultural environment and the culture of the dominated classes. As Nicos Poulantzas has argued,

The political role of dominant bourgeois ideology ... is to attempt to impose upon the ensemble of society a 'way of life' through which the state can be experienced as representing society's general interest, and as the guardian of the universal vis-a-vis 'private individual' (created and represented by the dominant ideology) as unified by an 'equal' and 'free' participation in the 'national' community under the protection of the dominant classes who are held to embody the 'popular-will' (Poulantzas, 1978, p.214).

The effect of this, as Poulantzas went on to point out, is the:

fact that dominated classes live their conditions of political existence through the form of dominant political discourse: this means that often they live even their revolt against the domination of the system within the frame of reference of the dominant legitimacy (Ibid, p.223).
This indicates not only the possibility of a lack of class consciousness in the dominated classes but also implies that their own social perspective or meaning system is often modelled on the discourse of the dominant ideology - which also sets the framework within which oppositional forces and dominated classes carry out their ideological struggle.

It is in this light that we have to see the ideological function of nationalism, national unity, economic development and ethnicity within the Nigerian social formation. Their use reflects the historical and constitutional development of the Nigerian state. It is this historical context which gives these ideological themes their force and effectiveness because they reflect certain concrete aspects of the Nigerian reality.

As much of what is set out below has been discussed above, we only attempt a brief discussion here for emphasis and to fill some of the gaps that may remain.

As Nigerians started to assume formal political power the clamour for the implementation of the two facets of bourgeois nationalism (Nigerianisation and indigenisation) increased. In order to meet this agitation the various regional and the Federal governments speeded up the programme for the Nigerianisation of the civil service and state assistance to indigenous businessmen. While the government continued to state its commitment to encouraging foreign investment, it promised the fullest Nigerian participation in industry. This was stated in the 1962-68 Development Plan where the government promised that foreign investors "will have access to all the incentives, policies and facilities available to the Nigerian investor but Governments will insist upon the fullest Nigerian participation in ownership, direction and management at the earliest possible time. Specifically, it is expected that Nigerians will be trained and employed for all, including the highest positions as fast as possible" (National Development Plan, 1962-68, p.360). The government also encouraged foreign companies to Nigerianise their management, offer shares to Nigerians and move out of certain lines of business especially produce buying and retail trading, in which Nigerians were already established.

With the understandable reason that there was lack of indigenous
capital, the government moved into productive activities by establishing industries in partnership with both local and foreign investors on the understanding that "once such enterprises have been launched successfully, they will be progressively sold to private Nigerian investors in order to raise further capital for accelerated expansion" (Ibid, p.362). We have to note however that this interventionist policy was a continuation of the colonial policy. As one observer has noted "Nigeria ... has never known a liberal laissez-faire state in economic matters. Such ideological strictures were often left behind in the European metropolis by colonial officers, one of whose main duties was ensuring the economic rentability of the colonial enterprise" (Joseph, 1983, p.22).

The reason for this policy which came to its fullest realisation with indigenisation in the mid-70s was to create an autonomous national economy. In the 1962 Plan it was stated that "It is important that Nigerians should ... have prominently before them at all times the ultimate goal of economic independence". Reflecting the confidence and ebullient spirit of the 70s, this was more ambitiously stated in the Second Development Plan (1970-74), "The uncompromising objective of a rising economic prosperity in Nigeria is the economic independence of the nation and the defeat of neo-colonialist forces in Africa". To frustrate the global strategy of modern international combines "the government would aim progressively to substitute Nigeria for foreign interests in both ownership and the management and technical direction of economic enterprises" (pp.31-34).

As Awa has noted by promoting and supporting the economic interests of Nigerians against those of foreigners and by reinforcing a feeling of economic nationalism, nationalist ideology generates some sentiments of belonging together to one country (Awa, 1974, p.369).

During the agitation against colonialism the contradictory process that would enthrone the highly emotive issues of national unity as a major ideological theme was set in motion. This was ensured by the divide and rule tactics of the colonial administration and the desire of Nigerian politicians to use prdomial and particularistic interests to advance and maintain their hegemony.

The fact that different parts of the country were incorporated into
the colonial political and economic framework at different times, the uneven economic, social and political development between the North and South, this differential incorporation gave rise to and later fostered by the colonial administration have given birth to major differences and disagreements between the elites of the two geographical areas. Colonial Governors seized every opportunity to point out these differences. In his broadside against the Congress of British West Africa's demand to the Colonial Secretary in 1920, Sir Hugh Clifford said, inter alia that,

There was ... no such thing as a Nigerian nation because the native states were separated by geographical, racial, tribal, political, social and religious barriers. Self-government in Nigeria ... would secure to each nationality, its own chosen form of government and political institution (Awa, op.cit, p.362).

The idea of separateness inherent here was to become the cornerstone of the policy of self-government after the second World War. It was to be actively promoted with the introduction of the Richard Constitution of 1945 with its stress on 'Unity in diversity'. Before the constitution was introduced, the Governor, Sir Arthur Richard had said that "The problem of Nigeria today is how to create a political system which is itself a present advance and contains the living possibility of further orderly advance - a system within which the diverse elements may progress at varying speeds, amicably and smoothly, towards a more closely integrated economic, social and political unity, without sacrificing the principles and ideals inherent in their divergent ways of life" (quoted in Odumosu, 1963, p.43). This policy was later translated into the three main objectives of the constitution: "to promote the unity of Nigeria; to provide adequately within that unity for diverse elements which make up the country; and to secure greater participation for Africans in the discussion of their own affairs". To realise these objectives three regional legislatures (North, East and West) were created in addition to the Federal one. The next two constitutions (MacPherson in 1951 and Lyttleton in 1954) consolidated the regionalisation of politics in Nigeria "and between 1954 and 1959 the region became the principal arena of politics, the field where the action is" (Dudley, 1982, p.52).

This development met the immediate needs and aspirations of Nigerian politicians who by now had organized themselves on ethnic/geographical lines. Ethnicity as a medium of political discourse became predominant and the
major three political parties (NCNC, AG and NPC) built their programmes and campaigns on communal competition. Since independence, no major party, group or movement has emerged that is organised on class or ideological lines or able to effectively challenge the predominantly geographical/regional/ethnic mode of political discourse. Writing in a similar vein, Douglas Rimmer has pointed out that:

The Federal form of constitution, seen as an unavoidable reflection of social heterogeneity of Nigerian society accentuated this mode of political behaviour ... and enabled the major parties to find regional bases of power and founts of patronage. It encouraged a sense of regional nationality. The primary interpretation of distribution of development and welfare became the regional shares; a secondary interpretation became the shares within each region of the communities that composed it (Rimmer, 1982, p.66).

The military regimes that have ruled the country since 1966, with the tendency towards unitarism, the centralisation of authority and patronage in the Federal Government, the oil wealth, the creation of more states and consequently their weakness compared to the former regions, have not been able to transcend the problem of ethnicity in the Nigerian polity. Even if its saliency was muted during the period of military rule, it reared its ugly head again in 1979 when civilian rule was restored. The new parties that contested the elections were more or less reincarnations of the pre-1966 political parties with the same principal dramatic personae and regional/ethnic bases.*

The ethnic nature of politics has a decisive impact on the distribution of wealth in the country since independence. Such issues as inequality, revenue allocation and economic planning and development in general have almost always exclusively been defined in terms of regional/ethnic balancing. Development Plans are more of shopping lists of

* The National Party of Nigeria (NPN) which won the Presidency was, like the old NPC, dominated by the Northerners and also quite conservative. The Nigerian Peoples' Party was, like the NCNC led by Dr. Azikwe and had its support base mainly in the East. The Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) was seen as a Yoruba party and had its leadership and fellowship mainly from the old West and among the Yorubas in Kwara state. The Peoples' Redemption Party (PRP) was led by Aminu Kano of NEPU and like NEPU had its support among the TALAKAWAS of Kano and Kaduna. What gives the comparison with the pre-1966 era more credibility was the accord between the NPN and NPP at the Federal level between 1979 and 1982 just as their 'predecessors' did in the First Republic.
projects designed to satisfy all ethnic groups ostensibly designed to achieve national unity and reconciliation. In his analysis of distributional issues in Nigerians politics, Henry Bienen concluded that:

Most discussions of political competition in Nigeria have focused on ethnic or communal conflict. Examination of equity issues for the most part have been in terms of formulas for inter-regional or inter-state allocations of federal funds, and on the citing of industries and infrastructure. Territory and community rather than class or occupation seem to have been the organizing concepts used in the analyses of political competition and economic distribution in Nigeria (Bienen, 1981, p.144).

Another implication is that it promotes politics of clientelism or what Richard Joseph broadly termed "ethno-clientelism" (Joseph, 1983). According to him "The grid of Nigerian political society is an intricate and expanding network of patron-client ties, which serve to link communities in a pyramidal manner". Politicians put themselves forward as communal champions in the intra-class struggle for wealth and power.

In this struggle the state becomes an arena for competition by the various factions of the dominant class in order to privatize its resources to satisfy personal accumulation and communal support. Politics becomes essentially a struggle for gaining control of state resources for private ends, some of the resources thus appropriated slip down to the lower classes not as classes per se but as communal supporters. Among many others who have noted this situation, Douglas Rimmer has observed that:

Either directly or through the medium of the parties, men in authority benefited their supporters and home communities by provision of amenities, misappropriations of funds, and nepotism in appointment. They received fealty and delivered largesse. Alongside these expressions of communal solidarity there also grew up "egotistic" graft. The lords of the economy acquired interests and ambitions reaching beyond those of their clients.

He went on to say that:

... public economic power and patronage were valued mainly as instruments of distribution, or the means of moving benefits in one direction rather than another. Appointments to public office (particularly ministerial and in the public
corporations) were therefore decisive, and the dominant purpose of electoral activity was to control such prefermant (Rimmer, 1981, pp.45-48).

Apart from obscuring class differences and in fact arresting the development of class consciousness and politics this tendency helps to legitimise the "disproportionate access to goods and services between individuals of high and low socio-economic status" in Nigeria (Joseph, 1983, p.29).

Two students of Nigerian political economy, who have also recognized the communal basis of politics and resource allocation and its effects, have correctly argued that "The constituencies were not simply given but are defined in the process of political competition itself. Ethnic identities do not present themselves ready-made, determining in advance the lines of political conflict. They are socially constructed in relation to the exigencies of specific historical situations" (Williams and Turner, 1978, p.134). As a social construct, ethnicity becomes ideological, displacing the contradictions at the level of production to a secondary one, thus obscuring social differences. In this case the politics of ethnicity is in practice the process and mechanism for satisfying and reconciling the ethnically divided dominant classes. As we were shown above the Nigerian dominant class were regionally constituted during the terminal phase of colonialism. As Schatz has noted "The prospect and subsequent reality of power precipitated a fusion of the elites into a single dominant class in each region" (Schatz, 1977, p.156).
CHAPTER 2

THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE UNIONISM IN NIGERIA

The pattern of social organisation of production in pre-colonial Africa which we briefly outlined above was not the type that would ensure the emergence of a wage earning population. Most people of working age were more or less self-employed peasant farmers. In that wise, wage labour and consequently trade unions in Africa were products of European colonialism. The growth of the wage-earning population has therefore paralleled the growth of the modern largely urban economy.

After the establishment of colonialism and its administrative, political, security and economic accomplishments it became necessary to establish a steady wage labour force for the effective prosecution of the colonial enterprise. Securing this labour force was initially very difficult. Apart from the newness of wage employment which meant working for another person (which traditionally many would regard as slavery where it did not involve some customary obligation or practice) in this case mostly white-strangers, Africans had very few reasons to leave home and plenty not to. Firstly, accepting wage employment meant leaving home and the security this afforded. It could involve some long, sometimes dangerous journey to a totally different environment. Secondly, the social and psychological adjustments that needed to be made were quite enormous. The worker, apart from losing his freedom, might be subjected to a lot of degradations and rigid discipline and in some cases it might involve a change of dietary habits. His white employers and supervisors hardly understood him, his language and customs. Moreover he could not change his employer when he wanted unless he wanted to be imprisoned or caned (Berg, 1965, p.399, Yesufu, 1962, p.7).

The abolition of slavery did not help the matter much. In fact it led to a shortage of able-bodied men in the towns to the disappointment of many British administrators. Many of the freed slaves were able to enter into agriculture and the rural economy relative easily. As we have shown in the last chapter, the colonial economy started off by relying on agriculture (the period of legitimate trade). Nigeria's economic development during this period and after did not involve the appropriation of land and the "creation of a landless proletariat in response to the demands of new industries". As Hopkins explained,
The freed slaves stayed in agriculture, colonised virgin land, and ... it seems likely that the slaves of the late nineteenth century became the independent cocoa farmer of the early colonial period. The collapse of slavery, far from forcing labour off the land, made agriculture a more attractive occupation than it had been previously (Hopkins, 1966, pp.34-35).

Apart from the above factors we could further argue that the reluctance of Africans to enter into wage employment with the colonial administration or the mercantile houses could be seen as part of the resistance put up by the traditional communities against the imposition of alien structure of social relations of production.

Under this situation the colonial government had to devise different measures, in most cases involving force and coercion, to draw Africans into wage employment. The introduction and payment of taxes and the monetisation of the economy were two means of coercion through which Africans were drawn into wage employment and into the colonial economy in general. The colonial administration was confident that trade by barter and subsistence agriculture could not yield the needed cash to pay taxes, peasant farmers would be forced to seek employment where they would be paid in hard cash or engage in economic activities linked to the colonial economy, for example planting and selling cash crops. According to Elliot J. Berg, "While in some instances the aim of taxing Africans was to raise revenues, more commonly direct taxes were levied primarily to force them out of the villages into wage employment" (Berg, 1965, p.403). A colonial Governor of Kenya was quoted as saying "Taxation is the only possible method of compelling the native to leave his reserve for purpose of seeking work" (ibid, p.404).

Forced labour was also used at the initial stage in many places including Nigeria. According to an analyst the colonial administration "openly accepted that forced labour was necessary in all African colonies, particularly in the earliest stage of colonial rule" (Mason, 1978, p.60). Such forced labour and "its sibling, wage labour provided the muscle which was demanded by the colonial regime to install the infrastructure required for domination and appropriation" (ibid, p.56). In 1918, Lord Lugard had to resort to forced labour to meet the acute shortage of labour needed to construct the railway in Nigeria (Fapohunda, 1979, p.109). In some case thousands of men were forcefully drafted for labour service as "punitive
measures against the villagers and for quite flimsy offences" (Akpala, 1971, p.275). The drafting of such forced labour was sometimes done with the active collaboration of local chiefs in many areas. Despite the enactment of the 1929 Colonial Development Act and the Labour Code which gave some protection to workers, it was still believed that some elements of coercion was needed to ensure that the recruited labour stayed on until people would voluntarily accept wage employment (ibid).

Another means of drawing Africans into wage employment was the creation of wants and desires which could only be satisfied by buying imported goods and services. Needless to say these goods could only be bought by earning and spending cash - European currency.

In addition, shortage of agricultural land in some areas forced many into wage employment. This was quite evident in Eastern Nigeria where scarcity of cultivateable land, in relation to the large population created a pool of landless people who were early encouraged to take to wage employment.

The early workers were employed on road and railway construction, public works, the mines and as messengers or lower grade officials in the colonial administration and the mercantile houses.

The opening up of Nigeria by European traders and missionaries to be followed by the extension of the colonial administration to many parts of the country advanced and consolidated the creation of the servitor class necessary for the operations of the colonial regime. According to Kenneth Dike about 2,500 Europeans and Africans were employed in the Delta in 1871 and the number was said to have increased when the Royal Niger Company was chartered in 1886 (Dike, 1956, p.156). Earlier a few people have been employed to work with John Beecroft, appointed first Consul of Lagos in 1849. With the increased complexity of administration following the penetration and military conquest of the hinterland and the establishment of more commercial houses, it became necessary to employ more Nigerians. Faced with shortage and alleged high cost of indigenous labour, the government and the commercial houses resorted to employing foreigners from other territories in West Africa, the West Indies and unsuccessfully, Asia (Hughes and Cohen, 1978, p.33). The government also sought to solve the labour recruitment problem by lowering wages. A staunch.
advocate of this low wage policy was the governor of Lagos, Henry McCallum, whose attempt to cut wages paid to African workers led to the 'Lagos Strike of 1897' (Hopkins, 1966). Among other reasons the low wage policy was based on the belief that African workers had very limited and specific wants and therefore would work just long enough to realise those wants. The policy did not solve the problem, suggesting as Hopkins pointed out "that the real reason why labour remained in short supply was because wages were too low" (ibid, p.147).

The Emergence of Trade Unions

As could be expected it was out of the above servitor class of employees that the first trade unions in Nigeria emerged. Though many writers have dated the emergence of organised labour to 1938 when the colonial government enacted the Trade Union Ordinance many studies have shown the existence of trade unions as far back as 1893 and Hopkins has studied the occurrence of a major strike in 1897 among government workers (Hughes and Cohen, op.cit., Hopkins, op.cit.). In fact European employers were not very enthusiastic about the establishment of trade unions. Before the law was passed the Nigerian government and employers consulted were of the view that the workers and the country were not yet "ready for the type of legislation which the civilized world had evolved after a considerable period of years" (Yesufu, 1962, p.30).

According to Hughes and Cohen there was a Mechanics Mutual Aid Provident and Improvement Association in Lagos in 1893. In August 1912 the Southern Nigeria Civil Service Union was formed. It later changed its name to the Nigeria Civil Service Union following the 1914 amalgamation of the Protectorates of Southern and Northern Nigeria. This union was more of a staff or professional association than a trade union in the modern sense of the word.

According to Yesufu the Nigeria Civil Service Union was not formed out of disaffection or grievances by its members who wanted a platform from which to fight for improvements in their material conditions but rather "it would appear that the main reason for its formation was merely to match the existence of such institutions elsewhere" this time Sierra Leone (Yesufu, 1962, p.34). The union was dominated by the most senior of African civil servants. Its membership was limited to officials down to and including those of the rank of First Class although it promised to take care
of the interests of other African workers. From its composition and mode the union was 'aristocratic'. It rejected strikes and its main weapon seemed to have been discussions, and lectures and addresses. A Nigerian trade unionist, Woga Ananaba, said of the Nigeria Civil Service Union "Its weakness lay in the fact that it was aristocratic to a fault. It did not just abhor strikes, but lacked the courage even to make threats in furtherance of its demands" (Ananaba, 1969, p.15).

The union however dominated Nigerian labour history up till the depression of 1929; though in between other unions did emerge. They included the Nigerian Mechanics Union, the Nigerian Union of African Railwaymen and a Lagos Branch of the National African Sailors and Fireman's Union established in July 1921. Within the private sector the Lagos Mercantile Clerks Association was formed in 1911. In 1931 the Railways Workers Union and the Nigerian Union of Teachers came into being.

The Railway Workers Union grew out of the depression of the 1930s and the dissatisfaction of a lot of workers with the 'gentle-man' posture of the NCSU. Between 1931 and 1938 it was able to organise effective agitation for regrading of certain posts and against maltreatment and racial discrimination. It was the first trade union to be registered under the 1938 Trade Union Ordinance. Though the Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT) arose out of the dissatisfaction of Nigerian teachers with their conditions of service its activities and posture were not different from those of the Civil Service Union. Its activities were "tempered considerably by the same type of intellectualism as pervaded the Nigeria Civil Service Union" (Yesufu, 1962, p.36).

The main big unions of the pre-1939 formative years were the Nigeria Civil Service Union, the Nigerian Union of Teachers and the Railway Workers' Union. The first two were unions of government employees while the NUT drew its membership mainly from teachers in government schools. This is understandable in the sense that the government was the main employer; the majority of educated Nigerians were mainly civil servants.

Accordingly, it was they who had not only an employer to bargain with, and against whom to defend their interests, but it was primarily within their ranks that one could find the intelligence, the skills, and the spur which are essential for the formation of strong stable, and continuous associations of workers (Yesufu, ibid, p.37).
### Table 2.1
**List of Strikes and Other Labour Disturbances, 1897-1939**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>Large-scale strike by artisans and labourers in the Public Works Department, Lagos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>Strike by government employed canoe men at Badagry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>Warders in the Lagos Hospital came out on strike.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>A strike involving clerks working on the railways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>A second and more widespread strike involving railway clerks, which spread to other employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>Eighty-three government printers came out on strike.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Strike and other labour disturbances at the Lagos docks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>A strike by engineers employed by Elder Dempster over inadequate war bonuses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>According to a newspaper account there was an &quot;extensive&quot; strike in Port-Harcourt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>A strike in the Marine Department, Lagos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>A strike at the government-owned colliery at Enugu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>A strike in which &quot;all the daily paid men in the employment of the railways and the Public Works Department are involved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919-1927</td>
<td>Agitation over a lengthy period about pay and conditions of service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>Railway artisans were involved in strike action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>&quot;Pit-boys&quot; came out on strike at Enugu colliery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>&quot;Tub-boys&quot; came out on strike at Enugu colliery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>Disaffection among Fire Brigade and Police.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>A strike by bus drivers against Zarpas, a Lebanese-owned transport company.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>Industrial unrest on the Eastern Section of the railway.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Continuing strikes and unrest among coal miners at Enugu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Produce labourers at Ijebu-Ode refused to work in protest against &quot;ill-treatment&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>A strike in the Railway Foundry shop, backed by the newly formed Railway Workers' Union.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to this we could also note that to many workers and Nigerians in general, the government was the main 'problem' or enemy to be confronted. During the colonial period it was generally felt that the government was in collusion with the mercantile companies to exploit Nigerians (Coleman, 1958, pp. 79-90). This could partly explain the fact that Nigerian nationalism was mainly concerned with displacing the colonial regime.

Though the level of overt conflict might not have reached the level of other countries as Yesufu suggested, it is noteworthy that many of the unions did take industrial actions to back up their demands on wages, conditions of service, racial discrimination and Africanisation of certain posts in the civil service (see Table 2.1). Peter Gutkind has described the period between 1918 and 1929 as that of "consciousness raising among African workers" (Diejomaoh, 1979, p. 171).

From the above it is clear that there existed in Nigeria prior to 1938 "massive labour agitation" and that the 1938 Ordinance "facilitated, but in no way caused the rapid growth of (union) registration" (ibid, p. 175). The law as Hughes and Cohen have observed,

> was not the great releasing mechanism for trade union organisation which later writers imply or state. Rather it represented a kind of coming-of-age of Nigerian trade unionism, the birth and adolescence of which had taken place, despite government hostility and non-recognition (Hughes and Cohen, op. cit. pp. 36-37).

They went on to say that though the law helped the unions to picket and protect their funds from employers, "the ability to organise trade unions had been demonstrated some two decades previously" (ibid).

The law stimulated the formation and registration of many unions. By one account 14 unions with 4,629 members had been registered in 1940. A year later there were 41 unions representing 17,521 members.
TABLE 2.2
GROWTH OF NIGERIAN TRADE UNIONS, 1940-4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. registered during the year</th>
<th>No. of unions existing at the end of year</th>
<th>Total membership of all unions at the end of year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4,629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>17,521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>26,275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>27,154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>30,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Note: The difference between the running total in column (b) and the figures indicated in column (c) represents the number of defunct unions).


It must be pointed out that this high increase in unionisation was not due solely to the law or any liberal policy of the government. An important stimulant was the "underlying structural changes in the economy and society" (Cohen, 1977, p.350). There was an increase in the number of wage-earners and in the rate of urbanisation. According to Odumosu the second World War undoubtedly accelerated the rate of urbanisation which led to a noticeable increase in the wage earning population (Odumosu, 1963, p.38). Further, Nigerian products like those of other colonial territories became of strategic importance in the war effort. There was also an increase in the level of political awareness of wage-earners due to war propaganda and the new found importance of colonial territories to the 'win the war effort'. However most important was the increase in the cost of living occasioned by the war. In 1941 real wages had fallen to 68% of their 1939 level (Cohen, 1977, p.350).

Apart from the socio-economic factors the militancy of the Railway Workers' Union generated a lot of interest among workers in other establishments. This militancy could be attributed to the "towering and fearless" personality of Michael Imoudu who was able to master and exploit the social conditions of the time to lead the railwaymen's agitation.
It was Imoudu's leadership that spearheaded the one-day sit-down strike against wage-reduction in 1931. This strike generated a lot of interest and a "high level of consciousness among the workers..." (Osoba, 1980, p.197). Imoudu became the President of the RWU in 1940.

Soon after his election, Imoudu successfully led an agitation against the Railway Management which further added a boost to workers' interest in unionisation. In a nutshell the RWU had demanded the abolition of retrenchment and other 'anti-workers' measures taken by the colonial government during the Depression. The government accepted the workers' demands and left their implementation to the Management. According to the RWU the management's proposals for implementing the agreement "contained discouraging interpretations of the concessions granted by the government". The Union also demanded the removal of the Chief Mechanical Engineer, Mr. W.G.W. Wilson (Ananaba, 1969, p.24). After a protest march to the Government House under Imoudu's leadership, the workers received a promise from the Governor, Sir Bernard Bourdillon for an explanation. Upon his intervention the crisis was resolved, the union secured most of its demands including the departure of Mr. Wilson. This success must have demonstrated to the workers that 'in unity lies strength'.

Another factor in the growth of trade unions in the 1940s was the growth in nationalism signified by "Azikwe's new brand of combative nationalist agitation and aggressive journalism, which focused public attention on the various forms of colonial exploitation of Nigerian labour) and inspired confidence among many Nigerians in their ability to end colonial rule through the intensification of activist political and working class agitation" (Osoba, op.cit. p.198).

The awareness generated by the success of the Railway Workers' Union was translated into a kind of inter-union relationship. With the hardship which followed the second World War the workers started agitating for better wages. In July 1941 a meeting attended by representatives of the RWU, the Post and Telegraphs Workers' Union, the Nigerian Marine African Workers Union and the Public Workers Department Workers' Union, formed the African Civil Servants Technical Workers' Union (ACSTWU) "to protect the interests of African technical workers' and establish better understanding between them and the Nigerian Government" (Ananaba, 1969, p.26).
This new body was more of a quasi-federal organization acting as a rallying point and spokesman for government technical and unskilled manual employees in all industrial disputes, than a trade union central organisation. However, it was able to collaborate with the Civil Service Union and the Nigerian Union of Railwaymen in the agitation for a Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) or 'war bonus' in 1941. Through walk-outs, demonstrations and marches the workers were able to get some concessions from the government. For instance the government accepted a recommendation for a 50% increase in the Cost of Living Allowance in 1941.

The success of these struggles further reinforced the desire for unity among Nigerian workers and it seems this desire for unity to fight during periods of agitation especially for wage increase would be a principal feature of organised labour in Nigeria for a good part of its history up till 1978.

In November 1942 the ACSTWU organised a meeting in Lagos which led to the formation of the Federated Trade Unions of Nigeria. It pledged itself to further the interests of the labour movement and loyalty to and cooperation with the government so long as it acts in the interest of the people. That the issue of labour unity was of paramount importance could be seen from the fact that the editorial of the maiden issue of the FTU's paper, 'The Nigerian Worker' was titled 'We Must Unite'. In July 1943 the name of the FTU was changed to the Trade Union Congress of Nigeria (TUCN). Again the first of its nine aims and objectives was "to unite all trade unions into one organised body" (Ananaba, 1969, p.40). The TUCN was immediately recognised by the government. The government initiated a consultative monthly meeting with the Union and it was able to influence labour legislation. It also mounted a series of trade union summer schools. But despite this, the TUC "took overt political stands",

It demanded labour representation in the Legislative Council (perhaps as a counterweight to the representation of shipping, banking and mining interests) while its constitution announced that one of its objects was 'to press for the nationalization of mining and timber industries, township transport and other important public services' (Cohen, 1974, p.72).
However, the main impact of the Congress was on wage demands. The workers were not entirely satisfied with the 1942 awards which in any case have been eroded by inflation. Some labour leaders even felt that the ACSTWU was not dynamic enough in fighting the workers' cause. It seemed the government itself realised that the awards did not go far enough, for Sir Bernard Bordillon promised to review the allowances accordingly to match the cost of living index. The 1943 and 1944 indices justified such a review.

**TABLE 2.3**

**COST OF LIVING INDEX, LAGOS, SHOWING COMPARATIVE INDEX FIGURES**

**WITH DETAILS OF FIVE MAIN HEADS OF EXPENDITURE**

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Before the promised review could take place there had been a change in the administration. A new governor had been appointed. The new governor was a different man in character and in his view of the African. To the new governor, Arthur Richard, every African demand was political agitation. James Coleman has said that it was unfortunate that he was the governor of Nigeria during the delicate period of 1943-47 "He seemed to have a special knack for antagonising educated elements..." (Coleman, 1958, p.275).

On March 22, 1945 the Joint Executive of Government technical workers sent a request on pay increase to the government. The workers also demanded increased Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) "in order to minimise the tide of the fast approaching national disintegration in health and stamina
and in order to reduce further sapping of vitality amongst the workers" (quoted in Ananaba, 1969, p.43).

The government of Arthur Richard rejected these demands in spite of the fact that it admitted a rise in the cost of living because "certain essential commodities are in short supply and difficult to obtain" (ibid). Among other reasons the rejection was based on the argument that an increase in wages would lead to further inflation.

This flat rejection of the workers' demand led to the now famous 1945 General Strike. The strike, despite its success, revealed the schism within the TUCN over issues of strategy. Imoudu, now released from detention and banishment (because of his militancy and courage in confronting the European Management of the Railways, he was dismissed from service on January 23, 1943. That same day a detention order was served on him and he was deported to Benin Province) and some militant labour leaders were able to win the followership and confidence of the rank and file of union members. They were also able to displace the established leadership of the TUCN and the ACSTWU who were in favour of a postponement of the strike and continued negotiations. The strike however demonstrated the strength of the labour movement despite this apparent split. The Tudor Davies Commission set up after the strike recognised this when it said,

It is apparent that the influence and power of the Nigerian Trade Unions for good or for ill should not be underestimated, for if their organisation strength - financial, numerical - is small, what may be termed their operational strength is great (quoted in Cohen, 1977, p.356).

This Commission as could be expected lent its weight in support of the moderate leaders when it recognised as "fully representative" and "sufficiently rational and sufficiently responsible to voice the opinions of Nigerian labour as a whole" (Cohen, 1977, p.357) the Supreme Council of Nigerian Workers comprising the Nigerian Civil Service Union, the ACSTWU and other white-collar unions including the NUT. In its report the commission warned that unless the trade unions received "help and encouragement from Great Britain to develop along proper trade union lines" they would drift "finally and irrevocably into the hands of the politicians" (Cohen, 1974, p.163). The type of responsible unions and workers the Commission wanted was evident from the report when it wrote
"... the colonies can become busy hives of activity, filled with eager ambitious and loyal workers; this is the ideal of an ever expanding colonial development" (in ibid).

The Commission's warning must have stemmed from the active support Zik and his papers - The West African Pilot and the Daily Comet - gave to the militant unionists during the strike. An editorial in the Pilot issue of September 4, 1945 described the TUCN and the Civil Service Union as "a sort of Cinderella, subject to the vagaries of the colonial administration" (quoted in Cohen, 1974, p.163). To a section of the labour movement and Nationalists in the NCNC the strike has shown the link between the interest of the workers and the broader cause of Nationalism. "The strike", Coleman wrote, "served as a dramatic opening of a new nationalist era" (Coleman, 1958, p.259).

The leader of the militant wing of the labour movement, Michael Imoudu was coopted into the executive of the NCNC and toured the country with the party in 1946. This was in spite of official objection and the fear that the trade union movement might "fall under the domination of disaffected persons by which their activities may be diverted to improper and mischievous ends" (quoted in Ananaba, 1969, p.86). But the relationship was not to last long and it further widened the cracks within the labour movement.

Though it might not have been apparent by this time, three tendencies emerged within the labour movement on the issue of party/union affiliation. One was to forge a link with the existing political parties, the second was for the movement to remain neutral, which was favoured by the government and lastly, some favoured the creation of a workers' party separate from the existing ones (Cohen, 1974, p.169). At its sixth Annual Delegates Conference held in Lagos on December 27, 1948, the matter came to a head. A motion moved by a Zikist, Nduka Eze, for affiliation with the NCNC was defeated and it paved the way for the first open split of organised labour in the country.

The radical labour leaders led by Imoudu left to form the Nigerian National Federation of Labour in March 1949 after they had first organised themselves into a Committee of Trade Unions. The others remained in the TUCN. The aims and objectives of the new Central
Organisation clearly showed its difference from the TUCN and established its radicalism. They were,

a) To assist by practical effort the attainment of the objects of member unions in the Federation.

b) To foster a spirit of working class consciousness among all workers of Nigeria and Cameroons.

c) To fight for the realisation of the social and economic security of workers and to advance their educational and political aspirations by imparting political knowledge to the workers.

d) To press for the socialisation of important industries in the country with a view to realising a socialist government where the identity of the working class will not be lost.

e) To cooperate with all democratic federation of trade unions the world over in order to make possible the clarion call of 'Workers of the World Unite' for the triumphant emergence of a World Parliament of the Working Class (Ananaba, 1969, p.96).

The split in the international labour movement around this time did not help matters. It created two points of focus, ideological reference points and sources of fund and other material assistance for the two dominant tendencies within the Nigerian labour movement. But interestingly enough by 1950 the two central organisations, on the initiative of the Department of Labour, were at the negotiating table discussing how to unite. On May 26 the two actually united to form the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC). Its executive was dominated by the radical leaders of the NNFL. In fact, Robert Melson said the NNFL "absorbed" the TUCN. As if to demonstrate the victory of the radical elements, weeks later the NLC was affiliated to the Communist led World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTC) and the NCNC internally, an old sore that caused the split of 1948/49.

The victory of the radicals was short lived. Before long, two incidents occurred which affected their fortunes and ascendancy within the labour movement and their alliance with the NCNC.

First because of their radicalism and unitary-nationalist orientation which were out of tune with the emerging regional/ethnic divisions within the political system of the time, the Zikists, among
whom were the radicals, were denounced by the NCNC. The various constitutional reforms of the 1940s and 50s, especially the Richard Constitution of 1944, were increasingly polarising Nigeria along regional lines with the consequence of creating "a market for regional politics" (Nelson, 1973, p.125). The NCNC like other parties became drawn into this market abandoning its earlier unitarian outlook. This increased the influence of politicians with regional/ethnic links and a loss for the labour activists and other Zikists. The Zikist Organisation was later proclaimed an unlawful society when a labourer claiming allegiance to it tried to assassinate the Chief Secretary to the government, Sir Hugh Foot. Thus the radical unionists lost their political base including of course the support of the Zik papers.

The second event was the failure of Nduka Eze who was both the secretary of the NLC and the secretary of the Amalgamated Union of UAC African workers (UNAMAG) to carry out a strike against the UAC Management in December 1950. Earlier in August he had organised a successful strike of the workers which secured a 12% increase in the cost of living allowance. It was an attempt to repeat this that failed and with it went his influence over the workers. The NLC also suffered during the strike when without the total support of its leadership, including that of some of the radicals, it called on mercantile workers in other establishments who had not been paid 12% cost of living allowance with effect from April to make such a demand, and be prepared to go on strike on December 14 with the UAC workers. It failed. The failure led to the departure of many unions from the NLC. In addition it further alienated the radicals from the NCNC and the West African Pilot in January 1951 deplored communist infiltration into the Congress and Eze was expelled from the NCNC 'Cabinet' for disloyalty and breach of trust (Cohen, 1974, p.75).

With the decline in the influence of the radical labour leaders and the competition for the allegiance of colonial unions between the WFTU and the ICFTU the fate of the NLC was sealed. Though some of the conservative unionists tried to organise the committee of ICFTU Affiliated Union in Nigeria, the country had no effective central labour organisation until August 1953 when both wings met again to start the All-Nigeria Trade Union Federation (ANTUF). Once again the leadership of the new organisation was dominated by the radicals. Michael Imoudu
and Cogo Chu Nzeribe became the President and Secretary respectively. They were also able to push through some radical demands. For instance among its ten aims were,

(1) to seek for state ownership of major industries in the country, and

(2) to establish and support the political wing of the workers' movement with a view to realising a socialist government.

The Federation decided not to affiliate with any political party and at its second congress decided against affiliation with either the WFTU or the ICFTU. These decisions removed two fundamental causes of disunity within the labour movement. It became difficult for the conservative and moderate leaders to accuse the new body of communist infiltration. But despite all this the government first refused to recognise it and during its second annual conference tried to infuse more moderate unionists into the leadership. Even the then weak moderate leaders still accused the ANTUF leadership of communist infiltration (Cohen, 1974, p.78).

By the fourth annual conference in November 1956 the moderates felt strong enough to table a motion for affiliation with the ICFTU. Their motion was defeated but they refused to accept the defeat. Adebola, a leading member of the moderate wing resigned from the executive, accusing it of being communist inspired. He was later joined by N.A. Cole and L.L. Borha and together, they formed the National Council of Trade Unions of Nigeria (NCTUN), on April 17, 1957. And so yet another split. The new body was immediately affiliated to the ICFTU and also immediately gained government recognition. The ANTUF accused the government, the Commissioner of Labour and the British TUC, the leadership of the NCNC and the ICFTU of being behind the split. The NCNC came in because according to the leaders of the ANTUF it wanted to thwart any attempt by their party, the Nigerian Labour Party formed about a year earlier, to gain mass support.

Toward 1959, with Nigeria approaching independence and pressure from below for wages and salary review, the two central bodies came together again in the Trade Union Congress (of Nigeria) (TUC(N)). Despite efforts made to bury their differences, the Department of Labour Annual Report for 1958/59 caught the real mood of the situation when it noted
that "it is by no means certain that the ideological differences have been completely resolved" (quoted in Cohen, 1974, p.80). The cracks soon opened again right at the conference when the members of the Executive Council were being elected. Delegates of the ANTOF walked out when its nominee for the Secretaryship, S.U. Bassey, was beaten by L.L. Borha of the NCTUN. Imoudu having won the Presidency stayed on; but not for long. By April 1960 the two organisations have effectively drifted apart again.

The TUC(N) now dominated by the moderates affiliated to the ICFTU while the ANTUF now under a new name, the Nigerian Trade Union Congress (NTUC), formed in Lagos on April 20, 1960 after the moderates in the TUC(N) had succeeded in expelling Imoudu, radicalised its programme demanding,

The immediate introduction of a unitary constitution, the resignation of British personnel employed in the Army and the Police Force, the nationalization of the major industries and the creation of an African liberation fund (Cohen, 1974, p.82).

In contrast, the TUC(N) called for cooperation with "Governments, employers and other sections of our community in the task of developing the economic resources of Nigeria and to ensure for each of the major factors of production a just and equitable share in the proceeds of industry" (Ananaba, 1969, p.205).

During the period the NTUC became attracted to the Ghana-based All African Trade Union Congress (AATUF) - a Pan-African body in line with Nkrumah's radical Pan-Africanism.

The above brief discussion has so far established the degree and reasons for the lack of unity and the fundamental differences within the trade union movement. This was the picture at independence in 1960. What follows is a discussion of the post-independence period.

Post-1960 - The Search for Unity Continues

In August 1961 the Federal Government organised a conference, the All-Nigeria Peoples' Conference bringing together about 500 delegates made up of representatives of individuals from organised bodies from all parts
of the country'. The theme of the conference was "The Role of Nigeria in African Affairs'. Among other things, it was felt by the participants that Nigeria could play a leading role in labour affairs on the continent but before it could do this it must be able to put its house in order. To achieve this a Labour Reconciliation Committee was established to bring together the two opposing camps of the labour movement – the NTUC and the TUC(N). After much acrimony between their leaders, and a month postponement, a reconciliation meeting of all registered trade unions opened at the University of Ibadan on May 3, 1962. Under intense tension, mutual distrust and counter-accusations, the conference was able to reach the third day having passed a resolution creating the United Labour Congress (ULC).

What proved the fragility and failure of the 'Unity talks' was the vital issue of international affiliation. After the vote had been taken in favour of affiliating to the ICFTU, the NTUC charged foul play; the voting had been rigged. The number of voting delegates had swollen to 1,025. The NTUC also accused the Chairman, a senior politician, of collaborating with the TUC(N) to wreck the talks. They walked out and staged a demonstration on the campus of the University and later formed the Independent United Labour Congress (ILUC). It was back to square one. Many Nigerians including the Press, shared the ILUC's reasons for the failure of the Ibadan Unity Talks. According to the West African Pilot,

The hopes of establishing an independent united labour movement are now dashed... The cause of the strife all these years has been the question of foreign link. Adebola supports foreign affiliation. Imoudu doest... We agree with Imoudu that tying our trade union movement to the chariot of alien bodies is not only inconsistent with our foreign policy but also in our domestic affairs. The saying that he who pays the piper dictates the tune is true even in trade union movements. It should have occurred to those who voted for foreign affiliation that those alien bodies are not charitable or philanthropic organisations. They must have a purpose for what they are doing (quoted in Ananaba, 1969, p.224).

Despite this division and national sentiments against international affiliation, the Government recognised the United Labour Congress in June 1962 which further fuelled the speculation about government collaboration with the TUC(N). The ULC increased its criticism of IULC as being communist inspired and called on the Federal Government to ban
John Tettegah, the Ghanaian trade union leader and the moving spirit behind the AATUF. The government did ban Tettegah, demonstrating the influence of the ULC within the government.

The situation within the two central labour organisations was also not without acrimony. The first to crack due to pressure of internal rivalry was the ULC. In December 1962 a break-away group formed the Nigerian Workers' Council and affiliated it to the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions (IFCTU). As Robin Cohen pointed out the affiliation should not be interpreted too literally. Though the two leaders are Christians, many of their members were Muslims, thus indicating the relationship between leadership and followership within the labour movement. What could have prompted the two leaders, N. Anunobi and N. Chukwura to break away, Cohen continued, was that they were "in the market" for a split attracted by promises of aids and support coming from the IFCTU (Cohen, 1974, pp.87-88).

Within the Independent United Labour Congress (IULC) a bitter power struggle ensued among Imoudu, Ibrahim Nock, S.U. Bassey, Wahab Goodluck, Sid Khayam and Amaeufule Ikoro, the IULC Secretary. Nock was the first to leave and in December 1962 announced the formation of the Northern Federation of Labour (NFL) which was affiliated to the International Conferation of Arab Trade Unions. The NFL according to Cohen represented little more than Nock's personal following, though it was able to hold a Congress in 1965 attended by about 6,000 to 7,000 delegates. As the name suggests, it was regional and it was believed that the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) was the power behind it.

Later, due to ideological and organisational differences, Goodluck and S.U. Bassey forced Imoudu and Ikoro out of office and took over the IULC. Before then they had forged a link with Dr. Tunji Otegbeye who in 1963 had set up a Marxist party called the Socialist Workers and Farmers Party. At its August 1963 First Revolutionary Congress, Goodluck and Bassey reverted the name of the IULC to NTUC. Imoudu and Ikoro formed their own organisation, the Labour Unity Front (LUF) which remained unaffiliated throughout its life.

There now existed four labour central organisations in the country - the ULCN, NWC, NTUC and LUF. The ULC and NTUC being the leading contenders
for leadership and followership. Ideologically, the NTUC and LUF were closer, the same applied to the ULC and NWC.

Before long, pressure from rank and file of workers was to bring them together again. Just as the leaderships of the four central organisations were splitting into various factions there were underground movements among the rank and file for a wage increase and effective labour agitation to back it up. The workers were becoming dissatisfied with the newly acquired affluence of the politicians and how it was acquired and displayed. There was widespread frustration and anger at the non-fulfillment of the promises of independence. The situation was aptly described by the ULC,

After nearly three years of dynamic experiment as masters of our own destiny, the fine hopes and reasonable expectations, born of the splendid prospects that heralded and marked the celebration of independence, are becoming increasingly confused and darkened by the statements and doings of politicians and Governments. The workers are baffled and fearful, disillusioned and frustrated (quoted in Ananaba, 1969, p.232).

It was under this atmosphere that the NTUC with the cooperation of other unions started a discussion group on wages in August 1963. On its part the ULC at its May 1963 Congress adopted a motion calling for a general revision of wages and salaries. On September 12 all the registered trade unions met and formed the Joint Action Committee (JAC) to prosecute the wage demand. The meeting decided to start a general strike on September 27 if the wage demand was not met before that day. After a day's strike on that day, the Federal Government appointed a six-man Commission of Inquiry under the Chairmanship of Justice Adeyinka Morgan. The cavalier manner the Government treated the Morgan and the Workers' demands led to a general strike in June 1964, the second in Nigeria's history. The coverage of this strike by the press forms part of our empirical investigation which is reported in later chapters.

The JAC did not last long. Despite the desire of the ordinary workers for continued unity, the charged political atmosphere in the country due mainly to the 1964 general elections was to frustrate any move to consolidate the gains of the temporary unity. It was the issue of which of the two political alliances formed to contest the general
elections, NNA (comprising the NFC and NNDP) and UPGA (made up of AG and NCNC) that split the Joint Action Committee and the four central organisations went their different ways. The LUF and NTUC, supporting the UPGA which had called for a boycott of the elections, decided to sponsor a strike, as a protest against election rigging, in the name of the JAC. At the meeting where this was decided, Adebola of the ULC who was the Chairman, supported the strike only to back out some days later describing it as 'political'. Adebola's turn-around came about when he realised that the constitutional crisis involving the Prime Minister, Balewa and the President, Azikwe, was being patched up and so he would have to mend his fences to retain his favoured position with the government (Cohen, 1974, pp.92-93). The strike, the first purely political strike in the country, failed woefully.

It was this that provided the opportunity for Adebola of the ULC and Chukwura of the NWC to pull out of the JAC. Two weeks later the two joined together to form the Supreme Council of Trade Unions but it was shortlived. With the disintegration of the JAC no effort was made to unite the four central organisations again until after 1966 after the army had taken over. The new Head of State, Major General J.T.U. Ironsi, called the labour leaders and advised them to unite. The meeting led to the formation of the Nigerian Trade Union Federation comprising the NTUC, NWC and LUF. The ULC refused to go along because it believed that non-unionists were involved in drafting the NTUF proposals and attacked the presence of members of the banned Labour Party and SWAFP (both linked to the LUF and NTUC respectively) at the exploratory meeting held under the aegis of the NWC. According to the ULC the presence of the two parties "furnishes an absolute proof that the meeting which ought to be an industrial one was used by some politicians for the political manoeuvres..." going further to describe itself as "purely an industrial and not a political organisation" (Cohen, 1974, p.94). We have to note that at this time, party politics have been banned in the country. Not too long the NTUF itself broke up with the withdrawal of its main mover, NWC.

The events in the country in 1967 and the civil war affected the labour movement. Its Eastern section broke away with the declaration of secession by Ojukwu to form the Biafran Trade Union Confederation (BTUC). The ULC and NTUC gave total support to the Federal Government in its war effort to 'keep Nigeria One'. NTUC's support was predicted on its analysis
that the war was an imperialist ploy to balkanise Nigeria. In the case of the ULC one could say that its support was a continuation of its past support for the government.

During the war, attempts were made to merge the NTUC and LUF but they did not materialise because of personality quarrels between the two leaderships. Also in January 1968, the LUF and NFL (now called the Northern States Federation of Labour following the creation of 12 states in 1967) announced their merger. Another minor development was a breakaway group from the NTUC called the Nigerian Federation of Labour. The new body was of no substance or followership.

At the end of the civil war in 1970 the Lagos central organisations went to the field in the former Biafra to resuscitate their separate unions.

The first main test for the central union bodies came just months after the war. The prosecution of the war had put a lot of pressures on the economy and the people. Inflation was high and basic goods and food items were scarce. Under these trying conditions the workers were ready to abandon the restraints exercised during the war and demand a wage increase. This presented yet another opportunity for the labour organisations to create the United Committee of Central Labour Organisations (UCCLO). The UCCLO was to coordinate the submission of the trade unions to a wage commission set up by the Government. The simmering militancy among the workers had already made the government to set up the Commission, under Chief Simeo Adebo.

As in the past, the various Central Organisations soon went their separate ways with the end of the Commission's work and a wage increase. However, the Adebo Award led to a lot of strikes especially in the private sector of the economy. This followed initial government decision that the Award was limited to public sector employees and not to those in private enterprises because some companies have been granting wage increases since 1964. The government decision followed a representation made to it by the Nigerian Employers' Consultative Council (NECA). The private sector employees rejected this decision and their unions led by shopfloor workers went on strike to back their demand. The government and the employers were forced to climb down.
The main attempt made to unite the unions was in 1975 following the Apena Declaration. The new military government of Murtala Mohammed withheld recognition from the newly formed Nigeria Labour Congress, ostensibly because of leadership rift that developed within it soon after its inauguration. The non-recognition might not have been connected with the fact that the leadership was dominated by the radicals of the NTUC. Further it might not be too far fetched to suggest that the government decision must have been guided by the history and purpose of union merger in Nigeria. It seemed any attempt at such a merger was either a follow-up to a demand for a wage increase or a step to it. The government must have acted to preclude such an event. This argument becomes more plausible if we remembered that the wave of strikes that followed the 1974-75 Udoji Award was not yet over. (We discuss this event in a subsequent chapter).

The alleged leadership dispute provided an opportunity for the government to ban the Congress and the other central labour organisations. An administrator of trade unions was appointed to reorganise the trade unions along industrial lines and prepare the groundwork for the formation of a single central labour organisation in the country. The outcome of the exercise was the creation of 70 industrial unions - 43 for junior staff, 18 for senior staff and nine for employers and the inauguration of the Nigerian Labour Congress on February 28, 1978 at Ibadan, as the Central Labour Organisation in the country.

Before this the Federal Government, just after the formation of the 1975 NLC (which was not recognised) has set up the Adebiyi Inquiry to probe the affairs of the four labour central organisations. On February 11, 1977 the government announced the ban placed on Imoudu, Goodluck and eleven other leading unionists in the country from belonging to any union or holding a union office.

From the above it is glaring that much of the history of the Nigerian Labour Movement is in terms of conflict, fragmentation and futile attempts at unity. Peter Waterman sums up the period thus,

"... post-war Nigerian labour history presents a panorama of personalities and their conflicts, of significant but sporadic upheavals followed by disastrous collapse, of short-lived organisations and countless paper projects and moral and material aids (Waterman, 1971, p.201)."
It also seems that much of the efforts of the movement were made to prosecute mainly economic demands which in a way justifies Lenin's idea that on their own ability workers can only develop trade union consciousness or economism (Lenin, 1942, p.31).

Analysis of the trade union movement has attempted to provide explanation for its problems and failure. Such explanations range from simple personality differences to ideological differences. We restate some of the factors below as a way of summing up the above discussion.

One cannot deny differences at the level of personality, but as Cohen has pointed out "they can be more fairly regarded as the surface manifestation of less obvious causes of disunity" (Cohen, 1974, p.98). One of these was the quest for financial security by the union secretaries. This meant that for them to exist in business they need to perpetuate the various divisions within the movement so that they can be in service and draw salaries and allowances from as many unions as possible. Merging of small unions and central labour organisations meant less unions to organise, consequently less power and influence to bargain at various levels - central organisations for house union leaders and international labour bodies for national labour leaders. Though some labour leaders might have genuine ideological affinity with some of the international organisations, many did seek affiliation because of personal gains. As the Adebiyi Inquiry later revealed in 1976 many of them saw the labour movement as members of the political class saw state offices, as a means to acquiring wealth. For instance, one of the national labour leaders, Chief Odeyemi, told the Inquiry that all his actions were "dictated by his personal desire to remain at all times the Acting General Secretary of the Congress (NLC) and would sacrifice almost anything to make that possible" (quoted in Nwabueze, 1978, p.10). In its report the panel noted that some central labour leaders showed very little, if any, sense of responsibility and accountability to the unions and the workers they represented.

Another cause of disunity was the issue of international affiliation. The foreign unions through their patronage and support to their allies in the country "ensured the survival of some organised groupings in the labour movement that might otherwise have been swallowed up by mergers or take-overs" (Cohen, 1974, p.99).
There was also the issue of what type of relationship should exist between organised labour and political parties during the first republic which ended with military intervention in January 1966. A section of the movement represented in the earlier days by the Zikists wanted an affiliation with a party, the NCNC, while others wanted to stay neutral or form a labour party. The issue came to its height with the NPC's sponsorship of the Northern Federation of Labour, thus introducing regionalism into the labour movement. Those who were against any formal relationship advocated a "formal commitment to non-partisanship" but in reality were not against individual union leader standing for election on the platform of any of the political parties. We could also argue that the issue of political affiliation or not would not have arisen if the labour leaders quite understood their followership. Robert Melson has shown that Nigerian workers are cross-pressured by both their ethnic identities and their economic interests. And as their voting pattern showed during the 1964 General Elections, they would almost certainly vote according to their ethnic loyalties (Melson, 1971).

Further, the problems of the unions must be understood within the wider societal context of the time. This included the nature of the unstable political system and a weak federal coalition unable to articulate the national interest or any coherent ideological commitment to national development or foreign policy. The ideological and intellectual poverty especially during the first republic was reflected in the inability of the Federal Government to influence the course of events. It may also be argued as Sonni-Gwale Tyoden has observed, that the disunity in the labour movement suited the regime. His reason was that such a fragmented trade union movement "meant the domination and control of the socio-economy by the bourgeoisie in the absence of an ideologically united workers' organisation" (Tyoden, 1984, p.3). The government was committed to the principle of collective bargaining and would have wanted to give an image of being democratic to foreign investors and governments. It was however clear that the government and the Ministry of Labour were favourable to the conservative section of the movement but because of the nature of the political structure, especially the jockeying for advantages by the various political parties, the Federal Government could not openly and legally support it.

Another point that emerged from the above discussion is the existence
of two opposing sections of the labour movement with different ideological bents and interpretations of the socio-economic and political system in the country. Robert Melson has called the two predominant groups the Neutralists and the Activists. The neutralists who may also be called the accommodationists were the ULC and the NWC affiliated to the ICFTU and IFOTU respectively – while the activists were the radicals and Marxists in the NTUC affiliated to the WFTU and Imoudu's LUF (Melson, 1975). While agreeing with this dichotomy, Robin Cohen tried to explain the differences between the two wings in their attitude to certain ideas and mode of expression. For instance, while the radicals regarded strikes as a means of raising and developing workers' consciousness, the neutralists saw it as a regrettable recourse and preferred collective bargaining. Further, the neutralists accepted the view that government represents the national will as opposed to the radicals who saw the government as basically representing colonial, bourgeois and neo-colonial interests. In line with these attitudes the radicals have a class-based view of society believing that class antagonisms are endemic and inevitable as against the collaborationist attitude of the neutralists that class lines are not clear and that there is every possibility of reaching accommodation between workers and employers (Cohen, 1974, pp.102-103).

In a 1975 interview, the leader of the ULC, Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo, summed up the attitude of the ULC to political unionism. He said labour leaders should engage in meaningful discussion to gain "bread, butter and happiness" for workers and that,

It must be realised that the ULCN will not be for unity at any time for political purposes or with the idea of workers taking over power. We shall contribute to the labour unity for economic success of the nation which will provide better future for workers. Those who want labour unity for political emancipation must observe that workers' negotiation power is usually weak when they mix politics with labour power but one centre free from political intention would strengthen our growing power (New Nigeria, January 3, 1975).

In contrast to this is the class-based revolutionary analysis of the Nigerian social structure of the NTUC. The NTUC saw itself as,

a revolutionary trade union ... whose policies are governed by scientific analysis of the society and based on the class struggle of the working people. The dynamic force of this
theory of the NTUC is always directed towards combat actions from which it derives its revolutionary character (quoted in Waterman, 1975, p.293).

Leaders and Their Followers

Could we say that the attitudes of the two wings are shared by their respective followers? In answering this question we may need to look at the membership of the unions, their social world and attitudes to their unions in terms of participation.

Studies of Nigerian trade unions have revealed that many labour leaders before the 1978 restructuring were able to manipulate the rules and their members to remain in office. Such leaders were able to maintain tight control of the flow of information and decision-making. Some were also in charge of patronage and benefits through the distribution of which they were able to secure a personal followership or machine within the union (see Ananaba, 1969, pp.281-6 and Cohen, 1974, Chapter 4 for instance of such devices).

Most union members are illiterate. The reasons for this include the structure and complex grading system of posts, the division between 'senior service' and junior officers, the differences in outlook and lifestyle and opportunities between even clerical workers and daily paid/unskilled workers. The 1978 restructuring created separate unions for senior staff and by and large such unions (usually called associations) have remained outside the NLC; the umbrella organ of the labour movements. The high illiteracy rate among the workers has meant the employment of outside profession secretaries. This tendency is reinforced by the complex bureaucratic bargaining procedures inherited from Britain. Most of the workers were relatively new to formal employment, and still retained their links with the rural areas and economy.

As we pointed out above, organised labour has a longer pedigree in the public sector than in the private sector. In the 1960s, organising unions in the foreign dominated sector was difficult. Adrian Peace's study of workers in Ikeja (Lagos) Industrial Estate has shown that it was the 1964 General Strike that provided the impetus for the highly insecure workers in the private sector to organise (Peace, 1979). Even then progress was slow. But the experience of the '70s, especially the shopfloor led
strikes that followed the Adebo Award really provided the workers the opportunity to organise in the defence of their economic interests.

Despite this, Paul Lubeck has concluded from his experience in Kano that "... the outlook for a rapid development of responsible factory unions ... is certainly not promising" (Lubeck, 1975, p.159).

To many workers commitment to the union is half-hearted. A lot of them join unions after a strike or when a wage review commission has just been constituted. This practice has led Cohen to conclude that,

... trade union members in Nigeria should be seen as an intermittent participant, who will turn to the union either when he has a high expectation of receiving an immediate return for his support, or when he feels impelled by moral necessity and social pressure to reward the union when it has taken up the cudgels on his behalf (Cohen, 1974, p.129).

Attendance at union meetings was irregular, so was payment of dues when there was no check-off system. In this case union members knew very little about their union affairs. This made it easy for union leaders to manipulate union affairs to suit their personal interests and ambitions. However, occasionally members did show some militancy, like removing errant officials. But such militancy should not be taken as evidence of serious participation. It was likely to occur on accusation of misuse of union funds or alleged sell-out during negotiation or it might have been engineered by some other ambitious members.

This low level of participation by the rank and file should in the main be attributed to the role trade unions play in the daily experience of the worker and its place in the social network of the society.* In Nigeria, the trade union is one of the networks of social interactions open to the workers. Just as they are new to modern industrial experience, so also they are new to the institution of trade unions and its features and demands as against such traditional ones as the family, and age-grade. Some of these traditional institutions, religious associations, ethnic associations, thrift and credit unions (esusu) are more important in meeting the daily or occasional needs and demands of the workers than

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* A good description of this social network is provided by Peace (1979), Chapter 2.
their unions which they see more in terms of work-place (mainly wages) demands. As Cohen said "Unlike in Britain, where trade unions historically provided a range of social activities and benefits for their members (working men's club, burial societies, old age and sickness benefits, etc.), unions in Nigeria are simply one of a myriad network of competing affinities ... relegated to their purely economic function" (Cohen, 1974, p.132).

The influence of some of these extra-union bodies are more pervasive within the society than that of the union. In effect the workers would likely identify with and pay more attention to them, if for nothing else but the fact that he would still belong to them after retirement or setting up his own business. Yesufu has said,

The workers own tribal organisation, or 'improvement' union in the town provides benefits in desperate cases, financially assists those who want to get married, pays the burial expenses of a deceased parent, makes a present on the occasion of a new babe, honours the worker elevated to a chieftaincy, and repatriates the destitute. Some tribal organisations award scholarships to the young educated worker or to the children of others. It is this that explains the seeming paradox that whereas the worker will not regularly subscribe to the funds of a trade union (apparently because he is too poor) he does pay regular subscriptions to the fund of his tribal 'union'; and the contributions here are usually higher than those required by the trade union... Thus the trade union is caught in a vicious circle; it is deprived of funds because the services it ought to render are provided by non-industrial organisations supported by the workers, and it cannot provide rival services because it has not funds (Yesufu in R. Sklar, 1963, p.496).

Many union members distrust their leaders. They have seen some union leaders grow fat, just like members of the ruling class, at the expense of the unions. They have also seen some of these leaders desert the labour movement for more lucrative jobs in government and in business after they have attained higher academic qualifications, paid for either through government or company scholarships. In 1953 and 1955 the Ministry of Labour and the Nigerian Railway Corporation stopped their trade union scholarship schemes because those who benefitted from them did not stay to work for the trade unions. This sort of practice has created some cynicism among the workers toward the union leadership and the labour movement in general.
A broader issue that must be noted is the patron-client relationship existing in the workplace and/or in other social settings. In many companies the work environment is governed by a paternalistic relationship between the employer and his employees while in others informal mechanism like the use of patronage has developed to govern workplace relationship. A patron-client relationship is asymmetrical, with the patron providing economic assistance, security and protection to a client who repays with demonstration of esteem, information of value to the patron, and political support. Lemarchand and Legg defined clientelism as "a more or less personalized relationship between actors (i.e. patrons and clients) or set of actors, commanding unequal wealth, status or influence, based on conditional loyalties, and involving mutually beneficial transactions" (quoted in Lemarchand, 1972, p.69). In a statement which reflects the Nigerian situation, Eric Wolf says patron-client ties are "especially functional in situations where the formal institutional structure of society is weak and unable to deliver a sufficiently steady supply of goods and services, especially to the terminal levels of the social order" (Wolf, 1966, p.17).

Many workers just coming from the rural areas enter into the work-environment through sponsors, usually from the same ethnic groups. Such sponsorships could become "a formal sort of patronage embedded in a corporate group..." (Remy, 1975, pp.165-166). Remy's study of the Nigerian Tobacco Company (NTC) in Zaria revealed the nature of the relationship,

The patron and clients have daily personal contact with each other and the obligation of the client to provide political support to his patron within the corporate group is articulated. Patronage is thus distinguished from sponsorship by the patron's continuing interest and ability in influencing his clients occupational welfare and by the client's continuing obligation to provide political support for the patron (Remy, ibid).

At a micro-union and company levels this type of relationship has a negative impact on union solidarity. The tendency is for unions to be constituted as ethnic coalitions, sometimes at war with each other; as is the case at the national political level. Union officers and even management staff try to manipulate such relationships to build personal loyalty and followership. Coupled with widespread illiteracy, clientelism leads the workers to look for 'God-fathers' and educated workplace
leaders who could protect them. Further it could also be seen that clientelistic networks link individuals or groups to public and private institutions. On the national level this may take the form of politicians and businessmen (the two are usually fused) acting as spokesmen for their communities, acting to fix jobs and contracts for their constituents in return for political support. As Richard Joseph writes,

... clientelistic relations have served in Africa to reinforce and even promote the conduit for the transmission of resources from their own patrons downwards while ensuring in exchange the support of a reliable constituency. ... Clientelism, and more broadly ethno-clientelism, provide the linkages between villages and provincial and state capitals in Africa. Despite the apparent sharp discontinuities in economic benefits and life styles between those at the centre and the periphery of the statist distributional system, the former can be shown to be linked to the latter through a pyramiding of ethno-clientelistic networks (Richard Joseph,

As one British newspaper columnist has pointed out clientelism in Africa "leads to some of the most outrageous spoils system the world has ever seen, in which an entire national economy is looted and offices of state are handed out like lollipops at a fete, with the implicit licence to use them for private profit" (Neal Ascherson, in The Observer (London), February 23, 1986).

The important point is that clientelism creates vertical links between workers and supervisory and management staff which militates against workers' ability to take collective action in defence of their interests. Instead of seeking collective solutions to their problems individuals tend to 'go it alone' working through their patrons. This reduces any commitment to the union. It also, at a deeper level, vitiates the development of class consciousness.

Commitment to the union is further hampered by the general insecurity of employment by many workers. Because many of them are semi-skilled and unskilled it is relatively easy to dismiss them for the slightest excuse and employ others from the pool literally waiting at the gate begging for employment or threaten and intimidate them to submission.
A Nigerian Working Class

The multiple loyalty of Nigerian and indeed African workers has led many writers to dismiss the applicability of the Marxist concept of class to describe them. Such writers argue that African workers have not shown evidence of class consciousness and that they are predominantly involved in non-class based social networks and relationships which precludes the development of class divisions. The pervasive influence of ethnicity is usually referred to as part of the argument against class analysis; "vertical divisions of ethnicity - tribal, regional and 'ethnic' differences - often divide classes and unite people as 'pillars', despite economic differences of position and wealth" (Peter Worsley et al, 1977, p.473).

It is further argued that many workers and urban dwellers continue to retain strong ties with their rural roots, fulfilling kinship and traditional obligations, in order for instance to retain their rights to land and sometimes traditional titles. Such hopes to go back to their villages or towns to eventually settle down on their own. In other words they are target-workers. Even within the urban centres, social networks integrate people of diverse economic positions, status and power often involving as we illustrated above, clientage relationships. In the words of Peter Worsley such workers,

... are not, then, modern industrial workers at all. They are people only beginning to transform themselves into permanent city dwellers, learning the habits of industrial and urban society, struggling to piece together a new identity and community out of the kaleidoscopic fragments of their lives (Worsley, 1967, pp.160-1).

The main argument could be summarised thus; though the objective conditions of the "workers favour the development of inter-class hostility, their social networks, institutional attachment and village-based ideologies are not conducive to class formation" (Sandbrook, 1982, p.123).

African politicians have also contributed to the debate by the argument of a classless Africa. Such an idea has found expression in the ideology of African socialism, which we shall discuss in a later chapter. The romanticised African past which gave rise to this post-colonial ideology did in fact exhibit "clear-cut lines of social stratification, sometimes reinforced by ethnic and religious distinctions" (Cohen, 1977a, p.2).
Another argument usually put forward against the use of class analysis in Africa is that Africa presents a different class structure from those of Western Industrial Societies. The problem referred to here is how to conceptualise the various modes of production that obtain in many African societies. The inability to resolve this has created the problem of how to discern the nature of class formation in these societies. In other words, though there may be classes emerging in Africa, Western concepts are inadequate in conceptualising them because they do not follow the ideal types. Witness the many descriptive prefaces usually attached to the word 'bourgeoisie' when applied to African dominant classes.

The basic argument could be boiled down to the question of the type of consciousness that could be found among African workers. It seems the predominant form of consciousness among African workers is trade union consciousness or economism. Such consciousness comes about as workers realise that they share common interests which could only be realised through collective action. It is however limited to improvement in wages and conditions of service which could easily be reconciled to the status quo and therefore be met by the dominant classes. As such it could not be a source of challenge to the social order.

Though economism is limited to the realisation of immediate economic gains, it does not restrict workers' actions solely to the economic sphere. The agitation for such limited demands as wage increase could and do involve political action. In many Third World countries, workers' industrial actions could have profound political consequences. Further as we shall argue shortly there is a very thin line between political and economic unionism, especially in a post-colonial society where the role of the state is both central and extensive in its intervention in many spheres of life.

In reply to the 'anti-class' analysis argument it is pointed out that Marxist analysis does not insist that the social structure of Western societies must be replicated in the Third World. Because of historical and social reasons there must exist some differences which will have implications for the emergence, development and nature of the classes that exist within the two societies. Further, the fact that the workers do not exhibit revolutionary or political consciousness does not deny its existence. The point is that Marx's distinction between class-in-itself
and class-for-itself has been interpreted too literally or conflated by many writers. As Claude Ake pointed out "To deny the existence of classes on the basis of this passage would be to confuse the proposition that something does not exist with the proposition that it does not yet exist in full maturity" (Ake, 1978, p.61).

Further, it could be argued that multiple modes of production do not preclude the existence of classes. This, as Adrian Peace has argued could allow for the development of "class relationships on the basis of one mode of production, but only marginally structured ones on the basis of another - and this within the same national polity" (Peace, 1974, p.163).

Another weakness of the 'anti-class' argument is that it treats class as a 'thing' existing "with a set of attributes according to the possession of which it qualifies, or does not qualify, for the appropriate label" (Peace, ibid). Class is taken as a phenomenon that grows automatically into full maturity. The process of such growth is never taken into consideration nor is the historical and economic contexts. But class is relational and any class analysis must start from the analysis of social relationships and social action. In his study of the English working class E.P. Thompson writes, "... The working class did not arise like the sun at an appointed time... Class happens when some men, as a result of common experience (inherited or shared) feel and articulate the identity of their interests as between themselves, and as against other men whose interests are different from (and usually opposed to) theirs" (Thompson, 1968, pp.9-10). Elsewhere he insisted that "Class does not precede but arises out of struggle" (Thompson, 1978, p.298). In that sense classes are the effects of struggles - ideological, political as well as economic. The static analysis of many anthropological studies of African societies fails to consider this essential point in Marxist theory "that consciousness is a developing phenomenon, a process not of being but of becoming" (Mann, 1973, p.43).

Further, much of the debate seems to suggest that it is possible to detect or measure (usually through surveys) a pure working class consciousness. But as we shall discuss in Chapter 4, the working class and other classes are subjected to various competing value systems from which they draw to make sense of the reality of their environment. Such meaning systems are contradictory. As Michael Mann's study of Western
working class has shown if Western workers could show this dual and
contradictory orientation, then one can begin to understand the position

The point is that the low level of class consciousness of or even
its non-development by African workers make them open to other non-class
consciousness and manipulation by the dominant class. As the above sketch
of the history of the trade union movement has shown, organisationally,
financially, and numerically the workers are weak and poor opening them
more to manipulation by the dominant class who, because of their hold on
the state "require no separate organisation to protect their privileges
for they are defined in terms of power holding" (Lloyd, 1974, p.218). In
this process the mass media become an important component as image
producers and transmitters. The issues raised above are summarized by
Bukharin thus,

A class does not descend full-grown from heaven, but grows
in a crude elementary manner from a number of social groups
(transitional classes, intermediate and other classes,
strata, social combinations)... A certain time usually
passes before a class becomes conscious of itself,
aspirations, social 'ideals' and desires, which
emphatically distinguish it from all other classes in a
given society... We must not forget the systematic
psychological and ideological manipulations conducted by
the ruling class with the aid of its state machinery for
the purpose of destroying the incipient class consciousness
of the oppressed classes and to imbue them with the
ideology of the ruling class, or to influence them somewhat
with this ideology (quoted in G. Mudenda, 1981, p.79).

Another failure of this approach is that it failed to consider the
point that within the industrial - capitalist sector some people sustain
themselves, if not solely but largely by selling their labour power while
a minority appropriates the surplus produced by such people. This is a
crucial point because it distinguishes the working class (those who sell
their labour power) from the bourgeois class. The sale of labour power
constitutes "the necessary condition for membership of the working class"
(Allen, 1972, p.178). Social conditions and background further help to
define the working class proper (the low income workers who mainly belong
to the trade unions) from the highly paid executives and professionals who
could be said to constitute the middle class. The relationship between the
sellers and buyers of labour is derived from the fact that supply does
outstrip demand giving the buyers the ultimate control over men and the market. U.I. Allen puts it thus "As labour power cannot be separated from the people who supply it, the buyers exercise control over people, and this involves a further element of subordination" (ibid, p.177). This introduces the issue of power, that is the ability to control the means of consumption and compulsion and affect the life chances of others (Sklar, 1979). This ability rests with the dominant class. Class relations are the relationships of power and as such "any analysis should make reference to the pattern of class consensus and conflict around the state where the bulk of available scarce resources is concentrated. In short, key issues which must inform attempts at class analysis in Africa are: who controls the state and how are its resources deployed?" (Peace, 1979, p.143).

In the sphere of social action Nigerian workers have since the colonial period shown evidence of class-based opposition to exploitation, though admittedly such opposition has not involved the articulation of an alternative social order. While also admitting that ethnicity continues to structure social conflicts in Nigeria, this should not obscure the fact that the workers have on many occasions, stretching back as far as 1897, taken collective action to advance their mainly material interests and challenge the basis of government authority. We also have to see such resistance as the articulation of the generalised feeling of betrayal, grievance and opposition of the subordinate classes - wage and non-wage earners - to the structure of the Nigerian society. The workers being structurally linked to the other segments of the underclass and organisationally better positioned and capable were in a sense acting as their political force.

From the foregoing we adopt Adrian Peace's "elementary position" which defines "the Nigerian working class" as

those wage earners who stand in a consistently subordinate relationship in the industrial mode of production, whose surplus product is appropriated by those who own the means of production, whether the latter be indigenous to the Nigerian society or external to it and can identify a common opposition to their own economic interests and act accordingly (Peace, 1975, p.281).

The Labour Aristocracy Debate

The high content of economic demand by organised labour in Africa,
in addition to its low political consciousness has made some writers of both left and right persuasions to regard the workers as a labour aristocracy. Opposing the idea of the working class as a politically revolutionary force, the 'labour aristocracy' theorists could be divided into two. First are those like Frantz Fanon who lump all the workers together as a privileged aristocracy, organised in defence of their self-interests, and consolidating the neo-colonial economy and therefore non-revolutionary. He regarded the workers as the "most pampered" by the colonial regime and also as being in a privileged position and therefore "constitute ... the 'bourgeois' faction of the colonized people" (Fanon, 1967, p.86). After independence, Fanon still regarded them as "the most favoured section of the population, and represents the most comfortably off faction of the people" (ibid, p.97). Such views are also found among economists. For instance, Elliot Berg was of the opinion that,

... however low their income and welfare by some absolute yardstick African wage earners are in general a relatively privileged group in African society. They enjoy more of the benefits of modernisation and growth than any African social group. They have available more and better medical care, and a larger share of the conveniences and amusements of modern life - from supermarkets to cinemas (Berg, 1966, p.189, see also Kilby, 1969, pp.301-303).

The second position is more sophisticated as it tries to differentiate between higher wage-earners and low wage-earners. Notable proponents of this view are Arrighi and Saul who argue that workers in international corporations have interests congruent with those of the elite and sub-elite:

The higher wages and salaries, however, foster the stabilization of the better paid section of the labour force whose high incomes justify the severance of ties with the traditional economy. Stabilization, in turn, promotes specialisation, greater bargaining power, and further increases in the incomes of this small section of the labour force, which represents the proletariat proper of tropical Africa. These workers enjoy incomes three or more times higher than those of unskilled labourers and together with the elites and sub-elites in bureaucratic employment in the civil service and expatriate concerns, constitute what we call the labour aristocracy of tropical Africa. It is the discretionary consumption of this class which absorbs a significant proportion of the surplus produced in the money economy (Arrighi and Saul, 1973, pp.18-19).
In another article they proceeded to point to the division within the wage-earning class. According to them,

... the wage-earning class is polarised into two strata. Wage workers in the lower stratum are only marginally or partially proletarianised as, over their life cycle, they derive the bulk of the means of subsistence for their families from outside the wage economy. Wage workers in the upper stratum, generally a very small minority, receive incomes sufficiently high (say three to five times those received by wage workers in the lower stratum) to justify a total break of their links with the peasantry (ibid, p.69).

In a reply to their critics, Saul further explained,

The more privileged and better organised workers have been encouraged to identify upwards - to become partners (albeit the most junior of partners) in jostling for surpluses among the internationally and domestically powerful - rather than to identify downwards with the even more 'wretched of the earth', the urban migrants and the average inhabitants of the untransformed rural areas (Saul, 1975, p.304).

The main empirical support for this argument either by academics or politicians is the seeming difference between the income of wage-earners and peasant farmers. For instance the Adebo Commission of Inquiry on wages pointed out that while the yearly income of a farmer was between ₦68 and ₦144 the minimum pay for urban worker ranged from ₦168 to ₦216 a year. Commenting on the report, the late Nigerian Political Scientist, Bill Dudley, said "Even at the lower figure the urban worker is already earning almost three times the average per capita income" (B.J. Dudley, 1972, p.133).

One crucial implication of the thesis is that it departs from the Marxist view of conflict between the ruling class and the proletariat as economic development proceeds (Peace, 1975). Instead economic development produces an identity of interests between the two classes against the peasantry and other less privileged strata of the society.

The thesis has been criticised on methodological grounds for its emphasis on wage differentials between urban workers and rural dwellers. Urban workers in Africa fulfill a lot of obligations to family and relatives in the rural areas that could make any income comparison meaningless. Further, there is much similarity between the life-chances
and world views on the working class and the other less privileged strata that do create communal support for demands of the wage-earning class, and promote common perception of problems, grievances and interests. In other words it is difficult to see how the working class could perceive its interests as being separate from those of other lower class (Sandbrook, 1973, p.241, Peace, 1979). It could be argued that the supposed differential between the income of wage-earners, their standard of living and life styles and those of the non-wage earning classes are quite small to generate any great differences in perception and political orientation. As Hazlewood has said of Kenyan workers, the view that urban workers are well off could be "believed only by someone without experience of the way they live or with his nose firmly buried in the figures" (Hazlewood, 1978, p.90).

Further it seems the argument of the thesis was over-stretched in trying to draw a causal relationship between income and political orientation and behaviour. This could be said to be crudely economistic. An explanation of workers political behaviour ought to take account of the workers' perception of their position in society and of the possibility and desirability of social change. Income differentials alone may be inadequate in doing this (Sandbrook, 1982).

The relevance of the thesis, however, is that it finds support among African politicians, academics and journalists who argue that organised labour is taking unduly large shares of the 'national cake' out of proportion to its number and contribution at the expense of other segments of the underclass. Because of the overall importance of the implications of this argument in the context of this study we discuss it further in its popular fashion in Chapter 4.

How then do we characterise working class consciousness in Nigeria or in Africa in general? It seems to us that there is more to Nigerian workers' consciousness than just trade union consciousness though it might not have reached the level of revolutionary political consciousness. We tend to agree with the view that there exists "at least a 'populist', if non-revolutionary political consciousness that transcends economism" (Sandbrook, 1977, p.424). It is of course recognized that this is not the property of working class alone being shared by the underprivileged as a whole who no longer accept the existing distribution of power and wealth.
As such its effectiveness for providing guidelines for political actions might be limited. However, "That this mentality should have been achieved at all is no minor feat, inasmuch as educational and value systems tend to legitimate the status quo" (ibid, p.245).

It was in this vein that Peace described the Lagos workers he studied as "populist militants",

'militants' in the sense that they have the organisational capacity and resolve to oppose firmly those actions of the ruling groups which they consider to be most iniquitous, 'populist' in that they thus express their class actions general grass-roots sentiments of strong antagonism in the existing order (Peace, 1975, p.289).

To return to our question - did the postures of union leadership find any root among the rank and file? Robin Cohen has observed the gap that existed between union leaders and their followers. According to him, the sentiments of the leadership, and their perceived relationship with the government of the day, do not always mean very much to the 'professional' general secretary or his rank-and-file membership. At the local level, Nigeria's trade unions seem to function in much the same way, quite regardless of the attachment to one or the other of the trade union centres.

Cohen further said that many members of the Ibadan University Workers' Union were unaware of the national central organisation their unions were affiliated to (Cohen, 1974, p.158). Further, the cross-pressures on the workers (Melson, 1971) would suggest that they would find it difficult to articulate any opposition to the social order that is comprehensive and consistent enough to offer a fundamental challenge. In essence their struggle and actions have not gone beyond demanding 'bread, butter and happiness', though these have on many occasions been mixed with the crusade against corruption, inefficiency and bad government.

From the works of Peter Lloyd among the Yoruba (Lloyd, 1974) and Waterman's survey in Lagos and Kaduna (Waterman, 1976) it seems the Nigerian worker essentially shares the same world views as members of the dominant class. These world views come from the cultural or value system, religion, education and are reinforced by the social structure, for example clientelism. Waterman attributed this conservatism to the values
of pre-colonial or even pre-class societies which presumably the workers still hold (see Chapter 4). The hold of these conservative beliefs will continue to be weakened as the workers become more drawn into the market economy and as "personal ties are increasingly transformed by the market into cash relationships" (Waterman, ibid, p.181).

The poor link between the union leadership and the rank and file could also be attributed to the structural weakness and disunity of the labour movement. The constant in-fighting within the movement and shifting and unstable leadership must have affected the movement's educational and politicising functions; the leaders must have been so much concerned with survival that planning could have suffered.

Another issue, especially with regard to the radical NTUC, was the genuiness of the radical posture of its leadership. Much of its radicalism was rhetorical and declaratory and largely meant more to gain concessions from the international labour organisation, than to appeal to its followers, "thus as distant from the real and immediate needs of the workers as the conservatism of the ULC" (Waterman, 1975, p.183). The failure of the NTUC to have a secure ideological base within the working class should not be seen in isolation. It is a problem shared by the Nigerian Left in general. The Left in Nigeria is hopelessly divided and weak. The radical intelligentsia that existed before independence have either been coopted and absorbed into the establishment or silenced by frustration and disenchantment. Many of those of leftist persuasion are campus theoreticians who lack any social roots among the workers or the peasantry. The trenchant commentary of an "activist" at a conference of fellow Marxist indicates the problem. According to him the problem of Marxism in Nigeria was how to liberate it from academic Marxists. He continued,

Scholars are appendages of the brutal exploiters of the Nigerian masses. Marxism has become a commodity which academic Marxists sell for a professional career. The greatest number of Nigerian Marxists are not concerned with revolution. They are concerned with how to become professors. When students go out in action they run and hide their heads (quoted in Obadina, 1986, p.25).

Moreover the workers generally distrust many of their leaders. This is because the behaviour and life style of many of them did not differ
markedly from those of the politicians they condemn and seek to overthrow. Corruption and embezzlement of union funds was as common as one could find among the politicians. In short, the union leadership shared part of the general public cynicism prevalent among Nigerians to public officials and institutions.

Against this problem of structural weakness of radical ideology in Nigeria is set the image of individual achievement, social mobility, developmentalism and reformism and the harmony of interests among the various sections in the country subscribed to and propagated by the dominant class. All this of course exists within the general framework and concern for order, discipline, national unity and national interests. With this overriding concern the tendency is for the government to interpret any industrial action as politically motivated and destabilising. General Yakubu Gowon saw the wave of strikes which followed the 1975 Udoji Award in this light:

There is evidence about some ill-motivated elements in the country wanting to use the genuine demands but more often unfounded and misinformed complaints of workers in the public and private sectors to precipitate a paralysis of government and authority (quoted in Nwabueze, 1978, p.16).

This brings us to the issue of whether a pure division can be made between political unionism and economic unionism. The distinction usually made is based on the possible existence of ideal typical unions on both sides. Obtaining such ideal unions may be a very difficult task. Most unions tend to mix both roles, though to varying degrees. Unions in Latin America are more political than those in the United States. Latin American unions are closely associated with political parties or the government. During Nkrumah's regime the Ghana's TUC was closely linked to the CPP and in fact was part of Nkrumah's African policy apparatus. In Guinea during the time of ex-President Sekou Toure, the union was also associated with the party and the government. And in Nigeria we have seen the association between the radical wing of the labour movement with political parties.

The limited utility of the dichotomy between economic and political unionism becomes clear when we note that the usually cited economic unions in the USA do play important political roles. For instance, they endorse, campaign and sponsor pro-labour candidates for elections. What seems to
obscure their political activities is their acceptance of the status-quo, the nature of American industrial capitalism; and have accepted to work within the system while the State and employers have come to accept their role. In Britain the labour movement is organically linked to the Labour Party and carries out its activities within the consensus set by the nature of British parliamentary democracy. Richard Hyman has argued that "where the existence and activity of trade unions are accepted as legitimate, then however radical their origins they become modest in their objectives, accommodative in their strategies..." (Hyman, 1979, p.325). The case of the British labour movement is also instructive in the sense that within it are elements of both poles of the continuum with men like Eric Hammond of the EEPTU more interested in winning immediate material benefits for workers as a concession for no-strike deals as opposed to others like Arthur Scargill of the NUM who still believed in overt political struggle for the labour movement.

So in looking at the role of organised labour in Africa we have to bear in mind the structural features of the political economy, fragility of social institutions, absence of consensus on almost all issues, and the predominant role of the state in the economy - which do impinge on the activities of the unions and the interpretation placed on them. We should also consider the strategic location of the workers within the economy. Though numerically small and organisationally and financially weak, the labour movement and the workers are concentrated in the urban centres, in strategic industries, public utility corporations and the civil service which makes their actions most visible and effective. The fact that the state is heavily involved in the economy, apart from being the dominant employer, makes any agitation of the workers, however limited it may seem, assume political importance. The consequences of such agitations may be difficult to predict. This unpredictable consequence is further reinforced by the fact that the working class is "the locally-based political elite of the urban masses, a reference group in political terms for the other urban strata who substantially rely on the prevailing wage structure for satisfaction by their own interests in the urban arena, and furthermore look to the wage-earning class for expression of political protest against a highly inegalitarian society" (Peace, 1975, p.289). It thus means that the working class as the most active and organised elements of the urban dispossessed is in a strategic position to articulate the demands and grievances of the poor in general.
The likely political undertone of industrial action in Nigeria could also be understood if we consider that the state is an arena for accumulation by the political class and its allies. It seems to us that labour's demand for wage increases cannot but possess elements of 'anti-government' feelings which could specifically be articulated and therefore be seen as a challenge to the ruling class. Speaking of the industrial actions of the 70s and government responses to them, Nigerian economist Bade Onimode said,

... the position of labour in social production under neo-colonial capitalism, necessarily places workers in dialectical antagonism to a military dictatorship in partisan defence of capitalist interest. Since primitive capital accumulation by its dominant petty-bourgeois class is one of the obsessions of the leadership of such reformist military regimes, the struggle between capital and labour inevitably becomes a struggle between the military and labour, particularly since the depression of wages through the repression of workers increases surplus value and accelerates primitive capital accumulation. This explains why the military in Nigeria persisted in imposing a wage freeze in order to raise profit level (Onimode, 1982, p.210).

The Labour Force*

Between 1965 and 1980 slightly less than half of the Nigerian population were in the labour force. However, about 70 per cent of this were engaged in agriculture, mainly of subsistence nature. This means that a large percentage of the labour force is not unionised. In fact, in 1975 only three per cent of the labour force was organised. These workers were mainly in urban modern employment. The low per cent age of unionised workers must be due to the fact that many business concerns are small employing very few people who in many instances are relatives of the owners (see Table 2.4).

Most of the workers are unskilled or semi-skilled because of the high rate of illiteracy in the Nigerian society (Table 2.5). The recent history of industrialisation also means that the work force is of little or no work experience. The labour force is generally now more stable than was the case in the early 50s. The 1966-67 Labour Force survey

* Unless otherwise stated, the figures quoted in this section are from Fashoyin, Tayo (1980), Chapter 2.
showed that the labour force was generally young with about 70 per cent clustering around 15-40 years of age. This survey also showed that 95 per cent of the labour force were gainfully employed. There was a slight change in the figure in 1975 when it rose to 96 per cent with more than 17 million engaged in agriculture. Wage employment in agriculture accounted for a negligible per cent age of total wage employment it was 0.6 per cent in urban areas and 0.8 per cent in 1966-67. The reason for this is that large-scale plantation agriculture has not been a feature of Nigeria's economic development. The figure for non-agricultural wage employment was 21 per cent and 1.5 per cent for urban and rural areas respectively. In 1970 wage employment represented 5.8 per cent of total gainful employment and by 1975 it had increased to 7.8 per cent.

As shown in Table 2.6, employment in the various sectors was 1.39 million in 1973 and by April 1975 it had increased to 1.5 million. From the table we could see the large size of employment in the service industry. It accounts for one-third of employment for the four years indicated. This suggests the highly commercial nature of the Nigerian economy.

Another feature of wage employment in Nigeria is the high per-cent age of such employment in the public sector. Public sector employment accounted for 67 per cent of total wage employment in 1975. The dominance of public sector employment is evident in the fact that three Federal Corporations - the Nigerian Railway Corporation, Nigerian Ports Authority and the National Electric Power Authority employ more workers (89,795) than the 88,884 employed by the largest 16 private companies (Imosili, 1984).

This large share of government employment has a lot of implication for the industrial relations system. This is also reflective of state dominance in the economy which further draws it into the practice of industrial relations. Another implication of this is the decisive impact of public sector wage structure and determination on the overall wage fixing process and structure in the country. Wage increases in the public sector, usually the outcome of a government have always led to such increases in the private sector and on many occasions to industrial crisis. As Clark Kerr et al have argued,
An industrial relations system ... is more likely to be influenced by the state than previously since the government enters the system, not merely as a sovereign but often as the largest single employer of industrial labour (quoted in Fashoyin, 1980, p.16).

As we shall see in the next chapter, the Nigerian government since the colonial days has been heavily involved in industrial relations practice, especially in wage determination, despite proclamations to the contrary and the establishment of machinery for collective bargaining.
### TABLE 2.4

**ORGANISED LABOUR AND THE LABOUR FORCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>(a) Population ('000)</th>
<th>(b) Labour Force (LF) ('000)</th>
<th>LF as % of Population</th>
<th>(c) Organised Labour (OL)</th>
<th>OL as % of LF (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>48,676</td>
<td>23,810</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>544,016</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>55,073</td>
<td>26,080</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>700,416</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>62,925</td>
<td>29,220</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>864,249</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>72,596</td>
<td>32,740</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### TABLE 2.5

**EMPLOYMENT IN LARGE-SCALE ESTABLISHMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior Category</td>
<td>91,500</td>
<td>126,750</td>
<td>35,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate Category</td>
<td>252,000</td>
<td>339,300</td>
<td>87,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled and Semi-skilled Category</td>
<td>436,500</td>
<td>559,650</td>
<td>123,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled and Others</td>
<td>720,000</td>
<td>954,300</td>
<td>234,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,500,000</td>
<td>1,980,000</td>
<td>480,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>% of Share</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>% of Share</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>% of Share</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>% of Share</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>59,280</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>163,900</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>101,500</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>105,000</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining &amp; Quarrying</td>
<td>34,900</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>89,000</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>90,000</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing &amp; Processing</td>
<td>64,980</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>110,000</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>297,400</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>324,000</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building &amp; Construction</td>
<td>87,780</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>51,500</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>190,400</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>210,000</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution &amp; Commerce</td>
<td>41,610</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>58,500</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>93,300</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>99,000</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity, Gas &amp; Water</td>
<td>13,680</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>29,200</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation &amp; Communication</td>
<td>53,580</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>119,000</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>89,000</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>91,500</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>209,190</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>672,000</td>
<td>55.4</td>
<td>496,200</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>550,500</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>37,400</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>565,000</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>1,213,000</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>1,390,000</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>1,500,000</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 2.7
GROWTH IN UNIONS AND MEMBERSHIP, 1940-76

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Unions</th>
<th>Membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4,629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>17,521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>26,275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>27,154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>51,340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>52,747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>76,362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>90,864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>109,998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950/51</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>144,358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951/52</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>152,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952/53</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>143,282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953/54</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>153,089</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954/55</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>165,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955/56</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>175,987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956/57</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>198,265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957/58</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>235,742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958/59</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>254,097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959/60</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>259,072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960/61</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>274,126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961/62</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>281,124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962/63</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>324,203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963/64</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>352,790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964/65</td>
<td>551</td>
<td>517,911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965/66</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>490,905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966/67</td>
<td>646</td>
<td>544,016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967/68</td>
<td>667</td>
<td>649,164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968/69</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>648,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969/70</td>
<td>729</td>
<td>684,498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970/71</td>
<td>751</td>
<td>705,712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971/72</td>
<td>883</td>
<td>777,584</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Includes about 250 unions that are strictly not trade unions. They have been removed from the list under the Trade Union Decree, 1973.


TABLE 2.7a
PATTERN OF STRENGTH OF NIGERIAN LABOUR UNIONS, SEPTEMBER 1976

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Union Membership in '000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200-500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500-1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000-2500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2500-5000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name of Organisation</th>
<th>Officers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>African Civil Servants Technical Workers Union</td>
<td>L.A. Nkedine &amp; M. Imoudu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 1942</td>
<td>Federated Trade Union of Nigeria</td>
<td>T.A. Bankole &amp; S. Coker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1943</td>
<td>Trade Union Congress (of Nigeria) TUC(N)</td>
<td>T.A. Bankole, N.A. Tukunboh and F.O. Coker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>Supreme Council of Nigerian Workers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>Committee of Trade Unionists</td>
<td>M. Imoudu, F.O. Coker, N. Eze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1949</td>
<td>Nigerian National Federation of Labour (NNFL)</td>
<td>M. Imoudu, F.O. Coker, N. Eze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1950</td>
<td>Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC)</td>
<td>Coker, Imoudu, Eze (affiliated to WFTU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>Committee of ICFTU affiliated Unions in Nigeria</td>
<td>U. Agonsi and other Conservatives in the NLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1953</td>
<td>All Nigeria Trade Union Federation (ANTUF)</td>
<td>Imoudu and G.N. Nzeribe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1956</td>
<td>Committee of ICFTU affiliated Unions</td>
<td>Supported by Cole, Adebola, Borha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1957</td>
<td>National Council of Trade Unions of Nigeria (NCTUN)</td>
<td>Borha and Cole. Affiliated to the ICFTU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1960</td>
<td>Nigerian Trade Union Congress</td>
<td>Imoudu and Nzeribe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 May 1962</td>
<td>United Labour Congress</td>
<td>Adebola &amp; Borha, affiliated to ICFTU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 May 1962</td>
<td>Independent United Labour Congress</td>
<td>Imoudu &amp; Ikoro. Fraternal relations with WFTU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1962</td>
<td>Nigerian Workers Council (NWC)</td>
<td>N. Anunobi &amp; N. Chukwura Affiliated to IFOTU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Name of Organisation</td>
<td>Officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 1963</td>
<td>Joint Action Committee (JAC)</td>
<td>Alliance of all Trade Union Centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1965</td>
<td>Trade Unions' Supreme Council (TUSC)</td>
<td>Alliance of ULC and NWC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1967</td>
<td>Northern States Federation of Labour (NSFL)</td>
<td>Change of name from Northern Federation of Labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1968</td>
<td>The Labour Unity Front - Northern States Federation of Labour</td>
<td>Merger of LUF &amp; NSFC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1968</td>
<td>Nigerian Federation of Labour (NFL)</td>
<td>E. Bassey Etienam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1975</td>
<td>United Labour Congress (NLC)</td>
<td>Not recognised by the Government and later outlawed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"The development of industrial relations has been powerfully influenced by the structure and dynamics of capitalism and by the strategies (or lack of strategies) of employers." (Hyman (1975) p.119).

In line with its major institutions, the Nigerian industrial relations system was the creation of British colonialism. At independence in 1960 the country inherited the British model of voluntary collective bargaining.

The colonial government ratified the ILO conventions on freedom to associate, organise and bargain collectively. These conventions were incorporated into the various labour laws. The reformist Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940 provided a further incentive to the implementation of these conventions. The Act and another passed in 1945 stipulated that any colony which wanted its development projects to benefit from the money provided by the imperial government should enact laws to facilitate the establishment and functioning of trade unions. The colony must also ensure that wages paid to the workers on the development schemes were reasonable. In other words, the financing of Nigeria or any other colony's development by the British government was subject to the implementation of certain trade union rights (Akpala, 1971, p.276).

According to an ILO survey, the 1940 Act was based on the British model. The survey said,

The principal characteristic of the legislation specifically designed to protect and guarantee the right of association in the British territories is that it is based on models largely determined by the United Kingdom law and practice and intended to enable trade unions to pursue their objectives with legality, subject to certain safeguards. (Quoted in Cohen, 1974, p.180).

British industrial relations practice is traditionally based on the principle of voluntaryism, an outgrowth of laissez-faire, liberal ideology. This presupposes a neutral state standing above class interests. This neutral state is to leave almost all areas of economic activity to the private sector, with minimum regulations to curb excesses. According to this ideology, which "derives in part from the historical development of early capitalism" (Hyman, 1975, p.131), market forces should be allowed
to determine the course and shape of things, including the cost of labour.

It was under this intellectual and ideological atmosphere that British trade unionism and industrial relations practice were established. Though at first the doctrine of laissez-faire was used in a manner hostile to the unions, it was later "reinterpreted to imply that unions and employers should carry on their relations with the minimum of state interference" (Hyman, 1979, p.135). This 'enlightened' reinterpretation seems to reflect the confidence of employers vis a vis workers weakness. It has been observed that,

In Britain 'voluntaryism' in industrial relations shared with laissez-faire ideology in general an essentially practical basis: the confidence of employers in their ability to exercise control without outside assistance. This meant in turn that trade unions should lack either the power or the will to interfere excessively with managerial objectives (ibid).

However, the principle of 'voluntaryism' presupposes equal power relations among the contending or bargaining parties, in this case labour and employer. But this is not the case. As P. Sargent Florence has observed of the British experience, complete laissez-faire is not only impossible to implement, it is a farce: "because the bargaining position of the worker is so much weaker than the position of the employer that his liberty of contract, held so sacred by the laissez-faire philosophy, seldom materialised" (quoted in Yesufu, 1962, p.19).

Laissez-faire ideology, in practice, then means that the state is endorsing the propriety and legitimacy of economic relations in which unequal power prevails. In short, it endorses the "liberty of employers to exploit and of workers to be exploited. The non-intervention of the state was non-intervention in favour of capital" (Hyman, 1975, p.132).

Aside from the above, the state has always directly interfered with industrial relations through a set of legal and institutional arrangements - wage councils, industrial courts, labour exchanges, among others. According to Harry and Hood,

Ever since the birth of capitalism, the state has been more or less openly on the side of the employers in industrial disputes (quoted in ibid, p.136).
They go on to state that whether it has concealed its partisanship or not, "its principal objects remain constant: to secure for capitalist industry a regular and flexible labour supply, and to assist employers to maintain or to restore an 'industrial peace' which enables them to extract the maximum profit from industry with the minimum disturbance in the form of strikes, lock-outs, go-slow movements, etc."

It is also known that state mediation and conciliation efforts are carried under the "shadow of its known and declared propensity to invoke its power of coercion, against one of the parties in the dispute rather than the other" (Miliband, 1969, p.81). The guilty party is usually labour.

Recently the state has more or less abandoned its pretended adherence to 'voluntaryism'. The increased power of the unions, the deepening crisis of contemporary capitalism and the increasing stake of the state in the economy as an investor has dictated a more active state involvement in industrial relations. This involvement has embraced both legal, coercive and colaborationist strategies.*

The above, albeit brief and sketchy review of the British industrial relations scene has been attempted to provide the background for our discussion of the development of industrial relations in Nigeria. It seems to us that the Nigerian situation, despite differences in emphasis and details (which are not unexpected) is essentially similar to the British practice. Both have been informed and influenced by the same intellectual and ideological tradition - liberalism and capitalism.

As T.M. Yesufu described it in his seminal work on industrial relations in Nigeria, "the labour policy of the country (at the time he wrote) may be regarded as a sort of emasculated laissez-faire" (1962, p.20). Kilby regarded it as the failure of the Anglo-Saxon model (Kilby, 1969).

The enactment of the Trade Union Ordinance in 1938 is usually regarded as the beginning of organised trade unionism and industrial relations in Nigeria. The law provided workers with the legal right to organise, and laid down a minimum code of conduct for union administration.

* See Strinati, Dominic (1982) for a discussion of this development.
Various institutional arrangements were created by the colonial administration. In 1941 the machinery for conciliation and arbitration was established to assist voluntary negotiation between unions and employers. In 1942 a Department of Labour (later to become Ministry of Labour) was established, and in 1946 a special trade union division was created within the department. The Unit was staffed by professional trade unionists from the British TUC. They were to assist in the formation, administration and education of the emerging trade unions.

Peter Kilby has said that "taken together, these legislative and administrative measures represent a reproduction of the metropolitan institutional framework corresponding to a mature system of industrial relations and wage determination which had evolved over a long period" (p.268). Though the policy reflected British liberalism, it has been described as paternalistic (Peter Waterman, 1982, p.19). It was believed that social conditions in Nigeria by that time:

> tilt the scales so much in favour of the employers that there is need for control on the reputed freedom of the parties to agree on the terms and conditions of employment (Adeogun, quoted in Waterman, ibid, p.20).

In this direction, apart from laws designed to encourage voluntary collective bargaining, a number of protective and welfare ones were passed. They included prohibition of forced labour, minimum conditions of recruitment and long-term contracts, protection of wages, minimum age, paid maternity and sick leave, control of apprenticeship and workmen's compensation for accident and death. Between the 1940s and 1950s, Whitley councils were tried but seemed not to have worked (Akpala, 1971, p.35). In 1955 a Factory Ordinance, laying down minimum safety standards was enacted. A year after independence a compulsory retirement benefit scheme was established (Kilby, p.269).

These legislations and regulations were, according to Waterman, of a 'permissive' character where trade unions were concerned. For instance, trade unions were not obligatory, though, unlike in Britain, it was compulsory for trade unions to register. Another was that not all trade unions' actions were protected from action for civil wrongs. The actions covered were those related to "labour disputes as strictly defined". In other words 'irresponsible' political protests were excluded.
In his analysis of this labour policy, Waterman concluded,

The liberal and paternalist element in the labour control ideology at that time echoed dominant social ideologies in Nigeria during the transition from colonial to post-colonial rule.

At independence, the government, labour and employers each continued to express commitment to this received ideology of labour control. The earliest expression of commitment was made by the Prime Minister, Tafawa Balewa, in 1955. Censoring the Action Group Government of Western Region for increasing wages, he stated,

Government re-affirms its confidence in the effectiveness of voluntary negotiations and collective bargaining for the determination of wages. The long term interest of Government, employer and trade unions alike would seem to rest on the process of consultation and discussion which is the foundation of democracy in industry. Government intervention in the general field of wages should be limited to the establishment of statutory wage-fixing machinery for any industry or occupation where wages are unreasonably low by reference to the general level of wages. Any other policy would seem likely to lead to political influence and consideration entering into the determination of wages with effects that might be ruinous economically, and which would have serious adverse consequences for the development of sound trade unions (quoted in Kilby, p.269).

The adherence to the metropolitan model was made more explicit by the then Labour Minister, Okotie Eboh, at an ILO Conference in Geneva shortly after the Balewa statement. He said,

Can the various types of collective bargaining familiar to older industrial societies thrive in the different conditions of underdeveloped countries today? This is an important question which in the view of my government permits only one answer. We have followed in Nigeria the voluntary principles which are so important an element in industrial relations in the United Kingdom......

In words reminiscent of the Prime Minister's statement he continued,

There is little doubt that Government intervention in the field of wages can have very adverse effect in developing countries at least, on trade union development and therefore
on labour-management relations, unless it is carefully restricted to those fields where collective bargaining is either non-existent or ineffective. Equally, it is my view that compulsory arbitration must inevitably have adverse effects on the seriousness with which both parties enter into the earlier stages of negotiation. Compulsory methods might occasionally produce a better economic or political result, but labour-management must ... find greater possibilities of mutual harmony where results have been voluntarily arrived at by free discussion between the two parties. We in Nigeria ... are pinning our faith on voluntary methods.

During the civil war when restrictive legislations were already enacted, the government still found it prudent to reiterate commitment to principle of collective bargaining. In 1969 it said,

The ministry (labour ministry) encourages employers and workers to try to settle questions of wages and conditions of employment by collective bargaining and only intervenes in the last resort, in the public interest as an impartial arbiter. It fully supports the principles and practice of free and voluntary negotiation, collective bargaining and joint consultation. The policy is based on the belief that those directly concerned in the productive process are best placed to find the answer to their problems (quoted in Fashoying, p.98).

This commitment was repeated in the Third National Development Plan, again with the assurance that the government will only intervene "in the last resort or in the public interest, as an impartial conciliator or arbiter" (Third National Development Plan, 1975-80, vol. 1, p.283). In his first budget speech to the National Assembly in March 1980, the deposed President, Shehu Shagari, stated his intention to return the country to free collective bargaining (Ubeku, p.114).

Both the unions and the employers' association, the Nigerian Employers Consultative Association (NECA), shared the view that the principle of collective bargaining is "the normal way of settling wages and other conditions of employment" (Aire, 1970).

The unions' case for this policy could be said to have been stated by the Electrical Workers' Union of Nigeria before the Morgan Commission of Enquiry in 1963. Inter alia the union said "... the best form of salary structure would be that evolved by the two sides of industry through
collective bargaining as it allows for flexibility and permits both labour and employers to relate wages to production and other existing factors" (Morgan Report, para. 114).

In its memorandum to the same commission, Nigeria Employers' Consultative Association (NECA) expressed its position thus:

The Association wishes to state that since its inception it has subscribed to these policies and as far as it has been possible within the powers of the Association, it has encouraged its members to deal with responsible trade unions and to regulate relations between employers and workers by voluntary collective bargaining.

The preference by all the three principal actors in the industrial relations system could be seen from many angles. First, many Nigerians cherish British legacies bestowed on them during the colonial period. Intellectually, the educated elite are more British than African. Education, the most 'profound' of such legacies "has given Nigeria its most British attributes - its schools and colleges, its language, its religion and many of the intangible intellectual and social attributes of its people" (Schwarz, 1968, p.91).

Concomitant with this is that the educated elite both in government and business shared with Britain a commitment to liberalism as an ideology both in economics and politics. At independence, Nigeria adopted the Westminster form of government with all its pretentions and paraphernalia. The country's law and legal system are British-based.

More than this intellectual and ideological heritage is the economic policy pursued immediately after independence. An analysis of Nigeria of 1945-66 has characterised it as "an open economy ... following a conservative monetary policy and avoiding foreign exchange restrictions ...." (Kilby, p.1).

Immediately after independence, the country's industrialisation policy was based on foreign investment and aid, and private sector initiative. For instance, the first post-independence Development Plan, 1962-68, was described as too ambitious in the magnitude of expected foreign aid and too conservative in character (Aboyade, 1962, p.113).
Apart from this government desire to attract foreign private investment the economy was substantially foreign dominated and controlled. At the beginning of 1970, a survey found that about 60 per cent of the modern businesses, most of them industrial, were foreign owned. In terms of share holding in jointly owned companies, Nigerians had minority shares (see Table 3.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Share of largest shareholder (%)</th>
<th>Distribution of Firms by Nationality of largest shareholder</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nigerian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 and below</td>
<td>55.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 - 33</td>
<td>43.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>34 - 50</td>
<td>44.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>51 - 75</td>
<td>39.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Above 75</td>
<td>26.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37.2</td>
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The NECA at its inception was expatriate dominated and to them 'voluntaryism' was an article of faith. A former British Chairman of NECA was reported as saying,

You cannot do away with your British heritage of free enterprise, voluntaryism and collective bargaining unless you want to replace it with a totalitarian system as in Russia (Aire, 1970, p.158).

Apart from the ideological undertone of this statement, it did reflect the confidence of employers to handle the workers without any government interference, "because the employers have seen that workers, without the aid of government, did not generally constitute an organised force against the system" (Fashoyin, p.98). Aire summed it up thus, "... among employers (particularly the predominantly expatriate employers)
there is a strong support for the present capitalistic free enterprise system in Nigeria and for voluntary collective bargaining between management and labour (Aire, ibid).

Politically, it could have been suicidal for the various governments at both the Federal and regional levels to allow labour matters to intermingle with politics, at least overtly. This could have strengthened the power of the labour movement as a national organisation that could pose a challenge to the ethnic-based political parties. What the various governments did was to appeal to the workers through selective wage increases in their individual regions. This had the effect of promoting or preserving the ethnic or regional loyalty of the workers to the parties in power. In other words, the workers could not see themselves as sharing a common interest as workers.

The workers themselves, or at least their leaders, have been influenced by the British in ostensibly separating labour from politics. From their inception, the Nigerian trade unions have been exhorted to limit themselves to labour matters by the colonial administration and British advisers from the TUC. They were not to mix such problems with political affairs. In effect, politics and trade unionism were seen to be different institutions and had to be kept separate. This, the Nigerians were told, was the British tradition. At its Blackpool Congress of 1959 the TUC condemned political activities by African trade unions (Nwanuobi, 1974, p.80). The reason for this deceit and hypocrisy on the part of the TUC was not clear because as far back as 1913 the British government had passed the Trade Union Act which permitted the unions to participate in politics. However, we may hazard the guess that the TUC attitude was in response to the Colonial Office fear, as expressed by Lord Passfield in 1930, that African unions might fall under the influence or "domination of disaffected" persons who may use the unions for 'improper' and 'mischievous' ends. The colonial administration had always feared that African trade unions could be used as part of the Nationalist agitations of the time.

The important point is that the leadership of the Nigerian labour movement accepted the separation of politics from trade unionism. For instance, J.M. Johnson (later to become Labour Minister), in his capacity as a member of the African Civil Service Technical Workers Union, declared in 1943 that labour and politics were 'distinct but cooperative activities' (quoted in Yesufu,
1962, pp.44-45). In 1952 the Railways and Ports Workers' Union barred their officials from accepting offices in any political organisation. The Trade Union Congress of Nigeria during its foundation in 1959 decided to eschew politics and "leave individual worker free to pursue whatever political activity he might choose" (Yesufu, ibid, p.148).

The TUCN decision reflected the situation of things. Individual workers were not apolitical; but they did not participate in politics as members of their unions carrying the weight of the entire membership (Nwanuobi, 1974, p.89). According to James Coleman, many wage-earners joined political parties "through urban branches of (ethnic) unions, rather than through the trade unions" (Coleman, 1958, p.265). In a nutshell, economic and class solidarity were not enough to determine the political allegiance of the workers. Ethnic feeling seemed more decisive. This served the politicians well and they promoted it.

This ethnic base of politics contributed to the ill-fated attempt to establish worker-based parties. For instance, both the Labour Party, founded in the wake of the 1964 General Strike, and the Socialist Workers and Farmers' Party could not claim the support of the majority of workers. Moreover, Coleman has attributed the non-affiliation of trade unions with the NCNC to ethnicity and government opposition to political activity by Labour. Government opposition still exists. When the present NLC was formed in 1978, it was barred from affiliating with any political party.

However, despite all this public commitment to 'voluntaryism', "what happened in practice was so different from the ideal and so subversive of the institutional framework described above ..." (Waterman, op cit, p.22). It was for this reason that Yesufu described it as 'emasculated' while Kilby spoke of the 'failure of the Anglo-Saxon model'. This should not totally surprise us; even in Britain, 'voluntaryism' "has always been more apparent than real" (Hyman, 1975, p.137). From its inception in Nigeria, government has been involved in industrial relations, and especially in the sensitive area of wage determination. In the public sector, wage and salary adjustments have been made more through government constituted wage review panels than by voluntary negotiation; the private sector usually follows the public sector lead. It was this situation that led Robin Cohen to observe that "In general the institutional and legal framework of
bargaining that has been established in Nigeria can be seen as encapsulating the form, rather than the substance, of industrial relations" (Cohen, 1974, pp.184-185).

Cohen found a reason for this within the broader political ethos of the country. He said, "As such it closely corresponds to the broader discrepancy existing in other areas of social life ... between the constitutional, legal and normative mores inherited from the colonial government, and the real behaviour patterns". Writing in the same vein, Fashoyin attributed the failure of the inherited model to the socio-cultural and economic environment, which is quite different from Britain (Fashoyin, 1980, p.95). At best this could only be partially true. Even in Britain the government, as stated above, has not been totally neutral in matters concerning industrial relations. At a more substantive level, state neutrality is an ideological smokescreen for state support for capital. The Nigerian state, even during the hey-day of open-door economic policy, has created a series of incentives to aid capital realise its primary objective, profit maximization.* It is important to note that the government justified its adherence to 'voluntaryism' by alluding to this idea of neutrality and state autonomy. A consequence of this ideology is that it allows political leaders to justify their actions in impartial terms, and "decisions which are systematically class-biased appear within this framework to be neutral and indeed inevitable" (Hyman, 1975, p.129).

Apart from this we have to note that the Nigerian worker and the trade unions in general were at this time very weak, inexperienced and disorganised. The average Nigerian worker of the 50s and 60s was likely to be new to wage employment, a recent migrant to the urban area and an unskilled illiterate. In short, he was at the mercy of his employer, who was likely to be an expatriate with a lot of tangible and intangible resources at his disposal. The Morgan Commission seemed to recognise this fact when it said,

a system (of voluntaryism) which leaves the regulation of wages and conditions of service to whims and discretion of individual employers, institutionalises exploitation of the worst kind (Morgan Commission Report, p.4).

* For an official's view of these incentives see Asiodu, P.C. (1967) Industrial Policy and Incentives in Nigeria, Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies. Vol. 9, No. 2.
Further, collective bargaining presupposes an equal bargaining strength between all the parties involved. But this is not normally the case. Such assumptions "tend to ignore other social and economic considerations which may make this equality and its underlying freedom fictitious and hollow. For instance, the economic necessity which may compel an employee to accept a contract of service is not the concern of the common law" (Adeogun, 1969, p.13).

The inadequacy of the industrial relations practice becomes more glaring when we consider that there is a 'reserved pool' of the unemployed especially among the unskilled and semi-skilled workers. The unemployment situation has now grown worse, with the net embracing skilled workers, graduates and professionals. In such a case, the employer is better placed to exercise his power than an employee who is more concerned with safeguarding his job. There are many people, literally at the gate, begging to be employed.

The weakness of the worker has been further heightened by disorganisation and disunity within the labour movement and by the total absence of a trade union in many establishments. Many employers have contributed to this situation. There exists among some employers the practice of 'promote or fire': where a militant or uncompromising shop-floor steward is offered promotion or threatened with dismissal. Another practice, probably copied from the earlier periods in British industrial development, is for companies to organize rival unions or fund a more acceptable candidate. "The effect is to prevent, undermine or domesticate trade unionism at the enterprise level" (Waterman, op cit, p.23, Akerela, 1975, p.281).

Both at national and regional level this practice was replicated by what Waterman has termed the 'appointment or arrest'. Willing regional or national trade union leaders were favoured with posts on government boards, parliamentary seats and membership of delegations abroad. Moreover, the government recognised the moderate ULC as a central labour organisation. On the other hand, radical and militant unionists, especially members of the rival NTUC, "were continually in danger of arrest, loss of passport and other forms of harassment".

The advent of the military saw the beginning of the end of the inherited ideology of voluntarism. Government intervention became more
overt and direct. The civil war provided the first opportunity to pass a decree imposing compulsory arbitration in any dispute lasting more than seven days. This decree, according to the Labour Commissioner, was part of "a united and concerted effort of the entire community in order to crush Ojukwu's rebellion" and it was not intended to be a permanent feature of our system of industrial relations" (quoted in Cohen, op cit, p.183).

The decree, The Trade Disputes (Emergency Provisions) Decree (No. 21 of 1968), replaced the Trade Disputes (Arbitration and Inquiry) Act of 1958. The 1958 Act had empowered the Labour Minister to intervene through conciliation, formal inquiry and arbitration where negotiation had broken down. Parties to a dispute resorted to the machinery provided at their own discretion; they could not be compelled to do so by the Minister.

If the nation could afford such a situation under peace time, it could not under an emergency as dictated by the civil war. Under the 1968 decree the Commissioner had compulsory power to intervene in labour disputes. He could appoint an arbitration tribunal with or without the consent of the parties to a dispute. It was obligatory to report all labour disputes and equally compulsory for all employers and employees to deposit all labour agreements with the government. Any breach of the decree incurred a fine of ₦500.00 or six months imprisonment.

The decree did not solve the problem it was designed for, that is preventing industrial conflict. Therefore in 1969 the government had to promulgate the Trade Disputes (Emergency Provision) (Amendment) Decree No. 53. The first section of the decree imposed a total ban on strikes and lock-outs, while Section Three was concerned with the establishment of the Industrial Arbitration Tribunal. It stipulated five years imprisonment for anybody who threatened, organised, encouraged or even carried out an act preparatory to organising a strike or lock-out during the following year. The degree also provided for three years' imprisonment for an employer who granted a general or sectional wage increase to any employee without approval from the federal government.

Further, under this law, the police could detain anyone engaged in an act prejudicial to industrial peace. Such detainees had no right to habeas corpus. The press was also barred from reporting strikes in such a manner as to cause public alarm.
In 1970 an Industrial Arbitration Tribunal was established to determine wages referred to it by the Commissioner. The tribunal was also charged, "to settle the interpretation of collective agreements or the terms of settlement of any trade dispute". The establishment of the tribunal was, according to the commissioner, "a very important development in the industrial relations system in Nigeria" (Cohen, 1974, p.183). This 'important development' has since been consolidated and made more elaborate and permanent.

Despite the establishment of the Industrial Arbitration Tribunal, the 1969 decree, like its predecessor, was a failure. It did not stem the wave of strikes. A study of the impact of the 1968 and 1969 Decrees on strike activity came to the conclusion that:

The experience of the Trade Disputes (Emergency Provisions) Decrees of 1968 and 1969 show that the laws made only a negligible impact on the incidence of disputes and strikes ... the available evidence shows that more disputes and strikes occurred during the prime lives of the decrees (Fashoyin, 1978, p.53).

The conclusion is shared by the Federal Ministry of Labour Annual Report for 1969/70. The failure of the decrees was reported thus,

In spite of the enactment and enforcement of ... Decree 1968 ... there was noticeable tendency and drift during the year toward trade dispute resulting in stoppage of work, contrary to the expectations and hopes that strikes would either be avoided or minimized by the promulgation of the Decree (Ibid, pp.60-61).

Apart from this, one notable consequence was that "the government transferred all problems of industrial peace to itself. The dissatisfaction of the workers became directed against the government" (Nwabueze, op cit, p.22). The government thus provided a buffer zone, shielding the employers from direct confrontation with the workers. We shall discuss the implication of this further in the next chapter. The employers could also find a scapegoat in the government for their failure and the law as an excuse for their exploitation of workers. However, without any outlet to vent their grievances the workers were forced to flout the law.

With the end of the civil war one would have expected the abrogation of these decrees. Instead, more stringent ones were enacted "to deal with specific labour unrest and aimed at tying many loose ends". Decree 31 of
1973 banned such groups as soldiers, policemen and certain 'key state financial and communications employees' from joining trade unions. Other decrees like the Banking (Amendment) Decree of 1973 were enacted to further emasculate the trade unions.

Despite this array of draconian, restrictive and interventionist laws the military continued to proclaim its adherence to industrial democracy (Third National Development Plan, p.283).

The final blow to the inherited edifice of industrial relations was delivered in 1975 when the government announced its new national policy on labour based on the "principle of limited intervention and guided democracy in labour matters". The policy emphasised the undisputed right of government to intervene in both union management and labour-management relations in general.

In implementing this corporatist policy of labour control (see next chapter), the government in 1976 cancelled the registration of the four existing central labour organisations. The then on-going efforts by the organisations to merge were aborted when the government refused to recognise the new central organisations and its elected leaders. The government later appointed its own administrator of trade unions to reorganise the labour movement. This resulted in the creation of 42 industrial unions, all affiliated to a central labour organisation, the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), also created after the reorganisation. In effect, the new structure of labour movement in Nigeria was created by the government.

Further, following an inquiry set up by the government into the activities of trade unions, the Obasanjo government disqualified eleven labour leaders, notably those of the radical/leftist orientation, from further participation in union affairs. Prominent among them were the veteran labour leaders, Imoudu and Wahab Goodluck. This purge of the labour movement is paralleled by the purge of the Universities by the same government in 1978.

The government also banned the unions from any external affiliation, except with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Organisation of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU). This was done ostensibly to remove a source of disunity and destabilisation within the labour
movement. But it also had the effect of removing any direct external ideological influence on the labour movement. Nwabueze has observed that this was done "not only because of the need to curb the divisive influence such external alignment had on labour unity but because the world bodies infused the unions with ideas which were capable of being used to undermine the position of the military" (Nwabueze, 1978, p.25).

Another interventionist move initiated by the military which affected industrial relations was its income policy. Designed as part of an anti-inflation strategy, it limited the power of the unions to bargain for wage increase. The Productivity, Prices and Incomes Board (PPIB) set up for the purpose was established under the "feeling that any increases in incomes that may be permitted should be related to the trend in productivity and should not involve the self-defeating effort to relate increases in incomes to past price developments" (K. Awosika, 1982, p.368). However, it is notable that an accompanying instrument to fight inflation, price control, has failed woefully and in point of fact has been abandoned; yet the restrictive income policy is kept in force. While prices continue to rise astronomically, wages remain constant.

The question we need to consider now is why this radical change in policy and strategy has occurred. One is tempted to answer this question by referring to the peculiar demands of the civil war; but this would not be an adequate answer especially because the policy did not end with the civil war but became elaborated. Another appealing plausible answer can be found by looking at the 'authoritarian' nature of the military. A military regime is by nature averse to some of the niceties of Western democracy and liberal pretences which a civilian government, with an eye on elections, may profess to hold. Added to this point is the military's insistence on order and discipline. Moreover, there is the tendency to see all national institutions as one designed to prosecute the stated national goals under an overall commander (i.e. the military government).

Without denying the above argument, it is possible to locate the decisive factor for the change in the structure of the Nigerian economy. During the Balewa regime, the Nigerian economy, as stated above, was foreign dominated. The basic desire of government was to attract foreign investment and aid, and, under this situation, the government could not afford to pursue any policy alien to the Western investors it was trying
to woo. The civilian government's policy also suited foreign capital because the weakness of the working class movement suited its purpose. All this changed with the advent of military rule, which coincided with a fundamental change in Nigeria's economic fortune - the oil boom of the 70s. With a phenomenal increase in Federal Government revenue due to oil export (it accounted for ₦5.8 billion out of total government revenue of ₦6.2 billion in 1977), the government moved into direct participation in the economy. In a departure from past practice, such direct intervention almost became an article of faith. With confidence and nationalist fervour, the government declared,

What Nigeria lacked most in the past has been the national sense of purpose particularly in economic matters. The Federal Government will, therefore, occupy the commanding heights in the quest for purposeful national development and provide the leadership and honest administration necessary for the attainment of a national sense of purpose. (Second National Development Plan, 1970-75, p.32).

To this end, the government implemented various changes including the acquisition of controlling shares in commercial banks, a decisive movement into the oil industry, and the initiation of the policy of indigenisation. In the words of T.M. Yesufu, "While government has always been the greatest employer of labour, its economic power, thanks to its virtual monopoly of national oil revenue, completely dwarfs that of the private sector" (Yesufu, 1980, p.44). Complementing this economic intervention was a stress on cooperation and consultation with other industrial interests. The Second National Plan emphasised "the need to bring various interested groups into smooth and harmonious working relationship with Government bodies responsible for industrial matters" (p.145).

This dictated a change in policy and strategy on labour/industrial relations matters; as Yesufu pointed out,

The proliferation of public enterprises and institutions, as well as the direct participation of government even in the erstwhile private business sector confers upon it an indisputable hegemony in the control of all aspects of the economy, including labour and industrial relations (ibid).

It is the aim of the above discussion to show that Nigeria's
industrial relations policy has developed according to changes in the larger economic structure. The radical change from a laissez-faire ideology in industrial relations was not qualitatively different from what has happened, and is still happening, in other capitalist countries. An illustration of this is the British case mentioned earlier.

It has been argued that Nigeria shares another characteristic with other capitalist states: its labour policy has favoured the interests of capital against those of the workforce "in the process of control over work relations" and in the struggle for the distribution of the surplus produced by workers.

The industrial relations system is one form of labour control mechanism available to the dominant class. While it relies more on the judiciary for its effectiveness, it must be employed in conjunction with other forms of social control. Further, it requires articulation at the level of ideology, through the production of social and cultural discourses, such as that of national development. The mass media constitute an important site for these ideological practices. It is, therefore, to the elements making up these discourses, their historical and social origins that we now turn.
In his discussion of the 'Social Sources of Stability', Frank Parkin said,

One of the central aims of any dominant class is to make the rules governing the distribution of rewards seem legitimate in the eyes of all, including those who stand to gain least from such rules. The greater the extent to which this is achieved, the more stable the political order is likely to be, and the less need for recourse to coercive means (Parkin, 1972, p.48).

In other words the dominant class must be able to universalize its ideas and social perspective or be able to represent these as being in the national interest in order to maintain its rule and hegemony. This ideological function is primarily performed by the mass media and other Ideological State Apparatuses which include the school, the family, the trade unions, the Church, and the Mosque (Althusser, 1971).

However, the maintenance of such rule and hegemony is not easy especially in a post-colonial society like Nigeria where the dominant classes are unstable and lack the coherence and unity of their counterparts in more mature capitalist societies. In such a situation they resort to repression and coercion directly (the use of the police and army) and indirectly through intimidation and draconian laws. But the stability and, subsequently, the orderly reproduction of the capitalist social order cannot rest solely on such methods alone. The use of force to maintain law and order calls into question the legitimacy of the government and the state. Especially in the Third World where the potential risk to investment is an important factor in the calculations of foreign investors, multinational corporations and aid agencies, the ruling class and its allies must be particularly concerned about the constant use of force to keep the working class and other lower classes in line. This means that the management of information becomes a crucial weapon in maintaining public support.

This is where the use of certain themes, ideas and institutions becomes useful in building a consensus about the social order and its operation. Such themes, ideas and institutions could be indigenous, traditional or modern or a mixture of both. What is, however, important is that in their 'ordinary existence' they are shared by many people in society. They reside in the people's consciousness as part of their daily existence.
They include the idea of meritocracy, national unity and development, and such traditional beliefs as predestination. Such seemingly innocuous socio-cultural ideas could easily become useful in legitimising the dominant social perspective and inequality in society. In addition to this, certain images of the working class or any oppositional group could quite unwittingly be promoted which more or less devalue its positive contributions to society and marginalise its activities.

The point we are making is that the relationship of domination-subordination inherent in the capitalist social formation has to be masked and justified in some way in order for it to appear acceptable and even natural and inevitable. This does not imply a conscious or deliberate conspiracy between members of the ruling class and/or 'symbol-handlers', that is the mass media. Though this may not be totally ruled out, some of those involved in propagating and elaborating these ideological ideas and images could be regarded as genuinely doing their assigned tasks 'in the national interest'.

The Gramscian concept of hegemony is particularly helpful in explaining such social control ideology. From the dichotomy between force and consent, Antonio Gramsci postulates that the supremacy of a ruling class is manifested in two ways; domination or coercion, and intellectual or moral leadership which constitutes hegemony. "Social control" as Femia puts it "takes two basic forms; besides influencing behaviour and choice externally, through reward and punishment, it also affects them internally, by moulding personal convictions into a replica of prevailing norms" (Femia, 1981, p.24).

The process of such 'internal' control is based on hegemony; a situation in which one version of reality is dominant "informing with its spirit all modes of thought and behaviour". It is the process of ruling class's "domination of the subordinate classes and groups through the elaboration and penetration of ideology (ideas and assumptions) into their commonsense and everyday practice". Though not necessarily deliberate, it is the systematic engineering of consent to the established order (Gitlin, 1980, p.253). According to 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 continuing sway. 'Hegemony' thus depends on a combination of force and consent. But - Gramsci argues - in the liberal capitalist state, consent is normally in the lead, operating behind 'the armour of coercion' (Hall, 1977, p.332).

In that sense hegemony is obtained through consent rather than by force exercised by one class over another. It is also implied that while force is carried out through the coercive machinery of the state, hegemony is exercised and accomplished through civil society and agencies of the superstructure - the education system, the mass media and other cultural institutions, and religious institutions. As Ralph Miliband said, hegemony "is not simply something which happens, as a mere superstructural derivative of economic and social predominance. It is, in very large part, the result of a permanent and pervasive effort, conducted through a multitude of agencies." (Miliband, 1969, p.181). These agencies are what Althusser has collectively called the Ideological State Apparatuses (1971). To Gramsci, the state is the sum of political society and civil society. He offers these definitions,

a) State = political society + civil society, that is hegemony armoured by coercion.

b) State in the integral sense: dictatorship + hegemony.

c) (The State) is the entire complex of political and theoretical activity by which the ruling classes not only justify and maintain their domination but also succeed in obtaining the active consent of the governed (Femia, op. cit. p.28).

Gramsci used the term to denote the social, cultural and ideological dominance of a social group and, conversely, the consent of the other groups to the general ideological direction of the dominant group. However, the process of hegemony has an economic foundation. He writes "if hegemony is ethico-political, it must be economic, it must also have its foundation in the decisive function that the leading group exercises in the decisive nucleus of economic activity" (quoted in Femia, op. cit. p.24). In other words, consent is "caused by the prestige which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production".
One noteworthy point on the use of the concept of hegemony is that it allows us to grasp the essence and source of the contradictory worldview held by the working class and other subordinate classes - an explanation of reality based on a dominant (conservative) interpretation and another based on an objective situation or radical interpretation. While members of the underclasses accept a great deal of the dominant conception of social reality, they also exhibit some form of dissensus and reduced level of commitment to bourgeois discourse and meaning systems. This situational interpretation occasionally bursts into open hostility and revolt. But such hostilities are usually not high or comprehensive enough to demolish the bourgeois 'wall of defence'. This is because, among other factors, they lack a framework of analysis fundamentally different from that provided by the dominant classes. In point of fact, the stock of categories, concepts and language usually employed in such analysis are in many instances those of the dominant group. They cannot offer a radical alternative to the existing order.

The masses, Gramsci seems to suggest "are confined within the boundaries of the dominant world view, a divergent, loosely adjusted patchwork of ideas and outlooks, which despite its heterogeneity, unambiguously serves the interest of the powerful, by mystifying power relations, by justifying various forms of sacrifice and deprivation, by inducing fatalism and passivity, and by narrowing mental horizons" (Femia, op. cit. p.45).

While Gramsci allocates a decisive influence to socio-cultural engineering in creating consensus in society, he, unlike consensus theorists, recognises the use of force especially during a 'crisis of authority' when force becomes a chief instrument of social control. Further, he recognises that cultural and ideological hegemony, is not absolute. The endorsement given to the dominant social class is not 'spontaneous' but must be continually produced and reproduced. Its "internal structures", as Raymond Williams points out, "are highly complex, and have to continually to be renewed, recreated and defended; and by the same token, that they can be continually challenged and in certain respects modified" (Williams, 1980, p.38). Lastly, he noted the origin of the hegemony of any group as being rooted in the material dominance of that group. According to Femia, Gramsci's concept of hegemony refers to a set of ideas which are dominant as a consequence of a particular structure of power. To him bourgeois
hegemony was a legitimating mask over the predatory nature of class domination" (Femia, ibid, p.225).

We may now consider how certain social institutions in Nigeria, ideas and practices and attitudes to workers and the images of workers created over the years have contributed to the ideological hegemony of the dominant classes and the structure of the peripheral capitalist economy in Nigeria. We attempt to tease out these ideas, themes and images because, as we have said before, the mass media on many occasions appropriate some of these materials in creating their own reality and meaning of events. We shall also try to locate their sources. Some of these ideas are taken up later when we examine press reports of industrial relations during the two periods chosen. Our argument is that some of these themes and characterisations of the unions provide the raw materials from which press coverage and presentation of labour news are constructed. We also take it that the themes could be located within the ideological discourse and social perspective of the dominant class and that over time they have become part of popular consciousness. As Philip Schlesinger pointed out in his essay on counter-insurgency thought,

It is more important to recognise that such concepts are ideological constructs. In everyday and mass media discourses they tend to be handled without a critical awareness of the ways in which they pre-manufacture a version of reality favouring those in power (Schlesinger, 1978, p.112).

We have mentioned some of these issues in the foregoing chapters. For instance, we entered into a brief discussion in Chapter 1 of the Nigerian political economy in which we demonstrated that the articulation of nationalism and economic development is an ideological fig-leaf used by the ruling group and its allies to regulate the economy in the interests of capital. In other chapters we have referred to such issues as ethnicity and patron-client relations and their possible ideological function. We shall have course to refer to some of these in the discussion below and when we discuss our empirical findings.

The Traditional Belief System

Within the African belief system certain themes mitigate against the development of working class consciousness or the radical articulation
of the source and nature of social injustice and inequality. Such themes and attitudes are conservative in that by and large they "are supportive of the social structure, and the ruling and exploiting strata" (Waterman, 1976, p.160). Despite the penetration of capitalist social relations in these societies, many workers and the rural and urban dwellers in general still hold to the pre-industrial belief-system. This is due largely to the unbroken connection between urban/factory life of many workers and rural life and culture. A good percentage of the African labour force is still engaged in non-capitalist mode of production and exchange not too dissimilar from the peasant mode from which they came from not too long ago and to which, if seasonally, many still return to supplement their living.

Many workers move to and from their villages with relative ease, retaining rights to land, performing traditional obligations and looking forward to an eventual permanent return home, usually as a self-employed. Moreover the part of the city inhabited by workers and other segments of the urban poor, e.g. Ajegunle, Maroko and Agege in Lagos, are nothing more than sprawling ghettos with all the essential rural social networks and relationships (town unions, age-grades, family associations) reproduced and maintained by the inhabitants. These networks and relationships cut across class distinctions as such, embracing workers, petty-traders, petty-bourgeois elements, landlords and the unemployed.

With this type of cultural milieu and the life chances and material conditions of many urban dwellers remaining much the same as those of peasants, "one should not then be surprised that peasant (or traditional) forms of consciousness survive in the cities" (Sandbrook, 1982, p.185).

A major tendency in the traditional social belief system is to explain misfortune, including poverty and failure, either in business, at work or school in terms of traditional cosmologies - the anger of the gods, witchcraft, jealous friends or rivals. Many resign to fate or accept their social condition as natural and inevitable. In the words of Parkin "In traditional societies, especially those lowest in the social order have often expressed their feelings by a sense of fatalism than by active resentment" (Parkin, 1972, p.60). In fact many workers are unable to interpret their social problems, anxieties and the tensions of urban life in a language corresponding to their location within the social relations of production within which they exist. Social problems are personalised,
thus losing sight of their social roots. In that case only divine assistance could be sought. In a survey of Yoruba attitudes to inequality, Peter Lloyd found that,

... one third of all respondents (and a higher proportion of less-educated men) explicitly stated that inequality was a natural phenomenon and used the analogy of the fingers on the hand... An even higher proportion said specifically that inequality was caused or ordained by God... Whilst the less-educated almost universally ascribed inequality to destiny, the better-educated were more agnostic in their responses... (Lloyd, 1974, p.142).

Another survey among Nigerian workers of various grades and positions came to a similar, though somewhat ambiguous conclusion. The labourers in the survey believed in self-help, destiny and "trust in God" (Waterman, 1976).

The recourse to the super-natural could also be explained by noting the apparent inability of many workers, new to the urban environment and coupled with their low literacy level, to comprehend the new socio-economic and political forces which affect their daily lives. It is easier for them to find solace and explanation in the traditional beliefs they have been socialized into from birth than in any complex and rather abstract thoughts about the working of the socio-economic system which is quite alien to them.

Stemming from the 'God-ordained success' attributed to the rich and powerful is the high deference and respect accorded to them and other men of influence in business, politics and community affairs and other walks of life. Among many Nigerian groups is the belief that the successful should help the less fortunate; leading to a kind of patron-client relationships which we discussed earlier. As Waterman observed in the study we referred to above, "Widespread illiteracy combines with patron-client traditions to incline the workers towards choice of a more educated work-place leader... The conservatism of the workers, like the poor in general... represents a claim on the rich and powerful that they should protect their poor brethren... (Waterman, 1976). This type of patron-client relationship is more suited for civilian politics but cannot be ruled out during military regimes. Politicians who are more likely to be businessmen could be regarded as local champions who help to fix employments, scholarships, contracts, obtain market stalls and so on. The important point is that a
The patron-client relationship offers for the poor an individual solution to the generic problem of mass poverty.

The consequence of the traditional belief system is that it serves "the latent function of reducing or channelling in apolitical directions the social tension inherent in highly inegalitarian societies and hence fortifying social order" (Sandbrook, 1982, p.187). By explaining social problems like poverty in terms of personal 'ill-luck' or inadequacy, it prevents a recognition of such as an aspect of social injustice. Further it prevents the growth and solidarity of collective responses in challenging or changing such social injustices by posing the problems as individual problems which demand individual response. In other words, the destruction of the evil of exploitation is not through, as Sandbrook puts it "a programme of political action but the repeated performance of certain rituals or practices". This, he continues,"is not propitious for the diffusion of the view that mass poverty is subject to change through human agency" (Sandbrook, ibid). In short such beliefs form a strong cultural block to the development of needed cooperative action and solidarity among the urban and rural poor to fight for a change in their condition. In essence the superstition and myth contained in traditional beliefs serve the interest of the dominant class, "inasmuch as (they) narrow the mental perspective of the masses" (Femia, op. cit. p.339, fn 60).

Religion

Apart from these elements in the socio-cultural belief system, religion is another source of social control for the acquiescence of the lower classes. Marx spoke of religion as the opium of the masses. Frank Parkin has observed that,

In most systems of stratification, religious institutions play an important stabilizing role. Among lower social strata religious beliefs are of particular significance in so far as they often present the disprivileged with an alternative system of meaning to that current in the secular world, and one in which the scale of secular priorities is dissolved or reversed. (They lower) the material and social desires of the underclass to conform to the existing structure of rewards (Parkin, op.cit. p.70).

Traditional religion, Christianity and Islam share a common belief in life-after-death and/or reincarnation. It is believed by the
faithful that everybody will meet his reward, good or bad, in heaven where God in His pre-eminence sits in judgement. Believers, especially are obliged to look up to heaven from where all mercies come. The efficacy of prayers is also a cornerstone in such religious beliefs which also promise the Kingdom of God as the inheritance of the believers and followers of God's teaching.

Such doctrine and teachings reinforce the explanation of misfortune in personalised terms. They also reinforce the acquiescence of the common-man to the existing social order, by building hope in a heavenly future or divine intervention promised to the righteous. By preaching spiritual or divine intervention in social problems, religion depoliticises such problems.*

Apart from this passivity inherent in religious teachings and institutions, there is the idea that religion is being manipulated in Nigeria by the different sections of the ruling class to satisfy class interests. This is akin to the use of ethnicity by the same class as an instrument of class control. The proponents of this idea are not against religion nor do they see religion per se as inimical to the development of class consciousness. What they are against is its use by the various factions of the dominant class. A leading proponent of this thesis says,

The real basis of the manipulation of religion in Nigeria today is the need to obscure from the people of Nigeria a fundamental aspect of reality: that is the domination of our political economy by a class of intermediaries who are being increasingly exposed. And it is to enable this class to cover themselves with religious and ethnic disguises in order to further entrench division among our people, slow their awakening... (Y. Bala Usman, 1979, p.89).

Despite the above we do recognise that religion could be a source of radical or reformist, if not revolutionary, challenge to an existing order. In this regard we recall the contribution of the Church to the nationalist struggle in Southern Africa, the religious impact during the Iranian revolution and the 'theology of liberation' in Latin America, especially Nicaragua. In Nigeria a study of workers in Kano found that traditional

* A Nigerian leading politician, Chief Awolowo was recently asked to suggest how to stop election rigging in Nigeria and he said "the evil must be removed through prayers to God by the entire citizenry" (see National Concord, December 17, 1985).
religious belief provided a medium and a motive for workers militancy and strike action (P. Lubeck, 1976). Also some elements of Islamic theology have been used by a not so coherent nor articulate group of urban poor and dispossessed to challenge the behaviour of the elite in Northern Nigeria. Tagged the Mai-tai rioters, the group is mainly drawn from rural immigrants to some Northern cities. They use the Quran to justify their physical attacks on luxurious properties, cars, government buildings, which to them represent the depraving influence of Western culture. However in general,

The socio-economic function of religious activity is more in the direction of integrating the poor into the existing social order than challenging prevailing norms, values and goals. This may constitute further evidence that African slums largely constitute slums of hope, not despair (Sandbrook, 1982, p.189).

Ethnicity and Class

Another covert instrument of social control is ethnicity. The saliency of ethnicity in Nigerian politics has received so much treatment that we need not go into it here,* more so since we have discussed some of the issues involved in Chapter 1. While we recognise that ethnicity has not played any overt significant or decisive role in intra-union politics (see Chapter 2 for the main factors) it has structured workers relationship with the larger political system and perception of national problems. Robert Melson has found out that "... the Nigerian worker of whatever nationality was cross-pressured between his loyalty to his ethnic group and loyalty to his economic interest group" (Melson, 1971, p.163). Nigerian politicians have on many occasions played on ethnic mistrust, fear and stereotypes to mobilize ethnic following in the intra-class struggle for the sharing of the 'national cake'. Such mobilization becomes more effective because of the uneven development of the country and the contradictions this generates. The politician, while advancing his own personal and/or class interest, creates the popular impression that he is representing the 'genuinely' held interests of 'his people'. Richard Sandbrook captures the essence of this process when he writes "A politician thus gains a tribal power base by successfully manipulating the appropriate cultural symbols and by articulating and advancing his people's collective

* See NNOLI, 0 (1978) and Achebe (1983).
aspirations (which he himself probably helped define) (Sandbrook, 1982, p.195).

In this situation, unless ethnicity coincides with class identities, it becomes a potent force in obstructing the development of class consciousness, "encompassing solidarity in the political as well as economic sphere". National economic policies, political administration and other issues are more likely to be perceived in primordial terms than class terms.

A glaring effect of this situation is that no labour party or a party based on working class identity and interests has made any impact on the Nigerian political scene. It has also affected the development of any truly national political party of whatever ideological coloration. Many of the so called national parties existing between 1979 and 1983 were no more than coalitions of tribal chieftains who use their tribal power base to bargain and jockey for positions and offices and contracts. For instance, Larry Diamond describes the National Party of Nigeria which claimed to be the most national of all the parties as "a loose coalition of many diverse ethnic groups" (Diamond, 1983, pp.658-9).

In the above discussion we do not intend to give the misleading impression that ethnicity is merely a form of 'false consciousness' deliberately and consciously manipulated by the dominant classes to mystify reality. Ethnicity could be seen as "one type of political grouping within the framework of the modern state" which could be useful in "the intensive struggle over new strategic positions within the structure of the new state: places of employment, taxation, funds for development, education, political positions and so on" (Abner Cohen, 1974, p.96). The universality of the usefulness of ethnicity in such struggle could be seen if we note that almost every Nigerian would make recourse to it when the situation demands.

Anyone who has to deal directly with the ways in which Nigerians, and other Africans, at all levels of the social hierarchy seek to mobilise or evoke sectional identities... whether ethnicity, locality or religion - in pursuit of the most basic goods and services would find it difficult to maintain that such identities are solely a reflection and instrument of bourgeois class formation (Joseph, 1983, p.27).
In other words, it is possible for ethnic groups to serve as functional or interest groups in their own right (ibid).

It seems to us more meaningful to locate the problem within the uneven development of the country and the effect of this on the class structure. By uneven development we mean not just geographical imbalance but also, and more fundamentally, the existence of more than one mode of production; for example, the capitalist and pre-capitalist modes. As John Saul puts it "the articulation of modes of production has a clear tendency to strengthen ethnicity" (Saul, 1979, p.357). As we indicated in Chapter 1, ethnicity as a category to define different groups in Nigeria was a colonial device to 'divide and rule' Nigerians. It was later seized upon by the ruling elite in their struggle for power. In this sense we regard its use as a language of political discourse, as a social construct. To quote John Saul again,

... the ingredients of the 'ideological discourse' which constitute itself as ethnicity are not arbitrary [and there is some political 'creativity'] (exercised most often, by petty bourgeois politicians) which must be central to any effort to blend these ingredients into a coherent political project or to mobilise large numbers of adherents to it (Saul, 1979, pp.356-357).

The crucial point is that where ethnic or sectional identities predominate or is entrenched in political life it is very difficult for "a social movement to redefine political conflict in class terms" (Sandbrook, 198, p.195). Such a situation is in the interest of the main beneficiaries of the status quo; that is the dominant classes.

The Ideology of African Socialism

Apart from these elements inherent in the socio-cultural environment an explicit ideology, African socialism, has been promoted by many African leaders which deny social (class) differences and sometimes inequality. Common themes in the many variants of this nationalist ideology are the denial of class conflict, that is that Africa is a classless society, sacrifice for the common good, order and discipline, national unity and economic development. The underlying idea is that 'we are all one' or to use the NPN slogan in Nigeria, 'One Nation, One Destiny'.

The exponents of this ideology usually take their bearing from the 'utopian' pre-colonial Africa; which they conceived as highly egalitarian
with little or no stratification. They stress the organic link between the individual and his community and it is this link that is taken as the traditional foundation of 'African socialism'. According to the former Tanzanian President, Julius Nyerere,

In primitive African society, this question of the limits of responsibility as between the individual and society in which he lives was not very clearly defined. The traditional African community was a small one, and the African could not think of himself apart from that community in which he lived. He was an individual; he had his wife - or wives - and children, so he belonged to a family. But the family merged into a larger 'blood' family which itself merged into a clan or tribe. Thus he saw himself all the time as a member of a community, but he saw no struggle between his own interests and those of his community, for his community to him was an extension of his family (quoted in Mohan, 1966, pp.232-233).

Nyerere like many other African leaders has on the basis of this rejected class conflict. His Ujamaa or 'family hood' is "opposed to doctrinaire socialism, which seeks to build its happy society on a philosophy of inevitable conflict between man and man". In fact, Nyerere believes that there is no African word for class: "Indeed I doubt if the equivalent for the word 'class' exists in any indigenous African language; for language describes the ideas of those who spoke it, and the idea of 'class' or 'caste' was non-existent in African society" (Nyerere, 1968, p.11).

Though these ideas have not been elaborated or systematically worked out by Nigerian politicians (this is not to say that they, especially Southern politicians, have not on occasions advocated socialism), compared to, say, Nkrumah, Nyerere, Sekou Toure and Senghor, Nigerian politicians and military rulers share the basic assumptions of such an ideology. For instance, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, one of the very few, if not the only one, who have expoused any coherent and articulate socialist ideology denies the existence of class conflict. He also denies the existence of capitalists in Africa,

For the time being, Black Africa has no emperors, no absolute monarchs, no opulent aristocrats, no big land owners, no war lords and no capitalists with vast financial empires, whose positions, wealth and excessive acts can provoke extremities of violent reaction from the masses of the people, and who will fight to the last ditch to defend those positions and wealth. Not only do we not have such men now, they are not even likely to emerge in the near future (Awolowo, 1977, p.65).
To Awolowo, therefore, socialism can be achieved by passing the necessary legislation, meticulous planning, love and good leadership.* According to Richard Joseph Awolowo and UPN (the party he led between 1979 and 1983), socialism "is conceived more in terms of judicious social engineering by a progressive government, than as the outcome of increasing proletarian consciousness and class action" (Joseph, 1978, p.89).

The denial of class differences is, of course, suitable for the imposition of one-party rule. More than this, however, the various themes incorporated into the ideology of 'African socialism' do form "the basis and source of an ethic of 'hard work', 'public-spiritedness', and 'self-sacrifice' which African leaders continually urge upon their peoples, in their efforts to mobilise the mass of people behind the development effort" (Mohan, 1966, p.232). We could also pin-point two related assumptions that underline the ideology. First, it could be argued that the post-colonial state is a neutral instrument being deployed in the interest of all citizens. Second, is the assumption that the ruling elite is an agent of modernization whose activities and policies are above class or group interests but in the national interest. These assumptions are buttressed by such nationalistic policies as indigenisation and attacks on foreign businesses, not because they are capitalist or exploitative but because they are foreign.

Social Mobility and the Education System

The idea of social mobility and the possibility of unrestricted access to the top are common themes in official pronouncements and policy; especially in education, and also embedded in popular consciousness. Generally, it is believed that anybody could make it either through luck, personal effort, assistance through others or God. It is a form of competitive individualism which is characteristic of early capitalist society (Waterman, 1976). Peter Lloyd, who has studied this aspect of dominant ideology says,

Through its control of the mass media the government helps to maintain the dominant ideology. Typical elements are the stress upon achievement, the openness of society and the ability of anyone to reach the top through hard work. The wealth of those at the top is the reward for their effort. The dependence

upon government may be emphasised - benevolence and paternalism blend to suggest that the poor may achieve their goals through cooperation with the government rather than critical attacks on it (Lloyd, 1982, pp.105-106).

In this regard we may note again the national objectives as contained in the Second National Development Plan; (1) "A just and egalitarian society; (2) A land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens.

The root of the popular variant could be found in the traditional social set-up. In Yoruba and Igbo traditional societies, for instance, it was (and still is) possible for any hard-working person, especially male, to make it socially, politically and economically, and also be accorded traditional recognition by bestowing on him a chieftaincy title.*

The modern and official variant, however, rests on the idea of meritocracy - the principle that only the best and brightest will and can make it; a sort of social Darwinism. This receives an "institutional backing via the educational system". The argument could be made - and is usually made - that because everybody has the opportunity to attend school, the educational system determines success or failure through personal ability, talent or even good luck and not through parental or any advantageous social background. In this wise "Education serves as a mechanism of social control to the extent that it legitimises inequality by fostering acceptance of the applicability of the meritocratic principle" (Sandbrook, 1982, p.201).

The ability of the education system to promote social mobility is reinforced by examples of many people from poor and humble origins who have made it to the top through their educational qualifications. This is very significant in a society like Nigeria where a sizeable number of the first generation of politicians, professionals and senior civil servants are from such humble origins. Such examples give hope to the poor. "Western education", as Nduka has pointed out, "has long been accepted as one of the surest avenues of upward social mobility. Most of the country's present elite - whether military, political and bureaucratic, business, or academic - come originally from humble backgrounds" (Nduka, 1976, p.104).

* These days such titles are becoming commodities sold to the highest bidders among the rich and politically powerful.
The structure of the education system lends itself to the legitimation of the status quo. It seems inevitable that, the way the school system is structured, some pupils are right from youth prepared for manual jobs while others are ready for white collar employment. Up to the 1970s in Nigeria, there existed a Modern/Commercial school, and a Grammar/Secondary school systems preparing pupils for different roles and occupations in life. Most of those who attended Modern/Commercial schools are of poor, peasant and working class parentage while those from wealthy, middle-class homes found their way to the latter. Unlike those who attended Grammar schools, Modern/Commercial school-leavers cannot go up to the University because they cannot sit for the ordinary and advanced level examinations, the normal qualifications for University admissions.

The recently launched new policy on education seems to have resuscitated this dichotomy in another form. In brief, the policy stipulates that after a six-year primary education, the successful ones will go to junior secondary schools for three years. After the third year the academically minded will proceed to a three-year senior Secondary/Grammar school and ultimately to the University. The rest, according to the policy "may then go on to an apprenticeship system or some other scheme for out-of school vocational training" (National Policy on Education, 1981, p.17). It seems quite evident that those who will end up as apprentices in carpentry or auto-mechanic workshops are the children of the poor both in the rural and urban areas. Yet, despite glaring evidence to this fact, in the hope that their children will make it and the fervent belief in the ability of the education system, many workers, peasants and petty-traders go through a lot of financial and material hardship to sponsor their children. "The son of a poor farmer often still hopes to obtain a good education and a well-paid job or office, even though his chances of success are rapidly diminishing" (Sandbrook, 1972, p.119).

The importance attached to education by policy makers in Nigeria reflects the belief that it is a key to success and also national development. This importance could be seen if we consider the enrolment figures within the last decade or so. Enrolment in primary schools rose from an estimated 3.5 million in 1970/71 to 12 million in 1979/80 while the figure for secondary and other post-primary institutions rose from 190,000 to 2 million within the same period. University enrolment rose from about 26,000 in 1974/75 to an estimated 50,000 in 1979/80. There are now more than 20
universities as against six in 1975/76 and more than 30 Polytechnics.

The issue of education is so important and politically sensitive that a whole political career has been built on it. For instance, Chief Obafemi Awolowo's political influence is based largely on his life-long commitment to 'free-education at all levels'. Education was one of the major political issues in Nigeria between 1979 and 1983. The debate was between those who believed that the state should finance a free education system and those who said this was not possible and that if such a scheme was implemented it would lower education standards and quality.

However, we need to note that the idea of meritocracy promoted by the system and official rhetoric is more apparent than real, especially now. There is a lot of disparity between the quality of rural schools and urban ones which has a lot of implications for the job prospects of their respective graduates. Even within the urban areas there is a lot of disparity. For instance, primary and secondary schools in Ikoyi, a rich suburb of Lagos are qualitatively different from those in the adjacent marshy slum of Maroko. Federal Government owned schools are far superior to state or community schools. Educated and well-to-do parents are better able to send their children to the superior schools. In this connection, we may recall the bitter legal battle waged by the Catholic Church, on behalf of parents of pupils and owners of fee-pay private schools, against the Jakande administration when all private schools were taken over by the Lagos State government as part of its free education policy in 1979.

The openness of the social structure is now doubtful and questionable. Immediately after independence, because of the Nigerianisation policy pursued by the government a lot of access was created for people to move to the top. This seems to have come to an end. Unemployment, especially graduate unemployment has reached an all time high within the last few years especially after the oil boom collapsed. Since 1978 there has been massive retrenchment of workers in both the public and private sectors. The rate of unemployment in urban centres rose from 7.8 per cent at the end of 1984 to 9.7 per cent in mid 1985. Between 1982 and 1983 private sector employers retrenched 30 per cent of their work force (Financial Times (London) February 24, 1986). Further, according to the Federal Civil Service 11,091 workers lost their jobs in the Civil Service between December 1984 and June 1985 (West Africa, February 17, 1986).
In another way, capitalist social relations have been or are being legitimised by pointing to the aggressive commercial instinct among many Nigerians. Since the advent of the oil boom, almost all Nigerians have become traders, from the 'moving-go-slow' hawkers to the big market mammies, from the permanent secretary or commissioner who sells contracts in the office to the University professor who sells cement or motor spare-parts. Everybody is a businessman or woman. This undisciplined rat-race is taken as the essence of capitalism and being used to counter any argument for an alternative social-economic system. In a sense, it is a variant of the alleged openness of the social structure. The economy is so open and accessible that it is assumed that anybody who can join the race will 'make' it. Studies of workers have shown that many of them aspire to be self-employed some day (Peace, 1979). This type of petty-bourgeois aspiration is unlikely to be conducive to the development of working class consciousness or any fundamental questioning of the status-quo. For instance a worker that sees himself as a temporary worker would not likely see himself as part of a long term project for the overthrow of his present source of injustice.

**Corporatism and Cooptation**

Sometimes the state actively seeks avenues to neutralise the potential power of working class organisations and other oppositional social forces like student movements. An obvious policy in this regard is corporatism. According to Strinati "corporatism is a particular mode of political representation and a particular form of state control of industrial relations". He goes further to say that it is "generated by and represents a response to the development of capitalism". By definition it "is a potential institutional arrangement organised by the state and class and political interests to provide the political conditions for economic intervention. It thus becomes a potential form of political representation corresponding to the means and purposes of the 'interventionist' state ..." (Strinati, 1982, p.23).

According to Panitch, whom Strinati quotes with approval, corporatism is a mode of political representation,

Within advanced capitalism which integrates organised socio-economic producer groups through a system of representation and co-operative mutual interaction at the leadership level, and mobilisation and social control at the mass level (Panitch, 1977, p.66).
The characteristics of corporatism are as follows "The institutional incorporation of the leaderships of capital and labour organisations within state apparatuses and state administration to represent such class interests, the state's sanctioning of the control structures of such organisations, in particular organisations of labour, to buttress their effectiveness as means of social control over their membership; and the restructuring or construction of state apparatuses insulated from parliamentary and popular-democratic struggles" (Strinati, op cit, pp.24-25).

The important point is that corporatism represents a movement away from liberalism or voluntarism associated with laissez-faire economic policy. It is a response to interventionism which in itself is an outcome of state direct involvement in the economy both as a guarantor of capitalist accumulation and as an investor and provider of inputs and services in aid of private capital.

Though Panitch says it is a policy of 'advanced capitalist state', it is found in peripheral, neo-colonial capitalist states like Nigeria also. The adoption of such policies stems from the "fear that old modes of domination are breaking down" and, therefore, there is the need for "new mechanisms to link the lower classes to the state and new formulas to legitimise such mechanisms" (Alfred Stephan, quoted in Sandbrook, 1982, p.203). The trade union movement in a Third World state is as good and suitable as any other for such a class control project. More so if we consider that it is likely to be the only organised coherent and powerful body in such a state (apart from the military, which may be in power, anyway).

Before we discuss the specificities of the Nigerian situation, we would like to examine the general tendency among trade unions to act unwittingly as an instrument of control on rank and file action. Governments, especially in Western democracies have found that a union that is treated as an outsider, not accorded any recognition nor respect is likely to be militant and disruptive in its policies and pronouncements. On the other hand, unions accorded legitimacy through legal protection, financial security through the check-off system, consultation and representation on government agencies "is likely to form a means of integrating the working class into capitalist society, thus serving as a mechanism of social control" (Hyman, 1975, p.143). In this way the trade union is expected to act as a 'manager of discontents'. 
The manner in which, for instance, the British trade union movement gained social acceptance, especially its acceptance of the principle of collective bargaining, involved 'give and take' - reached through a negotiated compromise which is "seen as fair, just, equitable and decent, irrespective of the merits of the initial demand or complaint" (Allen, 1966, p.30). The acceptance of the principle of collective bargaining implies an acceptance of the capitalist social order of which it forms a part. Its acceptance also means that the trade unions act to stabilize such a social order by legitimising the rules and regulations governing economic rewards. For instance, the principle "meshed neatly with the ideological segregation of industrial and political action, each requiring distinctive organisations and strategies". Many union leaders are very conversant with this dichotomy and, not to be branded irresponsible, try to keep within the rules of collective bargaining. Those who do not are branded as the 'minority extremists'. In effect, collective bargaining and its attendant strategies imply a general acceptance of the rules governing distribution. Organised labour directs its main efforts toward winning a greater share of resources for its members - not by challenging the existing framework of rules but by working within this framework. In this respect it is reasonable to regard trade unionism and instrumental collectivism generally as an accommodative response to inequality. Collective bargaining does not call into question the values underlying the existing reward structure, nor does it pose any threat to the institutions which support this structure (Parkin, 1971, p.91).

The effect of this is that the labour movement is precluded from developing an integrated general critique of the prevailing system of power and social relations of production.

In Africa, labour movements have in many cases been incorporated as part of the party apparatus as in Nkrumah's Ghana, or Tanzania. In some cases the strategy is to co-opt the leadership through consultation or appointment into state offices. The state also grants the unions some concessions or benefits while with another hand it takes away some of the autonomy enjoyed by the unions.

In Nigeria various forms of incorporation and cooptation strategies have been tried by the various governments. The mature or classical form was in the late 70s under the Obasanjo trade union reform.
Because of the divisions within the labour movement after independence, it was not easy for the Balaewa government to recognise any of the contending factions. However, in official circles the moderate, Western sponsored ULC led by Adebola, was favoured. This recognition was made public after the attempted merger at the Ibadan Conference in 1962 (Ananaba, 1979, p.195). This implied access to government and other tangible benefits like foreign scholarship, parliamentary seats and membership of delegations abroad (Waterman, 1982, p.22). For instance, Adebola, the ULC leader, was an NCNC parliamentarian, the party in alliance with the NPC in the Federal Government. At one point the NPC was sponsoring a central labour organisation, the Northern Federation of Labour and it was also the creator of the Northern Mine Workers' Union. According to Ananaba the setting-up of the latter union "was both a manifestation of extreme tribalism and the desire of the ruling party to get a union in the mining area it could control and dominate" (Ananaba, 1969, p.127). To achieve the latter objective, an employer of labour and a mine contractor was made the chairman while a welfare officer of a mining company became its secretary.

Since the advent of military rule and the abandonment of voluntarism, the government has pursued policies directly aimed at incorporating the labour movement. In 1975 the government cancelled the registration of all the existing four labour centres and refused to recognise the newly formed NLC. Under its direction and guidance a new central body, the present NLC, was created while the trade unions were reorganised into 42 industrial unions. The NLC was given one million Naira by the government to help it take off. The government also laid down the guidelines for the appointment of the principal officers of the unions and the NLC. The policy of the government was revealed by the then Commissioner for Labour, Henry Adefope in Geneva, when he said the government was

... committed to a new trade union structure in the country which will ensure that workers can elect their leaders in accordance with a code of conduct consistent with the government's overall national programme of enforcing discipline in all facets of public life (quoted in Madunagu, 1982, pp.33-34).

When the unions ignored this 'code of conduct', for example, the appointment of officials through advertisements in newspapers, the government later demanded that elected officials must seek 'recognition'.
A wave of strikes neutralised this coercive power to impose officials on the unions (Dafe, 1981, p.68).

The Shagari administration tried to divide the NLC by promoting the formation of another central labour organisation in the country. After the successful strike over a minimum wage in 1981, the NPN and the Federal Government suddenly realised that the monopoly enjoyed by the NLC was against the ILO Convention No. 87 on Freedom of Association. In fact legislation was introduced in the National Assembly to correct the situation.

An important point about the Obasanjo's labour policy was that during that period and now, the labour movement came directly under government control. The government called its policy "the policy of guided democracy in labour matters". It involved 'government involvement' without politicising the trade union movement.

Another point to note about the new policy is that it has created a vast labour management bureaucracy in the NLC which now values its survival more than its primary duty as a working class organisation. Its response to the current problems confronting Nigerian workers is shaped by a concern not to rock the boat for fear of being legislated out of existence.* It is also alleged that because of its bureaucratic set-up the Congress is too far removed from the everyday experience of the workers. This same accusation could be levelled against the leadership of the various industrial unions.

The problem of forging national unity among the diverse groups that make up the country makes the issue an appropriate one for incorporating various interest groups into a common front against the enemies - under-development, foreign companies and those who refuse to toe the official line. Because of its political sensitivity and highly emotional nature it is a catch-all phrase which accepts everything under its umbrella. The experience of the civil war further increased its political value as an ideological slogan for the dominant classes. In the words of the Second National Plan, "The background to the basic issues in the country and the character of the civil war have demonstrated the political necessity that

* This much I gathered during an interview with NLC officials including the Secretary-General in Lagos. Dafe has also discussed this issue (op. cit.)
Nigeria must henceforth remain a united nation" (p.32). To achieve the objective of a united Nigeria, "All programmes of social actions must be guided by the over-riding commitment of all citizens to the fundamental objectives of building a strong and united Nigeria" (ibid). (The takeover of the Daily Times by the Federal Government in 1976 was justified on this ground). The first of the 'five principal objectives' set out by the Plan was "to establish Nigeria firmly as 'a united, strong and self-reliant nation'."

Though the above discussion would seem to suggest that the issues considered affect only the lower classes, this is not so. Their influence is quite widespread and diffuse within the entire society and cuts across class or social divisions. The interpretation of national issues or policies in terms of ethnicity of 'federal character' is the predominant mode in the press and the dominant orthodoxy in academic analysis. The recourse to juju or witchcraft or the 'Aladura' churches to enhance ones promotion or job prospects, better trading or personal protection is not limited to the lower classes alone but could even be found within the senate of a university.*

It also seems to us that many Nigerians uncritically accept the problem of unity as a national imperative. They also accept developmentalism and such nationalist ideologies. This acceptance makes the adoption of such concepts unproblematic and 'commonsensical' in popular and academic discussions. This for instance is evident in the concept of development journalism. (This is discussed further in Chapter 6).

Suffice it to say here, however, that we consider the concept of national development as an ideological construct which supports the status quo. It is basically to incorporate the mass media into the state structure. This is reinforced by the procedure of appointing senior editorial staff and directors of government owned newspapers. Such appointments are more or less zoned to reflect the ethnic composition of the country or the state. This is evident in the recent appointments in the New Nigeria, a Federal Government owned newspaper. The new Editor is a Christian from the South while the Managing Director is a Northern Muslim. The reverse is the case in the Daily Times, also owned by the

Federal Government. In addition to this, journalists like other workers are likely to seek for patrons or 'God-fathers' who will protect them in the highly uncertain world of Nigerian journalism.

The government could also selectively coopt some highly placed and favoured journalists by appointing them to seats on the boards of other Government agencies or providing them regular access to key government officials. During the Murtala/Obasanjo regime, this practice was more or less institutionalized. The government created a monthly forum by which all editors and other senior editorial staff and some university lecturers met and discussed with senior government officials including the Head of State. Such discussions were off-record and so not published. This allowed the government to manage the flow of news while it gave a boost to the status of the journalists and others involved. Our information is that the procedure has been started again under the present administration.

However, while the adoption of some of the issues discussed above could produce an ambiguous contradictory orientation among the lower classes (that is the contradictory co-existence of such conservative elements and oppositional mentality) it may not be so for the journalists, the academics and the middle-class in general (see Waterman, 1976). It could be said that the adoption of conservative attitudes and ideas by the middle-class reflects their class position and destination.

The central point we would like to draw out of this is that such conservative attitudes and ideas prevent the adoption of a critical stance in, for example, press discussions of issues and policies. It lends itself readily to the propagation of the dominant social perspective and definition of such issues, while delegitimising any oppositional or radical alternative. To that extent, it has the same effect on working class consciousness as it does on the press, that is to limit the horizons of oppositional social perspectives to an acceptable range.

If the adoption of the values, ideas and ideological elements mentioned above could be said to cut across class and social divide, certain concepts have over the years developed which are predominantly attached to the workers. Most of these concepts are negative or applied in that sense; therefore their use in industrial relations discussions is more likely to produce a negative and poor image of the workers and the
labour movement in general. In this section we look at these concepts and ideas.

The Labourer's 'High Pay'

Some of the central ideas are as old as the history of organised labour in the country. It is quite clear that one of the most visible and probably important aspects of industrial relations leading to open conflict is the amount of remuneration to labour; wages. As far back as 1897 a Governor of Lagos, Henry McCallum, complained about the 'absurd' high wages being paid to Nigerian workers. In a letter to his counterpart in the Gold Coast (Ghana) he said,

What is distressing me (and it is a subject we can well work together) is the high price of labour when taken into consideration with what we get for it. When we know the conditions of life here a uniform sum of 1s 3d. per diem including subsistence is downright absurd. 9d. would be too high for the ordinary nigger if we are ever to develop our colonies agriculturally and allow their products to compete with those produced in other parts of the world (quoted in Hopkin, 1966, p.135).

The solution proposed by McCallum was a reduction of wages. He believed that African labourers would not be able to go on a long strike. He made this clear in another letter,

I am now engaged in working with the Chamber of Commerce in bringing about a reduction of local labour which is absurdly high especially for mechanics and artisans. It wd (sic) pay us well at present rates to import the industrious and shifty Chinaman. We shall probably have a strike when a general reduction of labour is brought about; that will not last long - an African worships his stomach and will be back again to work before many days. Prices will then go down all round and you should make savings in the Estimates (quoted in ibid).

This issue and some other measures introduced by the governor later led to a strike on August 9, 1897. He was forced to climb down by the workers' action. Despite this, the stereotype of lazy and pleasure loving over-paid African labour persisted among colonial officials. In the Annual Report of Southern Nigeria, 1899-1900, the Acting High Commissioner, L.H. Gallway, wrote,
this wage is excessive because the native of the Protectorate, with very few exceptions, is not fond of work, and it is very difficult to get out of him anything like the worth of the money paid (quoted in Osoba, 1980, p.188).

In the Northern part of the country the colonial administration complained in 1901 that the "preposterous rates of pay which have been instituted for local labour of all kinds" was one of the two most serious problems facing the administration (Yesufu, 1962, p.7). The solution proposed was the same as that of McCallum - recruitment of cheaper labour from Sierra Leone and Ghana and later the recruitment of forced labour.

The issue of high cost of urban wage labour in Nigeria is still on. In a comparison with neighbouring Benin Republic and reminiscent of Lugard's 1901 colonial report, Philip Asiodu, ex-super Permanent Secretary during Gowon's regime and later Shagari's Economic Adviser said,

You go across to Lome and visit a cement plant, same size as Ewekoro (a cement factory in Ogun state) with one-third the labour force. Minimum wage there is 30 Naira, ours is 120 Naira. We are employing three times more people and productivity is less. That is no route to anything. You are only escalating inflation... People have now to learn that higher standards of living will only come from harder work and greater productivity. This is a big political problem. How to keep monetary wages constant and drum it in that we need to increase productivity (Spectrum, p.15).

Asiodu has in one single stroke raised a lot of ideas that have shaped the dominant attitude and perception toward the working class. For instance the ideas that higher wages to workers cause inflation and the need for workers to work harder for higher productivity. All these ideas are tied up with the issue of development or lack of it. Further, he seems to imply that this is a political problem requiring a political solution. The statement also suggests that Nigeria's economic problems are caused by the workers - low productivity, laziness, higher pay, over-manning which "are no route to anything".

We shall return to some of these issues later. For now let us look at the idea of the 'preposterous pay' of the labourer. The issue of whether a group of workers' pay is too high or not can only be settled by comparing it to those of others in paid employment. Not only that, we have to consider other tangible and intangible benefits and fringe allowances like
leave bonus, use of official cars and housing, among others, before we can arrive at a meaningful and fair conclusion. It is this type of comparison Lugard, Asiodu and other official spokespersons who find a ready weapon in this argument rarely make. Rather, what one finds is a comparison of wages of workers with the earnings of farmers and other non-wage earning segments of the population like petty-traders and market women and even the unemployed. Or, as in Asiodu’s case, to look across the border for international comparison. Even here the same inadequacy or unfair comparison is evident. One would have expected Asiodu to compare his salary and fringe benefits as a Presidential Adviser with that of his counterpart in Benin Republic. We may also note that while the international comparison usually made is to justify a call for a reduction in the pay of low-income workers, it has been used by a salary and wage Commission as a justification to raise the salaries and fringe benefits of middle-level and senior bureaucrats. The argument is that such high salaries are needed to attract qualified and competent people and also to stop the brain-drain to other parts of the world. We could also note that the complaints against the wages paid to workers rarely relate such wages to the level of inflation, the cost of living and even more rarely to the profit level of the employers. The worker-farmer wage comparison is often made by politicians, University lecturers, especially economists,* development planners and even international aid agencies.

One other point against this selective comparison is that, while it may be relatively easy to compute the workers’ annual income, it is not so with farmers and others not in the formal enumerated sector of the economy, especially in a country like Nigeria where basic statistics are difficult to gather and compile. Farmers are reluctant to declare their incomes because of fear of taxation. Yet the comparison is made with much confidence. Take, for instance, the assertion of the Second National Development Plan "... the poorest paid industrial worker is far better off than the average peasant farmer and infinitely better than the urban unemployed" (p.259).

The point we would like to stress is that without the correct facts and figures it is difficult if not deceitful to say that the labourer is better off than the farmer. Lack of such figures has led to a lot of

* See Berg, Elliot J. (1966), Lewis, W.A. (1967) and Kilby, Peter (1969)
confusion and wrong conclusions. For instance a World Bank Mission in 1955 was of the opinion that Nigerian farmers selling to Marketing Boards should relatively well be able to bear differential high taxation. The same farmers were regarded by the Adebo Commission set up in 1970 as the segment of the population which, by any stretch of the imagination, cannot bear such treatment (Rimmer, 1981, p.67). Further, the workers that economists like Arthur Lewis and Peter Kilby regarded as a highly privileged minority were found by the 1964 Morgan Commission to be living under conditions of penury and the Adebo Commission to be going through intolerable suffering. It seems that what this inconsistency points to is that the majority of Nigerians are poor. Douglas Rimmer came to a similar conclusion:

... it is not clear which are the poorer classes in Nigeria...

The explanation of these inconsistencies is not only an ignorance of the facts of income distribution so often officially deplored; more fundamentally, it is that most Nigerians are poor. Hence it is possible for the same group to appear relatively well off, yet actually be absolutely impoverished. The gradations of income, whatever they may be, are less significant than the prevalence of poverty. Among the vast majority of the population, relative affluence is likely to be much less apparent to those credited with it than to those who think they measured it (Rimmer, ibid, pp.67-68).

During the colonial rule, the administration tried to prevent a wide difference between rural and urban incomes. This was done by pegging government minimum wages for unskilled workers to the local area earnings of the non-wage labour force. The government's aim was to prevent migration to the towns which would have disrupted the production of export crops which the colonial economy relied on. To make the government policy effective private employers were urged not to exceed the government pay ceiling. This idea of using pay policy to reduce rural migration is still fashionable especially among economists. Discussing the Adebo Commission Report, Professor Dofun Philips of the University of Ibadan and a former State Commissioner, said the wage increase recommended in the report might further encourage migration to the urban areas leading to higher open unemployment in the cities. He further said wage increase is "a further obstacle ... in the way of balanced rural/urban development". According to him it is generally accepted that one of the vital factors accounting for the relative under-development in the rural areas was the income differential which favours the urban areas (Philips, 1972, p.117).
These same arguments were repeated after the Udoji wage increase (among others see Ojo and Ogunpola, 1979, p.204).

A similar idea is the labour aristocracy thesis common among some radical/ Marxist scholars and activists (see Chapter 2).

Another problem usually associated with the 'high' urban wages is unemployment. It is propounded that wages of urban workers, apart from inducing migration to the cities, prevents the employment of more labour released from the traditional sector of a very low wage rate. The argument is that an underdeveloped economy could be divided into two; a traditional sector and a modern industrial sector. The traditional sector, apart from its function as a producer of food and raw materials is also supposed to release surplus labour to the industrial sector "at a reasonably low wage rate such that the industrial sector can now transform the economy at minimum cost and at the same time absorb the labour thus released by the agricultural sector" (Ojo and Ogunpole, ibid, p.203).

Over the years the envisaged development of the new-colonial economy has not happened. What has happened, among other things is increased unemployment. It seems a convenient scapegoat for this persistent situation is urban wages, at least it assumed much prominence among the "lot of factor-price distortions which invariably lead to mass unemployment in the urban areas" (ibid).

During the 1964 General Strike, the Prime Minister advanced this argument in his speech giving an ultimatum to the workers to return to work. He said the higher wages being demanded by the unions would make it impossible for the government to provide jobs for the unemployed without discriminating against self-employed people such as farmers who, he said constituted the majority of the population. The same could be said to be behind the recent cut in salary of workers by the Federal Government. According to the Labour Minister the money saved would go into providing more employment.

Wages and Inflation

Perhaps the commonest charge against high wage rates is that it is the cause of inflation. This is a theme very popular both among academics, politicians and the lay public. According to the Fourth National
Development Plan, 1981-85 the Udoji Award "generated such unprecedented disruptions and inflationary pressures that government had no option but to embark upon a post-Udoji wage freeze... (p.10). Professor Philips, in his discussion of Adebo Awards that we referred to above, said "Perhaps the most likely economic effect of the Adebo Award ..... is a worsening of the present inflationary situation" (Philips, op.cit. p.108). Similarly in their discussion of the Udoji Awards, Ojo and Ogunpola opined that the excessive demand to be generated by the award would ultimately increase the rate of inflation. Their argument further listed the negative effects of inflation on the standard of living, capital formation and the balance of payments (Ojo and Ogunpola, op.cit. p.205).

The Lazy Labourer

Another theme which has characterized attitudes toward an average Nigerian worker is the level of his productivity. According to a trade unionist, Oken Eshiette, "The general opinion of employers and experts about the productivity of the Nigerian workers (is that) it is much lower than that of their counterparts in industrialized and some developing countries". This is despite the fact that the "cost of labour is much higher comparatively, than in industrialized and some developing countries" (Eshiette, 1983, pp.351-352). According to Yesufu the "general views of management in Nigeria are that Nigerian labour is inherently lazy, unintelligent and of low productive capacity" (Yesufu, 1962, p.113). Discussing the plight of the Nigerian workers, and the problem of low productivity, Professor Claude Ake said "characteristically we blame our meagre productivity on our workers: some talk of their ineptitude, but more often than not the blame is placed on their indiscipline, laziness or dubious patriotism" (C. Ake, 1984, p.7).

This idea has its root in the attitude of colonial administrators to workers, who as we discussed in Chapter 2, were usually then employed under compulsion to work on the railways and public-works. In 1919 it was estimated by a colonial Administrator of Public Works that the output of a Nigerian carpenter was one-fourth to one-fifth that of an English carpenter. Before that in 1914 the Nigerian Blue Book recorded that workers on the Eastern section of the Nigerian railway were "so inferior and the people so primitive and undisciplined that it took probably two or three men to do the work of one ordinary labourer from the North" (quoted in Yesufu, 1962, p.113).
As the statement from Philip Asiodu above indicated the myth of over-paid yet lazy, indolent and unproductive Nigerian worker persist till today among politicians, senior civil servants, businessmen, military administrators and even the man on the street. In fact one of first phases of the current war against indiscipline (WAI) was against unproductive work ethics.

The overall effect of the above ideas about the worker and the labour movement in general is the negative impact their activities have on the country's economic development and political stability. In other words the image of working class held by the dominant classes is that they have contributed largely to Nigeria's under-development. Inflation, unemployment, low capital formation, balance of payment deficit, high importation of consumer goods, poor investment and low productivity are serious economic problems which affect the level and rate of economic development. All these problems are in one way or another linked to one another. It is a vicious circle. In that sense once labour is accused of being the cause of one, it could be held responsible for the country's economic problem. The solution prescribed by Asiodu, holding wages down while increasing productivity, is in line with this reasoning. That is we need cheap labour for rapid economic development.

Wages and Economic Development

Anyway, apart from labour's demand being linked to this vicious circle of under-development, the accusation could be made directly. For instance during the 1964 General Strike, the Prime Minister, Alhaji Balewa argued that any large increase granted to workers would ruin the country's economy and jeopardise the six-year National Development Plan. The progress report on the plan agrees with this self-fulfilling prophesy in its evaluation of the plan. It says,

The consequences of the Morgan salaries and wage increases on the implementation of the six year Development Plan and on general price stability in the economy as a whole have been quite serious. Although the planners allowed for an annual increase of one per cent in per capita consumption on the standard of living of every Nigerian, large increases in salaries and wages at any given time are bound to have disruptive effects on the development of the economy. This has to a limited extent been the case with the Morgan awards in spite of their limited scope.
The Governments and their statutory corporations and agencies have been forced to reduce the surplus available for investments in development projects and to raise additional revenue through higher taxes and increases in their service charges in some cases... It is now clear that the Nigerian economy cannot sustain similar increases in salaries and wages without equivalent or demonstrated increases in productivity and national income (National Development Plan, Progress Report, 1964, p.16).

This is quoted at length in order to reflect its rehearsal of the familiar arguments which have formed the basis of our discussion all along. The Adebo Commission sees the effect of wage and salary increases as the reduction in government services and a cut in productive services "which is patently detrimental to an economy that aims at rapid development". Further, the commission asserts, it leads to "unemployment and a lower pace of economic development" (Adebo Commission Second and Final Report, p.19). As far back as 1945 the Acting Chief Secretary to the Colonial government has in a similar tone dismissed the demand of workers for an increase in the Cost of Living Allowance (COLA). He told them:

Unless the public is willing to do without or reduce their consumption of commodities which are scarce, or to substitute other commodities for them ... no benefit will result from increasing COLA (quoted in Cohen, 1974, p.160).

The issue of economic development brings us back to the ideology of national interest. Underlying the call for national development is the assumption that it is something 'we all want' or something that will benefit everybody. Therefore it is in the national interest for all of us to support it. In fact some economists have used the argument to advocate a different role for labour unions in developing countries. A. Mehta has argued that it is in the interest of the unions and the developing country that the unions render active cooperation in the development plans aimed at the prosperity of the country. According to him while the unions could afford to be political in their struggle during the colonial regimes, they must subordinate their demands to the interest of national development after independence. A crucial function for the unions during this period is "to mitigate the feeling of distrust by the workers of the legally constituted Government and to assist it in implementing the development plans". Moreover unions' demands for consumption must be held down because "economic development requires
keeping aggregate consumption down" and allowing adequate resources for investment. Mehta also advocated that unions in developing countries, unlike their counterparts in the West, should keep out of politics, "fighting the elections on specific issues, forming the government or the opposition, agitation or propaganda on political problems and similar issues should be left outside the trade union field" (Mehta, 1957, pp.16-23).

This type of argument will find a receptive and fertile ground within the ideological framework of the ruling class and its allies.

In Nigeria the doctrine of national interest and its derivative, national unity have been used to promote, advance and maintain the interests of the bourgeois class and repress those of the workers and other lower class segments of the population like peasant farmers. During the 1964 General Strike, the Labour Minister, unfolding plans to deal with the striking workers said, "any action by our trade unions which deprives our community of an essential public service is an attack not only on government but also on the country".

Recognising its position and weakness in its struggle against foreign capital the comprador bourgeoisie has spoken of its plan to use the labour movement as an ally in the struggle; it is of course 'in the national interest'. In the second National Development Plan it was contended that "... in a neo-colonial situation, a responsible trade union movement can serve as a healthy countervailing force against foreign investors who often dominate the growing points of the National economy" (p.259). Though no definition of 'a responsible trade union movement' was offered, we suspect that it is the one described by Mehta above. Or more specifically the one that accepts the dictates of local capital. This is hinted at in the same paragraph as the above quotation where some trade unionists were described as "self-seeking trade unionists". These are those who have not recognised that "the poorest-paid industrial worker is far better off than the average peasant farmer..."

Another catch-phrase in the ideology of containment, especially in a period of economic and financial crisis is sacrifice. The workers and other segments of the population are constantly told that the 'road to national greatness, stability and security' is sacrifice. General Obasanjo
made this point in his 1979 New Year message,

... sacrifice will continue to be demanded of each and every one of us according to his ability in the overall interest of the nation. For a nation like ours any hope or promise of greatness without hardwork and sacrifice is a delusion (Obasanjo, reprinted in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Daily Times of Nigeria, n.d. p.viii).

The Doctrine of National Security

Since 1975 a new theme has been added to the ideological baggage of the ruling class in its attitude to the workers and other lower segments of the country. The Murtala-Obasanjo regime promoted the issue of 'discipline' to that of a national ideology. The Buhari regime which described itself as an off-shoot of the Murtala-Obasanjo's government picked it up after it came to power in December 1983. It launched a massive programme, the war against indiscipline (WAI) in the effort to eradicate indiscipline in national life. The extensive 'embrace-all' definition of indiscipline could be understood from the fact that it involved the ability to sing the national anthem and pledge (which was written for primary school pupils in 1976 when the Universal Primary Education (UPE) Scheme was launched) and salute the flag. The programme provided the justification for the enactment of a lot of draconian decrees and imprisonment of many people, executions and in general the denial of human rights.

According to Obasanjo's Commissioner for Labour, the 1976-78 restructuring of the labour movement and the new labour policy were part of an "overall national programme of enforcing discipline in all facets of public life".

The themes of national interest, unity and discipline are all tied up with another doctrine which Gunder Frank calls 'the doctrine of national security' or what Armand Matterlart also calls the 'ideology of the military state'. This has been espoused by many Third World leaders notably in Latin America to justify the political and economic repression and domination of the lower classes (Frank, 1981, Matterlart, 1979). The ideology is defined by the Chilean dictator, General Pinochet as a,

concept destined not only to protect the national integrity of the state, but very specially to defend the essential
values that made up the national soul and tradition, since without them national identity itself would destroy itself. And from this firm pedestal, national security projects itself dynamically to the field of development, thus focusing not only on the material plane, but on harmony and at the service of the spiritual progress of man. National security, including the authentic tradition and national development, spiritual as well as material, thus appear as the integral elements of the common good of a particular community... (Frank, op. cit. p.266).

And according to an Indian defence expert, it "does not mean merely safeguarding of territorial boundaries; it means also, ensuring that the country is industrialised rapidly and develops in a cohesive, egalitarian, technological society" (in ibid, p.268). Armand Matterlart elaborated on this further when he wrote, "One of the consequences of the colonization of all sectors of society by national security is that the notions of development and security are regarded as being equivalent" (Matterlart, 1979, p.406).

As a war doctrine, national security identified friends and enemies and the strategic means of containing them (ibid, p.403). It involves all aspects of national life, and naturally the protection of national security or the Fatherland is the duty of those in charge of the state, especially the coercive and ideological state apparatuses; in short the ruling class and its allies. All others, especially oppositional movements and those who question any aspect of the status quo are branded as enemies of the nation. Some other segments of the population, the mass media, religious and traditional institutions, the judiciary are coopted and mobilized under the leadership of the ruling class, to preach the new doctrine and put pressure on the non-conformists.

From the above we can see that the doctrine is all-embracing. All members of the society are expected to cooperate. According to the Chilean junta,

National security is the responsibility of each and every Chilean. It is therefore necessary to inculcate 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 (quoted in Matterlart, op. cit. p.408).

In Nigeria the issue of national security and integrity assumed an overriding importance during and after the civil war. The war was fought under the slogan 'To Keep Nigeria One Is Task That Must Be Done'.

The post-colonial reassessment of ideology which has taken place among African ruling classes has taken the process summed up by the Nigerian political scientist, Claude Ake thus,

First, their ideology now proclaims the end of internal ideological conflict, it is argued that the problems facing the nation are clear, that everyone should apply himself to the task... Second, emphasis has shifted from liberty to order. They argue that order (in effect conformism) is necessary for maximum effectiveness in dealing with the problems of development. Order has to be maintained to discourage numerous enemies... This argument becomes generalized as an argument against dissent, interest articulation and democratic participation and also a defence of the monolithic political culture that is being created. Third, the significance of independence is re-defined... concealing poor performance and self-interested behaviour of the ruling elite, to hard-work, not self-indulgence. Legitimate expectation of the material betterment of the masses are now represented as naive or subversive or as reprehensive hedonism. The fourth... is the emphasis on unity... (which has served) the purpose (of covering) the contradictions in society. In the independence era, the rulers have used the idea of unity in a manner that is blatantly self-serving (Ake, 1976, pp.205-206).

The point to note and which is underlined in the above statement is that Nigerian leaders like their counterparts in other parts of Africa, have been able to appropriate issues and problems inherent in the political economic structure of the country; lack of unity, underdevelopment, ethnicity, low level of workers' education among others as part of their ideological and social control mechanism against the subordinate classes. The assembly, articulation and universalisation of these ideas as a coherent ideology is an aspect of the hegemonic project of the ruling class.

The Internal Problems of the Unions

However, before we close this discussion we shall like to refer to two other issues which seem to have originated from the structure and the early
history of the Nigerian labour movement. These are the issues of leadership and external influence in the affairs of the unions, especially the central labour organisation. We are mentioning them here again because we believe that they could readily be cited as evidence against the union. In other words they could easily be picked on by the government and/or the mass media to attack the internal organisation of the unions and to delegitimise the leadership. It could be said that the leadership is irresponsible, undemocratic or that the workers were being used by outsiders, especially a foreign power. In fact the reform of the late '70s was informed by some of these considerations.

According to Yesufu, "There is hardly an aspect of trade unionism in Nigeria which has received so much attention and comment as the character of union leadership" (Yesufu, 1962, p.86). He went further to say that "there is hardly any commission or arbitration tribunal which has not had some scathing remark to make about the almost complete absence of these (good leadership) qualities, and the undesirable effects that this has had on the conduct of industrial relations in Nigeria" (ibid). Evidence of such poor leadership includes embezzlement of union funds, repudiating of collective agreement of which the union had been a part and internal rivalry.

During the formative years of the Labour movement many union leaders, especially at the plant level, were not well educated. Their main qualification seemed only to be the ability to call workers out on strike and they tended to be seen as rabble rousers. Men like Imoudu were no better than those they were leading but for their courage and militancy. At the negotiating table, they could not match the ability and sophistication of the management, mainly expatriates. The issue of corruption, though a national one, has created a lot of problems for the labour movement in terms of working class solidarity and public support. The government and management have used both problems and the division and tendencies within the movement to discredit it as unworthy of recognition and lacking enough support and credibility to speak for the underclass.

The solution has always been to bring the union under close state supervision. During the colonial days the government appointed specialist Trade Union Officers to the Labour Department as advisers to the unions. The government also started a training programme for trade union leaders.
Scholarships were granted to enable such leaders to train in British institutions, for example Ruskin College at Oxford as well as Trade Union Offices in Britain. In 1953 the government also provided funds to support vocational training in Industrial Relations at the University of Ibadan (Yesufu, 1962, p.94).

Trade Union regulations also involve the requirement that unions make annual returns of their financial position to the registrar of trade unions.

The issue of outside influence has always existed. Its existence could serve well those who believe in conspiracy theory and could easily be picked on by the government, especially during a period of crisis. During the colonial period efforts were made to make sure that no 'outsider' was able to use the unions for non-labour interests, for example political agitation. This reflected Lord Passfield's 1930 directive that "without sympathetic supervision and guidance, organisation of labourers ... may fall under the domination of disaffected persons, by which their activities may be diverted to improper and mischievous ends". This fear increased as the tempo of nationalism increased.

During the protests and strikes over Udoji Awards in 1975, General Gowon and some of his governors were convinced that "some ill-motivated elements" were behind it all. Similar charges have been made against others, especially students and farmers. For instance the government believed that the Agbekoya Farmers' Revolt in Western Nigeria in 1968 was incited by outsiders, especially politicians (see Beer, C.F., 1976).

The allegation of outside influence on the labour movement could be 'proved' by pointing to the substantial influence exercised by the trade union internationals on the various factions of the labour movements before 1975. All the Central Union organisations in the country depended then on external finance and ideological inspiration.

Another problem which in part stems from the above is the disunity and personal rivalry within the movement. Due to ideological, leadership and personal struggle and the need to maintain external patronage the pre-1975 labour movement was badly divided. In fact the history of the movement could be seen solely in terms of attempts at merger and subsequent
dissolution. This limited its ability to organise or conscientise the workers to offer any credible and coherent ideological challenge to the ruling class.

We have presented the above factors as though they have been eliminated, this does not appear to be the case. The idea that the leadership of the labour movement is corrupt is still prevalent – even among rank and file workers. Many of the workers we interviewed in Lagos and Abeokuta during the fieldwork expressed the belief that their leaders have been 'bought over' by the Federal Government, hence their silence over the massive retrenchment, salary cuts, imposition of levies of different kinds and high inflation. The Nigerian Civil Service Union was at the time of writing undergoing a crisis which had led to the removal of its president, David Ojeli, over his handling of an allegation that about two million Naira of the union fund could not be accounted for.

Workers' Social Perspective

The above discussion should not limit us to accepting that the subordinate classes accept the prevailing ideology and value system in toto. Contrary to consensus theory acceptance of the inegalitarian structure of reward and power in society is not absolute but subject to challenge, constant negotiation and renegotiation. In this regard Richard Sandbrook has said "Assent on the part of workers (to the extent that this obtains) is not tantamount to complicity in a class alliance underpinning a neo-colonial or national developmental state" (Sandbrook, op.cit. p.137). As we said above, workers exhibit what could be called 'contradictory consciousness'. "The predominant pattern", according to Hyman and Brough "is a failure to question the dominant generalised philosophies of society, conjoined with a cynical attitude towards those in positions of power and a readiness to engage in actions (going on strike for example) deprecated by other sections of society" (Hyman and Brough, 1975, p.208). This type of orientation has been found among African workers. It is a 'populist' ideology, "a mentality of the underprivileged as a whole who no longer accept the legitimacy of the existing distribution of power and wealth" (Sandbrook, 1982, p.139).

This ideology may be likened to Frank Parkin's subordinate value system which according to him is "essentially accommodative; that is to
say its representation of the class structure and inequality emphasizes various modes of adaptation, rather than either full endorsement of, or opposition to, the status quo. In their view of the society a "strong emphasis is given to social divisions and social conflict, as embodied in the conceptual categories of 'them' and 'us'" (Parkin, 1972, p. 88). But as Peter Lloyd has observed in his study of Third World social structure the 'them' in this "Dichotomous view of society in which the underprivileged are seen as oppressed by the dominant groups ... are not the capitalists, the owners of the means of production, but the government" (Lloyd, 1982, p. 102).

This type of ideology or what could be termed, in Lenin's words, trade union consciousness is characterised by an "uneasy compromise between rejection and full endorsement of the dominant order ... a 'negotiated version' of the dominant value system". That is, the lower classes, instead of rejecting the dominant ideas and constructing an entirely different one, "negotiate or modify them in the light of their own existential conditions" (Parkin, op. cit. pp. 91-92). The process of this negotiation is underlined in Richard Hoggart's observation that,

When people feel that they cannot do much about the main elements in their situation, feel it not necessarily with despair or disappointment or resentment but simply as a fact of life, they adopt attitudes towards that situation which allow them to have a liveable life under its shadow, a life without a constant and pressing sense of the larger situation. The attitudes remove the main elements in the situation to the realm of natural laws... (Hoggart, 1958, p. 92).

The limited perception of the lower classes should be understandable, especially if we consider that the most visible and 'extensive' institution whose actions or non-action daily and directly impinges on their lives is the government. The government is the main employer of labour. It is responsible for providing social services; education, health, housing, roads and transportation, electricity and water. In some cases the government fixes prices of essential commodities and is also involved in production and distribution of such commodities. Its wage fixing mechanism affects the entire formal sector of the economy while farmers also depend on commodity boards for the sale of their produce. Tax collection is also an exercise involving a lot of conflict between the farmers and government officials. Also through the local governments the
people in the informal sector, market women and petty-traders and professionals like tailors, and mechanics are in constant contact with the government through such regulations and bye-laws on street trading, allotment of market stalls and the provision of local services. In contrast to this "The owners of the large, probably foreign and multi-nationally owned, firms are invisible to workers; the latter can have little appreciation of the complexities of international finance. The owners of the usually very small indigenous firms are viewed paternalistically. Thus neither group provides a clear focus for discontent" (Lloyd, 1982, p.102).

Further, we also have to relate this to the parochial social milieu of the lower classes. The daily experience and social knowledge of many members of the working class or peasant farmers rarely go beyond their local environment and most social relationships are face-to-face. In this situation the lower classes are more susceptible to the dominant meaning system because they lack the resources for its total rejection and the construction of an alternative or radical one. As Parkin said,

Members of the underclass are continually exposed to the influence of dominant values by way of the educational system, newspaper, radio and television, and the like. By virtue of the powerful institutional backing they receive these values are not readily negated by those lacking other social sources of knowledge and information (Parkin, op.cit. p.92).

Press and Social Perspectives

The point we are driving at here and which is evident from the discussion so far is that in the Nigerian society, like any other, different social perspectives on the economy, the reward system, the source and nature of inequality and the value system supporting them, coexist. Such social perspectives individually reflect certain social interests and economic positions of social groups and individuals. To that extent these social perspectives are social constructs or cultural 'properties' of certain classes of people sharing common interests, class position and destination and an understanding of the society in which they live.

The argument about social perspectives could conveniently be divided into two - consensualist and conflictist. The functionalist and
consensualist theorists would speak in favour of a unitary system of belief in society, especially in Western societies. Conflict theorists and Marxists argue that there are two fundamentally opposed and contradictory value systems - the working class and bourgeois value systems. However, Frank Parkin in the work we have already referred to above, has argued that "it might be helpful if we approach this complex issue by looking at the normative order as a number of competing meaning systems" (Parkin, op.cit. p.81). He identifies three main types - dominant, subordinate and radical value systems. As we have discussed the subordinate value system above we outline the remaining two below followed by some modification for our purpose.

The dominant value system which he derived from the Marxist dictum that "the ideas of the ruling class are, in every age, the ruling ideas" is described as "a moral framework which promotes the endorsement of existing inequality ... a representation of the perceptions and interests of the relatively privileged... In a way, dominant values tend to set the standards for what is considered to be objectively 'right'" (ibid, p.83). Essentially the workings of the society are seen, accepted and promoted as just, normal and natural. As we said above, the members of the lower classes could easily be incorporated into this world view of the dominant group.

Against this dominant perspective and the "essentially accommodative" stance of the subordinate meaning system is the radical value system. Parkin defined it as "a moral framework which promotes an oppositional interpretation of class inequalities" (emphasis in the original). Instead of the parochial nature of the subordinate value system it offers a comprehensive social perspective and a radical critique of the prevailing system in society. Its source lies usually in the mass political party based on the support of the underclass. Usually drawing on Marxist class analysis it attempts to connect individual fate and the wider socio-economic and political contexts. The system's analysis is based on a different vocabulary and concepts. Further, its political struggle is aimed at overthrowing the existing social order and replacing it with a more egalitarian reward structure (Parkin, ibid).

The above distinctions should be seen as constructs or typologies useful for analytical purposes. In real life things may be more complicated. In this case two related points easily come to mind.
First it is empirically difficult to distinguish between a subordinate and a radical meaning system. There is a lot of overlapping between the two that separating one from the other may be an exercise in hair splitting. The problem mainly derives from the fact that the subordinate class are exposed to all the three normative systems in varying degrees. In Parkin's metaphorical terms "... the overall meaning system of the subordinate class could be likened to a kind of 'reservoir' fed by three major 'normative streams', each flowing from a different 'institutional source' (Parkin, ibid, p.100). In contrast it should be quite easy to distinguish the dominant social perspective from the subordinate/radical ones. In that sense our attention in this study will be focussed on how the press reflects the two main meaning systems - dominant and subordinate/radical (oppositional) - in the coverage of industrial relations.

Another issue that we need to bear in mind is the difficulty of distinguishing between what the ruling class really believe and what they offer as explanations for social phenomena or want the public to believe. Though the two could be related they may not necessarily be the same. For instance we think it would be wrong to assume that a Nigerian permanent secretary would genuinely hold the belief that the success of his child who attends Kings College, Lagos is the 'work of God' and not due more to the socio-economic and educational environment of the child; though he may tell his less fortunate friends and relatives that it was luck and God's blessings. It could then be argued that for the powerful to attribute their success and fortune to divine intervention without mentioning the elements of power, social position and economic dominance is an ideological smokescreen to mask the social origin of many issues that arise in society.

The related point is that it might be quite erroneous for us to give the impression that each meaning system is the exclusive property of the corresponding social group. Though the dominant world view will naturally form the core perspective of the dominant class, they would still be familiar with the oppositional meaning system and even appropriate and incorporate some of its elements for use as occasions demand. As Nicos Poulantzas has observed, "The dominant ideology contains features from ideologies other than that of the dominant class, incorporated as 'elements' in its own structure..." (Poulantzas, 1968, p.210). In this same vein, as
we have already mentioned, members of the subordinate classes do incorporate some elements of the dominant ideology as part of their social perspective providing the frame of reference for their interpretation of social events. To this extent,

We are dealing ... with views of life, which overlap and interpenetrate, which are not necessarily always contradictory, but which contain elements that may meaningfully be regarded as reflecting the different life experiences and interests characteristic of middle class groups on the one hand and working class groups on the other. In so far as they are distinct they provide different, and often conflicting "versions of reality" (Hartmann, 1976, pp.1-22).

Within the context of this study, therefore, we shall employ a two model-class based meaning system. On the one hand we shall note a dominant value system or ideology. In the main it is supportive of the status quo and promotes its legitimacy. On the other is the subordinate/ radical perspective which we could call the oppositional meaning system. Broadly it questions the existing social order and represents the interests of the underprivileged. It could be said to be an amalgam of trade union consciousness (economism), egalitarian and radical world views.

From our discussion of the development of the Nigerian Labour Movement we pointed to the existence of two main opposing factions - the accommodationists of the ULC and NWC and the radical/Marxists of the NTUC and the LUF. Extrapolating from this it could be argued that the accommodationists are more likely to subscribe to the dominant meaning system while the radical/Marxists would employ the oppositional social perspective in the interpretation of the Nigerian reality. This of course would be in the main the orientation of the leaderships of both factions. The followership, as we have discussed, would more likely subscribe to elements common to both, that is they are likely to hold a subordinate social perspective. Once again, we need to caution against any neat distinction or attribution of a 'pure' meaning system to a particular social group.
CHAPTER 5

STRUCTURE OF OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL OF PRESS IN NIGERIA: CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

The legacy of the past, left by the early Nigerian proprietor-editors, the "Black Victorians" as Increase Coker would call them, continues to influence and haunt journalism in Nigeria. That inheritance is the combative political character of the pioneers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This legacy continues to form the basis of evaluation and discussion on the performance and role of the Nigerian press including its relationship with the state. Much of the academic and popular discussion on the Nigerian press tends to be whether the press is free as of old or not. In short there is a lot of nostalgia about the role played by the press during the colonial days when politics and journalism were fused together. It has been difficult to separate them. Peter Golding and Philip Elliot summed up the historical process thus,

Nigerian journalism was thus created by anti-colonial protest, baptised in the waters of nationalist propaganda, and matured in party politics. The separation of politics and journalism has remained incomplete and the dual allegiances of journalists to professional and political goals have created conflicts whose resolution in daily practice underpins much of contemporary Nigerian journalism (Golding and Elliot, 1979, p.31).

In this chapter we take a brief look at the development of this process, paying particular attention to the factors that motivated the pioneer journalists in their critical onslaught on the colonial administration. It is our suggestion that these factors, produced mainly by the colonial situation have to be taken on board in any discussion of the performance of the early press. Much of the current discussion tends to neglect them. We will also argue that changes in these factors following the constitutional and economic changes the country has witnessed over the years have led to some fundamental changes in the structure of the press. In short, we hope to demonstrate how the structure of ownership and control of the Nigerian press has moved with the changes in the country's political economy.

Taking adequate account of the relative importance of these various factors that have influenced and continue to influence the development of the Nigerian press could be a difficult and complex exercise. For instance such an analysis may have to take into consideration the two main forms of ownership, government and private, available in the country. It could be
argued that the two may not necessarily operate under the same economic or market principles. It should however be pointed out that the issue involved goes beyond the matter of funding which the issue of government ownership would seem to be primarily concerned with. Any analysis of the media must take on board the way market imperatives determine the range and forms of media production and the resulting output. For instance, it appears to us that the disappearance of provincial newspapers is related to the changes in the Nigerian economy in the 1970s.

Our basic argument is that in the 'last instance' the Nigerian press operates within the changing framework of the country's economy and its determining influence. Much of the current approach is to neglect this crucial dimension and focus almost exclusively on the constraints and controls exerted by the state on media development in general and news production in particular. In such an analysis, attention is concentrated on the relations between the mass media and political and state institutions. They are treated as separate power blocs with little or no connection to the structure of the economy. It seems this almost exclusive focus on media-state relationship bears witness to the historical origin of the Nigerian press; an institution born out of anti-colonial nationalist protest. It remains closely linked either to the state or political parties. The 'political' character of the Nigerian press has further led many analysts to miss the material interests which underpin its development and products. More than this however, such an analysis reflects the main academic tradition in the country; that is the liberal-conservative tradition received from the West.

The stress on economic determination in our analysis does not imply that other factors (for example political, cultural and ideological) are of no importance. Their 'relative autonomy' and importance cannot be ignored. The point is that the economy has to be seen as the "necessary but not sufficient condition for an adequate analysis" (Hall in Golding and Murdock, 1979, p.198). In other words the notion of economic determination is used in the sense of "setting limits, exerting pressures" (Raymond Williams, 1980, p.32).

In The Beginning...

The origin of the Nigerian press is closely linked to the Christian missionary zeal to educate, evangelize and civilize the 'natives' of their
new colonies. In Nigeria, the British colonial administration was not initially interested in cultural propagation; that sphere of the colonial enterprise was left to the missionaries. Though the Church and the School were the main centres of cultural activities, journalism was recognised for its supplementary role as an instrument of propaganda and publicity for Christianity and as a valuable medium for self-education. As Increase Coker has pointed out,

The press was employed by missionaries as an instrument for promoting literacy and enlightenment; the earliest newspapers were also meant to function as an extension of the pulpit, a medium of Christian evangelism (quoted in Ogunade, 1981, p.43).

As far back as 1846 the Presbyterian Church had established the first printing press in Calabar. Eight years later Henry Townsend established another one in Abeokuta. It was out of these mission printing presses established across West Africa, especially in Sierra Leone that some of the pioneer Nigerian journalists would emerge. The education provided by mission schools would also act as an incentive to some of the educated Africans to establish newspapers while at the same time providing them with the intellectual and philosophical weapon to assail the colonial administration and sometimes the Church itself.

Directly, Nigeria's first newspaper was published by the Church Missionary Society (CMS). In December 1859, the Rev. Henry Townsend brought out the Iwe Irohin fun awon ara Egba ati Yoruba (literally meaning the paper of news for the Egba people and Yorubas). Published in Yoruba at a price of 120 cowries the paper appeared every fortnight. In March 1860 it became bilingual, with the introduction of an English supplement. Rev. Townsend's objective in publishing the paper was "to get the people to read, i.e. to beget the habit of seeking for information by reading" (quoted in Hyde, 1972, p.61). The paper started by publishing Church matters but later the content was broadened to include "commercial news about producer prices of palm-oil, etc. ..." The paper was also "a vigorous critic of the evils of the slave trade, an ardent advocate of the diversion of trade and commerce from human beings to produce and merchandise" (Coker, n.d. p.2). The paper carried advertisements from local firms and Government agencies.
It is noteworthy that the real impact of the Iwe-Irohin was in local politics rather than in evangelism and education. The paper was Townsend's "chief weapon in his ambitious political propaganda and shrewd manoeuvring for power in Egbaland". He also used the paper in his involvement in Egba/Lagos politics. This earned him the displeasure of the Lagos colonial government; attempts were made to control it based on the Lagos accusation that it was aggravating problems of foreign policy (Omu, 1978, p.8). The paper died during a political uprising. The Egbas rose in 1867 to expell all Europeans in their midst and in the struggle destroyed the mission printing press.

Though the Iwe-Irohin had some problems with the colonial administration in Lagos, its impact could not have been great. This was due mainly to low literacy rate, the limited perspective of the press and transportation problems that limited circulation and readership. There was general indifference to reading among the populace which meant that the readership was limited to the small circle of educated African elite who also formed the link to the illiterate masses. It was also from this circle of educated Africans that Nigeria's pioneer journalists were drawn. Most of them were West-Indian or ex-slave returnees or their children from Sierra Leone.

To understand the conditions that pushed them into journalism and such professions as law, medicine, business or the colonial administration for which many of them were qualified - it is necessary to understand the colonial situation at the time.

Frantz Fanon has said that the colonial world was divided into two. There was the world of the coloniser and the other, that for the colonised. The Lagos colonial society was like this; the white minority living in a world separated and quite distinct from the world of the African 'natives'. The structure of the Lagos political system was the crown colony type of government, consisting of a governor, an executive and a Legislative Council, all dependent on a bureaucracy. All these institutions were manned by European officials.

The British colonial policy was for an eventual devolution of power to Africans. It was stated that Africans would be trained "in the arts of civilization and government until they shall grow into a nation capable of
protecting themselves and of managing their own affairs..." (quoted in Bamiduro, 1981, p.57). This policy was hardly followed, despite reiteration by the colonial government. The crown colony system did not provide the needed political education and experience for the indigenes. Africans were not allowed to participate in government. For example, employments were not open to them in the colonial civil service and other institutions. Those employed were in subordinate positions to their European counterparts, despite possessing equal qualifications and training. British officials received higher salaries and allowances than Africans for the same jobs. Residential and social segregation introduced initially for health reasons continued for a long time (Coleman, 1958, p.151). Qualified Africans were denied promotion and passed over because of 'character deficiencies'. The policy of indirect rule later introduced by Lord Lugard did not help the situation. As late as 1930s a Briton, Miss Perham, was advocating that no African should be appointed to the administrative service, which she said was an alien superstructure. She wanted them to be restricted to the service of the Native Authorities (Crowther, 1970, p.34). It was not until the mid-1930s that educated Africans started to participate "in the system to any meaningful extent" (Coleman, op cit, p.53).

This discrimination in the political sphere was also evident in business and trading. European firms dominated the trade in produce and the export-import sector of the colonial economy. Independent African traders were almost pushed out of this sector because of the monopolistic practices of the European mercantile firms grouped together in the Association of West African Merchants. For example, many African traders resented the activities of the Royal Niger Company, which prior to 1900 was both a trading/commercial enterprise and a government in Northern Nigeria. The dominance of European firms especially the United African Company (UAC)* could be seen from the fact that by the 1930s the company was controlling "more than 40 per cent of Nigeria's import-export trade, as late as 1949 it handled 34 per cent of commercial merchandise imports into Nigeria and purchased, on behalf of Nigerian marketing boards, 43 per cent of all non-mineral exports" (Coleman, 1958, p.80). Apart from trading, the financial and shipping sectors of the economy were predominantly

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* UAC was a subsidiary of UNILEVER formed in 1929 from a merger of the National African Company, the Royal Niger Company and the Niger Company.
European. This further enhanced the dominance of the big mercantile firms who have access to credit facilities.

There was also the apparent government support for the European firms in the form of allocation of trading licenses, the administration of trade controls and the formulation of tax policies (Coleman, ibid, p.81). According to Coleman this "near-totality of economic power exercised by a small group of European firms, together with apparent government support or toleration of that power, gave rise to a popular image of alien collusion and exploitation (ibid). Added to this was the growing disillusionment of the embryo African intellectuals with the Christian missionaries.

It was under this alienating and frustrating environment of political, administrative and social discrimination, virtual economic strangulation and the superior - inferior social relationships inherent in the colonial situation that the Nigerian press was born toward the end of the 19th century and matured in during the first half of the 20th century. As Omu has pointed out "the early press was inevitably a political press" (Omu, 1978, p.11). The highly critical tone reflected social, political and economic climate of the period.

Journalism was one of the few areas left open to many of the educated elite both in terms of business undertaking and as a forum to vent their grievances. Until the establishment of the Daily Times the Lagos European commercial establishment did not bother to set up a newspaper. By mid-19th century there was a growing number of Africans interested in business or the colonial administration and politics. Some of them have actually been driven to Lagos by the monopoly practices of Sierra Leonian European firms. The situation in Lagos, as we have described above, was not different. Therefore some of them saw printing and newspaper industry as an avenue to make a living. The newspaper was also an avenue for them to criticise the monopoly practices of European mercantile firms and the government.

The frustration and resentment of these early newspapers meant a change in the philosophy of the press. Instead of the importance the missionaries attached to literacy and religious awareness, the African journalists were more interested in political and cultural awareness by
their fellow Africans. They wanted to influence events through their papers and create "a strong public opinion which the colonial government could not easily disregard" (Omu, 1978, p.11). They assumed the role of opposition as the voice of the indigenous population.

They also wanted to exploit the growth in education and the general expansion in literacy in Lagos. Many of them also hoped to capitalise on the growing advertising market following the expansion in commerce in the Lagos colony.

The early press could rightly be called a 'Lagos Press'. Most of them were established in Lagos and until Ernest Ikoli established the African Messenger in 1920 the proprietor-editors were people of Yoruba origin. The contents of the papers were mostly about issues affecting Lagos and its immediate environs. Also the readership was mainly among the educated Lagos elite whose interests were most frequently represented and vigorously defended. One critic then complained,

They all address themselves only to the comparatively small number of English reading people on the island ... the very large number of Yoruba readers are all neglected and left to suffer from intellectual starvation as if they also are not in the country... (quoted in Omu, 1978, p.31).

According to Bamiduro, "The interests and concerns of the large bulk of the unlettered native community were only publicised when they coincided with those of the educated portion of the community" (Bamiduro, 1981, p.61). Another factor that made the issues relevant to those outside Lagos was the racial-cultural context in which they were presented by the press.

Despite the limited readership and low standard of these papers they did exert a lot of influence on their environment. They bore the personality and philosophy of their owners, who used them to express their viewpoints on issues of the day. The first newspaper to be established by an African, Robert Campbell, declared its policy as,

to promote the interest and welfare of Lagos and its people, and not to serve those of any party, but in all questions to advocate the side of right-right, not in the estimation of this man or that, but in the estimation of its editor, and hence we shall never consult any one as to what we shall say or what we forbear to say (quoted in Bamiduro, ibid, p.36).
The paper, Anglo-African survived for two and a half years. It was fifteen years later before the next paper, Lagos Times and Gold Colony Advertiser, appeared on the streets of Lagos. Between 1880 when the Anglo-African first appeared and 1900 many newspapers were established which died soon afterward. Unlike Campbell's Anglo-African these papers, though short-lived, left their footprints in the anti-colonial struggle by providing "a means of criticism of the authorities and spreading dissatisfaction with official plans and policies" (Omu, 1978, p.11). They began the tradition among Nigerian journalists of seeing the press as "the opposition ... and rival of the government" (ibid). This critical oppositional stance of the Lagos press toward the government made many colonial officials regard Lagos as the "storm centre of administrative politics and the grave of reputation" (Bamiduro, op cit, p.55). According to an editor of one of the papers, "The issues of newspapers ... (were) regarded incomplete unless they contained attack on some Government official of high rank or prominent member of the European or Native community" (quoted in Bamiduro, op cit, p.52).

In the light of this strong press opposition the government as far back as 1862 made effort to control the press through legislation. That year, Governor Freeman unsuccessfully sought permission from the colonial office in London to impose a tax on what he claimed was a "dangerous instrument in the hands of semi-civilized Negroes" (Omu, 1978, p.173).

Despite the fact that a lot has been made of the patriotism of these early papers because of its political stand against the colonial administration we shall like to argue that its criticism of the government was limited and seemed motivated by the self-interest of the owner-editors as representatives of the African elite. Though many of them might not have accepted British colonial rule as enthusiastically as Campbell, none of them questioned the fundamental bases of colonialism. Such limitation could also be seen in the fact that their criticisms were conducted within the received ideology of liberalism as a political and economic philosophy.

What these proprietor-editors, as the other members of the African elite, were against, were their exclusion from the political decision making process and the virtual economic strangulation by the European trading firms. Their efforts were almost entirely directed at securing political and
administrative reforms that would guarantee them a place and share in the colonial administration. In short they wanted to participate as a junior partner in the exploitation of the unlettered native masses. We can say here in passing that this was not peculiar to the early African elite whom the Nigerian historian, Professor E.A. Ayandele has called the "deluded hybrids". Those who came after them, the later nationalists, Azikwe, Awolowo and others were at first only interested in participating in government. Their "grievances" according to Ayandele who called them "collaborators" "were not the grievances of the rest of the Nigerian society. They were the 'grievances' of the educated elite about the plums of office they wanted to share with the British, which plums would have made them more and more partners in the exploitation of the unlettered masses" (Ayandele, 1974, pp.73-74).

We could see the point we are making about the limited scope of the grievances of the early journalists if we note that a major and constant theme in their agitations and politics was the principle of representation. After Lagos had been separated from the Gold Coast (now Ghana) administration in 1886 the Observer called for the establishment of a legislature and declared "In the name of the whole of Lagos community, we ask ... how long will we tamely submit to taxation without representation" (Omu, 1978, p. 148). Also the Lagos Times while assuring the colonial administration that "we are not clamouring for immediate independence for the sufficient reason that we are not prepared for it" declared that,

> It is time for us to boldly ask England to associate us with themselves in the matter of regulating and superintending our affairs ... none would say that we have no men intelligent enough or patriotic enough to devote some portion of their time to act as our representatives in the Council (quoted in Bamiduro, op cit, p.60).

The issue was to dominate the political agenda for a long time, well into the 20th century. The important point however is that the 'intelligent and patriotic' men spoken of in the above Lagos Times editorial were the educated elite whose interests and lifestyles were quite different from those of the uneducated masses who for a long time resisted British colonial rule until they were subdued by the maxim-guns.

Most commentators on the history of the Nigerian press, especially this early part, do not take cognisance of this apparent self-interestedness
in the anti-colonial campaign of the press. That is to say that their 
agitation for constitutional changes were motivated by what they stood 
to gain as members of the governing class or as representatives of the 
'native' population. As Coleman has pointed out "Nationalism is not 
merely the sum of accumulated grievances; it is equally an awareness of 
greater possibilities and opportunities" (Coleman, 1958, p.89).

More importantly in this regard, the commentators have down-played 
the economic conditions which forced the early journalists into the trade. 
We need to recognise that it was the frustrated ambition of the nascent 
indigenous entrepreneur class that made some of them go into journalism 
both as a profession, a business and an avenue for political agitation. 
As could be expected, this commercial and political aspect were down­
played by these pioneers. They emphasised the philanthropic, educational 
and nationalistic motives above all else. Omu pointed out that "The news­
papermen themselves helped in no small measure to create this tradition of 
sacrifice and philanthropy. They advertised themselves as motivated by a 
'strong sense of obligation' which they owed to their country and as doing 
public duty which the people did not appear to appreciate" (Omu, 1978, 
p.28). After noting the strong commercial and economic push he 
categorised them into two,

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 
owning to dismissals and resignations from jobs, prohibitions 
from legal practice and incapacitation from illness. In other 
words, the early newspaper press was the refuge open to many 
whose careers had been ruined (ibid).

As we shall see presently, it could also be argued that economic 
considerations must have contributed to the development of the patriotic 
or racial feelings of the proprietor-editors in the depressing economic 
situation of the 1880s and after.

One of the most prominent proprietor-editors of the time, 
J. Payne Jackson, was honest enough to admit that his paper, the Lagos 
Weekly Record was not "a public benevolent institution (or) philanthropic 
charity". Jackson's paper relied on government advertisement subsidy, 
though there was no evidence to show that this directly affected its
editorial policy. The government advertisement came from Governor Carter as a compensation for Jackson's support for the Europeans during the Anglo-Ijebu war. He had earlier gone into journalism and opposition to European interests after failing in business because of what he later described as "the cruel greed of European commerce" on the Lower Niger. His son, Thomas Horatio Jackson, who took over after his death, was equally motivated by commercial interests. He aspired to be the African Northcliffe, one of the pioneers of the Fleet Street commercial revolution. His aspiration was to have a chain of newspapers all over West Africa as part of his SAMADU Group, which included a shipping company, and a Palm Produce trading company on the Niger.

The paramountcy of economic consideration in the calculation of the 19th century journalists could also be seen in their support for British policy on what Governor Moloney called the 'Interior Question'. The issue arose from the internecine warfare between the various Yoruba sub-groups in the interior outside Lagos. This was of great concern to the British and the Lagos elite because these wars disrupted trade between Lagos and the hinterland. As a commercial centre, Lagos depended on trade and commercial relations with these areas. The Saros (as the Sierra Leonian emigrants were called) being 'sons of the soil' had an advantage over the Europeans in this commercial transaction as middlemen between the interior and mercantile firms in Lagos. Before 1877 the disruptions caused by the wars affected many Saros as well as indigenous Lagos traders. Among these traders were the newspaper-men. Up till the end of the 19th century all the owner-editors were traders, their business varying from the comparatively large establishments of Richard Blaize and J.S. Leigh to the commercial agencies of John Jackson (Omu, 1978, p.116). Apart from this direct effect, the wars also affected the papers' advertisement patronage. Their owners were interested in increased circulation which would follow the opening up of the interior.

It was therefore in their primary economic interest to support the colonial conquest of the Lagos hinterland. This they enthusiastically did. They carried out strong propaganda in support of British military intervention and expansionist policy in these areas. The high point of such propaganda support came in the 1890s when Jackson's Lagos Weekly Record ceaselessly urged Governor Carter to use force in settling the 'Interior Question'. As Robert July has noted, Jackson's "cordial view
of British influence in Africa reflected in part Jackson's belief, shared by many Lagosians, that only strong action by the administration at Lagos could bring about the peace in the land necessary for the commercial health of the country" (July, 1968, p.350). In May 1892 the Lagos government invaded and conquered Ijebuland. Jackson accompanied the army as a war correspondent. For his support Governor Carter gave his newspaper government advertisements.

This action of the Lagos elite was contrary to their opposition to British and French policy outside Yorubaland. The press was vigorously against the Berlin Conference and they campaigned against the activities and rule of the Royal Niger Company. They were against the extension of the company's influence to the Oil Rivers, which could have affected them.

The point we shall like to stress is that the collaborative role of the press in the expansion and consolidation of British rule in Nigeria or resistance to it including agitations for political and constitutional changes were as much dictated by economic self-interest as any other nationalistic or humanitarian reason. In this vein Omu has argued that "The desire to make money often blended with the desire to influence public opinion and advocate causes for personal and communal ends and economic ambitions were often intertwined with threads of philanthropy" (Omu, 1978, p.29).

The ownership and control of the press during this formative period was limited to these small groups of educated individuals who often combined both management (proprietorship) with professional (editorial) activities. They were both the publishers, printers and editors. This was the dominant trend till the end of the first world war.

End of the Pioneers: The Second Phase

With the amalgamation of Northern and Southern Protectorates in 1914 and the increase in nationalist tempo there was an increase in the number and variety of newspapers. In contrast to sixteen papers published between 1880 and 1914, sixty-four were published between 1914 and 1945. The amalgamation led to an increase in the market and circulation of newspapers and new opportunities due, for instance, to better communication. Also the prefix 'Nigeria' started appearing as part of newspaper titles in recognition of the constitutional and administrative changes that were
taking place. Further, the newspaper industry benefited from the growth in private commercial printing establishments. It was now possible for newspaper owners to publish without owning a printing press.

The most important of these changes was in the structure of ownership which was now dominated by indigenous Nigerians. More importantly the small-scale owner-editor operations of the pre-war years gave way to corporate ownership. The focus and horizon of the papers, if not the interests represented was now broadened, going beyond Lagos.

The new trend in corporate ownership started with the establishment of the Nigerian Printing and Publishing Company in 1925. The company was set-up by a group of European individuals and firms led by the Chairman of the Lagos Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Richard Barrow and some Nigerians, notably Sir Adeyemo Alakija. Around this time Ernest Ikoli's paper, the African Messenger, was in financial trouble. By agreement the NPPC took over the Messenger and in 1926 launched the Nigerian Daily Times with Ikoli as the editor. Another of the limited liability companies set up during this time was the Nigeria Press Limited. Established in 1930 by T.A. Doherty, I.A. Ogulana and Victor Babamuboni, it continued the publication of the Nigeria Daily Telegraph. Herbert Macaulay, who was to become the father of Nigerian nationalism, and Dr. T.A. Caulcrick also combined to form a joint venture which also continued the publication of the Daily News, the first Nigerian daily newspaper. These two companies due to poor financial support, and unable to compete successfully with the Daily Times soon collapsed.

From the start the Daily Times was a successful newspaper. It was pro-government and pro-European business interests. This should not be surprising because it was established "chiefly to serve the interests of local expatriate commercial houses" (Coker, n.d. p.36). According to Increase Coker, the Daily Times was founded as a response to Macaulay's acquisition of the Lagos Daily News as an organ of his three year old Nigeria National Democratic Party (Coker, n.d. p.17). The paper's pro-European policy was further demonstrated in the fact that its front pages mostly contained foreign news "some of which are quite unrelated to Nigeria and unintelligible to the average reader" (Coker, ibid, p.36). The paper's foreign link was reinforced in 1947 when it was bought over by the London Daily Mirror Group. Apart from being pro-business the
paper has diversified into many sectors of the economy and every branch of the newspaper industry.

Though the Daily Times was technically superior to its contemporaries, it was not of much importance in terms of nationalistic politics of the day. A former reporter with the paper and prominent politician, Chief Obafemi Awolowo assessed the paper in the following words,

The Daily Times was technically the best then in circulation but ... an unpardonably dull journalistic and literary product; a veritable stagnant pool of stale, colourless news; and a musty-reservoir of articles which lacked animation, pungency and nationalist flavour (Awolowo, 1960, p.82).

On the paper's editorial policy, Awolowo wrote "unless definite instructions came from the very top, nothing critical must be written about the Nigerian government or expatriate officials"; yet things were happening "which aroused the just resentment and indignation of young Nigerians" (ibid, p.84).

It was the failure of the Daily Times to fire the imagination of Nigerians and reflect the rising tide of nationalism that Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe was able to exploit with the establishment of the West African Pilot in 1937. The paper accordingly was regarded as "a fire eating and aggressive nationalist paper of the highest order" in the tradition of Macaulay's Lagos Daily News, and the Nigeria Daily Telegraph (ibid).

The Pilot became a very popular newspaper attracting the best and the brightest young Nigerians, many of whom were later to become prominent journalists and politicians. Between 1937 and 1960 the Pilot dominated the Nigerian press scene; rising to overshadow other papers including the better produced Daily Times and its later main political rival, the Daily Service, organ of the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM). In fact the Mirror take-over and reorganisation of the Daily Times was to meet the challenges posed by the popularity and dominance of the Pilot. The Pilot, like its owner Zik, was to assume a prominent place in Nigeria's political history.

Dr. Azikiwe was educated in America where he also worked as a journalist. He therefore brought his experience and political interest to bear on the Pilot and Nigerian journalism in general. On arrival in
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Paper</th>
<th>Place of Publication</th>
<th>Date Registered or First Issued</th>
<th>Editor/Printer/Publisher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Iwe Irohin (F)</td>
<td>Abeokuta</td>
<td>December 1859</td>
<td>Printer/Publishers - CMS Press. Editor - Rev. Townsend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The Anglo-African (F)</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>Editor/Printer/Publisher - Robert Campbell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Lagos Times &amp; Gold Coast Colony Advertiser (F)</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>10 November 1880</td>
<td>Editor/Printer - Andrew M. Thomas. Publisher - R.B. Blaise. Reappeared in 1890 as a weekly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Lagos Observer (F)</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>15 February 1882</td>
<td>Editor/Printer/Publisher - J. Bagan Benjamin assisted by Robert Campbell as Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The Eagle &amp; Lagos Critic (M/F)</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>13 March 1883</td>
<td>Editor/Owner - Owen E. Macaulay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The Mirror (F)</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>17 December 1887</td>
<td>Editor/Owner - P. Adolphus Marke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The Lagos Echo (revived Lagos Observer) (W)</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>1891</td>
<td>Editor/Owner - J. Bagan Benjamin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. The Nigerian Times(W)</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>5 September 1910</td>
<td>Editor/Publisher - James Bright Davies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Times of Nigeria (change of title) (W)</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>18 December 1913</td>
<td>Editor/Publisher - James Bright Davies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. The Nigerian Pioneer(W)</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>Registered 10 Jan. 1914. Apprd.later</td>
<td>Editor/Publisher - Kitoye Ajasa, replaced by his son in 1928</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nigeria from Ghana where he has also worked for three years as a journalist, he established the Zik Press Ltd. - a limited liability company with an initial capital of £5,000 with £2,644 paid up (Azikiwe 1970, p.287). By 1960 the Zik Press had established newspapers in many parts of the country. These papers were, West African Pilot (Lagos), The Eastern Nigerian Guardian (Port Harcourt), The Nigeria Spokesman (Onitsha), The Southern Nigeria Defender (Warri), The Daily Comet (Kano), The Eastern Nigeria Sentinel (Enugu) and the Nigerian Monitor (Uyo). These towns were politically and economically strategic. Politically they were important for Zik's political career. Economically they have high potentials for better circulation and advertisement as urban centres. It is therefore not surprising that Zik described these ventures as "successful business". Actually he has seen the establishment of the papers as "my efforts to be economically secure and free from want" (Azikiwe, ibid, p.286). He had gone into journalism, among other reasons, to demonstrate that it could be a successful business enterprise (ibid, p.291). Within a year of establishing the Pilot he was able to do this:

After one year of existence, we declared a dividend of 15 per cent. For the years 1939-43 we declare 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, ibid, p.301).

From this initial base and the capital accumulated in the newspaper industry Zik diversified into other areas including banking; the African Continental Bank which he formed in 1944. Other companies included the Zik Enterprise Ltd., Nigeria Commodities Ltd., African Book Group Ltd.; Nigeria Paper Company and the Nigeria Printing Supply Company Ltd.

Just like their 19th century forebearers, Zik and others downplayed the economic aspect of their journalistic enterprise. Rather much capital was made of their political ideal - their struggle against colonial rule. In the maiden issue of the Pilot, Zik wrote "Our programme is based on the quest for social justice ... Economically we aim at the eradication of such forces of profit motive which overlooks the African producer as a human being, and which lay unnecessary emphasis on material values" (Azikiwe, 1970, p.296).
The Pilot was later to become Zik's political voice and weapon after his disenchantment with the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM) and the formation of his National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon (later changed to National Convention of Nigerian Citizen, NCNC). Before Zik arrived in the country, Lagos politics was polarised between two political parties, the NNBP led by Herbert Macaulay and the NYM. Zik joined the NYM and later became one of its leading figures. The NYM won all the three seats in the 1938 Lagos Legislative election. But trouble soon broke out among the top echelon of the party. This was over the selection of a candidate to contest a Lagos seat on the Legislative Council which became vacant in 1941. The party did not recover from this crisis. Zik was at the centre of this conflict and the Pilot served him well in the campaign against his opponents who won the selection contest and the subsequent election. In response to Pilot's attack the other faction of the NYM converted the movement's newsletter, the Service, into a daily newspaper in 1938.

Before then the movement had relied on Zik and the Pilot for the dissemination of its objectives and activities. Zik later left the NYM to form the NCNC in 1944. In essence Zik revived and continued the policy of the 19th century pioneers of using their papers both as a business enterprise and a propaganda machine for their political ambitions.

The use of the Pilot by Zik for his political campaigns against his political opponents and later in the slanging match with the Daily Service could be said to have been the formal beginning of another dominant feature of the second phase in the history of Nigerian journalism. This was the party press and the consolidation of what has been described as "a vituperative and cantankerous party press". The emergence of the party affiliated newspapers was closely linked to the beginning of the formal incorporation of Nigerian politicians into the structure of state power.

The establishment of the Pilot is usually seen as a landmark in the history of the Nigerian press. It brought many innovative features some of which remained today, notably the use of banner headlines, the use of human interest stories, sports stories and dramatic pictures. The Pilot changed the dull and turgid presentation of news of the early newspapers. In its place Zik brought in "the sensationalism and pugnacity of American journalism" (Coleman, 1958, p.223). The paper was also a training ground for many journalists and politicians including Anthony Enahoro,
As the discussion must have indicated the most notable contribution of the Pilot was in politics. It continued the tradition of the pioneers. For this it became very popular and influential for its radical nationalism and pointed editorials. In this regard we can again mention the paper's total support for the trade unions during the 1945 General Strike for which it was banned by the government. In short the commercial success and "eloquent and sensational tone of the Pilot and its pugnacious political journalism marked the beginning of a new era" (Omu, 1978, p.240) in Nigerian journalism and politics.

Apart from Zik's commercial interest and the economic potential of taking a radical stand in terms of larger readership, the Pilot's nationalist fervour should not be seen solely as a disinterested pursuit. It has to be seen within the context of Zik's political ambition. Though the NCNC was the main political party in the country in the 1940s after the collapse of the NYM, the remnants of the Movement still posed a challenge to Zik's dominance in Nigerian politics. This challenge increased after the formation of the Action Group. The Pilot was also in competition with the Daily Service and the European controlled Daily Times. There was therefore a running battle over the minds of Nigerians, that is the control of popular images and meaning by the small group of emerging politicians mostly based in Lagos. Zik has also been charged with using the Pilot to denigrate non-Ibos especially the Yorubas (Awolowo, 1960, Chapter 11).

Commercialisation of the Press

One other notable contribution of the establishment of the West African Pilot to the development of journalism in Nigeria was the commercialisation of the press. This process reached its height with the London Daily Mirror take-over of the Daily Times in 1947. It continued with the arrival of Lord Thompson in 1958 as a partner with the Action Group in the establishment of the Daily Express. Though some of the post-war newspapers continued to support certain political parties, they now saw themselves as commercial enterprises first and party organs second. For instance, in a May 14, 1958 editorial the West African Pilot declared it was a commercial organisations. "This paper must survive either as a
### TABLE 5.2 - PAPERS CIRCULATING IN NIGERIA BY 1937

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Frequency of Publication</th>
<th>Estimated Circulation Figures</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Times</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>5,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Leisure Hours</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>1,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily News</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>2,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akede Eko</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Catholic Herald</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Observer</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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>Service</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Advertiser</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>3,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West African Pilot</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>9,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Church Chronicle</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Life</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria Provincial Guardian</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>1,868</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

commercial concern or political enterprise. But we are the former - at the moment at least - and being so, we intend to maintain our independence whilst upholding the principles of the party" (quoted in Sklar, Richard, 1963, p.455).

In his comparative study of the emergence of journalism in France, Germany and England in the early 19th century, Lenore O'Boyle showed that English journalists became selfconscious as professionals distinct from political activists and the press separated from party politics earlier than in the other two countries because of the early industrialisation in England. Unlike in England, German and French journalism remained weak and indistinguishable because of the relative backwardness of the French and German economies. In other words the development of popular mass entertainment press is related to the level of economic development (O'Boyle, 1968).

The post-war situation in Nigeria to some extent followed this pattern. The commercialisation of the press towards the end of the 1940s was made possible by the other developments in the country especially the higher level of economic activities after the second World War. These made it possible for the establishment of mass circulation newspapers independent of the political parties and also able to employ professional journalists. For instance, by the 1940s the number of wage-earners have increased. There was also an increase in urbanisation. Along with these factors was the increase in the level of education and literacy. This accelerated after the second World War culminating in the establishment of the University College of Ibadan in 1948. The higher level of circulation was evident in the case of the Pilot in 1938 and in 1945-46. In 1938 expatriate firms withdrew their advertising patronage following the cocoa crop hold-up by producers who responded to the instigation of the indigenous press. In 1945-46 the colonial government withdrew official advertisements from the Pilot because of the paper's criticism of the government. On the other hand the Daily Times relied on advertising patronage of foreign firms to sustain itself.

On the supply side, the development of railway and road transportation reached its maturity with the launching of the Colonial Development and Welfare Scheme and the Colonial Development Programme from 1946. The Nigerian press also benefitted from the development of cheaper and better
printing technology. The economic situation was evident in the memorandum written by a Daily Mirror Director who was involved in the 1947 acquisition of the Daily Times,

The prosperity, present and future, of the country was, of course, of the maximum importance to any newspaper enterprise. I made many and detailed enquiries into the situation.

At that time (1947), the position was good. To my mind the future was full of promise. There were prosperous coal and tin mines. There had at that date, as I wrote "never been a completely adequate geological survey, but the Government is starting now... It is hoped there is oil. Altogether there are big development plans in being"...

I was confident about the country and, therefore, about a new newspaper's prospect (reproduced in Echeruo, 1976).

The commercialisation of the press involved changes in the organisation of the press and the production of news. For instance it signalled the end of the earlier situation, when the proprietor was also the editor-journalist, to the setting up of limited liability companies where management was separated from the producers-editors and journalists. The early journalists as we have pointed out were at the same time the proprietors of their papers. They were often professional lawyers, doctors, engineers or printers first and journalists second. With commercialisation the proprietor was now more concerned with providing the finances and laying down the paper's policy while he employed professional journalists charged with the responsibility of daily production of the newspaper. Further, while the pioneer proprietor-editor regarded themselves as politicians or more appropriately as anti-colonial crusader and their newspapers as political organs for the achievement of certain political goals, the professional journalists are more likely to see themselves as disinterested chronicler of events.

Professionalism in the Press

The employment of professional journalists constituted another aspect of the changes dictated by the move towards a commercial press. As professionals, journalists often draw on certain values, routines and ideologies in the production of news. These values, routines and ideologies were "forged in the workshops of a commercial press serving historically particular needs and interests... News evolves then in
response to a range of imperatives in its market situation which become incorporated in the working routines and beliefs involved in its production" (Golding and Murdock, 1979). An aspect of this market situation is the demand for larger circulation and the need to satisfy an heterogeneous readership. To meet this commercial imperatives, the press now emphasised how objective and neutral the products they supply are. Comments are now separated from facts. As Golding and Elliot have noted, "The search for new and larger readerships draws the press away from a strident factionalism and toward a more central band of opinion, in which a mix of apparent neutrality and entertainment make a paper attractive as much as influential" (Golding and Elliot, 1979, p.25).

The employment of professionals as producers of news also involved a change in the style and presentation of news. This change was most noticeable in the West African Pilot. As we have already pointed out, Dr. Azikiwe introduced many innovative features to Nigerian journalism when he established the Pilot in 1937. The features of this "new journalism" as Increase Coker called it (Coker, n.d. pp.39-44) included the introduction of American style of sensational reporting, the use of pictures, short sentences and paragraphs (thus ending "the ponderous political essays, long-winded and high-sounding phraseology typical of the ... 'Black Victorian' of Lagos" (Coker, n.d. p.18)) and the use of banner headlines. The Pilot also placed great emphasis on the 'human interest stories' through such banner headlines. In short, in this 'new journalism' news became entertainment. According to Increase Coker, "The day-to-day domestic and human problems of the people were being dramatized for the reader's entertainment and pleasure" (Coker, n.d. p.43). As another Nigerian historian has noted, "The era of the mass appeal had come" (Biobaku, n.d. p.viii).

The success of the Pilot must have led to a lot of rethinking in other newspaper establishment. It must have also kindled a new spirit of competition for readership which could not have been satisfied by appeal to only political allegiance or anti-colonial nationalistic feelings. The Daily Mirror take-over of the Daily Times in 1947 was part of this process, just as it also intensified it. The competition of the 1950s included, ... early arrival at the market and in the physical appearance of the newspaper. Competition in the remuneration and general conditions of service offered to working journalists. Competition

For instance the Daily Times, which was the main rival of the Pilot, "was revived in a 'new look' garment tailored with all journalistic frills and drapery by the new Daily Mirror Management" (Coker, ibid, p.37). A prominent part of this "'new look' garment" was "A conscious policy of human interest and highly pictorial journalism amongst a predominantly semi-literate people combined with brilliant technical production and widespread sales organisation to place the Times well ahead of others" (ibid).

It should of course be noted that the style, presentation and subjects of the 'new journalism' were imported from the West. Such style of journalism was developed by the so-called American Yellow Press "that has transformed the newspaper in the United States ... from a more or less sober record of events into a form of popular literature..." (Tunstall, 1977, p.36).

One point to be drawn from this discussion is that competition among the Nigerian papers from the end of the 1940s meant that they had to pay more attention to presentation and style in order to reach a larger readership. To this end better trained professional journalists were employed who to a very good extent saw themselves as journalists first before anything else. Such journalists were more likely to see themselves as distinct from politicians. The arrival of foreign owned newspapers, especially the Daily Times, contributed greatly to this development. According to Coker, "Because the Daily Times was unattached to any political group, the staff lacked the missionary or crusading spirit which motivated journalists in the indigenous papers" (Coker, n.d. p.39). In a sense it could be said that the 1950s started the process of depoliticising of the Nigerian press, though the process is incomplete. By the 1960s the sense of professionalism among Nigerian journalists has increased. "Gone (was) the almost fanatical sense of political mission. The working journalist of today regards himself, before anything else, first as a journalist by profession and a labourer worthy of his hire" (Coker, ibid, p.85). Another writer on the Nigerian press has noted that the most important factor in its development in the 1960s "has been the
growing professionalism of the Press corps. With increasing scope for promotion and greatly expanded opportunities for training, journalism has become a career rather than a form of casual employment. There has been a slow, but unmistakable, rise in standards, while a new sense of occupational solidarity has appeared among the more sophisticated writers" (Chicks, 1971, p.126). Part of this professional consciousness was the setting-up of a professional association, the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) in 1954 with a code of conduct for its members, and a Guild of Newspaper Editors established in 1961. In 1962 the Guild also published a code of ethics for all journalists.

What we are driving at is that commercialisation of the press and professionalism, which followed it, led to the separation of journalism from what could be called "the political-literary hybrid it had been hitherto" (Golding and Elliot, 1979, p.23). Commercialisation also lessened the high political profile of the press from the late 1940s. It became more interested in reaching larger readership. In doing this the press has to draw on certain centrally held opinions and values. An important aspect of this is the ideological stress on the guiding values journalists use in the selection and production of news. Such values and ideology, as we shall discuss in the next chapter, include the ideas of objectivity and neutrality and the larger concept of press freedom. Another aspect was the change from the Victorian style of writing of the pioneering owner-editors to a simpler and easier to read style characterised by short sentences and paragraphs and the use of pictures. The model of this 'professional journalism' in terms of style and philosophy including the values and ideologies which informed its practice were from the West.

However, as we mentioned above, the separation of politics from journalism has remained incomplete in Nigeria. The ghost of the past still walks tall in Nigerian newsrooms. Though there are no more party-owned newspapers, journalism is still often seen in terms of the attainment of certain defined national goals - national unity and development. This, it could be argued, is more or less against the idea of professionalism with its stress on neutrality, objectivity, disinterestedness and autonomy. Reconciling the demands of the two models creates a lot of tension and conflict. As Golding and Elliot have pointed out "... the dual allegiance of (Nigerian) journalists to the attainment
of professional and political goals have created conflicts whose resolution in daily practice underpins much of contemporary Nigerian journalism" (Golding and Elliot, 1979, p.31). One way of resolving these conflicts is through the journalists' commitment to 'development journalism' which we shall discuss in the next chapter.

Press and Party Politics

The involvement of the press in party politics and electioneering started with the Legislative Council elections under the 1922 Clifford Constitution. The three Lagos seats in the 1938 legislative elections were fought by the NNDP and the NYM. Many of the newspaper owner-editors were involved in the formation of the two parties. The NNDP was formed by Herbert Macaulay and Thomas Jackson who owned the Lagos Weekly Record while Ernest Ikoli was closely associated with the NYM. Dr. Azikiwe was for many years a leading member of the NYM before he left to found the NCNC. The press was involved in the heated campaigns for the elections. Some newspapers were established purposely to fight the elections thus introducing bitterness and vehemence into the campaigns. As Fred Omu remarked from the 1920s when elections into the legislative council started, "Newspapers shifted their focus from that of political group supporters to organs of the political parties" (Omu, 1978, p.233). Some other papers exploited the political excitement for commercial ends (ibid).

As we have observed above, the expansion in the industry also coincided with the constitutional changes which gradually devolved formal political power to the educated and the business elite. Apart from Zik who used the Pilot to create "a political following ... which was channeled into the NCNC" (Grant, 1975, p.100) the Daily Service became the official organ of the Action Group when it was formed. The paper was later renamed Daily Express in 1960 when the AG and Lord Thompson of Britain came together to form the Allied Newspaper of Nigeria in 1958. Awolowo also had the Nigeria Tribune which initially was not formally linked to the AG until after Lord Thompson had taken over total control of Allied Newspaper after the AG crisis.

In the North, the Northern People's Congress (NPC) formed in 1949 later took over the Hausa language newspaper, Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo and its English language partner, Nigeria Citizen to defend and advance its interest.
The Gaskiya, founded by the Northern Region Literature Bureau on
January 1, 1939 was the first newspaper in the North. It served as a
'mobile comprehensive school' to its readers offering information on a
variety of subjects ranging from economics, native administration, health
to martial and juvenile problems (Baniduro, op cit, p.89). The paper was
also very influential in the evolution of Northern political thinking.
In 1948 its board included Tafe Balewa, who later became the country's
Prime Minister, the Sultan of Sokoto, Dr. A.B. Dikko and one
representative each from Government and Commerce. The paper's policy was
determined by the colonial government. According to an Assistant Director
of Education,

"Gaskiya is, to all intents, a Government paper. That is
to say its policy is to support and explain Government
action. It must accordingly submit to many restrictions,
which make it difficult to run it satisfactorily, and
sell it, as a popular paper (quoted in Grant, 1975, p.103).

Because of the influence and importance of the Emirs to the British,
especially their important role in the operations of the indirect rule
policy, they were allowed a say on some of the paper's contents. Letters
to the editor pertaining to them and their administration were given to
them for censorship (Dudley, B.J., 1968, p.75).

Six years after the establishing of the Gaskiya, the government
felt the need "to publish the true facts at once" during the 1945 General
Strike which was sympathetically reported by the nationalist press
especially the Pilot and the Comet based in Kano. In 1948 the Nigerian
Citizen was established with a British editor.

One notable difference between the Southern political party news-
paper and Gaskiya and the Nigerian Citizen was that while the Southern
papers were independent of the colonial government the latter were initially
sponsored by the colonial administration. The two papers were thus the
first government owned newspapers in the country. Another feature of the
Citizen was that it was ostensibly not intended to be a 'political'
newspaper but for "solid news coverage in English". The policy declared;

"We cannot, and do not wish, to compete with our contemporaries
in the field of political invective; so the editor has
concentrated on making a real newspaper, in the hope that
it will appeal to that section of the public which wants
news from its newspaper, not emotional stimulus (quoted in Grant, 1975, p.106).

From this we can see that the paper saw politics within a narrow focus of emotional outburst or theatrical and sensational display by Southern politicians and press. It could also be seen to mean the critical attack on the colonial administration launched in the South. The Northern colonial government had always seen Southern nationalists as agitators from whom the North must be protected from. The newspaper was part of this social control mechanism. Whatever may be the case this policy was to be abandoned after independence. The Citizen and the Outlook owned by the NCNC controlled Eastern Nigerian Government were involved in the most bitter political invective in the history of press war in Nigeria in the 60s (Chicks, 1971). However, the policy of sober presentation of news contained in the above statement continues to influence the New Nigeria which replaced the Citizen in 1966. The influence welded by the Gaskiya and the Citizen is also still evident in the New Nigeria. The paper is very influential, and it is regarded as the voice of the Northern establishment. According to a former editor of the paper, it was established,

1) To get across the views of the government to the Northern elite and mobilise them in order to achieve its goals;

2) To fight the Northern case in all disputes at the centre (Daura, 1971, p.41).*

From the above it is clear that the three major political parties, AG, NCNC and NPC which assumed power at independence have newspapers established as part of the struggle for economic and political power. Apart from these major parties other individuals and small parties had their own newspapers which they used to defend and advance their interests and policies. Accompanying this development was the ethnicisation of the press as the three main political parties had their main support base in each of the three main ethnic groups. NCNC (Ibo), AG (Yoruba) and NPC (Hausa/Fulani). It is worth mentioning that geographical location of newspapers, ownership and ethnicity are linked.

* The fact that the New Nigerian is a sectional paper for the Northern elite was recently restated by the current Managing Director, Mohammed Haruna (see New Nigerian, Jan. 7, 1986).
The press of the 50s and 60s has been accused of contributing to the emergence of regionalism, ethnic consciousness and the political crisis of the 60s by, in the words of Zik, "beating the tomtom of tribal hatred" (Chicks, 1971, p.116). According to Omu "With the advent of responsible government in 1951 and the emergence of modern political parties as well as party-controlled administration, old antagonisms were intensified and the atmosphere of politics and press seethed with bitter rivalry and enmity". The verbal combat was so vicious that the press "completely immersed in the vortex of partisan politics ... were in no position to prepare the people for the challenges of independence and national unity" (Omu, 1978, p.247). Many commentators have blamed the press for contributing to the collapse of the first republic (1960-66) and the events that led to the civil war. This view is shared by the government of General Gowon. According to the Second National Development Plan (1970-74),

During the 1962-68 Plan period, the former Regional Governments on many occasions used the information media at their disposal, to spread unwholesome propaganda and inflame sectional passions which culminated in the last civil war (Second National Development Plan, p.255).

**Government-Owned Newspapers**

As the various parties gained power in the regions and the centre they started to establish newspapers funded from the public treasury. Hence the Federal Government established the Morning and Sunday Post, the Eastern Region had the Eastern Outlook, the North continued with the Citizen and Gaskiya while in 1964 Akintola established the Daily Sketch in the Western Region as the organ of his unpopular NNP Government. These papers now performed the functions of the former party newspapers or complement them. The government also have total control of Radio and Television broadcasting. In a space of four years after independence government/party newspaper was the dominant form of ownership, though the government owned newspapers were unable to match the circulation and wider appeal of the Daily Times.

The basic change in the ownership pattern from that which came with independence was the transformation from privately owned papers to the party/government ownership. In essence the integration of the press into state structure. This also marked a big shift from an aspect of the
<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 Times</td>
<td>Government/Private</td>
<td>June 1926</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>350,000&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Nigerian</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>January 1966</td>
<td>Kaduna/Lagos</td>
<td>80,000&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daily Sketch</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>April 1964</td>
<td>Ibadan</td>
<td>80,000&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Standard</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>July 1975</td>
<td>Jos</td>
<td>15,000&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Herald</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>October 1973</td>
<td>Ilorin</td>
<td>40,000&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Observer</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>May 1968</td>
<td>Benin</td>
<td>70,000&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Statesman</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>June 1979</td>
<td>Owerri</td>
<td>30,000&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Tide</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>December 1971</td>
<td>Port Harcourt</td>
<td>36,000&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nigerian Chronicle</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>January 1971</td>
<td>Calabar</td>
<td>25,000&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daily Star</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Emgu</td>
<td>50,000&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evening Times</td>
<td>Government/Private</td>
<td>August 1973</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>36,000&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>Nigerian Tribune</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>December 1949</td>
<td>Ibadan</td>
<td>96,000&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Punch</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>November 1976</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Concord</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>300,000&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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*Sources:  
<sup>c</sup> BBC International Broadcasting and Audience Research : Survey on Nigeria 1983.
received ideology of liberalism which came from Britain. The Nigerian mass media started as a replica of the British system: a public service broadcasting system and a privately owned press. This shift is also evident in how the government sees the role of press as a purposive instrument for social engineering and national development as against the Western model which has continued to influence Nigerian journalists thus creating a tension and sometimes overt conflict between the government and the press. Further the new structure of ownership also meant a change in formal day-to-day operation and control. For instance as Zik became more involved and successful in politics he "slackened" his journalistic activities (Zik, 1970, p.103). The formal operations were left to party and/or government appointees. We shall look at some of these issues later.

Before then we would like to note that the changes were essentially in form and not in substance. The economic and political factors that pushed the pioneers into journalism were still the prime motives for the so called nationalist politicians. The competition for economic and political power has only become more national, that is no more limited to Lagos and more organised with an ethnic dimension thrown into it. It also assumed more visibility following the gradual assumption of power by the 'cultivated elite'.

The shift in favour of government ownership became consolidated with the advent of military rule and oil. The extensive use of the mass media during the civil war might have contributed to this trend. In 1967 the Gowon administration divided the country into twelve states, they were increased to nineteen in 1975. One of the first priorities of some of these new states was to set-up their own newspapers. The increase in national revenue derived from the oil wealth in the 70s gave the new states the economic means to establish and support new mass media channels despite poor financial returns. By 1979 when Nigeria briefly returned to civilian rule there were only two wholly privately owned newspapers, The Nigerian Tribune and the Punch. Party-affiliated and/or individually owned newspapers increased after 1979. All of them with the exception of the National Concord owned by the ITT millionaire, Moshood Abiola and The Guardian owned by the Ibru Group have since folded up after the December 1983 coup (Newswatch, March 11, 1985, pp.34-35).
With the acquisition of 60% controlling share in the Daily Times Group in 1976 the state now accounts for the majority of newspapers and bulk of the circulation.

Sources of Press Revenue

Most government newspapers depend on yearly government subvention while privately owned ones depend on support from affiliated companies. However the mass media in general are under pressure to find other sources of revenue to reduce their dependence on the public purse.*1 From the beginning, sales have not been a viable source of revenue for the Nigerian press. This is mainly due to low literacy level and poor communication and transportation facilities in a very large and diverse country with dispersed and extensive rural areas.

The structure of the Nigerian newspaper market follows the uneven development of the country which of course is also evident in the development, location and contents of the press. The educationally more advanced and economically more developed Southern part of the country has more newspapers, readers and higher circulation than the North. There is no single privately owned paper in the North.*2 Political party affiliation also affect newspaper readership. This is mainly because the papers being mainly organs of party propaganda appeal to their ethnic supporters (see Grant, 1975).

With this handicap the newspapers have to turn to other areas for revenue. These are advertisement and income from other economic activities. A study of the Daily Times and the New Nigeria by Ngozi Nwandison found that the two papers devoted about 87.02% and 72.80% of their total mean space to advertisement respectively (Nwandison, 1983, p.60). Another study of both papers by Onu showed the same trend. His analysis of the type of advertisements carried by the papers revealed that in the Daily Times vehicles constituted 24.8% of the advertisement space followed by finance (defined as banking, financial and insurance services) with 24.5%. In the New Nigeria finance tops the list with 20% while vehicle took 14.7%. These

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*1 This is particularly strong on Radio and TV. Recently some of them including the NTA started charging fee before they cover some events. Many media houses have been forced to reduce staff strength while some federal radio stations were closed.

*2 Some Northern businessmen started one, The Democrat, in 1983 but has since collapsed after the 1983 coup.
two sectors of the economy dominated by Western Multinationals together took 50% of the total advertisement space in the two leading Nigerian newspapers (figures quoted in Ayu, 1984).

These findings should not be surprising. It is consistent with the dominance of the Nigerian economy by foreign, largely Western capital and the type of development the country is pursuing. In essence through advertisement the mass media help to diffuse and foster Western consumerist culture and development pattern in the Nigerian society. The image in the advertisement is to present consumption of luxury goods as an index and agency of development. They exploit the country's desire for development and modernisation. One result of this is the distorted pattern of development fostered among other factors by the import-substitution strategy adopted by Nigeria's economic planners.

At another more immediate level, advertisements affect the production of news. Advertisement effects the quality, quantity and position of news. Allocation of space to advertisements takes precedence over space for editorial matters. As a result the editorial staff either have to cut the length of their stories or reduce the number. Either way quality and quantity suffer. Further advertisement space is normally booked and set before that for editorial matters, thus determining the position of stories in the paper; "Thereby structuring the option for presentation" (Murdock, 1982b). The press also tend to look for issues that cut across social divisions and appeal to a wide spectrum of the public so as to attract advertisers. This tendency seems to devoid issues of their most contentious or radical contents while over-playing the entertaining and the sensational. The press also actively seek advertisements on particular industries, products or events. In such a case favourable articles which tend to promote the industry or product are published to accompany the advertisements which have been canvassed for before by the paper.

In support of the above observations we can note the tendency among Nigerians newspapers to enjoy the best of two worlds by combining the features of popular and quality journalism. This to our mind is to appeal to a large readership across the economic, social and income divide. We could also note the use of banner screaming headlines to catch the attention of buying public. Headlines, among other functions, is to a
newspaper what good packaging and design is to any other consumer product. Related to this is the almost exclusive urban focus of the mass media. All newspapers, apart from being located in capital cities, Lagos, Ibadan, Benin, Kaduna, Kano, Enugu, Ilorin, Jos, Port Harcourt and Calabar, try to reach Lagos and all have "Lagos editors". Rural dwellers do not have the disposable income to spend on goods likely to be advertised.

The other major source of revenue for newspapers is income from other economic activities, that is diversification into either other areas of the newspaper or printing industry and/or other sectors of the economy. The Daily Times is a prime example of this, though it is now a dominant feature of the privately-owned newspapers. Even it could be argued that the same is true of state owned papers, only that the diversification is indirect being undertaken under public ownership and without formal links to the newspapers as in the private sector. The informal relationship between state owned papers and state other economic activities could be understood if we consider that such papers survive out of subsidies from government treasury just like the private papers survive on such subsidies from affiliated companies.

The Daily Times has a stake in almost all aspects of the newspaper and printing industry. Outside it the paper is involved in finance, estate development, packaging, leisure and tourism (see Table 5.4). These various economic activities give the Daily Times a more secure financial base than any other newspaper in the country. In 1976 the Times Group made a profit of N3.5m reaching over N5m in each of the next three years. Since then the fortune of the company has moved with the down-turn in the country's economy. It made a loss of N495,569 in 1981 but a profit of N1.4m was made in 1982 and N2.2m in 1983. However the company's turn-over has been rising since 1974 (see Table 5.5).

Other newspaper companies emulate the Daily Times. The Punch set up in the 70s by Chief Olu Aboderin is part of a chain of companies including a record company, a travel agency, a clearing and forwarding agency, TV rentals, Oil Marketing, Property and Estate Development and commercial printing. The same is true of the newest newspapers in the country, The National Concord and The Guardian. The National Concord is owned by Moshood Abiola who has interests in Telecommunication (ITT(Nig.) Ltd., RCN (Nig.) Ltd.); Food agriculture (Wonderloaf Bakery, Abiola Farms
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities of The Daily Times</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Printer and Publisher of:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Daily Times</td>
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<td>Evening Times</td>
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<td>Sunday Times</td>
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<td>Lagos Weekend</td>
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<td>Sporting Record</td>
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<td>Times International</td>
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<td>Business Times</td>
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<td>Headlines</td>
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<td>Woman's World</td>
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<td>Nigeria Yearbook</td>
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<td>Times Trade and Industrial Directory</td>
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<td><strong>Subsidiary Companies</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Naira Holding Limited (100% owned)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Investment holding)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Naira Properties Limited (60% owned)</td>
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<td>(Property development)</td>
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<td>Niger Pak Limited (74% owned)</td>
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<td>(Packaging Manufacturers)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Times Leisure Services Limited (100% owned)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Travel agency, car hire, trade exhibitions, restaurant etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Times Press Limited (100% owned)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Lithographic and letterpress printers)</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Africa Publishing Company Limited</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Publishers of West Africa Magazine (80% owned))</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turnover</td>
<td>24,426,000</td>
<td>30,271,000</td>
<td>34,664,000</td>
<td>38,828,000</td>
<td>44,690,000</td>
<td>44,128,000</td>
<td>50,050,311</td>
<td>51,745,860</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Newspaper)</td>
<td>6,847,000</td>
<td>8,009,000</td>
<td>8,823,000</td>
<td>9,868,000</td>
<td>11,436,000</td>
<td>10,893,000</td>
<td>13,027,804</td>
<td>16,223,240</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book and</td>
<td>1,131,000</td>
<td>1,028,000</td>
<td>1,101,000</td>
<td>1,573,000</td>
<td>2,912,000</td>
<td>4,001,000</td>
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and Abiola Soft Drinks), Finance (Habib Bank Nig. Ltd.), Music (Decca Records), Shipping (African Ocean Line) and Sports (Abiola Babes Football Club).

The point we would like to underline is that as with advertisements this industrial and commercial connections do indirectly affect editorial output. One doubts if the owners of these papers and those in government will allow them to carry a sustained criticism of the neo-colonial social order in the country.

From the discussion so far it seems to us very clear that the development of the Nigerian press has closely followed the changes in the country's political economy. For example the present government dominance is in line with the government decisive in-road into other sectors of the economy in the 70s following the oil boom.

We shall like to take a look at other forms of control. These are the law and operational control especially the appointment of senior editorial and management staff, overt censorship and sometimes physical attacks on journalists and seizure of newspapers when covert controls fail.

Press Law

The government from the colonial period till the present have found legislation a potent means of controlling the press. The first attempt to legislate on the press was in 1862 when Governor H.S. Freeman failed to persuade the colonial office to stifle the yet to be established Anglo-African through taxation. On learning about Campbell's plan to establish a newspaper in Lagos, Freeman informed the colonial secretary about the danger a newspaper in the colony would constitute. He feared a newspaper in Lagos would bring into the open the strong ill-feeling exhibited between the different sectors of the Lagos society (Omu, 1978, p.173). To prevent any trouble, Freeman sought permission from the colonial secretary to impose "such a tax upon newspapers published in this colony as would preclude the possibility of their succeeding as a monetary speculation" (quoted in Ogunade, 1981, pp.61-62). In the alternative he proposed the establishment of a government newspaper to carry government notices and thus free from tax. The two proposals were rejected by the colonial office.
In 1866 Governor John Glover tried to control the circulation of the London-based African Times by confiscation and later slow deliveries whenever politically safe. This action was a foretaste of the 1916 Custom Ordinance which gave the executive the power to ban any foreign publication. In 1891 the Official Secrets Ordinance was enacted without any protest from the press. This might have been due to the fact that it was introduced to curb the disclosure of official secrets by civil servants.

The heightened opposition of the press to the Lagos administration toward the close of the 19th century must have convinced the government that something must be done to curb the 'excesses' of the press described by Governor William MacGregor as "ill-informed and mendacious" and "ignorant and malevolent". On April 1902 the Newspaper Bill was introduced into the Legislative Council. Despite strong opposition from the press, the Nigerian ex-officio members of the Legislative Council, Lagos White Cap Chief and the educated elite the Bill was passed on October 5, 1903.

In the main the Ordinance stipulated the registration of all newspapers to be published. It was also demanded of the publisher to deposit a bond of £250 with one or more sureties. The address of the printers and publisher must also be printed at the foot of the last page. Following the 1914 amalgamation the 1903 Ordinance was amended in 1917 with modification based "upon different and more extreme principles" (Omu, 1978, p.181). In 1909 a seditious Offences Bill was passed by the government. It arose out of government concern about a pamphlet written by Herbert Macaulay in which he criticised the governor, the railways and the administration in general. Many journalists and editors were prosecuted under this law by the colonial government notably Lord Lugard who described the press as the "scurrilous local yellow press" and "Lagos rags" (Omu, ibid, p.189).

It was therefore a rich array of laws that the Nigerian government inherited when self-rule came in the 50s. The constitutional changes which came with the 1954 Lyttleton constitution made the press a residual subject, that is it was within the Legislative competence of both the federal and the regional legislatures. The press thus became liable to four set of laws instead of one under the colonial government. This
constitutional arrangement gave the regional and federal governments enough power to control the press in their areas of influence and control. Both the Eastern and Western Regions were able to adopt separate newspaper laws in 1955 and 1957 respectively and a Defamation law in 1958 while the North followed in 1959. This was despite the fact that there were federal laws on these matters. As the crisis of the 60s intensified some regional governments and local councils enacted laws to ban the circulation of some unfriendly papers in their areas.

However, the most controversial of these laws was the 1964 Newspaper (Amendment) Act which was fiercely opposed by the press. The controversial aspect of the law read,

4(1) Any person who authorises for publication, publishes, 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 a term of 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 (quoted in Elias, 1969, p.6).

This was briefly the state of the Nigerian press law when the military came in 1966. As part of their first actions the military tried to liberalise some of the regional press laws. The second decree issued by the Ironsi government, Decree No. 2 of 1966, declared 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 shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding £500 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years or both (quoted in Elias, ibid, p.133).

Before long the honeymoon was over. In 1967 the Western Nigeria government banned the Morning Post in its area of authority for about two months and no action was taken against the government under Decree No. 2. Earlier in 1966 the Federal Government promulgated the Defamatory
and Offensive Publication Decree. In 1967, as a result of government concern over reports in the foreign media just before the civil war the Federal Government enacted the Newspapers Prohibition of Circulation Decree No. 17 of 1967. This gave the Head of State the power to ban the circulation or sale of a newspaper in any part of the country. Though Onagoruwa has argued that the decree affected only foreign publications, it was under this decree that the Obasanjo's regime banned the Newbreed Magazine in July 1978 (Onagoruwa, 1980).

Also in 1967 the all embracing emergency decree, Armed Forces and Police (Special Powers) Decree No. 24 was enacted. Under it a police officer from the rank of Inspector and above could search any newspaper office or premises without any search warrant or even any prior notice of intent. The emergency decree also empowered the Inspector General of Police or the Chief of Staff (Supreme Headquarters) to arrest without warrant and detain indefinitely any citizen for no stated reason. The law was enacted to meet the circumstance of the civil war but it remained in force till 1979 when the military withdrew. Under it many journalists were detained and sometimes tortured. During the period newspaper offices were closed. There was also Decree No. 53 which forbids all newspapers from giving "undue publicity" to lockouts, strikes or picketing and any form of industrial disputes.

The most celebrated case of physical attacks on the press or journalists was the Amakiri Affair. Minere Amakiri was the correspondent of the Nigerian Observer in the River State. He wrote a story on some demands made at a press conference by the State branch of the Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT). Unfortunately the day the story was published, July 30, 1973, was the birthday of the State Governor. This according to the Governor’s assistants was an embarrassment. Amakiri was arrested, given twenty-four strokes of the cane on his bare buttocks and roughly shaven clean with "an old rusty razor blade". The case later went to court where Amakiri was awarded ₦10,750 as damages.

In 1977 the Obasanjo Government enacted Decree No. 11 of 1976 entitled Public Officers (Protection Against False Accusation) Decree. Under it, it was an offence to publish any false allegation of corruption against any public officer. In April 1984 the Buhari Government enacted a similar but more draconian law popularly known as Decree 4. Under it
the truth of a publication does not exonerate the writer as far as the fact was "calculated to bring the Federal Military Government ... or public officer to ridicule or disrepute" (Fola Akinrinwosa, 1985, West Africa, May 7, 1984). Under the decree two journalists were jailed for one year each for publishing a story about the appointment of ambassadors. The decree has since been repealed following the overthrow of the Buhari's regime.

Despite these laws and sometimes maltreatment of journalists many Nigerians including journalists still believe that the country's press is the freest in Africa (Jose, 1975, Ekwelie, 1979). Be that as it may legislation only constitute one form of control open to the state. We can further identify more covert form of control. These are controls at the level of resource allocation and at the operation level.

According to Graham Murdock, allocative control refers to the power to define the general objectives, goals and scope of the media institutions, and the determination of how its resources are used. In short, it is mainly concerned with policy formulation, for instance the overall editorial policy will be defined here. On the other hand operational control consists of day-to-day implementation of the policy and decisions already laid out at the allocative level. The government or owner and/or board of directors are responsible for control at the point of resource allocation while the management implement their directives on daily basis.

Some of the issues on control have already been discussed above. For instance we have mentioned some of them in our examination of the changing pattern of ownership. During the 19th century we noticed that control at both levels were in the hands of the owner-editors with the colonial state attempting to control them through legislation and sometimes advertisement subsidy as in the case of Jackson's Lagos Daily Record or withdrawal as was the case of the Pilot in 1938 and 1945-46. The gradual separation of the two levels came into sharper relief with the commercialisation and professionalisation coupled with the constitutional and political changes which ushered in independence. Then it became necessary to employ trusted men as managers, journalists and directors to take charge while the politicians busy themselves with the struggle for power and the sharing of the 'national cake'.
The board is usually composed of political party appointees or as under the military trusted civilians and civil servants. When the Federal Government set up the Morning Post its board was made up of four NPC and three NCNC members reflecting the federal coalition of the time. The board was under the general supervision of the Federal Ministry of Information. The two parties tried to appoint their own men into key positions. For example the NCNC wanted to appoint Increase Coker as the editor-in-chief while the NPC preferred Abiodun Aloba (Ebewezer Williams) who eventually got the job because of the Prime Minister's backing. He was trusted by the Prime Minister (see E. Williams, n.d. chapter 14).

When the Daily Times was taken over by the Federal Government in 1976 a senior civil servant from the cabinet office was brought in as the Chief Executive. Editorial appointments are equally influenced by political considerations.

Though media managers may be able to exercise some autonomy in their day-to-day administration, efforts are made by the government to see that the policy reflects the general interests of the ruling class. These efforts we suggest are made through the appointment of key management and editorial staff under the general supervision of a trusted board. This suggestion is evident in the following statement by a former editor and General Manager of the government owned Daily Sketch, Dayo Duyile. According to him,

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 Board's editorial policy... These are the three principal actors who really matter in directing the editorial policy of a newspaper... The Board initiates and directs the company's policies while the management carries out the wishes, aspirations and plans of the Board (Duyile, 1979, p.51).

As the statement made clear the overall shape of a paper's editorial policy is set by the Board whose decisions are ultimately subject to the control of the appointing authority, the government.

Conclusion

The editorial policy of a newspaper would reflect how the paper conceives its role in a particular society. It could be argued that such a policy would reflect how the makers of such a policy perceive the society
and its social structure. Specifically, in the Third World such a policy is often influenced by the national policy and objectives as enunciated by the power elite. This is evident in the idea that the mass media should support government efforts towards national integration and economic development.

As we shall show in the next chapter such sentiments are contained in the editorial policies of both private and government owned media organisations. Individual journalists also express commitment to them. This does not however prevent such organisations and individuals from also claiming adherence to certain aspects of libertarian and social responsibility models of the press. This indicates the contradictory sources and traditions which inform Nigerian journalism and the double allegiance of Nigerian journalists.

As we shall make clear in subsequent discussions the effects of the various forms of control we have discussed above should not be over emphasised. The sometimes dramatic outburst of government harassment, intimidation and maltreatment of journalists could give a misleading picture. This is evident in some academic and popular discussions of freedom of the press in Nigeria. Such discussions usually attribute mostly all problems of Nigerian journalism to government ownership of the mass media. But as Golding and Elliot have argued this is outweighed by the professional ideologies or news values of journalism received from the West. It is these values that also give expression to and help to resolve the tension generated by the double allegiance of Nigerian journalists that we mentioned above that is, the adherence to the basic tenets of 'development news' and the Western 'fourth estate' model of journalism.

While we do not disregard the constraints imposed on journalism by the type of state-media relationship we have noted above, it is our contention that it will be more meaningful at least in the context of this study to pay more attention to how professional ideology structure news production in one direction rather than another. We examine these values in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 6

THEORIES OF COMMUNICATION

Two main approaches or theories have come to dominate mass communication studies, especially discussions on the role of the media in society. These theories are in the main derived from two opposing views of society and its social structure; though until recently they have more often been employed "as implicit presuppositions rather than as explicit expositions" (Golding and Murdock, 1980, p.64). The first approach is derived from the liberal democratic view of the press as a 'fourth estate of the realm'. This has its root in a pluralist conception of the society, with analysis centering on freedom of speech and the press, media autonomy from the state, democracy and so on. The second approach is derived from Marxist/critical theory which sees the media as one of the ideological apparatuses of the state being used to promote and legitimise the values and ideas of the dominant class in society. Despite the differences and various tendencies in the Marxist approach its line of enquiry stems in the main from a class-based model of society, stressing such issues as ideology, legitimation, power, inequality, ownership and control, access and participation.

However, the dominance of the two approaches has not debarred some commentators on African mass media to conceptualise the media on the continent in terms of authoritarianism. Such an approach is usually brought in from a standpoint which accepts the general perspective of the libertarian theory of the press. Working within this perspective African countries are usually seen as having departed from the ideal type of media ownership and control found in the West. If they are not communist, they are authoritarian, especially if the government is military (see Hatchen, 1975). Many African journalists, intellectuals and the lay public accept this view and the basic postulates of the libertarian model of the press (Aborishade, 1977, Sonaike, 1985). This of course is due to the general process which has been called the transfer of professional ideology from the West (Golding, 1977).

The acceptance of the main tenets of libertarian philosophy has however not precluded African journalists from a commitment to another model of journalism, development journalism. While this model is supposed to meet the peculiar needs and aspirations of the Third World, its basic assumptions, procedures and canons of practice are not radically different
from the Western journalistic practice. There is much confusion about how to conceptualise development journalism, either as a new concept, a variant of authoritarian or social responsibility theory. According to Christine Ogan,

> Depending on one's definition of this 'new' concept, development journalism belongs either to authoritarian or to the social responsibility theory of the press. It is just another example of new wine in old bottles (Ogan, 1982, p.11)

**Liberal View of the Press**

This view of the function of the press in society has progressed with the historical development of European societies both intellectually, economically and politically. Historically the system of press control in Europe was authoritarian, reflecting the basic authoritarian structure of society and government with its economic and intellectual underpinnings, (Siebert, 1956, p.10). However because of changes at different levels of the society, notably economic, intellectual and the struggle for power between the rising class of commercial bourgeoisie and declining class of landed aristocracy, and the Reformation, the authoritarian structure of society gave way to liberal democracy. According to Siebert by the beginning of the 18th century authoritarian control of the press was dying and by the end of it the libertarian principles had triumphed "protecting the freedom of speech and of the press" (Siebert, ibid, p.44).

The underlying postulate of libertarianism as embodied in the writings of John Milton, Thomas Jefferson and others was that man should be free from all outside constraints on his ability to use his reason as a rational being in the pursuit of truth. In that case he needs an unpoluted source of information to arrive at a rational decision. The press is seen as the source of this information. Under the libertarian concept the main function of the press is to provide information free from government interference. As Siebert put it,

> Basically the underlying purpose of the media was to help discover the truth, to assist in the process of solving political and social problems by presenting all manner of evidence and opinion as the basis for decisions. The essential characteristic of this process was its freedom from government controls or domination (Siebert, ibid, p.51).

1. The discussion below is based largely on the works of Siebert et al (1956).
Clear in this statement is the view that multiplicity of voices and the clash of different ideas and opinions are essential ingredients of democracy. It was also assumed that everybody is rational enough to choose between falsehood and truth. It was further assumed that there is a 'self-righting' mechanism in the market-place of ideas where everybody has equal right and power to participate. As one of those who provided the intellectual background to the philosophy remarked, "The discernment they have manifested between truth and falsehood shows that they may safely be trusted to hear everything true and false, and to form a correct judgement between them" (Jefferson, quoted in Smith, 1973, p.36).

Another assumption of the libertarian philosophy was that anybody who has anything to say on any public issue should be allowed to say it without any hinderance. Related to this was the belief that anybody who has the means to establish a means of communication should be allowed to do so. There should be no monopoly of such means of communication. Underpinning this is of course the acceptance of free enterprise and private ownership of property and means of production, in other words the main tenets of capitalism. As Dennis McQuail who has labelled the theory as the "free press theory" has pointed out "... press freedom has become identified with property rights" and the analogy of the 'free market of ideas' transferred to the "real free market in which communication is a good to be manufactured and sold ... press freedom thus becomes identified with private ownership of the media and freedom from interference in the market" (McQuail, 1983, pp.88-89).

The key point in the libertarian theory is that the press should be free from government control and left to the patronage of readers; implicitly to market forces. In carrying out its functions impartially the press should be an autonomous institution, not only transmitting information about other institutions but acting as a watchdog on behalf of the people. In this sense the press and its functions are central to the proper and effective working of liberal democracies. In fact the need for a free press acting as a fourth estate of the realm became an essential characteristic of such societies.

However, just as the changes of the earlier epoch saw the withering away of authoritarianism so the changes of the 19th century revealed the obvious weakness and inadequacies of libertarian philosophy. Such changes,
apart from those in the larger political, economic and social structure, could also be noticed in the organisation and economics of the press and even in the practice of journalism. For instance the high cost of setting up a newspaper or a television or radio station more or less renders the libertarian argument that anybody who so wishes could set up a means of communication hollow. Increasing cost and concentration both across and within the communication industry has meant that fewer and fewer big businesses could survive in the industry. This means only fewer voices, as against the multiplicity of voices and the market place of ideas, advanced by the libertarians could be heard.

Within the organisation and practice of journalism itself, changes occurred which more or less rendered the press a mere transmission belt of facts. James Carey has located the origin of this change in the "development and institutionalisation of objective reporting" whose cannons "turn the journalist into a professional communicator; from an independent observer and critic to a relatively passive link in a communication chain that records the passing scene for audience" (Carey, 1969, p.33). One of these cannons is that the highest standard of journalism is "when the reporter (has) presented the reader with all sides of an issue (though there were usually only two), presented all the 'facts' and allowed the reader to decide what these facts meant" (Carey, ibid). This development meant that the press became a broker in symbols abandoning its classical role as an independent interpreter of events. We however have to note that this change in practice "was grounded in purely commercial motive: the need of the mass newspaper to serve politically heterogeneous audiences without alienating any segment of the audience" (Carey, ibid, p.32).

Another major challenge to the libertarian philosophy was the coming of television. For technical and sometimes security reasons, television has always had a close relationship to the state. It was practically impossible to guarantee a multiplicity of channels because of limited space in the broadcasting spectrum, thus dealing a blow to a central tenet in the libertarian argument. It was therefore necessary to have some form of state control, at least to avoid chaos in the use of frequencies and to safeguard national security.
Further the earlier faith placed on the rationality of man became suspect. It was now feared that though he may be rational, he may however be lethargic, exposing him to manipulation by others.

In summary, concentration of press ownership, the criticism, arising from such concentration, of the role of the press in society, the arrival of television, changes in the organisation and practice of journalism, the challenge to the concepts of a market place of ideas and the self-righting principle and the undermining of the rationality of man, "that is the general intellectual challenge to the basic assumptions of the enlightenment which provided the intellectual justification for libertarian theory, all served to chip away at the foundations on which the old theory rested" (Tracey, 1978, p.23).

Moreover, despite its insistence on the individuals right to choose, the theory was not concerned with the right of the public to receive information nor does it place any obligation on the publisher. In a trenchant statement that reflected this 'power without responsibility' William Peter Hamilton was quoted as saying, "A newspaper is a private enterprise owing nothing whatever to the public, which grants it no franchise. It is therefore affected with no public interest. It is emphatically the property of the owner, who is selling a manufactured product at his own risk..." (quoted in Peterson, 1956, p.73).

Therefore it was in response to the criticisms of the press and the inadequacies of the libertarian theory and also to avoid government interference that the press started to express a commitment to a responsibility to their readers and to the general welfare of the populace. This response was, as Peterson has noted in line with the general sense of accountability to the public by business and industry. What emerged from this process of changes and response to them is the social responsibility theory described by Peterson as "largely a grafting of new ideas onto traditional theory" (Peterson, ibid, p.75). This implies that the new theory (Roger Brown would prefer "Ideology" (Brown, 1969)) accepts some of the basic premise of the libertarian philosophy, e.g. the autonomy of the press but with the added self-imposed duty that the press must be socially responsible to those it serves. Further it accepts the functions ascribed to the press by the older theory but however there was the recognition of the inadequacy of the press truly performing these functions (Peterson,
ibid, p.74). The theory thus strives to reconcile media autonomy with obligation to society. "In short", as McQuail pointed out,

media ownership and control is to be viewed as a kind of public stewardship, not a private franchise, and there is a pronounced shift away from the relativism about ends characteristic of free press theory and from optimism that the 'free market place of ideas' will really deliver the individual and social benefits claimed on its behalf (McQuail, 1983, pp.90-91).

The canons and character of the social responsibility theory were spelt out by the Commission on Freedom of the Press set up in the U.S. in 1946 and a Royal Commission on the Press set up in Britain between 1947-49. The American Commission listed five functions which the society expected of the press,

1) That the press provides "a truthful, comprehensive, and intelligent account of the day's event in a context which gives them meaning". Here the press was being called upon not only to report the true fact but also "the truth about the fact".

2) The press should serve as "a forum for the exchange of comment and criticism".

3) The press should present a "representative picture of the constituent groups in society".

4) It should be responsible "for the presentation and clarification of the goals and values of society".

5) It should provide "full access to the day's intelligence" (Peterson, ibid, pp.87-91).

The movement from the open license granted by the libertarian philosophy to a socially responsible press was influenced by the belief that while the press was still free "to provide a certain kind of service to society, it retained no freedom to please itself" (Smith, 1973, p.45). Perhaps in recognition of this point the 1923 Cannons of Journalism of the American Society of Newspaper Editors "called on newspapers to practice responsibility to general welfare, sincerity, truthfulness, impartiality, fair play, decency and respect for the individual's privacy" (ibid, p.85). This type of sentiment could be found in many codes of practice drawn up by or for journalists. For example part of the Code of Conduct for Nigerian journalists drawn up in 1962 stated,
1) "We believe that the public is entitled to the truth and that only correct information can form the basis for sound journalism and ensure confidence of the people.

2) We believe, therefore, that it is the moral duty of every journalist to have respect for the truth and to publish or prepare for publication only the truth and to the best of his knowledge.

3) We believe that it is the duty of the journalist to publish all the facts; never to suppress such facts as he knows; never to falsify either to suit his own purposes or for the purpose of satisfying ends other than the truth dictates or the facts bear out" (Increase Coker, n.d. p.123).

Implicit in the social responsibility theory and the codes of practice it gave rise to was the rejection of the earlier view of the rational man and the idea of self-righting process. Journalists now place on themselves the duty of helping to search for the truth, by providing 'all the facts' in a non-partisan way. The theory according to Herbert Altschull "though ... meaningless and operates as a mechanism of social control, has a considerable value for the working journalists." Altschull listed four ways in which journalists use the theory to justify their work. First, it gives the journalist the feeling that he is making a contribution to society and working in the public interest. Second, it allows him to avoid uncertainty about his purposes. Third, it enables him to ignore the economic realities of his trade; "He can choose to report the conflictual because it is socially responsible to do so, not because in so doing he is pandering to the baser interests of his readers, in gossips as well as in sex and violence". Lastly, it heads off the threat of government intervention (Altschull, 1984, p.303).

The social responsibility theory accepts a role for the state. While its predecessor denied any role for the state, the new theory expects it to promote and enhance freedom of the press. According to a member of the American Commission on the Freedom of the Press, William Hocking, "Government remains the residuary legatee of the responsibility for an adequate press performance" (quoted in Peterson, op cit, p.95). Therefore while the advocates and adherents of the social responsibility theory still argue that the press should be autonomous from the state, there was a change in what that autonomy implies. Peterson has argued that,
Libertarian theory was born of a concept of negative liberty, which we can define loosely as "freedom from" and more precisely as "freedom from external restraint". The social responsibility theory, on the contrary, rests on a concept of positive liberty, "freedom for", which calls for the presence of the necessary implements for the attainment of a desired goal (Peterson, ibid, p.93).

It is in this light that statutory and other legal regulations by the state is accommodated in the social responsibility theory. For example the government could legislate against monopoly, guard against abuse of the press and even establish its own communication channels to supplement existing services. And there is the whole area of national security to contend with.

As we have pointed out above the social responsibility theory is essentially a modified version of the libertarian philosophy; modified to suit changing times and conditions. It shared with the traditional theory a number of assumptions. First there is the general acceptance of a particular model of society and its economic structure. That model is the liberal democratic pluralist conception of society and the distribution of power within it. Briefly this is that the society is made up of competing elite and interest groups, all sharing power, at least if not equally, none is able to dominate the other. This according to Robert Dahl, "Because one centre of power is set against another, power itself will be tamed, civilized, controlled and limited to decent human purposes, while coercion, the most evil form of power, will be reduced to a minimum" (Dahl, 1967, p.24). In this social arrangement those who run the press constitute an autonomous group in society who through the medium of the press convey, quite impartially (at least so it is assumed) the views and ideas of other autonomous individuals, groups, institutions and centres of power. The press is presented as an autonomous institution independent of both the state, political parties and other outside institutions which may constraint its operations.

This assumption of the place of the press in the society is based on the theoretical position which sees the state as a neutral institution mediating the conflicting interests of different groups in the society. The press is to articulate these different interests. The press is also supposed to act as a check against abuse of power by any of the social groups. This is the idea of the press as the watchdog of the society.
For effective and impartial discharge of its role it must not be linked to any of the competing groups.

Linked to this theoretical position is the pluralist idea of social consensus shared by the various groups and individuals in society. The press is to act as a forum of debate, but this debate is assumed to be within the accepted beliefs and norms of the society. Journalists are to seek and publish the truth, as if the truth is self-evident and interest free.

The social responsibility theory with its stress on financial autonomy of the press also shared with its predecessor an acceptance of free enterprise and private ownership of means of production. The government is not expected to compete with or eliminate privately owned media but to supplement them if necessary (Peterson, ibid, p.95). It is also expected to create the atmosphere for capitalism to thrive by aiding private investors. A writer has summarised this argument as follows,

... the papers' financial independence from the state and from the major parties is seen as guaranteeing their autonomy from powerful vested interests and underwriting their ability to act as the guardian and voice of the general interest. Within the prevailing professional wisdom of the newspaper industry then, 'freedom' of the press is synonymous with the 'free' play of market forces and the absence of direct state control (Murdock, 1980, p.40).

The weaknesses of the social responsibility theory are inherent in some of these assumptions, largely stemming from the pluralist origin of the theory. For instance in the pluralist argument capital and power relations in society are ignored. According to Graham Murdock the pluralists "decentre the power of capital in two main ways; by concentrating on the relations between the press and the spheres of the state and the political, and by stressing the progressive separation of ownership and control within modern newspaper enterprises" (Murdock, 1980, p.39).

The first issue raised above is about the pluralist stress on the autonomy of the press and as such free from pressure from any vested interest, to act in the interest of general welfare. There is some truth in this argument. The press is to some extent independent of the political establishment and other powerful institutions especially in Western liberal
democracies. Journalists and other media practitioners are not passive relay belts or mouth piece of these institutions. Due to their professional codes and values and the ideologies of the profession, they exercise some judgements on their materials before they are packaged as news. However the argument by "decentring capital and concentrating so centrally on the spheres of the state and the political ... produces a partial account. Most crucially, it glosses over the relations between these spheres and the core segment of monopoly and finance capital" (Murdock, ibid, p.40).

The second point hinges on the 'Managerial Revolution' thesis which stresses the separation of ownership from operational control in the modern newspaper industry as in other industrial sectors. The editors and journalists are presented as those in charge of daily routine operation of newspaper production while the owners deal with laying down broad policy guidelines, resource allocation and market strategy. There is also a decentralised decision-making process. This separation and dispersal of control ensures production of diverse output and opinions. This view is underscored by Jay Blumler when he said that the decentralised structure of decision-making will allow newspapers "to give notice to those diverse ways of looking at social issues that a pluralistic society will generate" (Jay Blumler, 1979, p.7). The main thrust of this view is that "press presentations are shaped primarily by the interests and decisions of journalists and editors and by accidents and exigences of daily production schedule" (Murdock, 1980, p.41).*

While there is some truth in this occupational ideology, studies have however shown that news coverage and production are not random and personalised responses to chance events. Such studies have shown the consistency and similarities between newspapers on the coverage of many issues. These consistencies and similarities, such studies have further revealed, are due to the routinised practise of news gathering and processing based on some criteria of newsworthiness. These criteria or news values were developed to meet the changing market situation of the press, that is the need to satisfy a mass heterogeneous readership.

Though the pluralists accept the influence of the market, they

however contend that the sovereignty of the consumer is in the final analysis the deciding factor. But as one of them rightly conceded,

... the editor's knowledge that his paper's survival depends on attracting advertisements cannot fail to affect the nature of the product. In the present economic situation it has come to mean that he must either produce a newspaper which will be read by the millions or which will attract the big spenders. The rich and the business executive are the only minority groups fully catered for (quoted in Murdock, 1980, p.42).

Further works based on this orthodox view fail to realise that the supposed wide range of opinions carried by the press is really limited (Chibnall, 1977, p.3). The press, because of occupational and professional values and practices, economic and market constraints and its conception of its social role is oriented toward the middle ground, the liberal dominant values. The press operates within a framework of the social consensus established by the powerful groups in society who by their positions are regarded as the representatives and guardians of the 'national interest'. Views and opinions coming from outside this established social value or consensus are by and large excluded, trivialised and marginalised or stigmatised as unrepresentative or extreme and therefore irrelevant, unworthy or deviant.

Also the idea that power is equally diffused in society is not true to reality. In this vein Stuart Hall has argued that "The notion, then, that we are all 'free and equal' members of the communicative structures, with an equal competence of 'speech' and an 'equal right' of access is a mystification" (Hall, 1975, p.118). And as Raymond Williams has eloquently put it "Anything can be said, provided that you can afford to say it and that you can say it profitably" (Williams, 1976, p.135).

This pluralist conception, especially on the financial autonomy and independence of the press from the state or political parties has little or no applicability to Nigeria or any other African country. The structure of the Nigerian mass media started as a replica of the British mass media system. The press was under private ownership while broadcasting, based on the British public service philosophy, was state-owned. This structure reflects the spirit and philosophy of the social responsibility theory. But since independence the organisation and structure of ownership have
changed, though commitment to the philosophical premise of social responsibility remains among journalists, media owners and the government. The entire media set-up has become more and more integrated into the state structure especially since the advent of the oil boom in the 1970s. The movement in press ownership has been from private-ownership to party-owned papers and government-ownership. Now the mass media are mainly state-owned and they are subjected to a lot of overt and covert pressure. The few remaining private newspapers are part of big business conglomerates owned by some four families (see the next Chapter).

Further the supposed 'decisive power of the readers' is more of a fiction than a reality. In Nigeria as in many African countries, newspaper circulation is very limited. So, many papers yearly depend on government subvention and budgetary allocations. In fact many newspapers would die but for state support. Those in the private sector also depend on subsidies from other affiliated companies.

**Development Journalism**

Despite this limitation Nigerian journalists and commentators continue to lay claims to the main postulates of libertarianism. This, as we have mentioned above, is however held along a commitment to another model of journalism, development journalism which seem to deviate from the main tenets of the libertarian or social responsibility theory. Basically it accepts that the mass media must be committed to the attainment of certain stated national goals and objectives. It could be said that development journalism as a Third World idea is mainly a reaction, if not a total rejection by Third World leaders, academics and journalists, to the tenets and assumptions of Western model of journalism and the activities of the Western media in the Third World. According to development journalism, though the media may be independently owned, they are not supposed to be neutral or impartial. They may be objective yet their operations must be oriented towards some state social goals and political and economic objectives. Underlying this model of the social role of the press is the notion of "national service" (Habte, 1983).

African leaders and journalists have justified the need for this type of journalism in terms of the fragility of the political culture and the underdevelopment of their economy. It is argued that being very young,
African countries need to develop their institutions and shape their national consensus in an atmosphere devoid of disharmony, hatred and oppositionist tendencies. African countries, the argument further goes, cannot afford the excesses of the Western 'free' press. The mass media are urged to lay emphasis on positive values that unite the various cultural, social and geographical entities making up the nation. Further the mass media are to promote national consensus and help preserve national culture. In this light the role of the mass media is that of social guidance; 'showing the light' towards the stated national objectives as defined by those in government. According to one of Nigeria's foremost journalists, Babatunde Jose,

... in the new nations and traditional societies of Africa ... a journalist has additional responsibilities to help in building a nation out of the multi-lingual, multi-cultured societies in countries where economic sources are inadequate to meet the expectations of the people... In the final analysis, the journalists are part of the Nigerian society. If a society decays, the journalist cannot claim to be healthier than the body and if law and order breaks down and there is chaos, there would be no newspaper, no journalists and no readers (Jose, 1975)

Another argument put forward is that a 'watch-dog' press is needed in a society with irreconciliable conflict between groups and classes. Many African politicians like Nyerere, Sekou Toure, Mugabe and Awolowo deny the existence of structural, class division in African countries. The former Managing Director of the Daily Times, Dele Cole, has argued that in the Nigerian context,

It is ... contended that Nigeria's cultural heritage makes no such presuppositions (of a radical state of conflict between government and governed), that those who govern are, in theory and in fact, the representatives of the governed, and that no essential clash of interest need be invented where there should be none (Duyile, 1979, p.99).

In Nigeria the state attaches great importance to the mass media as tools for national development and national unity. In the Second National Development Plan (1970-74) the objective was stated,

An important function of Government information services in a developing country like Nigeria should be to mobilise massive support for national development measures and
programmes. This support is essential for the success of any Development Plan. A serious attempt will, therefore, be made during the 1970-74 Plan period to utilize the improved media to generate general and popular support for the implementation of measures and programmes for economic and social development at all levels - federal, state and local (Second National Development Plan, p.255).

This policy directive could, for instance, be seen in the policy of many media institutions, private and public. The policy of the News Agency of Nigeria, among other things, states:

News and comment emanating from the agency must be truthful, honest and fair, but must not jeopardize peace and harmony in the country... (The Agency) must positively influence public opinion and contribute to the evolution and formulation of correct national policies... In its role as the national purveyor of news and opinion, and of espousing the public good, the News Agency of Nigeria must not act as an institutional opponent to any government or interests; but where it is in the public interest to report criticism of public policy, it must do so in a restrained and objective manner. In matters that affect the sovereignty or unity of Nigeria, neutrality is not expected of the Agency. It must come out firmly on the side of Nigeria without prejudice to its adherence to the truth which must at all times be its guiding light and governing principle.

According to the former Chairman and Managing Director of the Daily Times, Babatunde Jose, the Daily Times pursues "a policy of absolute independence in all things and neutral in nothing affecting the destinies of Nigeria and Africa..." (Jose, 1975). This policy was earlier set out in 1963;

The Daily Times is a national newspaper and it must fairly reflect the interest of all the people in the Regions and the Federation. The DAILY TIMES is deeply concerned with the prosperity, health and education of all the people of Nigeria and with the development of the country; we must not allow the DAILY TIMES to be used to further narrow sectional interests which are inconsistent with its independent and national character.

Politically, the DAILY TIMES is independent. This means it does not as a matter of course support or oppose any political party. If the policy or action of a political party or group, in the considered opinion of the Editor, merits the paper's support, however, we shall give it. Just as we are free to oppose or criticise political policies or action which we consider to be bad.
Bad policies are those which are against the best interest of the people of Nigeria.

The DAILY TIMES gives broad general support to the Governments in power, but we also have the right to criticise Government policies which we believe are antagonistic to the country's best interests...

We must produce a fair and accurate newspaper which is loyal to the best interests of Nigeria which reflects the aspirations, interests and character of our people, (reproduced in Echeruo, 1976).

This same sentiment is evident in the policy of the newest newspaper in the country, The Guardian,

The GUARDIAN is an independent newspaper, established for the purpose of presenting balanced coverage of events, and of promoting the best interests of Nigeria. It owes allegiance to no political party, ethnic community, religious or other interest group. Its primary commitment is to the integrity and sovereignty of the Federation of Nigeria.... (The Guardian, July 4, 1983).

We have reproduced these statements for two main reasons. They demonstrate the media's support for a particular view of the Nigerian society, that is a collectivist conception that denies any structural division. This is in line with the view of the dominant group in the Nigerian society and in general the theoretical position of African socialism. This is evident in the stress on national interest, unity and development. From this stems our second reason which is that they indicate the double loyalty of Nigerian mass media practitioners to two philosophical positions on the role of the press in society.

As Golding and Elliot have pointed out, Nigerian journalists are caught between two seemingly opposed models of the social role of the press. These two models would, at least theoretically, entail different beliefs and values about the appropriate journalistic practice. These beliefs and values originate from different environments and social needs.

The first model which we discussed above is the Western libertarian philosophy which regards the press as the fourth estate of the realm. The mass media is supposed to act as an independent watchdog of the society, "its independence guaranteed constitutionally (and) its responsibility by
the exercise of consumer sovereignty in the market place" (Golding and Elliot, 1979, p.46). The whole notion of a free press is also rooted in this model. As against the collectivist notion of society we noted above, this model rests on the philosophical assumption of individual liberty and a free market of ideas.

This model is different from the second model, development journalism. Development journalism is essentially based on "the positive uses of the media for national development, for the autonomy and cultural identity of the particular national society. To this end, certain freedoms of the media and of journalists are subordinated to their responsibility for helping to achieve these objectives. At the same time, collective ends, rather than individual freedoms, are emphasized" (McQuail, 1983, p.95).

At an abstract and analytical level these two models are different. But operationally they are both informed by the notion of the media's responsibility to the society. In other words they are informed primarily by the assumed functions of the mass media to inform and educate (Lange, 1984) though the second model is more overt and less pretentious in its claims. Also development news assumes a more deliberate process in its selection and treatment of news while the 'fourth estate' Western model claims to be a random and objective capture of reality. However this randomness or 'chance reactions to random events' has been found by many studies to be limited. News is shaped by certain technical, organisational and professional factors which makes it both a structured and partial account of reality. From this structured production process comes the crucial similarity between the two models. This is at the level of 'what is news?' and the type of actors, events, places and subjects that make news. A comparative study by Golding and Elliot of broadcast news in Sweden, Ireland and Nigeria found a lot of similarities in these areas. According to the study, news in the three countries "was dependent on what could be termed the information-producing strata of society, [authority-figures] leaving unheard those with no access to publicity or no desire for it" (Golding and Elliot, 1979, p.163).

The point we are making is that Nigerian or Third World journalists share with their Western counterparts a core professional ethics, values and ideology. In that sense it seems to us that at least at the point
of the final output both models are not irreconcilable. The mass media in Herbert Altschill's term are "Agents of power" by their "heavy reliance on dominant modes of defining social priorities and preferred explanations and solutions" (Golding and Middleton, 1982).

However, because of the ideological context of much of the discussion on Third World mass media, the theoretical and largely superficial distinction between the two models are maintained. This separation is shared by many Nigerian journalists largely because they have been integrated into the dominant culture of media practices, objectives and values developed by Western news media (Golding, 1977). This produces a lot of tension about how to reconcile and accommodate the requirements of both models without being subservient to the government and at the same time contributing to national development efforts as reflected in government activities.

As evident in the last chapter, the idea that journalism should serve as a tool for the mobilisation of the people and for the achievement of defined social and political objectives is as old as the origin of the press in Nigeria. Journalism, as we discussed above, started in Nigeria as part of the anti-colonial struggle. Journalism and political struggle were inseparable in achieving constitutional changes and later political independence. It could be argued it is that tradition which has been carried forward in what is now called 'development journalism'. This is contrary to many accounts of the concept which date it to the 1970s or associate it with the debate on the New International Information Order. Such accounts also mainly associate its origin with Asia where it has definitely received much attention since the 1970s (see Ogan, 1982, Lent, 1979).

The longer pedigree of the concept in the African context could also be seen in the writings of African leaders. For example, in his address to African journalists in Accra in 1963, the Ghanaian leader, Kwame Nkrumah said,

The drumbeat of the African revolution must throb in the pages of the newspapers and magazines; it must sound in the voices and feelings of our news readers. To this end we need a new kind of journalist for the African revolution.
Though this statement reflects Nkrumah's pan-African politics, the idea behind it is in consonance with the assumption of development journalism; a non-neutral, socially purposive press that reflects the national aspirations and goals.

The commitment of Nigerian journalists to this type of journalism is therefore a continuation of the historical role of the press as defined by the early politician-journalists like the Jacksons, Herbert Macaulay, Ernest Ikoli and Azikiwe among others.

It could also be argued that much of this argument is appropriated from the orthodox theory on the role of the mass media in development has postulated by modernisation theorists and communication scholars in the 60s (see Schram, 1964, Pye, 1963). The basic argument of this research tradition is that the mass media could be used to integrate all the different cultural groups of a developing society and forge national unity. It was also claimed that the mass media could be used to mobilise them to participate in economic development by raising their consciousness. An underlying concern of these theoretical arguments is that the mass media could be used to stimulate the apathetic people of the developing societies.

One of the major criticisms of this approach is that it assumed a Western pattern of economic development and its supporting institutions and normative set-up as being suitable for developing societies. It also assumes that stimulating development ideas would trickle down from the Western educated elite of the developing societies to the poor in the urban and rural areas. Therefore the educated elite and the government are crucial in the scheme. The education and position of elite in the state give them the opportunity to determine the contents, direction and model of development. Such development reflects their interests and tastes as (junior) partners to Western capital.

The development model underpinning this orthodox view of the role of the media in developing society either as postulated by Schram and others or by African politicians do not bother to consider issues like power relations, social inequalities and the general social
structure. 'Development' is held to be what everybody wants or in the interest of all.

It could then be argued that development journalism shares certain assumptions about the society with the liberal/social responsibility theory of the press. For instance there is the underlying assumption of the existence of a national consensus which is above class divisions. In both models the state is conceived as the embodiment of the 'general will' and the government as the representative of that 'general will'. As we have already said such issues as power, inequality and class are not part of the two models and analysis based on any of them.

Critical Analysis*

It is these issues or the mystification in the two models or theories of the press and the constraining power of capital and market forces that the critical studies of the media focus on. Such an approach tries to conceptualize the mass media within the totality of the social structure. The scope of research employing the critical stance is usually wider than the earlier liberal approach. According to Dr. Robert White,

The point of departure is the recognition that social relations are radically though variably inegalitarian. This leads to a focus on the relations between the unequal distribution of control over systems of communications and wider pattern of inequality in the distribution of wealth and power. This focus entails exploring the relations between communication systems and systems of economic and social stratification, especially the class structure and the unequal exchange between advanced and developing nations.

Secondly, research must explore and unmask how communication systems maintain, reproduce and continually legitimate the prevailing structure of advantage and inequality as natural and inevitable.

Thirdly, research must consider the sources of social dissent

* We use the word 'critical' as it seems to be the most general current usage for the type of studies discussed here. However we sometimes interchange it with 'Marxist'.
and political struggle and how communication systems contribute to the dialectical relations between challenge and incorporation of disadvantaged groups within the existing order.

The advantage of this perspective is that it moves beyond the analysis of the media simply as causes and provides a framework for explaining communication systems and the media in terms of social structure and social process. It provides a basis for studying the content of cultural production (especially television) and national cultural development in terms of social structure (Robert A. White, 1981, p.7).

This approach implies that mass communication research and analysis ought to include the study of the context and factors - cultural, economic, political - within which mass communication takes place. Further, unlike the libertarian theorists, the Marxist/critical researchers view society in terms of conflict between social groups or classes of unequal power and that the mass media are "bound to the dominant institutions and ideologies by an actual subordination in power terms, by an intellectual disposition to acknowledge the role and centrality of those institutions and ideas and by occupational practices which serve the status quo rather than 'alternative' views of, say, the political process and history" (Tracey, op cit, p.29).

Usually situated within the political economy of the society, such analysis takes as its starting point the famous statement in the German Ideology by Marx and Engels that,

The class which has the means of 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... In so far therefore as they rule as a class and determine the extent and compass of an epoch, it is self-evident that ... among other things ... regulate the production and distribution of ideas of their age, thus their ideas are the ruling ideas of the epoch.

Though such an analysis tries to avoid economic determinism, its "distinctiveness and promise as a framework for the sociological investigation of culture and communication lies precisely in the fact that it focuses on the complex connection between economics and intellectual production, between base and superstructure" (Murdock and Golding, 1977, p.19).
Two main strands have been identified among Marxist writers on the media: instrumentalist, and structuralist approaches (Murdock, 1980). The instrumentalists assert that the press is an instrument of the capitalist class and "a crucial element in the legitimation of capitalist society" (Miliband, 1973, p.197). Thinking in this area is concerned with how members of this class influence news production in accordance with their interest. Without much evidence it is asserted that,

Those who own and control the capitalist mass media are mostly likely to be men whose ideological disposition run from soundly conservative to utterly reactionary; and in many instances, most notably in the case of newspapers, the impact of their views and prejudices is immediate and direct, in the straightforward sense that newspaper proprietors have often not only owned their newspapers but closely controlled their editorial and political line as well, and turned them, by constant and even daily intervention into vehicles of their personal views (Miliband, 1973, pp.204-205).

Pressure from advertisers is also assumed as a source of influence and conformism. Their patronage and custom means the survival or death of a newspaper, therefore directly or indirectly they influence the direction of a newspaper (Miliband, ibid, p.207).

However, instrumentalism has moved from this type of bald assertions of media control to studying how the press reflects the general interests of the capitalist class (Murdock, 1980, p.45). This is done by looking at the links between press proprietors and the dominant group in society. According to Miliband, who is a leading proponent of instrumentalism, "The assumption which is at work here is that a common social background and origin, education, kinship and friendship, a similar way of life, result in a cluster of common ideological and political positions and attitudes, common values and perspectives" (Miliband, 1977, p.96).

Apart from the fact that this type of analysis fails to provide evidence, it does not show how power and influence are exercised. It further fails to show the effect of the economy which is crucial to any Marxist analysis. Structural analysis of the media, however, attempts to rectify these failures. It lays emphasis on the political economy and its effect on news production. The press, it has been found, has over time, responded to the influence of the market in its development to reach its present state and it continues to respond to it. While structural analysis
does not ignore the relative autonomy of media producers and the effect of professional ideologies and practices nor the influence of the state and cultural factors on news production, Golding and Murdock have however argued that while taking on board these issues and factors "any sociological analysis of the ways in which the mass media operate as ideological agencies which fails to pay serious attention to the economic determinants framing production is bound to be partial". To them the 'economic' is a 'necessary' element in any study of the mass media (Golding and Murdock, 1979).

Structural analysis has shown the fallacy of the consumer sovereignty and the autonomy of the media theses of the liberal/pluralist theory. On consumer sovereignty it has shown that only papers with proprietors ready to underwrite their losses do survive. Also papers with readership possessing strong purchasing power appeal to advertisers, more so in this period of falling circulation figures. James Curran has shown in the British case that "... while political prejudice declined as a factor in advertising media selection, centrist and right-wing papers - most notably quality papers reaching elite audiences - have continued to receive more advertising support per copy than left papers, mainly due to the greater purchasing power and influence of their readers. Advertising has thus contributed in a number of ways to producing and maintaining a press weighted to the centre and right" (James Curran, 1980, p.109). It does mean that only those with substantial financial resources and therefore not likely to criticise the prevailing distribution of wealth and power will be able to establish or continue to produce newspapers (Murdock and Golding, 1977).

The fall in newspaper circulation and increasing cost have led the press to look for a 'safe non-contentious ground' of reporting in order to broaden circulation. Ideological and class divisions are avoided while themes and issues which cut across these are emphasised. The implication of this is to portray a non-existing oneness or unity in society. The structural inequality in society is blurred. In this sense the autonomy of media producers is hampered because they are always conscious of the necessity to meet these criteria.

They are constrained at another level by the values, ideologies and practices of journalism as a profession. That is how the press selects
from the many contending issues available to it. According to Golding and Elliot, news values perform two functions. They determine which events are suitable for inclusion in the final package sold to the public. Secondly, they are guidelines for the presentation of items, suggesting what to emphasise, what to omit and where to give priority in the preparation of the items for presentation. In other words they form a working rule "comprising a corpus of occupational lore which implicitly and often expressly explain and guides newsroom practice" (Golding and Elliot, 1979, p.114).

These values were historically determined, having arose from the need to serve a heterogeneous mass audience. They have come to structure the practice of journalism by making a virtue of necessity. For instance for practical reasons reporters are arranged and located according to schedules and locations that favour legitimated institutions, groups or individuals. Reporters are assigned to centralized agencies where facts are readily available and easier to collect - police stations, courts, parliament etc.

This reliance on organised source is part of the contradictory news making process Gaye Tuchman has described as the "routinization of the unexpected". More significantly, she showed how through this process the media help in legitimising the established social order;

... news both draws upon and reproduces institutional structures. Through its arrangement of time and space as intertwined social phenomena, the news organisation disperses a news net. By identifying centralized sources of information as legitimated social institutions, news organisations and newworkers wed themselves to specific beats and bureaus. Those sites are then objectified as the appropriate sites at which information should be gathered. Additionally, those sites of news gathering are objectified as the legitimated and legitimating sources of both information and governance. Through naive empericism, that information is transformed into objective facts - facts as a normal, natural, taken-for-granted description and constitution of a state of affairs. And through the sources identified with facts, newworkers create and control controversy; they contain dissent (Tuchman, 1978, pp.210-211).

In short the operation of these news values favour the elite in society. They also operate to obscure certain issues, e.g. historical and social processes and power while dramatising the immediate, the entertaining
and the negative. To illustrate these points we take a brief look at some of these values below. As Galtung and Ruge have argued, many of these values are culture-free and are "relatively independent of some other major determinants of the press". (Galtung and Ruge, 1965, p.69).

Prominence and Importance

This value has its origin in the theory of the social role of the press to educate and inform. Items that are of little interest but judged important in terms of their significance to a large number of people could be selected and published. It is assumed that the readers need to know. In many Third World countries 'importance' becomes a special criterion because of the type of news termed 'development news'. These are items included in the news package because of their social values associated with development. Development in such societies is mainly defined by the government. It means that the activities and speeches of those in government are of prime importance to the mass media.

Brevity and simplification

Due to space or time limitation, stories must be short, containing just the essential facts. Journalists also perceive that their readers have little or no time to devote to reading long or tedious articles. The concern of journalists in this case is to inform and not to explain; reality is thus oversimplified. Complex issues are sometimes brought down to a mundane and commonsense level in order for the news to be easily understood and assimilable by a readership of different cultural and intellectual background. This simplification often involves the dramatization and personification of issues, rendering their complex nature unrecognisable.

Negativeness

'When a dog bites a man, it is no news but when a man bites a dog that is news', this seems to be a standard criterion for judging how newsworthy an event is. Bad news is good news. Oddities make news. News is about the disruption in the normal running of events; issues that have obtruded themselves. This love of the abnormal is not deliberate but the outcome of the history of journalism. News, according to Golding and Elliot, "began as a service to groups directly concerned for the uninterrupted flow of commercial life. Interruption included loss of
merchandise at sea, financial upheavals in mercantile centres and, of course, war. Such events remain paradigm instances of bad news, and as a result of news per se" (Golding and Elliot, 1979, p.120).

News then becomes a means of surveying the environment "registering threats to the normal fabric of society and explaining their significance". The mass media by their orientation to the negative become agencies of social control "defining by default both the status quo and the sources and nature of threats to it" (Golding and Elliot, ibid).

Journalists often justify the attractiveness of negative news by making reference to the taste of the readers or audience. H. Brucker made the point thus,

It is, of course, a basic principle of journalism that the bigger, the more off-beat, or the more bloody the spectacle, the greater the news value. This is not because newspapermen are more ghoulish or less sensitive to the finer things of life than their fellow men. It merely reflects the ineluctable fact that readers will flock to a story that has shock value but ignore one that is routine (Brucker, 1973, p.175).

Recency

News must be up to date. The later the better. This means that the daily production sets the frame in which events will be perceived and reported. Issues become disconnected and disjointed as yesterday's event becomes a non-event today, except of course it could produce a new angle. In effect 'processes which do not fit this daily cycle do not register as news by producing news events'. This renders developing issues uncoverable until they burst into the open. News evacuates history from events. The Spanish scholar, Ortega Y. Gasset once said,

... the journalist's profession leads him to understand by the reality of the times that which creates a passing sensation, regardless of what it is, without any need for perspective or architecture. Real life, is, certainly purely of the present; but the journalist deforms this truism when he reduces the present to the momentary and the momentary to the sensational (Ortega Y. Gasset, 1944, p.98).

Backgrounding and follow-ups tend to reflect continuity of coverage then the continuity of social process being observed; a compilation of facts rather than an analysis of the history of the event (Golding and
Elliot, 1979, p. 148). Gaye Tuckman has put the consequence of this practice thus,

The orientation toward events, not issues, further limits social movements' and dissidents' access to the media, for newsmakers dismiss the issue-oriented analysis of social movement as unworthy of coverage (Tuckman, 1978, p.110).

**Drama**

This event-orientation of news is reinforced by an attraction to the drama in such event. News plays up the dramatic. Actions of individuals are more amenable to instant reporting than their argument. In getting the drama out of an issue, opposing views are usually pitched against each other. Sometimes reporting more or less turns into entertaining. In such a situation the entertainment value - humour, titillation, amusement - in an event becomes a factor in selecting it as news.

In Nigeria these elements of drama and entertainment may not be very evident if one looks at daily reporting in the papers as, say, compared with the British tabloids. This of course may be due to the predominance of government 'say-so' news in the press. But one would expect them to show up during periods of conflict. For instance, the early 1985 doctors' strike was presented as a confrontation between the government represented by the then Chief of Staff, Supreme Headquarters, Major General Tunde Idiagbon and the doctors, represented by Dr. Beko Kuti, the Secretary of the Nigerian Medical Association.

Dramatization has the effect of directing attention away from the meaning of events. The search for drama becomes a basis for evaluation; which more often than not bothers on trivialization of the event. In his analysis of the 1968 Anti-Vietnam demonstration in London, Graham Murdock argued that press,

present the material as a dramatic performance in which the action is unfolded through the actions and speech of certain central characters and the conflict between them. Readers ... are placed in the role of spectators, encouraged to participate vicariously in the performance through projecting themselves into the situation and/or identifying with central characters. In many ways therefore, newspapers are part of the entertainment business. Certainly, there is a constant and unending search for the offbeat, the bizarre, the 'new', the spectacular, but
like the pornography trade, the number of basic situations and plots offered by the news presentation is strictly limited (Murdock, 1981, p.215).

Personalities

News emphasises the individual - the so called personal angle. In an attempt to make stories understandable to their audience, journalists reduce them to the actions and activities of individuals. The activities of institutions are treated and reported as the interactions of individuals especially the leaders of such institutions. In other words social activities become interpersonal relations. According to two British media researchers, "When an event occurs the journalists' routine sends him in search of the key individual, the witness, the expert; and his 'personality frame of reference' will make him tend to explain events predominantly in terms of personal ambition, conspiracy, 'outside agitators' or other personal motivations" (Hartman and Husband, 1974, p.158). Industrial dispute is often explained by examining the pattern and channel of communication between union and management, the cooperative or intransigent attitude of both sides. During such disputes heroes and stars are made out of ordinary human beings. "Politics", as Steve Chibnail has noted, "becomes a gladiatorial spectacle in which the conflict of policies is reduced to the clash of personalities ... (Chibnail, 1977, p.27). Issues are reduced to the work of individuals or their effects on some people, ignoring their historical and structural origin. They are thus abstracted from their social context.

The assumption here is that ordinary people cannot understand issues in abstract. However true this may be, we have to note that it was reinforced by the commercial imperative to attract readers. Readers are made to see events through the eyes or experience of some individuals who they can identify with. "Personification" as Galtung and Ruge have observed "is a consequence of the need for meaning and consequently for identification; persons can serve more easily as objects of positive and negative identification through a combination of projection and empathy" (Galtung and Ruge, 1965, p.69). It is also easily amenable to news reporting techniques in that anchoring an event on persons could easily generate the 'timely' instant interviews and stories for daily consumption which is all what it is about. The implication of this is that it tends to transform structural inequalities into individual differences; "No more
classes, only a cloud of individuals; no more history, only a mosaic of events; this is the daily message" (Murdock, 1980, p.61).

Elite

News is about the known person, more so the celebrity. A study by Bisi Aborishade found that Nigerian newspapers not only carry more news about known personalities but also cover them in more favourable light than unknown persons (Aborishade, 1977). Also, Professor Alfred Opubor has said that over 50 per cent of the contents of Nigerian media is concerned with or directed toward the urban and traditional elite "whose opinions are quoted, whose fortunes are featured in the papers". According to him,

This bias of media content away from the masses is probably a function of the logic of social stratification that has been reinforced by the traditional journalists' definition of news as "what important people do". What unimportant people do becomes important if it impinges significantly on the lives of "the great", if it is bizarre, or if the journalist self-consciously indulges in so-called human interest. Therefore, consciously or latently, in the rules of the journalistic game, emphasis is given to the opinions of the elite class and other powerful minority groups (Opubor, 1973, pp.238-239).

However, the coverage of the elite is partial. Attention is concentrated on the more visible and accessible elite groups - those who directly exercise political power. The press emphasises the activities of the government and political elite - parliamentarians, ministers, police - while the economic and financial elite are also absent. Thus the glare of publicity is on the political faction of the bourgeois class while the economic, financial and industrial factions are shrouded.

A result of this is that news replicates the agenda defined by those political-government elite sources. As the Finnish media scholar, Karle Nordenstreng has pointed out,

... the agenda-setting is pretty much government controlled; that is, while government does not dictate to the media and through them to the public at large, what to think, it does largely determine what to think about (Nordenstreng, 1982, p.151).

What we are saying in effect is that the dominant class in society becomes the main source of news while the activities of the majority of the people are unrecorded and if recorded at all, in a marginalised manner.
The above values are supportive of a grandnorm which media men lay a claim to — the notion of objectivity. To demonstrate their adherence to the norm, for instance media houses separate news from comments and opinions. Journalists also try to obtain the views of all sides to an issue and often they seek the opinions of experts who are regarded as impartial.

However the notion of objectivity is, as Tuchman has described it a 'strategic ritual' which may be used by journalists as a defence against charges of bias or distortion. It underguards the basic cultural role that the media assume for themselves; that of neutral or unbiased reporting of seemingly natural occurrences. In Dan Schiller's words,

Objectivity facilitates the otherwise difficult belief that newspaper "mirrors" or "reflects" reality ... Invoked conventionally, objectivity ostensibly precludes the very presence of conventions and thus masks the patterned structure of news; it is an invisible frame (Dan Schiller, 1981, p.2).

As we have already noted objectivity, just as some of the other news values, arose predominantly in a commercial context. Objectivity according to this line of thought is connected with the transformation of the newspaper into a commodity, which is now forced to "see in everyone the buyer in whose hand ... it wants to nestle" (Schiller, ibid, p.7).

What the above discussion has so far pointed to is that news is structured by the exigencies of organised production, the routine organisation of newspapers and the commercial needs to serve a mass heterogeneous audience. The organisation of news production cannot rely on random search for events to be reported. The imperative of timeliness and recency cannot allow for lengthy survey of the environment which could sometimes be unproductive of the needed commodity, news. In that sense "certainty must be built into reporting process" (Paul Rock, 1981, p.66). In other words there is no truth in the notion that news is a "random reaction to random events. Despite the picture of flux, it is organised and patterned to meet certain criteria and needs. The point that must be noted here is that "News' is the end-product of a complex process which begins with a systematic sorting and selecting of events and topics according to a socially constructed set of categories" (Hall et al, 1978, p.53). The effect of this is that only a partial view of the world is
reported. This may or may not be in line with the dominant values or ideology. It is here that the issue of power relations and access to the media come in.

**Structured access**

The issue of access to the mass media is crucial in explaining the 'fit' between the dominant world view and mass media ideologies and practices. Journalists do not create news. They apply the criteria of newsworthiness to events generated by individuals, social groups and institutions. But access to the media by these groups is structured by the disposition of power within a given society. The powerful has a ready access to the mass media; that is the mass media are in a position of 'structured subordination' to the powers-that-be. Two main reasons may be advanced for this relationship.

We have already pointed attention to the arrangement of news gathering; reporters are assigned to legitimate organised institutions of or sanctioned by the state. Paul Rock has observed that,

> In the main journalists position themselves so that they have access to institutions which generate a useful volume of reportable activities at regular interval (Rock, 1981, p.68).

According to Graham Murdock this is a practical solution to the problems posed by pressures of time and resources allocation. This solution, he went on to say, increases the "newsmen's dependence on news sources willing and able to preschedule their activities" (Murdock, 1974, p.

The second reason is that in trying to be objective and impartial, journalists are trained to look for the statements of authoritative figures or accredited sources. These figures and sources are mainly within the legitimate institutions representing the national interest or such organised interest groups whose activities are by and large sanctioned by the state, and certified experts. In effect the definition of social reality prevalent in the mass media tends to be that provided by the dominant class and its allies. Hall et al have argued that these two factors,

combine to produce a systematically structured over-accessing to the media of those in powerful and privileged institutional
positions. The media thus tend, faithfully and impartially, to reproduce symbolically the existing structure of power in society's institutional order (Hall et al, 1978, p.58).

The better media access enjoyed by the powerful is implicitly based on the concept of 'hierarchy of credibility' developed by Howard 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 ... those at the top have access to a more complete picture of what is going on than anybody else. Members of the lower group will have incomplete information and their view of reality will be partial and distorted in consequence (Becker, 1967, p.

The result of this structured access by the powerful is that such people or group become those Hall and his colleagues have called the 'primary definers'. These primary definers have the advantage of setting the frames within which any issue will be discussed. Such frames are taken seriously because those who provide them are perceived as having the full facts and information or expert knowledge on which they base their opinions. According to Hall et al,

The important point about the structured relationship between the media and the primary institutional definers is that it permits the institutional definers to establish the initial definition or primary interpretation (emphasis in the original) of the topic in question. This interpretation then 'commands the field' in all subsequent treatment and sets the terms of reference within which all further coverage and debate takes place. Argument against a primary interpretation are forced to insert themselves into its definition of 'What is at issue' - they must begin from this framework of interpretation as their starting point (Hall, et al, 1978, p.58).

In this situation, oppositional contributions, if not totally ignored, are consigned to the fringe or stigmatized as irrelevant, unrepresentative or as 'not addressing the problem' at stake. To reverse this situation will need extra effort involving at least some reconstitution of the power structure.

What the above discussion amounts to is that the media constitute not the primary definers of social issues but rather "play a crucial but secondary role in reproducing the definitions of those who have privileged access, as of right, to the media as accredited representatives".
The theoretical issues raised by the Marxist/critical researchers open up a way of accounting for the dominance of a particular social perspective and ideas in the mass media and the "symbolic annihilation" (Gaye Tuchman, 1981) of others without imputing bias, prejudice or censorship, both internal and external, in news production. The ruling class must be able to represent its interests and image of society in universal terms and justify its actions, for example, in the national interest. Because of their structural location in society they are better able to use the media to disseminate such concepts and ideas in dominance over those of subordinate class. It is this process that gives meaning to Marx's statement the ruling ideas of every age are the ideas of the ruling class. The powerful class is able to legitimise its interests and ideas without using overt force or coercion, though these are always present in the background - and could be used in case of a breakdown. As Frank Parkin noted, Marx's "proposition rests on the plausible assumption that those groups in society which occupy positions of the greatest power and privilege will also tend to have the greatest access to the means of legitimation. That is to say, the social and political definitions of those in dominant position tend to become objectified and enshrined in the major institutional orders, so providing the moral framework of the entire social system" (Parkin, 1972, p.83).
CHAPTER 7

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS NEWS: QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

Sample Period

The main focus of attention was the coverage of industrial relations by the press. The problem of how to select the period to be covered surfaced when I conducted a pilot reading of Nigerian newspapers available at the British Library of Newspapers in London. I found that in order to make a meaningful analysis it would be necessary to cover a long period, maybe running over five years. Because of limited resources it was decided to concentrate on two periods which included some overt industrial activities by the trade unions in post-independent Nigeria: the 1964 General Strike and the post-Udoji strikes in 1974-75.

It is hoped that the two periods will offer an adequate indication of how industrial relations is handled by the press. The two periods also represent two different systems of government in the country. In 1964 Nigeria was operating a parliamentary Westminster type of government which was overthrown by the military in 1966. In 1974-75 the military was still in power. Prior to 1966 Nigeria's federal system of government was based on a weak centre compared to the regions. This has a lot of implications for the industrial relations system especially in terms of wage determination where the regions had concurrent power with the Federal Government. Under the military, though there was still some commitment to federalism, Nigeria was more or less operating a unitary system of government. By 1974-75 the Federal Government had become very strong mainly due to the oil revenue which went to the federal coffers and the experiences of the civil war. In essence, the change in government, from party politics to the military meant a substantive change from the "competitive wage-fixing for political advantage among the governments of the federation" (Douglas Rimmer, 1978, p.155). Another substantive change was the effect of the oil boom on the economy. In 1964, as the 1962-68 Development Plan shows, Nigeria was dependent on foreign aid and investment but by 1974 huge oil revenue had created an economic environment and confidence that could make Nigerians declare that money was not a problem.

Moreover the competitive multi-party system before the military regime affected the ownership, control and operation of the press. There were many party and government newspapers in addition to indigenous or
foreign-owned private ones. By the 70s there were no party newspapers, therefore we could expect that news reporting would not be influenced by party electoral calculation.

In effect we aim to offer a comparative study of the Nigerian press reporting of industrial relations during these two periods and environments.

A brief description of the two periods

As we mentioned above the two periods were different, both politically and economically. Further, as we have discussed in a preceding chapter, a lot of changes had occurred in the industrial relations system, notably a movement away from the received ideology of free collective bargaining to a more interventionist state involvement. However a lot of substantial similarities remained. The state continued to have decisive influence on wage determination through commissions of enquiry - in 1964 it set up the Morgan Commission, while in 1974 it set up the Udoji Commission. The strikes which formed the substance of this study followed the recommendations of these two commissions and the dilatory manner in which the government handled them.

1964 Morgan Commission and the General Strike

The Nigerian General Strike of 1964 was the second in the country's history, the first was in 1945. It demonstrated the power and strength of hitherto divided and organisationally and financially weak trade unions. To the surprise of many people the five trade union centres came together to fight for a wage increase. In the process the workers exposed the weakness of the ruling class and its tenuous base. The strike lasted for two weeks from June 1st to 13th.

The unity of the unions and the strike could be seen as a manifestation of the frustration felt by the lower class, both in the formal and informal sectors of the economy, about the events in the country since after independence. The immediate post-independent period "had seen a constant strengthening of the economic bonds between members of the political class, whose depredation from the public till ... were preventing any meaningful redistribution of wealth" (Cohen, 1974, p.164). The unions were brought together, in other words by the feeling of mutual suffering and deprivation occasioned by corruption, government inefficiency, inequality
and visible lack of development. Workers and other groups in the country daily witnessed the conspicuous display of wealth and opulence by politicians. Wale Oyemakinde caught the general atmosphere of the life-style and spending pattern of these politicians in these words,

Expensive buildings were erected for the comfort of politicians and their families, and even their mistresses. Conspicuous consumption was especially manifested in many an individual politician's possession of a fleet of cars, which might include a costly American Pontiac or Chevrolet in addition to a factory-ordered German Mercedes-Benz and perhaps a moderate car like the Peugeot for each of the mistresses. It required no great imagination for one to know that these men had far more money to spend than their salaries (Oyemakinde, 1974, p.54).

Despite this the parliament approved a salary increase of 10% for ministers and parliamentarians from April 1963. By 1965 a minister was earning £8,625 a year. The difference between low income earners and senior officers is shown in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Attainment</th>
<th>Years of Schooling</th>
<th>Entering Salary (£ per annum)</th>
<th>Normal Ceiling (£ per annum)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary School Certificate</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section IV Certificate</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASC/GCE</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSC/GCE.A</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>1,890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.A./B.Sc.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>1,890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honours B.A./B.Sc.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>1,890</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Under this situation many workers and other groups of Nigerians had the belief that the politicians were no better than the colonial officials that had just departed. In this vein Cohen has noted that "much of the rhetoric of the strike leaders concerned itself with pinpointing the analogies in attitudes and behaviour that the political class had with the former colonial administration" (Cohen, 1974, p.164).
The 1964 agitation did not just happen. As far back as 1961 the United Labour Congress (ULC) had prepared a report described as 'Operation Square Deal' in which it called for extensive changes in the wage structure. However, it was the pressure and militancy of the Nigerian Trade Union Congress (NTUC) in 1963 which was the final push. The ULC and NTUC later formed a wages committee which was expanded into the Joint Action Committee (JAC) when the other central labour organisations like the Labour Unity Front (LUF), the Nigerian Workers Council and the Nigerian Union of Railwaymen (Federated) joined.

At its inaugural meeting on September 12, 1963 the JAC called on the Federal Government to review the wages and salaries of workers in both public and private establishments with the threat that if this was not done there would be a general strike by September 27. This was just three days from October 1 when Nigeria was to become a Republic. When the government did not respond, there was a day's 'lightning' strike on September 27.

Frightened that the workers might mar the Republican Day Celebrations the Government appointed a six-man commission of enquiry under the Chairmanship of Justice Adeyinka Morgan with the following terms of reference:

1. to investigate the existing wage structure, remuneration and conditions of service in the wage earning employments in the country and make recommendations concerning a suitable new structure, as well as adequate machinery for a wages review on a continuing basis;

2. to examine the need for

   (a) a general upward revision of salaries and wages of junior employees in both Government and private establishments;

   (b) the abolition of the daily-wage system; and

   (c) the introduction of a national minimum wage and to make recommendations.

For seven months the Morgan Commission took oral and written evidence from many organisations and individuals across the country. The JAC memorandum "drafted with the help of some sympathetic academics and some radical ideologues on the fringe of the labour movement (Cohen, op cit) was not "confined to a list of demands but gives a politico-economic analysis of the country on which it bases a programme of economic and social
reforms" (Braundi and Lettier, 1964, p.601). For instance it rejected the 1962 Development Plan. It said, "Our six-year Development cannot plan for imperialistic expatriates, for ministers, for the police and the army, for the parasite elite and leave out the major producers of the national wealth - the workers - and yet hope to succeed". The document also contained elaborate statistical evidence on what the JAC termed the colonial wage structure which it said had been nationalised by the government. It called for a minimum wage of £180.

Before the Commission could finish its work the Finance Minister, in an action prejudicial to its findings, had said in his budget speech that the government could not provide money for any pay increase. Some days later the Labour Minister threatened the workers that any rebellion would be dealt with drastically - because "any action by our trade unions which deprives our community of an essential public service is an attack not only on Government but also on the country" (Nigerian Outlook, March 28, 1964).

The government, calculating that the new workers' unity was only momentary and that the vigour would soon peter out, delayed the publication of the Commission's report. The workers' felt this was because the report was favourable to them. In May the JAC gave the government an ultimatum to either publish the report or be faced with a General Strike. After a failed promise on May 25, the report was released on the 26th but without the government's White Paper. This angered the workers and on May 30 the JAC was mandated at a rally to organise a strike starting on June 1st. The meeting also decided to demonstrate in defiance of a ban on demonstration and processions. Spurred by Michael Imoudu the workers demonstrated from Suru-Lere through Herbert Macaulay Street to Lagos. It was on the Carter Bridge that the peaceful demonstration was confronted by the Police and many workers including Adebola, the JAC co-chairman, were wounded.

On June 1, 1964 strikes started all over the country with about 800,000 workers involved. Against government expectation, by the second day everything was at a standstill. On June 3rd the government released its views on the Commission's report. The government practically rejected all the Commission's recommendations. This rejection was based on the contention that any wage increase as large as that recommended by the Morgan Commission would jeopardise the 1962 Development Plan. This did not impress
the workers but rather strengthened their resolve to continue the strike. The striking workers received support from many sources including farmers, market women and even domestic servants who refused to work.

The government handling of the situation was very inept. The Labour Minister, J.M. Johnson left for a Youth Conference in New York as the strike was about to begin. The Prime Minister, Tafawa Balewa was away in his hometown, Bauchi, on holiday only to return a week into the strike to order the workers back to work or be sacked. This was largely ignored and even produced greater solidarity among the striking workers. Equally ignored were appeals by many prominent people including religious and traditional leaders.

An important point to note is that the strike was adding fuel to an already deepening political crisis. Such political controversies included the Western Nigeria crisis and the census among others.

It was when the seriousness of the situation began to dawn on the government that it accepted to negotiate on the basis of Morgan recommendations. The strike was called off on June 13. A committee under the Finance Minister, Okotie-Eboh was set up to negotiate the settlement. The result was a compromise between the Government White Paper and the Morgan Report.

At the end of the day the cost of the strike was put at more than £50 million, with a total of 722,118 man-days lost.

After the Morgan Award no wages and salaries review was conducted until after the civil war when the government set up the Adebo Commission in 1970. But according to Tayo Fashoyin the recommendations of the Morgan Commission continued to influence future industrial relations in the country, though those recommendations were largely ignored by policy makers. He further said that both the Adebo and Udoji Commissions based their recommendations on those of Morgan Commission (Fashoyin, 1980, p.142). Many workers also considered that the 1964 strike established an important precedent for the 1971 post-Adebo strike (Peace, 1979, p.102).

1974-75 - The Udoji Commission

Apart from the continuing influence of the Morgan Report, there were
certain other similarities between the two periods especially the 
inequality in the distribution of wealth, the mismanagement of national 
resources and corruption both of which had reached a new height in the 
70s. The misery among the lower class people amidst this high level of 
corruption caught the attention of the Adebo Commission and it wrote,

the suffering (of the lowest income group) is made even more 
intolerable by manifestation of affluence and wasteful 
expenditure which cannot be explained on the basis of visible 
and legitimate means of income (Adebo Commission, First Report 

In short, the frustration, anger and deprivation which were evident in 
1964 were still very much features of life among the working class.

The wave of strikes during the second period of our study arose 
from the implementation of the Report of the Public Service Review 
Commission set up in 1972. Under the chairmanship of businessman and chairman 
of the Multinational Tobacco Company, Nigeria Tobacco Company, Chief Jerome 
Udoji it was charged:

1) to examine the organisation and structure of the public 
service;

2) to investigate and evaluate their methods of recruitment, 
conditions of service and staff development programme;

3) to examine existing pension and superannuation schemes in 
the public and private sectors;

4) to make recommendation that would facilitate inter-sectoral 
mobility, without detriment to the retention of efficient 
and qualified personnel in the public services; and

5) to undertake the regrading of all posts in the public services 
and establish appropriate salary scales.

Two years after it was established the Commission submitted its 
report to the government on September 25, 1974. In keeping with the wide 
terms of reference the report was very comprehensive, examining every 
aspect and sector of the public service. Though the main purpose of 
setting-up the Commission was to make recommendation that would ensure 
the emergence of a more efficient and effective development-oriented public 
service, it was the 'wages and salaries' aspect that caught media and public 
attention. The government and members of the Commission helped in high-
lighting and publicising the salary aspect to the neglect of other recommendations on which the improved salary scale was based. For instance, before the report and Government White Paper were released in December 1974 some government officials were already assuring the public that foreign reserves would be used to pay the new scale. The Commission Chairman, Chief Udoji also told journalists that he was sure the private sector would be able to pay the new scale, though he was later to sing a different tune when the awards were announced.*

The new minimum annual wage was set at ₦720 from ₦312, the level at which it was frozen in 1972. The new salary was made retrospective from April 1974. Against the Commission's advice the arrears were paid in a lump sum. According to Colin Legum,

The value of the increases was eaten away by inflation, which had been rising sharply throughout 1974 and hit over 27% in the first half of 1975. High salaries, high import prices and the Government's own ambitious spending plans all contributed toward the upward movement (Colin Legum, African Contemporary Record, 1975/76, p.8800).

Though the over-riding importance accorded to the 'salary aspect' might have been in line with previous experience, the increase was according to Ian Campbell Gowon's initiative to placate his enemies and remain in power after defaulting on his promise to hand over power in 1976 (Ian Campbell, 1980, p.73).

As if the Government has not learnt from the experience of previous wage reviews, it was announced that private sector employees were not affected by the Udoji Report. This led to a wave of sporadic strikes which was started by bank workers. In effect the new year met the country engulfed in industrial disputes, strikes and threats by workers all over the country. The strikes were led by company union officials unlike the 1964 General Strike led by the centrally organised JAC. In fact the ULCN had to warn its affiliates not to go on strike until all avenues for negotiations had been exhausted. This was largely ignored. Also ignored were the various decrees banning strikes, even despite a police reminder that they were still in force.

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* The Nigerian Tobacco Company of which he was the Chairman did not pay its workers until there was a strike by the workers as in many other companies.
The wave of industrial disputes was said to have caught the
government by surprise. Gowon and some of his governors were later to
accuse the workers of sabotage and unfairness. The government's first
reaction was to use force and intimidation but when those failed it
backed down. A review panel, under a prominent accountant, Mr. Akintola
Williams was set up to look into all complaints against the Government
White Paper. The Government further approved a minimum 30% increase over
pre-Udoji salary and wage levels for all employees. In effect the workers
were again successful in their struggle against the government and
employers who sought to separate public sector wage determination from
what obtained in the private sector. During 1974/75 there were 303 and
51 strikes in the private and public sectors respectively with 126,818
workers involved and 357,028.2 man-days lost (Tayo Fashoyin, 1980, pp.77-80).

If Gowon had thought the generous salary and wage increase and
arrears would restore the sagging morale and authority of his government
and the loss of public confidence it was a disastrous miscalculation. The
strikes that followed it further served to weaken an already spent,
baffled and directionless administration. The industrial disputes added
to other political problems - the 1973 Census, corruption, reorganisation
of the army, students' unrest, creation of more states and return to civil
rule. About seven months after the Udoji Award was announced, Gowon was
toppled from power while attending an Organisation of African Unity (OAU)
Conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

We would like to note one last point about the background to the
setting up of the Udoji Commission. The Commission was set up under an
environment when oil revenue had become a dominant feature of the Nigerian
political economy, especially government finance and expenditure. Also we
have to note the increasingly decisive impact of the government stake in
the economy with a consequent increase in the role and influence of the
civil service. Therefore the government and the commission were
"concerned with development and the use of the civil service for this
purpose" (A.B. Williams, 1979, p.12).

However, despite the comprehensiveness of the commission's report,
it did not offer any idea of its conception of development nor a clear
definition of the Nigerian economy or polity rather there was "a view
that development is determined by management and efficiency, and that
functional recruitment, coupled with appropriate rewards and incentives would foster development and effect attitudinal changes that are synchronous with it" (A.B. Williams, ibid, p.4). This we suspect was not an omission or oversight. Rather the commission must have taken for granted the neo-colonial capitalist economy in Nigeria as the given framework for national development. It is a fait accompli which only needed to be made more efficient and modern, and this could be done by employing the right calibre of managers. Gavin Williams, among others, has spoken in a similar vein when he argued that,

In fact, the Nigerian bourgeoisie do have an ideology, in the sense of a theoretical legitimation of the status quo. It is expressed in the concept of 'development' which is 'that which we are all in favour of'... (G. Williams, 1980, p.40).

**CODING SCHEDULE**

**Content Included**

In order to have more news of general industrial relations character and not just news of industrial conflict, the study was designed to start three months before the strike, that is March 1964 and October 1974. This was to give us a better picture of the nature and types and 'subject-matters' of industrial relations news published by the press. As it turned out, the two months had almost nothing on industrial relations, so they were not included in the coding.

All available copies of each of the selected newspapers were read, except their Sunday editions because not all the papers publish Sunday editions. This was done so as not to miss any running story. It was also to enable us to capture the blow-by-blow coverage of the strikes and the associated manoeuvres of all the parties involved. Our attention was only focused on the general news pages, thus leaving out specialized sections, e.g. financial or women's page unless such a specialized sector was devoted to industrial relations or labour news. Anyway, special-subject sections with the exception of sports, are relatively underdeveloped in the Nigerian press, and where they exist they appear weekly. During the second period of our study, 1974-75, it was only the Daily Times and New Nigeria that were publishing weekly labour pages.

Industrial relations news was defined as any item mainly concerned
with trade unions, or employers' organisation, government, government appointed wage tribunals or commissions and where their activities are substantially concerned with employer-employee relations; strikes and other forms of industrial disputes - work to rule, go slow, pay claims, pay rise, lay offs and redundancies. We also included materials about unemployment, employment opportunities (not advertisements), working conditions, industrial safety or general economic matters in which the position of workers, employer-employee relations, trade unions or industrial relations as broadly defined formed an explicit and substantive part.

The unit of analysis was the news item, that is, all materials printed under a single heading in a newspaper. In all we dealt with ten months of press coverage, six months in 1974 and four in 1974-75 with a total of 725 news stories, editorials, features and letters to the editor; 372 in 1964 and 351 in 1974-75. All items in these categories were coded except those less than three column inches long.

Description of Coding Schedule

The coding schedule (Appendix A) was a modified version of Hartmann's (1976) coding schedule used in studying the coverage of industrial relations in the British Mass media. Our final version was arrived at after two pilot studies in London. Efforts were made to include as many categories as possible so as to be able to incorporate the differences between the two periods. It was designed in such a way that we could be able to record information about a chosen item under a number of headings.

The coding schedule started with the usual descriptive information - the paper, year, month and the number of the item being coded, its length (in column inches), headline and the first sentence of the story. The descriptive information also included the type of story (whether it was a news story, editorial, feature, personal column or letter to the editor) and its position in the newspaper.

It also contained columns to record the main source of news, e.g. statement or speech or an interview by a reporter, the main speakers and the parties mentioned as being involved in the issue or event reported,
e.g. trade union, government or employer. We also sought to know how the parties were characterised. Were they described as angry, irresponsible, restrained or rational, in short were they negatively or positively described in the news? There were columns to record what were regarded as the causes and effects of industrial actions and also the effects of pay increases. The last two columns in the coding schedule were included to give an indication of the context in which industrial relations is reported and what were offered as solutions to industrial conflicts.

All the coding was done by the researcher alone. This we hope will enhance the consistency in coding and reliability of the findings.

Selection of Newspapers

The newspapers were selected to reflect ownership and geographical location. The dichotomy between quality and popular newspapers which exists in Britain does not apply in Nigeria. Nigerian newspapers try to combine the features of both popular and quality press. Marcia Grant has observed that all Nigerian "newspapers are popular in style, and all are more serious than the Western tabloids which some of them emulate" (Grant, 1971, p.75). In this vein, Ugboajah has quoted an editor as saying "What we are trying to do in Nigeria is what is done in Great Britain by the Financial Times, the Daily Mirror and the London Times. We combine popular journalism with quality journalism so as to broaden the base of readership" (Ugboajah, 1980, p.36). This statement contains a crucial point - the commercial imperative to sell copies means that newspapers must find a common ground, language and message that will appeal to a cross section of the reading public. This is also to appeal to advertisers whose potential customers or public run across a wide section of the urban population.

To buttress the last point we may note that the papers are oriented towards the same urban clientele especially those in the formal sector of the economy (Table 7.2). The reasons for this are obvious - high rate of illiteracy, poverty, the urban bias of development programmes and as we noted above, commercial and economic imperatives.
TABLE 7.2 - ESTIMATED REGULAR READERS OF DAILY NEWSPAPERS
AMONG ADULT NIGERIANS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Urban Reading Rate (%)</th>
<th>Rural Reading Rate (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Times</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Nigeria</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Concord</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Punch</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Sketch</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Tribune</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Standard</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Observer</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Star</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Herald</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Statesman</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Tide</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Chronicle</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>129%</strong></td>
<td><strong>27%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The total percentage exceeds 100 because of multiple readership.


This means a high degree of sameness in the contents of the newspapers. This becomes more so if we consider that all the papers focus attention on Lagos, the political, social, economic and commercial nerve centre of the country. It is also difficult to talk of provincial/national newspapers, though some of the so called national dailies will perform better if they could concentrate their meagre resources on covering a limited local area. Not that there were no provincial papers in Nigeria before. During the nationalist period the Zik Group and the Action Group established a number of newspapers in many parts of the country to propagate their political campaigns.

Even the factor of ownership is very much limited to the civilian eras (pre-1966 and 1979-83) when papers were established by politicians in their struggle for positions and power. Many of such papers were quickly
folded up immediately after a coup. During the military regimes which has taken a sizeable part of Nigeria's post-independent history, media ownership became concentrated in government hands and the press became more integrated with the state. Though we shall retain this distinction, we do not expect it to indicate any kind of absolute or appreciable difference between the papers.

For the 1964 period the following papers were chosen: West African Pilot, Daily Times, Nigerian Tribune, Daily Sketch and the Nigerian Morning Post. These unfortunately represent the Lagos-Western Nigerian axis where the Nigerian Press is concentrated in terms of location, ownership, circulation and coverage. It was impossible to locate papers physically established in the East or North. The selected papers could however be said to adequately represent the national/regional interests of the governing elite of the time. The New Nigeria and the Nigerian Observer were included for the 1974-75 period, thus replacing the West African Pilot and the Morning Post which had ceased operations by then. The inclusion of the two papers increased the geographical spread. Table 3a gives the 1964 circulation figures of the newspapers, their political affiliations, owners and readership while Table 3b gives the circulation figures as of January 1, 1976 and owners.

**TABLE 7.3a - NEWSPAPER OWNERSHIP AND POLITICAL AFFILIATION AND CIRCULATION : 1964**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspapers</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Political Affiliation</th>
<th>Readership</th>
<th>Circulation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Times</td>
<td>IPC (Foreign)</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>95,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West African Pilot</td>
<td>Dr. N. Azikwe</td>
<td>Unofficially NCNC</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>23,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NCNC (Ibo)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Tribune</td>
<td>Awolowo and AG Members</td>
<td>Action Group (AG)</td>
<td>Ibadan &amp; Lagos AG Members</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Morning Post</td>
<td>Federal Govt.</td>
<td>Northern Peoples' Congress(NPC)</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>35,390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Sketch</td>
<td>Western Region Govt.</td>
<td>Nigeria National Democratic Party(NNDF)</td>
<td>Govt.Offices + NNDF(Yoruba)</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 7.3b - NEWSPAPER OWNERSHIP AND CIRCULATION

JANUARY 1, 1976*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspapers</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Circulation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Times</td>
<td>Private (Foreign)</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Nigerian)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Sketch</td>
<td>Government (Western)</td>
<td>70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(State)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Nigeria</td>
<td>Government (6 Northern)</td>
<td>80,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(States)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Observer</td>
<td>Government (Mid-West)</td>
<td>70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Tribune</td>
<td>Private - Awo and others</td>
<td>60,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


* Since 1976 the Daily Times has become a quasi-government owned paper; only the Nigerian Tribune remains a purely privately owned paper. The New Nigeria is now owned by the Federal Government.

Apart from the above reasons the papers chosen also represent the main press channels of information during the two periods. In effect we are more or less comparing main sources of news during the two periods. We also have to contend with the practical problem of finding the newspapers. Back issues of many Nigerian newspapers are not easy to come by; some actually do not exist.

The selection of the papers has also been influenced by the type of question we sought to answer. We were not so much concerned with the amount or quantity of coverage, for instance in relation to the total space available in a newspaper. We were more interested in the direction and 'meaning' of the materials provided by the press. We think it is more useful to use ideas expressed in the news as indicators of differing social or cultural frameworks of meaning that may be drawn upon when talking of industrial relations. In this direction we were more interested in the questions, what social perspectives are contained in industrial relations news? What are the probable source or sources of these perspectives? Why was one of them, if there is, dominant, and what processes shape news reporting?
Daily Times

The Daily Times is the oldest among the papers chosen having started operations on June 1, 1926. Its establishment was described by Fred Omu as a milestone in Nigerian press history (Omu, 1978, p.62). It was founded by expatriate interests in the Lagos Chamber of Commerce in partnership with some Nigerian businessmen notably Sir Adeyemo Alakija. In 1947 it was bought by the London Daily Mirror Group. Part of a conglomerate, it has the largest circulation in the country. A two-week study found that the paper devoted about 63% of its total mean space for both weeks to advertisements (Omu, 1981, p.111).

Politically it regards itself as neutral often subjecting itself to self-censorship. In 1964 Grant found that though its editorial policy was non-partisan "it tacitly supported the Federal Government. Its editorial comment was devoted to politically safe subjects" (Grant, 1971, p.98).

In 1977 the Federal Military Government acquired controlling shares (60%) in the company through the National Insurance Corporation of Nigeria.

West African Pilot

During the days of nationalist politics the West African Pilot was regarded as the most influential, most outspoken and most nationalistic. According to Chief Awolowo the West African Pilot filled a "journalistic vacuum" to give vent to the suppressed grievances and so "was naturally very popular, the very thing the youth of the country had been waiting for" (Awolowo, 1960, p.84). Another Nigerian journalist and politician, Chief Anthony Enahoro said the Pilot "was a far more vigorous publication and was more uncompromising with British rule" (quoted in Coker, n.d. p.39). According to the pioneer writer on the history of the Nigerian press,

The Pilot's brand of political journalism made it something much more than just another newspaper. Half of the epic story is told by its very motto 'SHOW THE LIGHT AND THE PEOPLE WILL FIND THE WAY'. Accordingly, it was for many years a fountain of political inspiration from which a continuous flood of exhortation went out to the youth of the country (Increase Coker, n.d. p.41).

It was established by Dr. Nnamdi Azikwe after his arrival from Ghana in 1937. Though not officially controlled by the National Convention of
Nigerian Citizens (NCNC), it was the mouthpiece of the party. In a 1958 editorial it declared, "We support 100 per cent all that the NCNC stands for... (quoted in Grant, ibid, p. 96). The paper's total identification with "all that the NCNC stands for" made many Nigerians regard it as an expression of Ibo nationalism especially immediately before and after independence. The Pilot was at the apex of a chain of newspapers established by Zik across the country.

The paper staunchly supported the workers during the 1945 General Strike. But its glorious past could not save it from the effects of the civil war; starved for funds, proper administration, good personnel, readership and advertising, it died not long after the war.

The Nigerian Tribune

The Nigerian Tribune was established in November 1949 by Chief Obafemi Awolowo. It was one of the several newspapers affiliated to the Action Group. The paper and its journalists have suffered government, police and opposition harassment more than any other newspaper in Nigeria. This stems from its often dogmatic and consistent advocacy on certain issues, e.g. free education, social justice and corruption, which are closely associated with Chief Awolowo, without doubt the most controversial Nigerian politician. According to Robert Nwankwo and George Kurian, the Tribune "... has exerted considerable political impact in Nigeria. The paper has been so fearless and tenacious in its fight against social problems that it is considered by some as bordering on the irresponsible" (Nwankwo and Kurian, 1980, p. 691). The paper sees itself as the spokesman of the common man but many regard it as Awolowo's propaganda machine. It is the only surviving nationalist paper. This according to Awolowo was because "it was the only consistent and most constant newspaper with an abiding principle" (Nigeria Tribune, January 26, 1984). The paper is based in Ibadan.

Nigerian Morning Post

The Nigerian Morning Post was established in 1961 by the Federal Government. Its establishment was in response to the critical tone of attack against the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) controlled Federal Government by other party-owned newspapers. According to M.J.C. Echeruo, "It came at a time when the Government (and the party in power) found they
could not depend on the absolute loyalty of the Lagos or the national press to champion its cause and propagandise its efforts (Echeruo, 1976, p.10). By that time each of the regional governments and parties were supported by at least one newspaper. The Post did not make any impact on mass media development in the country despite the resources at its disposal. Its large investment, the largest among the newspapers, was equally matched by the largest annual losses due to mismanagement, political considerations in its operation and blatant partisanship toward the NPC in its coverage (see Table 7.4). In the opinion of a Nigerian historian, "its layout was undistinguished; its reportorial style was certainly mediocre. What gave it character was its editorial and news policy which was partisan, aggressive and generally cantankerous" (Echeruo, ibid).

In a view shared by many Nigerians, Bola Adedoja, President of the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) told this writer that the Post's coverage of the 1964 General Strike spelt its demise. The paper was closed down after the civil war.

**TABLE 7.4 - NIGERIA NEWSPAPERS FINANCE, 1964**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Investment</th>
<th>Assets</th>
<th>Profit/Loss per Annum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Times</td>
<td>525,000</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>112,051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West African Pilot</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>-20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Tribune</td>
<td>20,400</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Morning Post</td>
<td>10,000,000</td>
<td>545,000</td>
<td>-200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Sketch</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>-80,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Daily Sketch**

The Daily Sketch, founded in 1964, was a child of the Action Group crisis. It was founded by Akintola, the then premier of the Western Region as a propaganda organ for his unpopular government. The paper has however since expanded to become one of the leading newspapers in the country. It is now owned by the Ondo, Ogun and Oyo State Governments, carved out of the former Western State.
The New Nigeria

The New Nigeria, described by Frank Ugboajah as "northerly buttressed and northerly directed" is based in Kaduna with a Southern edition based in Lagos. It came into existence on the eve of the January 1966 coup replacing the Nigerian Citizen which was an expression of NPC politics. Up till now the New Nigeria is regarded by many as the defender of the Northern interests in the Nigerian political economy. The paper's policy and orientation bear this out. According to a former editor and a powerful figure in the Northern establishment, Mamman Daura, the New Nigeria was established for two main reasons. (1) To get across the views of the government to the northern elite and mobilise them in order to achieve its goals. (2) To fight the northern case in all disputes at the centre (Daura, 1971, p.41). Though the paper has tried to widen its horizons and appeal, its main constituency still remains the North. Before it was taken over by the Federal Government in 1977 it was owned by the six Northern states, successors to the former Northern regional government.

It is regarded as a fearless and probably most influential mass media organ in Nigeria. The paper's strength, unlike that of the Daily Times which is derived from the Group's economic and commercial background, is derived from the country's political structure and the class affiliation of its personnel (Oreh, 1976, p.152). The Northern faction of the Nigeria ruling class has always had an edge, whether during civilian or military rule, over its fractured and quarrelsome southern counterparts. This advantage is shared by the paper in terms of access to sources at the Federal level and protection from political and police pressure.

The New Nigeria is well funded and it is less dependent on advertisement. Most of the middle and senior editorial and management personnel of the paper are members of the Northern ruling class or are connected by a number of ties - education, family, religious and social - unlike their Southern counterparts (Oreh, ibid). Some of the staff are former civil servants seconded to the paper. Some of its former editors and managing editors in 70s like Mamman Daura, Adamu Ciroma and Turi Muhammad are leading members of the Kaduna 'mafia'* the leading faction.

* According to a former editor of New Nigeria, Dan Agbse, the Kaduna 'mafia' is an informal group: "a powerful group of northern technocrats in the professions, business and government who seek to impose their will at all times on the political administration of (the) country" (News Watch, September 9, 1983, p.28).
of the Nigerian bourgeois class. All this creates "a very important power base for press freedom" in the New Nigerian. To be well connected means not only to have reliable news sources but also to enjoy editorial freedom that comes from 'belonging' (Oreh, ibid).

**Nigerian Observer**

The paper is based in Benin, Bendel State. Founded by the State government in 1968 it is one of the many papers in the country that could do better if it would concentrate its resources on a limited geographical area as a state newspaper. Because of persistent government interference the paper has not been healthy; suffering from intermittent closures, unstable editorial and management policies and poor funding.

**Method**

This study was carried out by a combination of both quantitative and qualitative analysis supplemented by informal interviews and discussions with journalists, union officials and rank and file members of the unions. To capture the type and character of news made available by the press we used the content analysis method. We describe the result later in this chapter.

**Content Analysis**

Berelson has defined content analysis as a "research technique for the objective, systematic description of manifest content of communication" (Berelson, 1966, p.263). From this definition it will be seen that the main concern of the content analyst is the manifest content of communication. He is not concerned with the meaning or effect of such content nor the intention of the communicator (ibid, p.262). In other words, content analysis is about 'denotative' rather than 'connotative' signifiers. As Colin Sumner has said this presupposes a distinction between denotative and connotative communication. Denotative meaning is understood by all while connotative communication is understood by some and not by others (Colin Sumner, 1979, p.66). For this reason only the aspect of discourse which are shared between the communicator, his audience and the analyst (a common universe of discourse) should be the object of study.

However, Berelson's definition has been further developed and
expanded by many others. For instance, Holsti has offered a definition which omits any reference to 'manifest' content "thereby allowing for the possibility that an analyst might wish to attempt to deal with 'latent' or 'implicit' features of communication content under study" (Alan Beardsworth, 1980, p.373). According to Holsti "content analysis is any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages" (Holsti, 1969, p.14).

Whatever the definition used, three main characteristics are attributed to content analysis by its proponents. These are objectivity, systematicity and generality. For content analysis to be objective it is stipulated that the research should be based upon "explicitly formulated rules and procedures". It requires that classification categories be defined in advance, and effectively distinguished from each other. Thus defined clear rules must be formulated for assigning content elements (words, themes) to particular categories. This rigorous procedure is to minimise subjective criteria by the researcher.

The second characteristic, systematicity, requires that allocation of content elements should be done according to consistently applied rules. Lastly, generality means that the analysis "be linked to, or be part of wider process of theorising about social processes" (Beardsworth, op. cit, p.374).

The scientific claim of content analysis has been subjected to a lot of criticism. First, it relies too much on quantification and mere counting of the number or frequency of appearance of defined units. It cannot provide an explanation of underlying structure or social relationships within which the communication content being analysed exists. Content analysis can show the type of events that made news or the people involved or quoted. The procedure can however not be used to study the event or its social consequences or effect. For the researcher to understand the consequence of media contents, how they are produced or the intentions of the producers, it would be necessary to carry out production and/or audience studies.

To the extent that the content analyst cannot claim to be studying the event, the social consequences of events reported as news in the mass media or the factors that determine which of the daily occurrences or
available materials becomes news, how it is to be reported or presented,

He has to be content with saying something about what has been called 'events as news' - that is, the version of the world daily laid before the public as a kind of suggested agenda for their thought, discussion and action (Hartmann and Husband, 1974, p.128).

Another charge against the procedure is that of 'crude positivism', "whereby the anatomy of denotation is substituted for an analysis of connotation, and analytical categories arbitrarily and unsystematically selected" (Ayu, 1984, p.369). There is also the criticism that the research procedure has elements of behaviourist assumptions in it. This is that it is assumed that one could read audience impact from the repetition of units of content. In that wise the tabulation of frequencies is taken as an indication of the message the audience is getting.

Questions have also been raised about how objective the method is. In this regard we have to note that the description provided by content analysis can only be done on the terms and categories provided by the researcher. This implies that content analysis is only objective and scientific in the sense of replicability: "But the procedure is not objective in the sense of being uninfluenced by the theoretical preferences or conceptual shortcoming of the analyst" (Hartmann, 1976, p.2-1). Related to this is Colin Sumner's rejection of content analysis' claim to neutrality. According to him content analysis is a device for producing knowledge about the communicator's consciousness. He went on to say that "The real object of the theory involved in this method is not the 'manifest content' of the communication but the intended message of the communicator". From this he concluded that the practice of content analysis assumes that "the true meaning" of what a communicator says "is an outcome of his or her intentions" (Sumner, op cit, p.67). Sumner buttressed his argument by noting that historically, content analysis flourished during World War II and in the US in the McCarthy period when it was employed by researchers to analyse enemy propaganda - to prove bias and the intention to deceive (ibid, p.99).

Last but not least is the underlying assumption that media content
forms an area of 'common ground' between communicator, audience and analyst. That is content analysis "presupposes a common culture unequivocably translatable into written forms" (Alan Beardsworth, op cit, p.386). But this might not be so and assumption of a shared "common universe of discourse" becomes problematic. There is a class struggle in language which predisposes each class or group to an interpretation of social reality according to its social view and existence. The same process, as David Morley has demonstrated, could also occur at the level of culture (David Morley, 1983). The implication of this point is again to call into question the scientific and objective claims of the content analyst because as a critic of the procedure has observed, "A technique which hold out the promise of a systematic approach and objective findings turns out to be reliant upon unexplained and ultimately elusive forms of pre-supposed knowledge about the social world (Beardsworth, op cit, p.387).

Despite this well-founded criticism, content analysis has the advantage of providing the means of summarising large quantities of data. It is also objective in the sense that the result produced is empirically verifiable and cannot be dismissed as mere matters of opinion. The systematic nature of the procedure protects the method from charges of bias which might follow from an 'intuitive' and 'subjective' reading of the chosen material.

Content analysis further allows for more precision than mere intuitive assessment. Holsti has argued thus:

Foremost among the arguments is the degree of precision with which one's conclusions may be stated. Descriptions such as '45%' or 27 times out of a possible 30' convey information more precisely than statements such as 'less than half' or almost always (Holst, op cit, p.9).

With the development in communication studies, various approaches have come up which try to transcend the limitations of content analysis noted above. For instance, a shift from earlier studies concern with 'bias' has led to production studies relying on participant observation and such other anthropological approaches. Such approaches and methods have been informed by theoretical backgrounds ranging from semiotics, phenomenology and marxist analysis.
It seems to us that no research method is 100 per cent foolproof. In that wise a combination of approaches backed by well grounded theories of news and society should be able to advance our knowledge of the role of the mass media in society better.

FINDINGS

As much as possible we have tried to show the differences among the papers and between the two periods. But as we go along it will become evident that there are more similarities than differences at these two levels of analysis. We shall be discussing the reasons for these similarities later.

In all, 723 items of industrial relations news were identified and coded. As shown in Table 7.5a the Daily Times led the others, for 231 items or 32.0%, followed by the New Nigeria with 105 items (14.5%). The Nigerian Tribune came third with 101 items while the Nigerian Observer had the least, 36 items or 5%. Though this figure may not represent the true position of some of the papers because of missing copies, it reflects what the general pattern would likely be if all the copies had been available. The Daily Times has more space available to it than any other Nigerian paper. On an average day it publishes about 32 pages as against 16 pages by the Daily Sketch, Tribune, The New Nigeria, the Nigerian Observer and the Morning Post. With the exception of the New Agency of Nigeria, the Daily Times is the only media organisation in the country with reporters in all state capitals and important towns in the country.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>April</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June</th>
<th>July</th>
<th>Aug.</th>
<th>Sept.</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Times</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2.7%)</td>
<td>(4.0%)</td>
<td>(17.2%)</td>
<td>(2.4%)</td>
<td>(4.8%)</td>
<td>(2.2%)</td>
<td>(33.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.Africa Pilot</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.3%)</td>
<td>(4.6%)</td>
<td>(14.5%)</td>
<td>(2.4%)</td>
<td>(1.9%)</td>
<td>(1.1%)</td>
<td>(25.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morn.Post</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(5.4%)</td>
<td>(11.6%)</td>
<td>(1.1%)</td>
<td>(3.8%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(21.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nig.Tribune</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.8%)</td>
<td>(4.8%)</td>
<td>(0.8%)</td>
<td>(0.3%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(6.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Sketch</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.3%)</td>
<td>(2.7%)</td>
<td>(7.0%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(2.4%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(12.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>55.1%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 7.5b - MONTHLY DISTRIBUTION OF ITEMS BY PAPER: 1974-75

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAPER</th>
<th>November</th>
<th>December</th>
<th>January</th>
<th>February</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>as a %</td>
<td>as a %</td>
<td>as a %</td>
<td>as a %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Times</td>
<td>5(1.4%)</td>
<td>9(2.6%)</td>
<td>53(15.1%)</td>
<td>40(11.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Nigeria</td>
<td>15(4.3%)</td>
<td>22(6.3%)</td>
<td>43(12.3%)</td>
<td>25(7.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nig. Tribune</td>
<td>2(0.6%)</td>
<td>7(2%)</td>
<td>37(10.5%)</td>
<td>30(8.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Sketch</td>
<td>7(2%)</td>
<td>8(2.3%)</td>
<td>2(0.6%)</td>
<td>10(2.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian</td>
<td>2(0.6%)</td>
<td>15(4.3%)</td>
<td>12(3.4%)</td>
<td>7(2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>31(8.8%)</td>
<td>61(17.4%)</td>
<td>147(41.9%)</td>
<td>112(31.9%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 7.5c - TOTAL NO. OF ITEMS BY EACH PAPER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>No. of Items</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>No. of Col. ins.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Times</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>5,350.00</td>
<td>23.1602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West African Pilot</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>2,049.00</td>
<td>21.3428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morning Post</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>2,096.00</td>
<td>25.8765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Nigeria</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>1,728.00</td>
<td>16.3019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nig. Tribune</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>2,419.00</td>
<td>24.1900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Sketch</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>2,074.00</td>
<td>28.4110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nig. Observer</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>1,166.00</td>
<td>32.3889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>723</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>16,882.00</td>
<td>Average = 23.3499</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, as Table 5b shows, the New Nigeria published more stories than the others in November and December 1974, that is before the Udoji Awards were announced. The Daily Times coverage was concentrated on the month of January when the strikes were already on. The New Nigerian case might be because it might have been following the events earlier than the other papers. According to Frank Ugboajah the New Nigerian devotes twice (32% of its total space) as much space to local news as the Daily Times which allocates 16% of its total space to such news (Ugboajah, 1977, p.28).
That the Nigerian Tribune published very little material in 1964 could be explained by the fact that it was involved in the Action Group Crisis and the trial of leading Action Group (AG) members including the leader of the party and its proprietor, Chief Awolowo. By late 1963 the Tribune had become the most important AG newspaper after the British Thomson Organisation had taken over the editorial and financial control of the Daily Express and Sunday Express which was jointly run by the Action Group and the Thomson Organisation in 1960 (Grant, 1971). As we said above, we were unable to get all the copies of some of the newspapers, especially the Daily Sketch and the Nigerian Tribune.

We are unable to get the copies of the Nigerian Tribune for June 12 to 19, that is six issues. This means that we are unable to know how the Tribune reported the end of the 1964 General Strike and the negotiations which followed it. In the case of the Daily Sketch the issues of January 3 to 31 were not found; that amounts to twenty-one issues. In this case it means that we are unable to study how the paper reported the beginning of the post-Udoji strike and its course during that month. The implication of this could only be understood if we note that most of the strikes which followed the Udoji awards occurred during January. We would then have expected the Sketch like the other papers to have published more stories than shown in Table 5b. Though we are unable to know the actual number of stories the missing copies must have contained, we need to be cautious in interpreting the data; especially as they affect the Daily Sketch.

In 1964 372 items were published representing 51.5% of the total for the two periods. However, coverage was concentrated on June when the two-week strike occurred. The month took 55.1% of all the items published during the entire six months. In column inches the stories published in June occupied 5910 column inches out of the 9136 column inches devoted to all the 1964 materials examined. There was very scanty coverage of industrial relations during the preceding two months and after the strike the workers were already disappearing from the pages of the papers. They and their activities were no longer newsworthy once things had returned to normal.

This pattern of reporting was repeated during the 1974-75 period.
there was little mention of industrial relations in the news. But after the announcement and subsequent industrial action by workers in many parts of the country it was picked up by the press. Of the 351 stories published during the period, 147 or 41.9% appeared in January. Because of the sporadic and scattered nature of the post-Udoji strikes, more stories were published in February 1975 than in July 1964. Nevertheless the coverage was already reduced.

This finding is due to the nature of news and the news process. According to Shibutani,

news is not merely something new; it is information that is timely... This transient quality of news is the very essence of news, for an event ceases to be newsworthy as soon as the tension it has aroused has been dissipated (Shibutani, 1966, p.41).

In other words as many other earlier studies have shown the mass media are oriented to the 'abnormal' or the negative and the dramatic. Events become reportable when they become a matter for concern or problem to the public. The press in its surveillance of the environment is unable to record the nature of unfolding events or issues until it has become visible and more or less 'threatening' to the social order. In this instance a strike fits better into the news process than other aspects of industrial relations. In terms of the focus of this study this will tend to suggest that the trade unions and their members rarely appear in the news except during strikes or industrial disputes. This creates the image of workers as disruptive elements whose activities inconvenience others and constitute a problem to the nation.

All the stories occupied 16,882 column inches with the Daily Times again in the lead with 5,350 column inches. It is followed by the Nigerian Tribune with 2,419 column inches with the Morning Post in the third place. The New Nigeria was pushed to the fifth place. This may not necessarily mean that it carried shorter items than the others. While almost all Nigerian newspapers, especially the Daily Times are fond of using bold banner headlines splashed across the front and back pages, the New Nigeria is more restrained, sober, "cool-headed" in its choice of headline types helping "to grade its news story while accentuating its newspaper typography. It frowns at the sensational in terms of headline
fireworks... (Ugboajah, 1977, p.28). This allows it to have more space for the text than, say, the Daily Times or the Nigerian Tribune.

The data, as shown in Table 7.6, show that most of the items published were straight news stories, constituting 73.6% of the total. Editorials accounted for 14.5% while letters to the editor constituted 5.7% and features 5.3%. Almost all the letters were published during the 1974-75 strikes. This may suggest the difference in the level of literacy and the development of public opinion during the two periods. Definitely there was a rise in the level of education among the Nigerian populace in the 1970s.

**TABLE 7.6 - TYPES OF ITEMS WITH COLUMN INCHES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Item</th>
<th>No. of Items</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Column Inches</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News story</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>73.6</td>
<td>12,054</td>
<td>22.6579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorial</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>2,386</td>
<td>22.7238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Features</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>1,356</td>
<td>35.6842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columnist</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>51,8571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>723</td>
<td>17,6341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>723</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>16,882</strong></td>
<td><strong>Average 23.3499</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in the tables below (Tables 7.7a and b) the monthly distribution of the different types of items for the two periods follow the same pattern noted above. Most of all the types were published in June 1964 and January 1975. We can however note that more editorials were published in June 1964 than all the editorials written on the 1974-75 strikes. This might be due to the scattered nature of the strikes of the latter period which might have made them more problematic and ambiguous for the press. This becomes more so if we remembered that the post-Udoji strikes and subsequent negotiations were mainly handled by shopfloor unionists unlike the 1964 General Strike which was centralised and more straightforward in terms of coverage by the press. News is about personalities, especially celebrities who could easily be identified, located and pigeon-holed. The 1964 strike had this element which was almost absent in 1974-75. In 1975 the various trade union centres were just attempting to come together to
form a single national central organisation.

Another reason might be the anti-strike decree in force during the 70s which also affected the press. Decree 53 of 1969 prohibited the press from reporting strikes, lock-outs and the declaration of trade disputes. It seems as though the press might have been contented with reporting the strikes while being more circumspect in their comments than was the case in 1964 under a more competitive and tolerant political atmosphere.

Toward the end of Gowon's regime (he was overthrown in July 1975) there was a running battle between the government and the press. By 1975 the regime was becoming very touchy and highly security conscious on many issues with many people, including journalists, in detention.

**TABLE 7.7a - MONTHLY DISTRIBUTION OF ITEMS BY TYPE : 1964**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>News Story</th>
<th>Editorial</th>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Columnist</th>
<th>Letter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>14( 3.8%)</td>
<td>2( 0.5%)</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>53(14.2%)</td>
<td>10( 2.7%)</td>
<td>1(0.3%)</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>1(0.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>148(39.8%)</td>
<td>43(11.6%)</td>
<td>12(3.2%)</td>
<td>2(0.5%)</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>18( 4.9%)</td>
<td>4( 1.1%)</td>
<td>2(0.5%)</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>1(0.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>39(10.5%)</td>
<td>8( 2.2%)</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>2(0.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>8( 2.2%)</td>
<td>4( 1.1%)</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>280(75.3%)</td>
<td>71(19.2%)</td>
<td>15(4.0%)</td>
<td>2(0.5%)</td>
<td>4(1.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4(1.1%)</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 7.7b - MONTHLY DISTRIBUTION OF ITEMS BY TYPE : 1974-75**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>News Story</th>
<th>Editorial</th>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Columnist</th>
<th>Letter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>22( 6.3%)</td>
<td>4(1.1%)</td>
<td>3(0.9%)</td>
<td>1(0.3%)</td>
<td>1( 0.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>36(10.8%)</td>
<td>8(2.3%)</td>
<td>6(1.7%)</td>
<td>1(0.3%)</td>
<td>8( 2.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>108(30.8%)</td>
<td>12(3.4%)</td>
<td>8(2.3%)</td>
<td>2(0.6%)</td>
<td>17( 4.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>84(23.9%)</td>
<td>10(2.8%)</td>
<td>6(1.7%)</td>
<td>1(0.3%)</td>
<td>11( 3.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>252(71.8%)</td>
<td>34(9.4%)</td>
<td>23(6.6%)</td>
<td>5(1.4%)</td>
<td>37(10.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

= 372

= 351
In the coding schedule we also sought to know where the items were placed in the papers. As shown in Table 7.8a, almost half of the total materials were on the front page as the main lead story (24.9%) or beside it (22.3%) while 13.1% of the items were on the back page. However, a further breakdown by monthly distribution (Table 7.8b) shows that 64.1% of the front page items were published in June 1964 while the figure for January 1975 was 43.6% which is still high enough to support the trend we have seen - the concentration of coverage during the two months. The labour movement and industrial relations in general become an important subject for media attention and agenda when involved in disputes or strikes. We could also see (Table 7.8c) that more stories were published on inside pages in 1974-75 than in 1964. This may be due to the fact that the Daily Times and New Nigeria were by 1974 publishing special weekly sections on labour. Also, as we noted above, each of the papers selected for 1974-75 had letters to the editor; a practice which was relatively underdeveloped in 1964. Another reason might be that the events of 1974-75 were not as dramatic as those of 1964 to merit front page treatment.

**Table 7.8a - Position of Items in the Papers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>No. of Items</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Column ins.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main lead</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>6,478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Front Page</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>2,902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back Page</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>1,905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inside Page</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>5,597</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 7.8b - Monthly Distribution of Items by Position in the Paper: 1964**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Main lead</th>
<th>Other front page</th>
<th>Back page</th>
<th>Inside page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
<td><strong>112</strong></td>
<td><strong>119</strong></td>
<td><strong>45</strong></td>
<td><strong>96 = 372</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 7.8c - MONTHLY DISTRIBUTION OF ITEMS BY POSITION IN THE PAPER: 1974-75

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Main lead</th>
<th>Other front page</th>
<th>Back page</th>
<th>Inside page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>191 = 351</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SPOKESMEN

An important way of assessing the character of news in our study is by looking at the personalities who provide the materials published either as speakers or actors. Our findings as indicated on Table 7.9a that of the 324 speakers quoted in 1964, 193 (59.6%) were trade union officials and rank and file workers. However, union officials appeared as speakers in 178 (54.9%) cases as against ordinary workers in just 15 cases. As shown on the table the workers were quoted as the main speakers or actors during the General Strike in June 1964. Government or state officials including ministers, followed with 84 (25.9%) appearances while employers were quoted 21 times (6.5%). The remaining 26 (8.0%) appearances were made by politicians, important personalities and ordinary members of the public.

During the 1974-75 period the trade union leaders and workers were quoted more often than the others (Table 7.9b). They appeared as spokesmen 146 times, that is 49.5% as against the government and its officials who appeared 65 times (22%). Employers were quoted on 41 occasions (13.9%) while others, including important people and members of the public made 44 (14.9%) appearances as speakers in the news. As again indicated on the table, trade union officials were the main speakers taking about 42.6% of the total appearance by all speakers.
### TABLE 7.9a - MONTHLY DISTRIBUTION OF SPEAKERS: 1964

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Trade Union Official</th>
<th>Worker</th>
<th>Govt. &amp; Officials</th>
<th>Employers</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 7.9b - MONTHLY DISTRIBUTION OF SPEAKERS: 1974-75

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Trade Union Official</th>
<th>Worker</th>
<th>Govt. &amp; Officials</th>
<th>Employers</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An important point in the tables above is the predominance of trade unions spokesmen over the government and especially the employers during the two periods. This tends to suggest that industrial relations news is almost solely about the unions and as we noted above, they only come alive in the news during periods of overt conflict and tension. This idea is reinforced by the title given to journalists who cover the industrial relations beat. They are usually called labour correspondents while the special section for industrial relations news in the papers is called labour page. The 'labour correspondent' is distinguished from the 'economic correspondent' who covers the other aspects of industrial relations and other economic matters. In this division of labour the labour reporter...
deals with little else besides the trade union offices and the coverage of strikes and industrial disputes.

A second important point indicated in the two tables is the predominance of union officials and the government. This goes to show the importance of elite and institutional figures as news sources. News emphasises the activities, concern and speeches of the 'big' people. When a story breaks, journalists look for the important people, the experts, politicians and protagonists on both sides of the issue involved for materials to be published. In this, the labour leaders are pitched against government officials mainly ministers, governors and the Head of State.

Another point which the above finding illustrates is the very few instances politicians were quoted. Throughout the 1964 period they were quoted on just nine occasions. Two reasons may be adduced to explain this. The first one was that the Nigerian Parliament of the 60s was quite ineffective. Most of the members did not show interest in matters other than those which concerned their constituences. Despite protests for more time for debates, the parliamentarians were not keen on any long debate on issues (Kermode, 1968). According to John P. MacKintosh,

> While the articulate members say they want longer sessions, the mass of the Government backbenchers press the Leader of the House to curtail sessions and let them get home to their jobs. The Opposition is loudest in its protests, yet its benches are often all but empty (MacKintosh, 1966, p.116).

For example, the House of Representative sat for 32 days in 1964 and 35 days in 1965, with the average length of session below five hours in 1965 (Kermode, op cit, p.261). In the words of the Daily Express the Nigerian Parliament had become an "expensive and irrelevant talking shop" (ibid, p.270).

The second reason was that the various political crises of the period must have starved the Parliament of all its energy if it ever had any. For example, the Action Group which hitherto provided the only effective and articulate organised opposition to the government was as far back as 1962 involved in an internal crisis which led to the split of the party and the imprisonment of its leaders. Directly or indirectly
other parties and their members were affected by this crisis and others like the census controversy.

More importantly however, the relative silence of the politicians especially the NCNC opposition indicates that not much difference existed among the political parties. Actually, Kermode noted this point in his discussion of the effectiveness of the parliament during the 1960s. According to him there were no "important issues over which the Government and Opposition were deeply divided" (Kermode, ibid, p.261). Since the demands of the Unions were directed at all the governments and the strike was national, it was difficult for any party to exploit the strike for any electoral advantage.

**ACTORS**

In the literature on industrial relations three main types of actors or parties are usually identified as being involved in the industrial relations system; the workers and their unions, the employers or management and their organisation and lastly the government. In laissez-faire liberal accounts the government is usually presented as a neutral agency acting as a mediator between the first two who are regarded as equal in a bargaining situation. But as we noted in a preceding chapter, this is not true in reality. The government or the state through many mechanisms - the law, fiscal measures, the police - has more often than not intervened in industrial relations usually on the side of the employer.

Be that as it may, we are here interested in looking at how press reporting reflected this set up during the periods of our study. To do this, a section titled 'parties involved' was included in the coding schedule. We found that the trade union or the worker was defined as a party in almost all the items 716 times, while the government also had a significant mention in 555 cases, whereas the employers showed up in 290. This further supports our argument that industrial relations is defined almost exclusively in terms of 'what the unions are doing to others or saying about them'.

The finding more significantly does indicate the relative importance of the state in the economy in general and industrial relations in particular. It also tends to suggest that industrial relations is more
or less a matter between the government and the trade unions. This has a lot of implications for the average worker. For example, in terms of his ability to locate and contextualise the totality of the source of his exploitation and be able to challenge that source. This is quite evident during the informal interviews we had with some workers during field work in Nigeria. Almost all of them believed that the government is the problem or saviour as the case may be. Though many of the workers express some measure of hostility to the rich, the proverbial rag to riches story still impresses them and they show a lot of deference to rich people. This has a lot to do with tradition and culture (see Chapter 4 for above). Though it is not uncommon nowadays for workers to accuse their employers and businessmen in general of 'cheating' the poor people, they still believe that only the government could help them. Private sector employees (we interviewed them at a brewery in Abeokuta) said that if the government could increase wages their companies would have no option but to do the same. They therefore believed that any agitation for wage increases must be directed at the government. This may reflect their experience and the weakness of the unions vis-à-vis the organisational and financial strength of the employers. But equally too is a deep seated hostility and bitterness against the government. Nigerian workers believe that the government is corrupt and that it is this corruption and not the system or mode of production of goods and services and the pattern of distribution of wealth that is responsible for their poverty. This of course is in line with the dominant definition of the Nigerian reality, especially the reason visually advanced for the current economic problem.

To be able to understand the importance of each party in the news we further analysed where they were positioned in the paper. One hundred and fifty four (45.4%) out of the 339 items in which a worker or union official was quoted were on the front page, while the employers appeared on this page in 15 items that is 24.2% of the 62 items in which they were quoted. The government was quoted in 91 (61.7%) front page stories out of all the 149 times and its representatives were quoted. In that case the government was likely to be quoted more on front page articles than trade union movement or the employers. This also implies that material from the government apart from having a higher chance of being used is also more likely to be prominently displaced on the front page. In effect, it could be said that the government enjoyed better visibility and prominence than the other parties in the industrial relations system. This situation
becomes clearer if we take into consideration that Government spokesmen are either ministers, commissioners and in some cases, governors and the Head of State. These categories of speakers are more important or news-worthy than trade union officials or employers. More so when they speak for the nation or in the national interest. Therefore what they say deserves better media attention and treatment.

However, an implication of such prominent treatment is that such materials or ideas have a better chance of registering in people's consciousness than another placed in an obscure inner page. We should also consider that front page stories in Nigerian newspapers are usually boldly headlined further amplifying their importance to the public.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>1964</th>
<th>1974</th>
<th>1975</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trade Unions</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
<td>786</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>1,561</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**News Source**

We also seek to find out the sources of industrial relations news during the two periods. As indicated in the tables below (Tables 7.11a and b), when a source is mentioned in a story it was more likely to be a statement or a speech. The large percentage of unattributed stories, though, including letters to the editor, editorials and features, indicates the practice among journalists of publishing certain important stories mainly from government officials while concealing the identity of the source. It is a news management technique employed by government officials to test or mould public opinion on a likely controversial issue.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Publication</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Press Conference</th>
<th>No Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Publication</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Press Conference</th>
<th>No Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown on the above two tables, publications or documents were rarely used as news sources. The reason could be that before some of these documents or reports, for example Labour Annual Statistics, are published they are already dated in conventional news terms. News is instant history, only the immediate, up-to-date event makes news. Such events must fit into the twenty-four hour cycle of news production. Another reason might be that some of these reports may be too complex or complicated for a reporter in a hurry to file a story to go through. Whatever might be the reason the implication is that only the surface of events are reported while the more complex which invariably involve the context and background of such events are ignored. In other words, by concentrating on the claims, counter claims and opinions contained in daily press releases and interviews by reporters, events are removed from their history and social context.
There is also a slight indication that journalists are more likely to seek interviews with protagonists on an issue during a period of conflict than during the period preceding it. Of the 46 stories published in 1964 from direct interviews by reporter, 23, that is half, were in June. Also in 1974-75 40 stories out of 77 from interviews were published in January. This of course supports our argument that the press is oriented to the conflict situation. It is in such conflict situations that heroes and instant celebrities are made by the mass media who then become providers of news. However, an important point is that as Daniel Boorstin has said the interview has turned news gathering into news making. According to him the journalist uses the interview technique to "incite a public figure to make statements which sound like news" (Daniel Borstin, 1963). Through seeking for interviews the journalist generates news from somebody who otherwise might have remained silent. It is a way of getting the stream of up-to-date news flowing. Journalists are actively involved in this news 'generating' process, for example by the type and status of the person contacted for the interview, the type of questions asked and how they phrase them. As Sigelman has noted, "Newsmen are in an important sense hypothesis testers, whose news-gathering procedures consist of checking the empirical validity of their preconceptions (Sigelman, 1973, pp.144-145). Such preconceptions are often shaped by the policy and practice of news organisations and newsgathering routines.

Characterisation

To understand how the three main types of actors during the periods studied were portrayed in the press, two lists of adjectives, one negative, the other positive, were drawn up. To qualify for coding, an adjective needed to be directly attributed to a particular actor. In order to avoid ambiguity many possible synonyms (see Appendix B) were provided and when there was any doubt the word was not coded. Another possible area of problem was the meaning to be attached to some words on the list. For instance the adjective 'militant' could either be positive or negative depending on the user and the context. Therefore the context and speaker were taken into consideration in coding a specific word. In the coding schedule we did not attempt to specify who was using a particular adjective to describe another actor or individual. We are more interested in the fact that for instance 'actor A' was described as 'this or that', than in who says it.
As shown on Tables 7.12a and b we found that workers and trade unions in general, were far more likely to be labelled negatively than the other actors. They were so described 89 times, with the government following with 50 adjectives. The employers had only 27 adjectives attached to their behaviour and activities. The workers were often described as irresponsible, irrational or selfish. These adjectives or close ones were used 22 times. Words like angry, violent or militant were applied to them 16 times while labels like illegal, destabilising or against national interest appeared 15 times. Though not as frequent words or phrases to the effect that the workers were lazy, unproductive (7 times) weak, divided or not united (6 times) were also used. Government and employers were almost equally described as uncooperative, not ready to negotiate or using delaying tactics (15 and 13 times respectively). The employers were eleven times described as either exploitative or as capitalists. This group of words was used five times to describe the government while in eleven cases it was described as lazy, unproductive, wasteful or corrupt.

Positive adjectives were used to describe the unions or workers 16 times while the government and employers had five and three respectively. While we may leave the others, the word most likely to be used to describe the workers is 'exploited' or the phrase 'poorly-paid'.

Before going on to discuss our other findings we would like to conclude this section of the result by noting two important points. The first point that has emerged from this section of the study is that apart from the fact that workers and their organisation appeared more frequently either as spokesman or as party to the conflict, they were also more likely to be fully described in the news than the other two parties. This may be due to their relatively higher rate of appearance than the other two types of actors. Employers, apart from their relative absence, tended to be mentioned without any qualification. This finding corresponds to that of Paul Hartmann on British mass media and industrial relations.

The other point is that, from the data we are unable to support the popularly held belief that the press tends to seek government and/or management views more than those of the unions and the workers. This however has to be qualified in two respects. First, it seems government views were more prominent on the front and back pages. Second, the descriptive qualifications attached to the unions might tend to affect the
### Table 7.12a - Negative Characterisation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Union</th>
<th>Govt.</th>
<th>Employer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Angry, bitter, furious, annoyed, threatening</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Violent, riotous, militant, clench-fisted</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Illegal, sabotage, against national interest, unconstitutional</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Irresponsible, irrational, selfish, not ready to negotiate</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Incited by outsiders, being used</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Politically motivated</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Tribally/ethnically motivated</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Lazy, unproductive, indolent, incompetent, inefficient</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Unsympathetic, lacks understanding</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Uneducated, poor leadership, ignorant</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Weak, not firm, divided</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Corrupt, ostentatious, wasteful</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Neocolonial, capitalist, exploitative</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Brutal, using force/power</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Poor labour laws, oppressive</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Unwise, foolish, short-sighted ill-judged, ill-timed</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Dishonest, lying, unfaithful, deceitful</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 7.12b - Positive Characterisation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Responsible, reasonable, rational, cooperative</th>
<th>Union/Worker</th>
<th>Govt.</th>
<th>Employer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Responsible, reasonable, rational, cooperative</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>United, showing solidarity, strong</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Productive, hard-working</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Experienced, good-leadership, good management</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Poorly-paid, poor working condition</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Working in the national interest/unity/econ. development</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Upholding law and order, rule of law</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Restraint, sensible, correct</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Good labour policies/law</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Not exploitative, good pay</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Ready to negotiate, pay, new wages</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Happy, joyous</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
evaluation of their point of views than those of the employers and even the government.

**ACTORS' COMMENT**

To know how each actor and interested parties to the industrial conflicts of the periods chosen attributed responsibility to either the trade unions, the government or the employers, we coded the 'stand' of the statements. This is in terms of 'who is to be blamed?' Most of the stories were 'neutral'. However, as shown on Table 7.13, when blame is apportioned the government got the greatest share. Out of the 279 of such instances it was blamed on 124 (44.4%) occasions followed by the unions blamed on 94 (33.7%) instances. Out of the 124 instances the government was blamed, 69 times (55.6%) were by the trade unions followed by the press through editorials and personal opinion columns on 57 occasions, that is 29.3%. Again, the employers had a very low score of 46. There is an indication that the press held the unions responsible for the strikes. Almost half of the time when the unions were accused were from newspaper editorials and columnists (44 times or 46%).

**TABLE 7.13 - ACTORS' COMMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Blames Union</th>
<th>Supports Union</th>
<th>Blames Govt.</th>
<th>Supports Govt.</th>
<th>Blames Employers</th>
<th>Supports Employers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trade Union</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorial</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columnist</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
<td>94</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above findings do support the earlier point we raised about the possibility of workers directing their anger solely at the government thereby missing the totality of the source of their exploitation. The unions seem to regard the government as their main object of attack. Most of the trade union attacks against the employers were from plant union leaders, especially
during the 1974/75 period when the strikes were led by shopfloor workers. This situation, as we have already pointed out, could be due to the role of the government in the economy and society. We should also remember that the strikes during the two periods were after pay reviews carried out by the government.

Subject of Industrial Relations News

To obtain an idea of the range of subjects or events that become industrial relations news we drew up a list of 15 topics (see Appendix B). The question we sought to answer is 'what kind of thing is this item about?' The frequency of appearance of each topic is shown in Table 7.14a. The table shows that the greatest number of the materials published (47.2%) was about pay claims either in terms of award or rejection or acceptance of such award or negotiation or statement about it. It is followed by current or on-going industrial action (19.1%). The third topic is about the activities of wage review panels or industrial tribunals.

As also indicated in Table 7.14b not much difference could be found among the newspapers. All the three subjects mentioned above were emphasised by them. The high score recorded by Daily Times on the issue of pay claims would seem to reflect the fact that the paper accounted for the highest number of coded stories during the two periods chosen.

These findings show how central the issue of pay is to the industrial relations system. However, such issues of pay or strikes are often reported without taking into consideration their links with other areas of the economy or the society. This is evident in the two tables. Issues concerning the economic or political context of industrial relations rarely made news during the period. Not that these issues are not reported in the news. They are likely to have been reported in different context, far removed from industrial relations.

In the press, issues and events tend to assume discrete existence of their own often with little or no connection with each other. Industrial relations thus becomes what the labour movement is doing without any link to the larger economy. Crimes are caused by criminals who are psychologically endowed with criminality, nothing is mentioned about the social conditions of the criminals. For example, rarely are issues like development plans or even the yearly budget discussed in terms of industrial
<p>| <strong>TABLE 7.14a - FREQUENCY OF APPEARANCE OF MAIN SUBJECT-MATTER FOR BOTH PERIODS</strong> |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Frequency</strong></th>
<th><strong>% of Total</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Projected industrial action, strike or threat of such including preparation, negotiation and likely effect</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Current industrial action, its cause and effect, negotiation, statement on it</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. End of industrial action, return to work</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Pay claims, including offer, award, rejecting or acceptance</td>
<td>341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Economic context of industrial relations e.g. cost of living, unemployment</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Government statement on economic policy excluding any statement or action on specific industrial action</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Political statement - pro-government (must be on industrial relations but excluding any specific industrial action)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Political statement - anti-government (must be on industrial relations but excluding any specific industrial action)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Activities or reports of industrial tribunals, wage commissions</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Activities of police or security agencies specifically on industrial relations</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Relations between unions - negative</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Relations between unions - positive</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Union - organized events</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Condition of services industrial health, safety</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Others</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Projected industrial action, strike, threat, preparation, negotiation and likely effect</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daily Times</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>West African Pilot</td>
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<td>Morning Post</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>Nigerian Observer</td>
<td>-</td>
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relations. In short, what we are saying is that labour matters are reported without relating them to the broader social and economic context which will make them more meaningful.

CONTEXT THEMES

In order to find out the type of ideas and concepts employed in the coverage of industrial relations news we coded any of a group of words or phrases which clearly and explicitly appeared in an item (see Appendix B). This, we hoped, would give us an indication of the terms in which industrial relations is handled in the news.

Reference to most of the themes were quite infrequent for any meaningful discussions. However our finding (Tables 7.15a and b) again does show how the idea of wages, either as wage increase, wage review or the totality of wage policy is central to industrial relations, as in the above discussion. It was referred to in 271 cases. Though this may not be surprising in the context of this study, it is however in line with similar findings elsewhere (Hartmann, 1976). Next to this was the issue of negotiation which was mentioned 156 times. Also referred to was the problem of labour unity (85 times). Economic development which embraced issues like investment and the economic policy was mentioned in 76 instances.

Though inflation was referred to, rarely was any mention made of counter-inflationary measures like price control or the provision of adequate and efficient social services. Also the issue of justice or fair play was not mentioned.

As we can see from the table, the themes emphasised by the papers are similar. The greatest attention was given to wages followed by negotiations or collective bargaining and, thirdly, the problem of labour unity.

Causes and Effect of Industrial Conflict

The coding schedule was designed so as to record what were considered to be the causes and effects of industrial action and also effect of pay increase. Generally, the papers seem to be silent on these issues. As we see in Tables 7.16, 7.17 and 7.18, the scores are
# TABLE 7.15a - PAPER BY CONTEXT THEME

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<th>DREAM</th>
<th>TRIBUNE</th>
<th>WEST</th>
<th>APR.-PILOT</th>
<th>DAILY TIMES</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27</td>
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</table>
very thin for any meaningful comparison. However, 'pay claim' by the unions was the usual reason advanced by the papers as the main cause of labour disputes. It occurred 108 times out of 228 times any cause was given. In the context of our study this may be a normal finding because most of the stories were written during periods of industrial conflicts which arose out of pay increase but it is supported by that of Aire who found that nearly 30% of reported disputes between 1960 and 1968 in Nigeria involved conflict over wages and salaries (Aire, 1970, p. 90). The issue of 'pay claim' by the unions is however followed by 'employers' reluctance to pay or negotiate the new wages announced by the government. Apart from being the commonest reason, pay claim was also the most prominent. Half of its 108 appearances was on the front page. Rarely was any mention made of the issue of disaffection by workers or any other group with economic policy as the cause of industrial dispute. In fact, attention seems to have been concentrated on the two factors mentioned above to the neglect of any other.

Before we discuss the effects of industrial conflict and pay increase as presented in the papers studied, we will like to mention in passing that the attribution of strikes to pay claims by workers should not be taken at face value despite its centrality in industrial relations. As Richard Hyman has said "It should be no cause for surprise if strike situations centre primarily around wages" (Hyman, 1984, p. 122). It is easier for workers and trade unions to express their more fundamental disaffection in terms of wages without being open to charges of being involved in politics or destabilisation. Therefore a strike for better wages or conditions of service may mask more fundamental disagreement with the structure of control in the work place or even the social structure in general. In Nigeria where the level of literacy and articulateness among workers is very low, a strike over wages is a potent weapon to express disagreement with government policy and the social order in general. As Gavin Williams has noted, wage demands provide the issue for Nigerian workers to galvanise their interests, and strikes and industrial actions the sanctions to enforce their demands while taxes provide both the issue and sanction for peasant action (G. Williams, 1980, p. 98).

As other studies have shown, media coverage of industrial relations do concentrate a lot on the effect of strikes on the public. According to Paul Hartmann, newspapers "tend to adopt the point of view of the 'man in
TABLE 7.16 - FREQUENCY OF REFERENCE TO CAUSES OF INDUSTRIAL ACTION

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<td>2 Political motive</td>
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<td>3 Government Economic Policies</td>
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<td>4 Pay Claim</td>
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<td>5 Wasteful spending, ostentatious living</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Corruption</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Gap between rich and poor</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Employers reluctance to pay/negotiate</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
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<td>9 Militant labour leader</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Bad Management</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Intra-union dispute/rivalry</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Outside influence</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Ethnicity, tribalism</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Dismissal of union officials non-recognition of unions</td>
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</tr>
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TABLE 7.17 - PAPER BY EFFECT OF INDUSTRIAL ACTION

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<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
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the street' or to see themselves as representing 'national interest' ... 
strikes are presented as lamentable events to be brought to an end as 
quickly as possible'. Our finding as shown in Table 7.17 is in agreement 
with this view. Out of the 128 instances, effects of the strike 
mentioned 67 were on the suffering or inconvenience of members of the 
public. Next to this was economic or industrial implication (loss of 
production, fear by investors) of the strikes which was mentioned 39 
times.

As evident in the table, there is little or no difference among the 
papers; though we can note that the Morning Post emphasised the economic 
aspect slightly more than the other papers.

The economic implication of labour activities as manifested in pay 
claims is further amplified when we examine what were considered to be the 
effects of pay increases. Leading the score as shown in Table 7.18 was 
inflation with 80 instances out of 155 times any effect was mentioned. It 
is followed by unemployment mentioned 19 times. The contention that pay 
increase leads to a slow down in economic development ranks third with 18 
instances.

The New Nigeria and the Nigerian Tribune emphasised the inflationary 
effect more than the other papers. The New Nigeria case is noteworthy 
because it was only available for inclusion in our analysis for the 1974-
75 period. The paper accounted for one-quarter of the 80 times inflation 
was mentioned as the effect of pay increases. It also accounted for 
71.4% (20 out of 28 times) of the times the New Nigerian mentioned any 
effect of pay rise. The paper, and this could be said of the Tribune, 
must have thought it was expressing a deep-seated concern for the public 
and the workers. They must have felt that a better way than pay rise 
should be found to relieve the workers of their economic problems. In fact 
as we see in the next chapter, the papers were against wage increases 
because they thought it would lead to inflation. They advocated that better 
social services should be provided to workers and others instead of the 
Udoji awards.

SOLUTION OFFERED

Again, as in the above, references to solutions were too thin for 
any meaningful analysis. However the solution most offered was for the
workers on strike to negotiate either with the government and/or employers. This is followed by the suggestion that all concerned should accept the newly established government pay structure. In effect there seems to be a general acceptance of the income distribution pattern as established by the government. Any problem according to this perspective could be effectively thrashed out at the negotiating table. The solution most likely to be offered in editorials are either negotiation (38 times) accept new pay (17 times) or return to work (14 times).

Discussion and Summary

Despite its limitations the quantitative analysis attempted above has pointed up certain trends. We can now draw together the findings to see the picture as a whole and its overall meaning and implication. First, in line with previous studies it is clear that industrial relations becomes news during periods of conflict; the strike situation. Many earlier studies have shown that,

Events only qualify for presentation as news when they reach a certain magnitude and visibility... Hence industrial relations become news in the form of disputes and strikes, social and political conflict in the form of demonstration and public disturbances (Murdock, 1980, pp.59-60).

The mass media's orientation to the 'negative' or 'abnormal' is not just for commercial reasons, "but also because it is in conflict that the strains in the social fabric show up clearly. Conflict situations therefore deserve attention because they have implications for social stability and social change" (Hartmann, 1976, pp.2-23). Golding and Elliot have located the origin of this orientation in the fact that news started as a service to groups directly concerned with the uninterrupted flow of commercial life.

The important point is that unionists use this as evidence of media hostility and bias against them. We were repeatedly told by union officials that reporters are not interested in their numerous activities like educational and social programmes, advice to government and contribution to state agencies on which representatives of labour sit. For instance, we were told by the Secretary-General of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) that the mass media did not publicise the 'Workers Charter of Demand' until there was a strike on minimum wage in 1980.
The media's orientation to events as news is not a deliberate action by journalists, rather it is due to the logic and working routines of the profession which is insensitive to unfolding events (see Chapter 6). In journalism, for an event to become news it must "assume forms that are amenable to processing within the twenty four hour cycle of newspaper production" (Murdock, 1980, p.59).

Another element in the picture that has emerged is the predominant visibility of the unions and workers in industrial relations news. News is presented as if only the activities of the unions make the industrial relations practice. Coming second in the frequency of appearance either as a spokesman or participant is the state. This could be explained by noting that in the two instances studied, state actions were the immediate cause of the strikes. More fundamentally it suggests the extent of state involvement in industrial relations both as an employer and as a mediator.

The crucial point yet to be explained is the almost total absence of the employers. It is not that employers either individually or collectively are not reported in the news. They are reported in other types of news which are not covered in this study. Employers are more likely to be prominent in business or general economic news which are not reported from the point of view of industrial relations. In effect, while workers' presence in the news is more or less limited to the domain of conflict, employers feature in far more wide-ranging activities and probably on a more regular basis. In a Canadian study, Hackett found that "... labour interviewees were highly concentrated in industrial/labour stories. In the broader areas of the economy and government economic policy, corporate spokespersons outnumbered their labour counterparts 28 to 9" (Hackett, 1983, p.21). Needless to say the wide-ranging activities of the employers are more positive. They are more likely to involve wealth-creation and production than consumption which a 'pay-claim' by workers represents. Within this perspective the state is an agency standing above all interests.

An issue also to emerge from this and related to an earlier point about the media's orientation to the 'immediate' is that any cumulative negative effect of employers or state action cannot be covered by the press until it reaches the 'boiling point' in the form of a strike. Such a strike
becomes attributed to 'irrational' or 'militant' trade unionism, forgetting its origin in a policy decision of the past. The point we are making is that the high visibility of the trade unions and workers in industrial relations (narrowly defined as industrial conflict) make them almost exclusively responsible and blameable for strikes and its supposed associated ills, while the relative absence of the employers tends to shield them from such blames and responsibility. As we shall see in the next chapter where we discuss the editorials written on the industrial relations during the periods studied, when the state comes in, it is blamed not for causing the conflict, but for not making enough effort to resolve it as quickly as possible as a disinterested arbiter. As we shall show in the next chapter, this last point is evident in the editorials written on the 1964 strike.

Our findings show that industrial relations is presented more in straight news than in editorials and rarely in feature articles. By its nature - brevity, conciseness, immediacy, drama - the news story is not suited for an explanation or contextualisation of an event, that is exploring its historical and social roots to discover the underlying trends and course. This is more the domain of features and special reports. It could then be expected that the underlying remote causes of industrial conflict would at best receive superficial treatment in the press. It is in this light we have to see the emphasis on immediate causes like pay claims and effects of conflict rather than structural causes. Such emphasis is usually on the dramatic day-to-day or instant happenings which tends to bury the fundamental issues that have produced such a conflict. As Hackett put it,

The media explanations of disputes focus on the specific claims, actions or attributes of the parties directly involved, especially those of labour. Such explanations exclude factors which would render labour's action more rational and intelligible by showing ... that conflict is generated by the basic structure of industry in our society (Hackett, 1983, p.26).

We can further support our argument here by noting that the two most prominent and important pages in a newspaper, the front and back pages, are entirely devoted to straight news accounts. Seldom are feature articles or news analysis placed on the two pages. Feature articles, news analysis and personal columns are separated from news which are supposed to
contain facts and facts alone. In essence, by separating facts from opinions the press signals to the reader how to approach both. The news story in this case is an objective neutral account while features, editorials, letters to the editor and such materials published in the op-ed page are not so neutral or objective, 'so readers beware'. Moreover, by separating facts from interpretation the press delinks any connection between them. As James Carey has pointed out, in the name of objectivity and neutrality, the press becomes "a relatively passive link in a communication chain that records the passing scene for audiences" in contrast to the journalist's earlier "roles of advocacy and criticism". In this development, these earlier roles "were reduced to secondary aspect of the journalistic enterprise" (Carey, 1969, p.33). As we have already shown, 341 (47.2%) of all the items were on the front pages alone.

We can also note the predominance of what Boorstin (1963) has called 'pseudo-events' as the source of news. In the study, speeches and statements and news conferences constitute half of the identified sources of the materials published. This could also be interpreted as an indication of the reliance of the press on organised, structured and accessible sources. It is easier for such bodies to gain media attention than for individuals or unorganised workers.

Two other issues we would also like to draw attention to are what the media regarded as the main effects of a strike—discomfort to members of the public and economic problems—and what to do to end the public suffering and possible economic chaos. The answer, as the data show, is that the workers should negotiate and go back to work. This view directly coincides with those of the beneficiaries of the present economic arrangement in Nigeria—a case of the press reproducing the dominant views in society. Though the negative effects of a strike are generally true in that social services are disrupted and production stopped during a strike, their presentation by the press is very superficial and lacks context.

The last element we shall like to highlight here is the similarity among the newspapers during the two periods. One could have expected that the West African Pilot would differ from the Morning Post, or the Nigerian Tribune from the Daily Sketch. This was not the case. This supports the view that journalists share a common core of professional values in their
news judgement and production that go beyond ownership, personal or corporate ideology, political bias or financial source. We are, however, not attempting to totally banish the influence of such outside factors. The contention is that they may not be as important or decisive as some accounts of the operation of news production would have it.

However, we would like to qualify the greater influence of news value in the news production process. The autonomy of mass media practitioners to exercise their professional value judgement is constrained by the terms and frame of reference already set by those outside the mass media; the forces and institutions that are in control of the socio-economic and political system. The framework for the mass media agenda is set by these powerful forces and institutions. The mass media do not 'create' news. They 'manufacture' or 'make' news from the materials they gather, select and process almost exclusively from these forces but such process of 'manufacturing' is structured by the operation of their professional ideology and values of practice.

In this sense, our point is that the mass media perform their roles within the power structure of a particular society. This is what Stuart Hall meant when he said the structure of power and the structure of the mass media are articulated together. It is the powerful in any society who set the initial definition of a problem and also the frame and limit of subsequent discussion by their ready and structured access to the mass media. Hall and his colleagues have called the powerful the 'primary definers' while the media "play a crucial but secondary role in reproducing the definitions of those who have privileged access, as of right to the media as accredited sources" (Hall et al, 1978, p.59).

Once the definition and framing of the issue have been established, any contribution, either from the media or other sources including the opposition, is constrained to start from this established interpretation and frame of reference. To go outside may, by and large, mean marginalisation, while success would entail a restructuring, however temporary, of the power structure and/or the terms of the debate. In a discussion on this issue Hartmann concluded,

In social terms, the 'real' issues are those perceived as real within the prevailing (i.e. dominant) system of values in a society. The similarity of news coverage by different
organisations is therefore due in large part to similar 
perception of the issues, derived not just from a common 
journalistic sense of what makes a good story, but from 
a common perception of what is at stake in terms of real 
power relationships. The 'real' issues - and therefore 
the most newsworthy stories - can only easily be changed 
by a change in the disposition of power (Hartmann, 1976, 
pp.2-53).

In the words of another media scholar,

Judgements of importance involved in the selection of 
facts, their arrangement and interpretation are not the 
product of individual prejudices and convictions but 
reflect social values widely shared throughout society. 
Communication media are part of the apparatus of power 
by which some values are widely distributed and shared 
(Elliott, 1978, p.188).

It therefore makes much sense to consider news value and media 
autonomy in relation to the actual disposition of power within a given 
society. The operation of news values and professional ideology of news-
men dispose them to the powerful without much pressure from them. The 
powerful, apart from their better access to the media, their advantage to 
define what the issues are about, are also able to influence, if not control, 
the nature, scope and movements of these issues. If news is not 
necessarily and always about the powerful "it will be about the situation 
that their exercise of power has produced".

Bias in the News

The quantitative findings analysed in this chapter have been able 
to give some indication of how the press handle industrial relations and 
the type of image of the labour movement implicitly contained in such a 
coverage. Such an analysis should also be able to lead us to see how the 
social views and perspective of the different participants are contained 
and treated in the press.

This may be done by utilizing the conventional view which sees the 
illogical role of the mass media in terms of bias, defined as "the 
deliberate manipulation of news for political or personal ends", or its 
positive corollary, objectivity, "a complete and unrefracted capture of 
the world" (Golding and Elliott, 1979, p.12). Journalists, media 
organisations and state authorities are aware of the possibility of
'deliberate manipulation' in news production. To avoid it, administrative and/or legal guidelines are given while journalists strive to 'balance' their stories by presenting opposing views on an issue. Despite these efforts and guidelines, politicians and other interested parties including academics still accuse the media of bias.

However, the use of the concept in a news production study is problematic. As Peter Golding and Philip Elliot have pointed out the concept connotes "a position of balance from which news could be dragged by the weight of prejudice, intrigue or malign influence of political or commercial outsiders". The two problems inherent here are where to fix that dividing line, and the assumption that if the 'weights' of prejudice or intrigue were removed the journalist would be free and autonomous in the discharge of his duties without any bias.

A further extension of the notion of bias is to see journalists and the mass media as detached observers, neutral from the social reality they report. This view which sees the media as the 'mirror' of social events is commonly held by journalists.

Various studies (Halloran, et al (1970), Tuchman, 1978, Altheide, 1976, Gitlin, 1980, Golding and Elliot, 1979) have shown that due to various unwitting or inferential factors - organisation features and professional values - journalists or news cannot be neutral or balanced in any absolute sense. In other words if we distinguish bias as a psychological disposition of an individual or group and economic or political pressure from bias inherent in the collection and production of news, or what the American political scientist, Austin Ranney called, 'structural bias' (Ranney, 1983) objectivity or balance becomes an impossible goal of journalism.

Another limitation in the use of the concept is that the use of language itself implies evaluation and context. There is no value-free language. As David Morley put it "Neutrality would only be possible if there existed a 'perfect language' in which pure facts of the world could be recorded without prejudice" (Morley, 1976, p.246). In this sense language and the mass media are regarded as structuring agents rather than neutral transmission belt (Hackett, 1984, p.236).
From the brief discussion above the concept of bias and its assumptions become inadequate. This is not to say that evidence of bias cannot be found in the mass media especially during a period of conflict. In Nigeria, evidence, supplied by journalists, could be adduced in this direction. Such instances and sometimes deliberate falsehood are due mainly to overt political pressure from government while at other times due to fear of legal and/or extra legal sanctions from the government.

The inadequacy of the concept of bias becomes more glaring in our case if we consider how contradictory our findings are. The findings could be used to make a case for or against press bias toward the trade unions or business.

As many of the works already cited have shown, it is more useful to show the underlying conceptual and ideological framework through which the news media present events and as a result come to be given one dominant/primary meaning rather than the other (Morley, op cit, p.247). Working within this framework, journalists "select and view events in peculiar ways" (Altheide, 1976, p.177). In doing this the focus of such studies changed from looking for bias in the news as a deliberate effort to structural factors which shape news production toward the "definitions of the powerful, without being, in a simple sense, in their pay" (Hall et al, 1978, p.57).

Legitimacy in the News

In this study we propose to locate the issues raised in the quantitative analysis by examining the way the press presented the actions of all the parties concerned in the industrial relations practice. Such handling, we submit will reveal the status of such parties, at least as presented in the press. This could be done by looking at how legitimacy was accorded to each of the parties, i.e. whose action was presented as legitimate or not and what are the likely consequences of these actions.

This approach is within the broader perspective that news operates as ideology and it "fundamentally broadens and even contradicts the view that news messages are biased in accordance with the motivations of communicators" (Hackett, 1984, p.245). Further, it transcends the search for favouritism to a group as the conventional bias studies would claim. As the Glasgow University Media Group said of their work,
Our analysis goes beyond saying merely that television news 'favour' certain individuals and institutions by giving them more time and status. Such criticisms are crude. The nature of our analysis is deeper than this; in the end it relates to the picture of society in general and industrial society in particular, that television news constructs. This at its most damaging includes ... the laying of blame for society's industrial and economic problems at the door of the workforce (Glasgow Media Group, 1976, p.267).

The mass media work through certain assumptions and themes which help to signal how events are to be contextualized and interpreted by the reading public. This process plays up certain perspectives of how to view social events to the neglect or marginalisation of others. It is in this way that some actions look more legitimate than others. These assumptions, taken for granted by journalists, could be said to be organised within a media frame which enables journalists to process large amount of information quickly and routinely. Todd Gitlin has defined media frames as the "persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis and exclusion, by which symbol-handlers routinely organise discourse, whether verbal or visual" (Gitlin, 1980, p.7).

In the rest of this chapter we shall use the above quantitative finding to illustrate our contention that the press accorded differential legitimacy to the three main parties in the industrial relations practice. This as we have said was not a deliberate process or deliberate bias on the part of Nigerian journalists but a product of structural factors inherent in the practice of journalism.

The fact that trade union officials and workers were more often quoted or defined as participants than the management or state officials do indicate that industrial relations is mainly defined as workers' activity. This fits into a popular definition of industrial relations as agitation for pay increase or other demands by workers. This view is supported by two other findings. First, previous to June 1964 and January 1975 when there were strikes by workers, industrial relations seldom appeared on the pages of the newspapers. The second finding that points in this direction is about the topic and context of industrial relation news. In these two areas the main emphasis was on pay claim or dispute and negotiation. In other words the press seems to define
industrial relations news as strike news brought out by disagreement or agitation over more pay.

Though our study did not set out to find out in what other context management 'make' news, Robert Hackett has found out in a Canadian study that business appears in a wider context than labour which is almost exclusively limited to industrial relations/labour affairs (Hackett, 1983, p.13). In other words, as Hartmann has noted "It is not that the activities of employers receive no media attention, but that they are seldom presented in an industrial relations context" (Hartmann, 1976, pp.2-46).

An implication of the limited visibility of the employers in industrial relations news within the context of differential legitimacy is that their activities are not subjected to as much scrutiny and discussion and therefore suspicion as those of highly visible trade unions. At least they are not often called upon under public glare of media publicity to explain, justify and account for their actions or reactions to government wage/labour policies. As we have noted above, the presentation of the employers in a wider context could imply that they enjoy a more balanced coverage and therefore more and broader perspective within which to judge and evaluate their activities as actors in the industrial relations scene and the society in general as compared to workers and union leaders who are almost exclusively presented in industrial relations news as narrowly conceived as strike or 'pay-claim' news.

The argument that the higher visibility of the trade unions, than that of employers and the state, open them to public scrutiny could also be seen from the fact that they are more often quoted in the news. This would suggest that because of their doubtful legitimacy they are either called upon or felt obliged to account for their actions. It could also mean that the unions felt that without 'maximum noise' their views would not get the needed hearing. In both cases the need to be heard is felt greater by the unions than the employers or government. As we shall see in Chapter 10, journalists are either more at ease or felt obliged to publish materials from the government and employers than those from the unions. According to some of the journalists they regard news from government or employers as more credible and less problematic than those from the trade unions.
The greater legitimacy accorded to employers and the state could further be understood if we consider that the other context in which they appear, for example, the general economy/business affairs, government and politics are more likely to be on their own terms and therefore more positive. In an underdeveloped neo-colonial economy like Nigeria the mere announcement of an intention or plan to establish a factory is big news, so are annual budgets announced by government and even company annual general meetings and such routine activities which feature businessmen and government officials in very high profile. Many of these activities, needless to say, are uncritically accepted as indices of economic growth in contrast to strikes which are disruptive and negative.

To illustrate this point further we can point to the way the consequences of strikes are presented. In most cases when such consequences are mentioned it is always negative. The press made a lot of capital out of the disruption to social services and the consequent inconvenience to members of the public who are usually presented as helpless victims in a power play between the proverbial two elephants. This view of strike as a social problem is not peculiar to the press alone. It is a popular view in the conventional literature on industrial relations with its stress on the cost of strike on the economy.* And as Hyman has noted "the dominant social values tend to define open industrial conflict as illegitimate..." (Hyman, 1984, p.145). But apart from the fact that this view fails to inquire into the inherent structural tendency of the economy to produce conflict, anybody familiar with Nigeria will note its deficiency. At the best of normal time and situation, the provision of social services and public utilities are very inadequate and inefficient. Such views that stress the negative effects of industrial conflicts also consider the industrial relations system from the perspective of its main beneficiaries and the 'consuming' public and not from the point of view of the workers on strike. The workers are presented as irrational whose activities are against the national interests, for example, economic development.

The way the various parties were described also support our thesis of differential legitimacy. For instance the unions were given

more negative adjectives than either the employers or the state. Apart from this directly signifying the low legitimacy of the unions and their actions, the fact that they were labelled either negatively or positively more than the others suggests that "the media frequently found it necessary to indicate to people what they should think about workers and unions, while employers and government were characteristically presented in unqualified terms" (Hartmann, 1976, p.2-47). The press invites its readers to view the workers either with sympathy or hostility, approval or disapproval; are the workers behaving well and therefore deserving support or disruptive/violent and so condemnation? In a nutshell, it is assumed that the image or legitimacy of the unions and workers is always in question and therefore the press must help define it. This is not so with employers or the state whose legitimacy is assumed as unquestionable.

The acceptance by the press of questionable integrity and legitimacy of the unions in comparison with the government and management is further evident in the solutions offered to ending the strikes. The workers were urged to return to work and negotiate. It was even suggested in some editorials, as we shall see in the next chapter, that it will be against the normal run of things for the government to negotiate with striking workers. The negotiation would of course be conducted within the framework already established by government white paper or in a broader context the government set economic guidelines, for example, income policy. Whether such policy guidelines are just and equitable are never questioned; they are implicitly accepted as such. To question them would be to bring the whole political economy into question and scrutiny. But there seems to be the view that any deficiencies, which are presented as human and not structural, could be set right within the spirit of 'give and take' between all the parties concerned. The assumptions underlying this viewpoint have already been discussed in an earlier chapter - equality among the parties, a neutral state acting in the common interests of all, the sanctity and justness of the industrial relations practice and the legal and administrative apparatuses buttressing it and the doctrine of national interest which overrides all other sectional interests.

Another assumption implicit in it and related to the ideology of national interest is the idea that there is something we all agreed to negotiate about; a general consensus. In our case we could isolate the elements of this consensus to be economic development, national unity and
political and social stability. These issues are prominent in speeches by Nigerian leaders and political and economic documents like the constitutions and development plans. In bringing these issues or any of them up it is assumed that only extremists, those against the collective/national interest who will not sit and cooperate in resolving any conflict at the negotiating table. In press reports of industrial conflict it is the union side who walk out on others during negotiations; hardly do we hear of 'militant' employers walking out or 'table-banging' arbitrators. Those are the characteristics of the unions.

From the discussion so far we have been able to establish that the government and employers enjoyed better coverage in terms of higher legitimacy accorded them than the labour movement and the workers. We have also been able to show that this is mainly because of structural factors - professional ideology and practice - including the taken for granted assumptions employed by journalists to contextualise events and issues in order to make them intelligible to their readers.

We shall pursue some of the issues raised above in the next chapter where we shall be discussing the qualitative aspect of the study. Here we shall see how the events prevalent during the two periods were handled in editorials written on them. We also hope the editorials will point up the differences between the various papers chosen. Such differences, if any, are not evident from the quantitative data.

An International Comparison

Before we discuss the editorials we shall like to note the similarity between our findings as discussed above and the studies of industrial relations coverage carried out in Britain and Canada, some of which we have already referred to above (Hartmann, 1976, Morley, 1976, Glasgow Media Group, 1976, Knight, 1982, Hackett, 1983). Two main conclusions could be drawn from these studies. First, journalists tend to define industrial relations news in terms of strikes, disorder and conflict. New coverage tends to give prominence to the disruptive effects of industrial actions rather than their socio-historical origins; explanations of strikes being limited to the immediate and not remote causes. This removes such events from their historical and social contexts. The mode of coverage and interpretation also presupposes a certain definition of the social order which largely conforms to the views of dominant groups in
society. As the studies indicate this was not produced by any deliberate bias or conspiracy on the part of journalists, proprietors or the government but by the operational routines, professional values and the reliance of journalists on the 'primary definers'—that is authoritative figures in society.

The second conclusion is that news of industrial relations tends to be seen as news of industrial action almost exclusively initiated by workers. With its emphasis on the abstraction of events from their social and historical origins and contexts and the personalisation of such discrete events, news focuses greater attention on the actions and views of workers and unions than those of employers or the government. This is because the workers are usually regarded as the initiators of the industrial crisis. The media attention of the workers and the unions is also usually accompanied by more negative descriptions than the other parties. This tends to suggest how the workers are to be viewed and their actions interpreted. As evident in Hartmann's and Morley's studies, press discussions of industrial relations tend to rely heavily on the concept of national interest and a harmonious view of society. The trade unions for going on strike are usually presented as against the national interest and as a minority against the majority, the public who suffers during the strike.

Our findings are in agreement with these broad conclusions. This also shows, as Galtung and Ruge have observed, that news values are "culture-free" and relatively independent of some other major determinants of the press (Galtung and Ruge, 1965, pp.67-68). It seems to us that this points to the international character of news production and the values and ideology that inform the practice of journalism. Third World journalists are drawn into this global production culture by three main mechanisms identified by Peter Golding (1977). These are institutional transfer, training and education, and the diffusion of occupational ideologies.

Nigerian media institutions are products of the colonial experience and are more or less prototypes of the British media establishment. For example, there are newspapers with 'Page Three Girls'; there is a three-year old newspaper that apart from the similarity in name is patterned after the British Guardian and there is a one-year old
news magazine, NEWSWATCH, which is a carbon-copy of the American weekly magazine, TIME, in layout and style of reporting. We also have to remember that the oldest and most successful newspaper in the country, the Daily Times was up till the mid-70s, part of the London Mirror Group. Many of the Nigerian journalists were trained in Britain and America. The schools of journalism in Nigerian universities and polytechnics are fashioned after American departments of journalism.*

The adoption of the Western model of cultural production is not limited to journalism. A recent study of drama on the television came to the conclusion that "The Western model is the source of influence on the process of television drama production in Nigeria" (Oduko, 1985, p. 387). According to the author, Nigerian television producers would like to produce drama programmes similar to Dynasty, Dallas, Hawaii 5-0 and such Western drama. In other words it seems that the Western model provides the standard for Nigerian media practitioners.

* During the research period a lecturer at the Department of Mass Communication at the University of Lagos told me that the Masters Programme was modelled after a similar programme at Columbia University. In fact the Lagos programme started off as a 9-month programme like that of Columbia before it was later changed to 12-months.
CHAPTER 8

EDITORIAL INTERPRETATION

News, as we suggested in the last chapter, is more or less a product of power relations in a particular society. We further suggested that it is this element of power and the professional values and ideologies of journalists which account for the similarity in the contents of different newspapers.

In this sense, news tend to conform, without any necessary deliberate or conscious attempt, to the interests and concerns of the dominant group in the society because most of the time, issues that make news, have their sources mainly from the activities, concerns and interests of such a group. Moreover the members of such a dominant group are interested in the maintenance and preservation of the status quo which guarantee them their privileged positions. They are, in other words, interested in issues or forces which may upset such a social order, of which industrial conflict is a prime candidate. The tendency of the mass media to emphasise and over-concentrate on the abnormal, and conflicts to a great extent demonstrate how news tend to conform to the interests of the dominant group in the society.

A great bulk of published news is about threat to the social order, crime and behaviours that deviate from the established common social norms and values. The publication of such news tend to suggest that those involved in such activities are against the common interest. Though this may not be contained in the straight 'hard' news account, it is part of the taken-for-granted-background from which news is presented to the public. What we are driving at here is that to publish a news item implies an interpretative framework which is usually not stated in the news columns. It is assumed that we all know what is good, acceptable and normal in society by which we can judge what we read as news. In other words, as we read our papers we are being asked to make a judgement within an assumed framework. In that case to present "something as news a whole background of 'normality' against which it should be seen and understood is implied" (Hartmann, 1976, p.3.2). In the case of industrial relations news this means that the great emphasis on strike and other forms of industrial conflicts by the press already assumes the normalcy of the existing economic and industrial order. Strikes are abnormal and disruptive and also deviate from the expected, so those involved in them are portrayed in the news as deviants and more or less enemies of the society.
The cues and signals presented in the news may not necessarily be uniformly interpreted by the readers. Because of differing social perspectives, ideological and political differences based on class, religion, cultural or ethnic divisions different meanings could be assigned to the same news item. This becomes more so in industrial relations where the principal actors are more likely to be in antagonistic relations to each other based on their different relations to the mode of production. The press tend to resolve this problematic by signifying a preferred meaning and context in the various form of press product - news, editorials and headlines. In this chapter and the next, we examine the editorials written on industrial relations during the chosen periods to see the themes and contexts which form the background of press perspective on the events of the periods.

Newspaper editorials are derived from news already provided and they indicate the importance accorded such news by the paper (Hall et al op. cit. p.89). It is also in editorials that a newspaper is able to express its policy, character and personality. Unlike news they are very clear and explicit about what the paper considers to be the meaning of the news. Editorials will also show, if not the substance, at least the degree of differences among the newspapers.

All the papers were against the strikes during the two periods; all the editorials were written during or in anticipation of the strikes and after to assess the impact.

Setting the Stage: Daily Times and The Pilot

On the first day of the 1964 General Strike the West African Pilot called on the workers to call off the strike "in order to rescue the already weak national economy". The Daily Times was already opposed to the strike before it started. In an April editorial it asked "What does the JAC of Nigerian Trade Union Organisations expect to gain from the threat of an industrial action over the delay in the publication of Morgan Commission?" The editorial called on the labour leaders to give the Federal and regional governments time to consider the reports and not indulge in "cheap popularity at the grave risk of exciting panic which is unreasonable and irresponsible". The West African Pilot also took this stand before the strike. In a May 4 editorial, titled 'The Morgan Buzz' which in a self-congratulatory tone, ("the most unfailing friend" of the
Nigerian worker by history and habit) the paper rebuked the workers for deciding to go on strike. It said,

We cannot ... share their reasoning over the publication of the Morgan Salary Commission Report. Nor see any sense in the rather foolish threats of industrial action in anticipation of the recommendations and what action government might take.

Truly we recognise the right to agitate and castigate. But need these rights be so exercised as to rob them any inkling of responsibility? or indeed commonsense? We think not.

Nigerian labour leaders must pause and think. Our trade union leaders must not see their duty as that of exploiting every imaginable situation to brew crisis. Nor must they conceive their role as those of detractors for this can only end disastrously for both employees and employers. Let them by all means think about how to bring about lower prices, higher wages, sounder profit because of steady, uninterrupted production. Let them stop giving the impression that the interests of the workers and those of the nation are incompatible. The trade unions cannot live apart from or indifferent to, the strain and stresses of government, for both have a common interest in higher living for a greater majority of the people—more people having more things and living happier life.

Surely none of these ends can be achieved by throwing the whole economy into disorder merely because some unthinking trade union leaders (so called) would not allow the government printers enough time to correct their proofs before printing their jobs, nor government—our own government—be permitted to read the report and arrive at a responsible, well considered decision before publishing it to the world.

Freedom indeed!

We need to take a closer look at this editorial before we go on to look at how other papers conceptualised the initial period of the strike. This is because it clearly expressed some of the major ideas and themes that structured how the 1964 strike was covered, interpreted and defined in editorials.

From the title the paper has already defined the workers agitation as 'noise making'. This has a ring of irrationality which was later spelt out in the body of the text. From this initial background the paper has already told us how to approach the coming agitation. While it recognizes the right to agitate and castigate it must not be done irresponsibly or against 'commonsense'. Anyway, to agitate or castigate may not necessarily involve the workers withdrawing their labour. They can demonstrate,
organise and attend rallies, shout or discuss but at the end of the day they should go back to work.

To the Pilot, for workers to exercise their industrial power was irresponsible and 'unthinking' and against 'commonsense'. This calls into question how rational the workers' action was. More than this, it involves an assumption that all readers of the Pilot accepted the definition of the situation which formed the background on which the paper wrote the editorial. One major element in this is the notion of common interest - Trade Unions, government and employers share a common concern to improve the living standard "for a greater majority of the people". The qualifier 'greater' seems to define the workers as a minority group whose interests are counterposed to those of the nation - all of us: "Let them stop giving the impression that the interest of the workers and those of the nation are incompatible".

This 'selfish attitude' of the workers or at least their leaders is in contrast to those of "our government" whose actions are supposedly above class or group interests. The editorial portrayed the government as working in the national interests but the trade unions could not appreciate this. The editorial was particularly hard on the trade union leadership. It accused them of using "every imaginable situation to brew crisis". In this sense, it becomes difficult to contemplate 'any imaginable' situation that would warrant going on strike. To do this will bring disaster to the nation. Apart from trivialising the whole issue, the last paragraph of the editorial expressed doubt about the credibility and legitimacy of the trade union leadership.

We could also see how the paper regarded the primary role of the workers as producers. The main issue is production, "steady, uninterrupted production" and not redistribution. The main point here is that the paper has accepted or taken for granted the structure and working of the economy. In fact it was mentioned in relation to how the strike would affect the smooth operation of the economy for 'sounder profit'. It is how to make it generate more profit that the workers should think about. As two students of the Nigerian political economy have remarked, "By assuming that growth precedes distribution, they (those who make this argument) justify inequality as a means of universal goal of 'development'." (Williams and Turner, 1978, pp.135-136).
In a nutshell the editorial has defined the workers as a selfish, irresponsible and unthinking minority against the national interests which the government was safeguarding. The editorial having clearly stated this deplored the strike: "Freedom indeed".

These ideas were later amplified as the strike got under way. On the second day of the strike the Pilot described it as 'Blackmail' in an editorial of that title. According to the editorial,

The purpose of a general strike at this time is, at best, obscure. Our guess is that union leaders who have been spoiling for a fight just want to let off steam. To say that workers are being called out on strike in protest against the refusal of the government to publish its conclusion on The Morgan Report is to find a pretext for embarking on a useless course of action.

Having further trivialised and reduced the legitimacy of the action and also its rationality "the leaders ... want to let off steam" it went on to call it a "useless course of action". In the opinion of the paper "No issue is involved in the workers' strike". This is to say that apart from being irrational, the workers' action would be futile. To say that it is futile or useless to go on strike is to imply that nothing is wrong with the system, and the paper said as much: "No issue is involved in the workers' strike". In other words there is no division between the workers and the government and employers. If there was any it is the work of 'irresponsible' trade union leaders. The Pilot also strove to divide the union leadership from the rank and file;

In the end everybody suffers and more so, the very workers whose interest, we are told, the union leaders want to protect.

Workers should have the guts to tell their erring leaders to retreat from their false path. They should not allow themselves to be misled. This is what they are doing by allowing themselves to be dragged into a senseless and purposeless strike.

Implicit here is the idea that the workers were undertaking the strike on the dictate of their leaders. They were being misled and dragged into it. This could mean that they cannot be left alone to determine what is good for them. Apart from this the paper turned the working class populist ideology of 'Us vs. Them' on its head, against the
workers to become us the majority against them (the workers) the minority,

The country belongs to all of us. If we end up in flames we all will suffer. If we prosper we will all be happy. We must not allow a handful of men to hold us to ransom. We do not support this strike and we urge workers not to support it.

The same day while the Daily Times urged the Federal Government to assure low-paid workers an increase in wages, it told the workers to go back to work. According to the editorial "strike is not the answer. They must continue talking with representatives of Government". The Daily Times has here brought in its preference for negotiation while reinforcing the idea that a strike will not achieve anything.

Almost a week into the strike the paper still refused to see reason with the striking workers. On June 6 the Daily Times said,

Workers who are on strike today should realise that millions of their countrymen are not behind them in their action... And all the national newspapers are also not behind them in the strike.

In the paper's opinion the government has met the demand of the workers half way "all right thinking people expect that the workers would, as patriots, accept the offer of the Government". It concluded that the workers should go back to work. The editorial explicitly constituted the workers as a group distinct and separate from the rest of the population, especially other segments of the lower class: "Millions of farmers, traders, peasants and others who are not wage earners" who are not supporting the strike. This idea must have arisen from the leader writer's imagination, stemming from the belief that because such people have nothing to gain directly from the strike, they must be against it. It is one of the taken-for-granted assumptions we have already referred to. However no evidence was provided to support the idea. Another important point contained in the editorial is that the paper saw itself and others as a crucial force in the conflict whose support the workers needed but would not get. This is in line with the idea that the paper is the voice of the nation and the tribute of the public. The press takes it as its social responsibility to reflect the views of the nation.
A day before, the West African Pilot like the Daily Times in the above editorial, accepted the government-approved wages for the workers which were far below those recommended by the Morgan Commission as "reasonable and realistic". The leader continued,

On the whole the Government has shown commendable realism and courage in its White Paper and it deserves the support of all concerned. "A nation divided against itself cannot stand", said Lincoln 110 years ago.

The Government of this Republic is of the people, by the people, for themselves. In other words, the Government and the workers are one and the same people with the same objectives and interests, with the same basic principles and beliefs.

Too many are still apt to look at the Nigerian Governments as a continuation of colonial past.

This is a suicidal misconception. For whatever their errors of head and heart the Governments are ours and striving in their own ways to improve the lot of the people.

Increased production will ensure better and higher standard of living and lower cost of living. Strikes will not. And so, we repeat our appeal to Nigerian workers now on strike to return to work TODAY, in their own interest as well as those of the entire Republic.

This leader further reinforced the idea that there is no division in society. It is asserted as a fact that the government, workers and the people have the same beliefs, interests and objectives. It is only those with suicidal inclination who would not recognise this. The editorial constantly reminded its readers that the Governments are "ours" and they were "striving their best to improve the lot of the people" and therefore deserved the support of all, more so as it was no more a colonial government. This idea fits into the basic postulates of African socialism which denies any division in the post-independent African society. Claude Ake, in the passage which we have already referred to, has noted this element in post-colonial ideology of African leaders, "... their ideology now proclaims the end of internal ideological conflict. It is argued that the problems facing the nation are clear, that everyone should apply himself to the task." (Ake, 1976, p.205). Within this perspective, workers are called upon to exercise restraint in demand for higher wages in the interest of economic progress and to attract foreign investment. This is in line with the argument that the lower the wage bill the greater will be the
capitalist surplus accruing to government and private investors and therefore there would be higher rate of investment and economic growth including of course higher incomes in the long run. It is in this sense we must see the editorial’s call for increased production to ensure better living standard. It must have been from this premise that the write-up said the government "has shown commendable realism and courage in its white paper".

To assert that the government has shown commendable realism is to assume that this was a reality which is evident for all to see. That reality is reflected in the white paper; that is the nation cannot afford to pay more than the government has offered. To refuse to accept this reality is to court disaster. Part of the reality of course is the national interest being promoted by 'our' government.

The reference to the colonial past also implied lack of understanding of the changes that have taken place in the country since independence. It could imply that the workers were ignorant and that they did not know of what was expected of them. In this light it helped to justify the Pilot's hostility having earlier congratulated itself as a friend of the working class. It would be remembered that the Pilot supported the labour movement during the 1945 General Strike. The paper and another of Zik's paper, Daily Comet, were banned by the colonial administration for supporting the workers during the strike. As we pointed out in Chapter 6, the idea of 'this is our government' and the concept of national interest have been used by many journalists including notable names like Babatunde Jose, former Managing Director of the Daily Times to justify media subservience to the government; especially during a period of crisis. In June 1965, the Daily Times stated that its editorial policy was pro-federal Government: "The Daily Times gives broad support to the government of the day", it declared.

The above discussion has dwelt on the West African Pilot and the Daily Times because in terms of history and ownership (as at 1964) they represent the opposite ends of the Nigerian newspaper industry. The West African Pilot was an indigenous newspaper owned by one person, a politician, whose political party was an interested party to the conflict. The Daily Times was foreign owned and claimed to be independent. Historically, the Pilot was reputed to have been a nationalist paper with a proud history of supporting
the labour movement. On the other hand, the Daily Times was seen as the organ of colonial rule and big business. Financially, the Daily Times has a more secured base than the Pilot.

However, as we can see from the discussion, despite these differences the two papers emphasised the same issues in their stand against the strike and the workers. From the editorials we can see how the two papers, by what was said and what was not said, presented the issues at stake as between those, principally the government, who were working in the national interest and the minority of workers against the rest of us. As we shall be discussing later, much of the discussions and explanations in the editorials were superficial, shallow and misleading. By their omission of crucial issues they seemed to have accepted the society and the economic structure as given and legitimate. There were no mention of level of profit in relation to wages or structural division and inequality in the Nigerian society. In fact the papers seemed to have denied their existence. Nowhere were they mentioned. The division that were mentioned were made to denigrate the workers and delegitimise their demands. The papers saw the social division as between the different sections of the lower class, between the 'high-paid' workers and the farmers, traders, market women and other non-wage earners.

Though the themes and ideas which informed the editorials discussed above continued to pervade the rest, by the end of the first week the two papers and some others had shifted their positions to include a condemnation of how the government was handling the strike. However, before we see how this came about, and why, we want to examine the Federal Government owned Morning Post. The paper refused to contemplate and discuss the government incompetence and insensitivity in handling the workers' demand and the strike in general.

Morning Post: The 'Biblical' Voice

Before and till the end of the strike the Morning Post was very hostile to the workers. The tone of this hostility was very strong and paternalistic. In fact it was preaching to the workers with an element of superiority in its language. On May 4 it warned the workers to "take heed". Appealing to the workers for patience, it said "It has been our idea that patience and co-operation are of the utmost importance when matters affecting the national interest and so closely tied up with the fortunes of
our people come up for consideration." The appeal for patience was to become the paper's banner and article of faith throughout the period. On the first day of the strike it sermonized in an editorial titled, "Patience Never Fails",

"Wait patiently...
"Cease from anger, forsake wrath
"Patience, experience, hope...
"Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation...
It is written in the books.

But it is not because it is so written that we counsel patience among Nigerian workers, asking such of them as might have deserted their post to return to their labour.

In such patronising tone the editorial said the workers would be guilty of "rashness before the bar of public opinion for plunging into a strike just at a time when negotiation ought to begin". It is clear from the editorial that the strike was unlawful or illegal, sudden and irrational. This is in the sense we have to interpret the words 'patience', 'desert' and 'plunge'. This became clearer later in the editorial. Though the paper accepted that most workers subsist below the starvation line and that they have public support, it said they were exploiting such support: "But in the greatness of the Nigerian people they are already saying that the strike is a show of unjustified impatience. In other words, millions of Nigerians are beginning to feel that the worker is exploiting the sympathy and consideration of both the people and the government." If we remembered that the strike involved less than a million workers we can appreciate the subtle attempt by the paper to lay emphasis on the fact that the workers constitute a minority against "millions of Nigerians and the Government". It was a strategy to divide the working class from other Nigerians especially other factions of the lower class.

Having interpreted the industrial action by the workers as unlawful, irrational, rash and deserving no public support, it was clear to the Morning Post that the strike would achieve nothing but chaos:

Meaningless demonstration in breaches of bans and public order will not only divert Government from the difficult task of removing the injustices of our economic structure, they may well lead to needless chaos in which the demands of workers may pale into insignificance and the work of development come to ruinous standstill.
To the shame and misery of us all.

We believe the path of sanity is narrow, through patient negotiation.

But we hold that it is to be preferred to the broad path of sit-down strikes, of indolent folding of arms at a time when men and women should be working round the clock with happy devotion and never-failing hope.

To the extent to which the Nigerian worker has chosen the narrow path, to that extent has he achieved success, including Morgan itself.

To the extent to which we desert this path for the broad street of hysteria and mob rule, to that extent will we do damage to the national image.

The sorrow of the hour is the lack of patience.

Yet we know of no battle for social change which patience has lost and anger and strife won.

First patience; then promise; then the fulfillment of promise.

God grant; because we know patience never fails.

Implicit in this sermon of 'hope and patience' was the idea that the workers cannot achieve anything through struggle which the paper would prefer to call "anger and strife". They should have trust in their political leaders and the goodness of the political and economic system in which they labour, have patience and hope for the promised future. The biblical idiom and metaphors chosen to present the arguments suit this ideological mystification. It seems the message in the paper's sermons was suggesting that it is unreasonable to engage in struggle to achieve an objective but divine to hope in patience for 'manna' from a benevolent government. It is the type of 'God-will-provide', cargo cult mentality of the poor and traditional believers. In fact, apart from the biblical language employed, the theme of the editorial is taken from the traditional socio-cultural and religious beliefs of the people which we discussed in Chapter 4.* In a way the Post was using both language and cultural theme to forge an identity with the workers and common people as a strategy of incorporation.

* For instance the idea of patience is prevalent in traditional philosophy as evident in these proverbs:

(i) He who is patient can cook rocks (Hausa)
(ii) It is the patient person who becomes a king among the Hausa (Yoruba)
(iii) Only the patient person can milk a lion (Yoruba).
(iv) The patient man eats the most patterned and delicious fish (Igbo)
These elements, taken from the past or what Raymond Williams has called a "residual culture" (Williams, 1980, pp.40-42) are selectively orchestrated and incorporated into the dominant culture. Graham Murdock has noted this strategy when he wrote,

"Throughout its history, the popular commercial press has operated through incorporation. It has consistently taken central elements in popular culture and attitudes, reworked and embellished them, and played them back to their working class readers (Murdock, 1980, p.58)."

By the second day the paper was accusing the workers of "cutting the Nation's throat" by hurting "pregnant women, market women and traders". This attempt to divide the workers was pursued further in the June 3 editorial of the paper. This time the farmers were singled out. The editorial now brought in 'conspiracy theory'; it hinted that some outsiders were inciting the workers;

"The pretentious lovers of the Nigerian worker continue to urge him along a line of action that to say the least can only lead to ruin. Soon enough, when the labouring wage-earner discovers that slogans do not fill empty stomachs, and that the theories of 'carrying on the socialist revolution' cannot stop his children from crying for food, the mischievous will come to their doom."

The conspiracy theory angle is a common theme by beneficiaries of a system to explain the cause and source of challenge to their position and privileges. In Nigeria such outside instigators are usually assumed to be 'slogan shouting socialists or Marxists'. This is quite explicit in the above editorial. During the strike there were attempts and allegations in government to prove that some "foreign elements" were behind the industrial crisis to subvert the government. A case that could have supported this claim could not stand in court. A British scholar, Victor Allen, who was conducting a research on African labour movement and some radical labour leaders were arrested and tried for attempting to overthrow the Federal Government. They were eventually released. The Morning Post's disdain for government's critics and anti-revolution stand were evident from its June 9 editorial. *Inter alia* it said:

"... economic theories alone do not make the desired changes possible; economic solutions which seek to change any society overnight only lead to chaos and confusion which
gradual change can avoid; and when a society labours for changes outside of practical realities it does so at the risk of unnecessary disintegration of itself.

This editorial also revealed the paper's interest in the existing social order. The Morning Post's anti-socialist stance was further expressed in its June 3 editorial. According to the paper,

Soon enough, when the labouring wage-earners discover that slogans do not fill empty stomachs, and that the theories of "carrying on the socialist revolution" cannot stop his children from crying for food, the mischievous will come to doom.

The editorial hinted at the issue of conspiracy, the idea that certain "mischievous" people or those it described in the opening sentence of the editorial as "The pretentious lovers of the Nigerian worker" who were urging "him along a line of action that, to say the least, can only lead to ruin". Although other papers like the Daily Sketch also hinted at this conspiracy idea, it was more prominently expressed by the Morning Post.

The Morning Post also made attempt to introduce the issue of violence into the conflict. It reported that workers in Port Harcourt, Enugu and other towns in Eastern Nigeria went on rampage and looting. This was quickly denied by the Inspector-General of Police.

On three consecutive occasions, June 5, 6 and 9, it carried editorials headlined 'Let's Go Back to Work'. The editorial of June 6 said "ALL OF US (capital in the original) are guilty of wasteful living. Happily, Government has already returned 'to my father', doing everything in its power to avoid waste, to reduce expenditure wherever possible." It warned that government efforts will not succeed "if everybody did not accept his own part of the responsibility, by doing a good day's job for a good day's pay". The phrase 'government has returned to my father' is to remind the striking workers that the government was no more a colonial government and therefore cannot be regarded as alien. A reminder that seemed to suggest that the anti-colonial struggle has ended and therefore, the type of 1945 General Strike cannot be tolerated. As we have mentioned above, it was meant to suggest to the workers that they must make sacrifice to achieve progress, "everybody must accept its responsibility". Though the paper talked of 'a good day's job for a good
day's pay' it was not clear how this was to be assessed.

The paper however believed that the workers were lazy and indolent while it exonerated ministers from wasteful spending.

Our toilets still over-flow with people during office hours; our workshops are yet too much of newspaper libraries; our labourers on the roads still spend far too much time stretching their backs; our love of over-time (which has been described as paid indolence) is still too strong for a nation that must know economic recovery.

Sometimes a Minister does have a great deal of justification for throwing the most expensive party and the expensive use of charter plane to enable a representative of Government to be present at the burial of the Head of a friendly government is the inescapable PRICE of the freedom for which workers fought.

But our attitude of "Government work never finish" can never be justified; nor can the love of the doctor's certificate to excuse us from work; nor can the idleness that the desertion of our workshop mean.

In a kind of perverted logic the paper argued that this attitude of the workers cost the nation more than the wasteful extravagance of government ministers and officials and therefore "The present demands by the workers in this respect represent a great deal of self-deceit". On the 9th of June the paper was still convinced "that there is nothing to be gained by the present strike, although there is everything to be lost by it by the nation as a whole".

In an editorial which seemed to have been written to purge or exonerate the Post from a feeling of self-guilt it attacked the Daily Times for abandoning what it called "the eternal truth that strike action is unhealthy in the economic atmosphere of Nigeria today" because of "love of money to loyalty to a cause". In the editorial published on June 13, the day the strike ended, the Morning Post restated its policy and stand on the strike and criticised the Daily Times for not following its lead. We reproduce a substantial part of the leader not because of this but more because it represented in large part the attitude of the other papers with the possible exception of the Tribune.

To us in the Morning Post ... what is involved is more than the number of newspapers sold; much more than cheap
popularity which man can attain but which in the final analysis, lasts but a while. What is involved is the survival of a nation, the economic welfare of a people, the inescapable truth that to allow this nation to succumb to the recklessness of trade union leaders is to set the hand of the clock back in Africa. The game, therefore, is not one of WHO IS RIGHT - which is that of the Daily Times - but of WHAT IS RIGHT which is the one of the MORNING POST.

We believe that the present strike, and for as long as it may last, is ruinous to the national economy; and that the suffering that is consequent upon it is an unkindly blow on a nation that is struggling for survival.

We hold that Nigeria cannot afford Morgan even if all the wages and salaries ever earned by Ministers were to be refunded; and we maintain that this strike, killing the hen that lays the golden egg as it seeks to do, can only ruin the six-year Development Plan to the UNJUST delay of the dawn of a better day for the peasantry who constitute the preponderant majority in our country.

We claim that it is well for the Daily Times to settle itself down to the judgement of Solomon, but that the Morning Post, as the rightful mother, cares more for the life of the child than all the theory of Solomon.

Our path is narrow
Their road is an avenue
We speak to our brothers in the chambers;
they fondle with their paramours along the garden path.
Our only consolation is that when the veil is removed;
the curtain drawn, the Nigerian worker, back at his desk
and at his anvil will say we told the bitter truth.
Gentlemen, let's go back to work.

Though the strike ended on the day this editorial was written, it was not in response to the Post's sermons laced with biblical allusions and quotations. Before we go on we may need to examine why the Morning Post adopted this consistent critical anti-strike tone and the patronising attitude to the workers and at the same time an over-enthusiastic support for the Federal Government. We will however like to stress that there was not much difference between the Post and the others. Any difference was not of substance but of tone and language. In other words the same assumptions and notions of the Nigerian society and the issues at stake informed all the papers' editorials.

An explanation for the Post's critical tone could be found in the personality of the editor-in-chief, Abiodun Aloba and his political links with the ruling party. Aloba often wrote the paper's editorial and the
biblical idiom was his. According to Grant, "As a nationalist writer for the Daily Times in the fifties, Aloba had used a prophetic Old Testament style against the colonial government. Now his strictures were against Nigerians, telling them what would happen if they did not obey the government" (Grant, 1975, p.240). Aloba hated any form of opposition to the Federal Government headed by his friend, Tafawa Balewa, who appointed him the editor-in-chief of the paper. Any opposition or criticism of the government, even from the legal and constitutional opposition party, the Action Group, was seen as subversion. Aloba used the news and editorial columns of the Morning Post to fight for the government by attacking all real and imaginary enemies. He believed that the Post being a Federal Government-owned paper must support the Federal Government at all times and in all circumstances. In his memoir he wrote,

The Post had one obligation to stand by the government of the day, be it at the Federal level or be it in the state level, provided the state remained with the Federal Government. In such circumstances, in which there was no doubt as to where the Federal Government stood, the Post had a clear responsibility and a definite duty. To project the case of the Federal Government and defend it (Aloba, n.d. p.129).

Apart from this 'public relations' conception of journalism, especially as it affects government owned press, the Post and Aloba have developed a consistent critical anti-trade union policy over time. In 1962 when the trade unions announced the formation of a Labour Party, the paper reported the story under a headline "NTUC Plans to Take Over Federal Government". Aloba described the 1964 General Strike in his memoir as "needless, purposeless, even evil to the extent to which it was inspired not to improve the lot of the workers but to discredit the Federal Government and particularly to up-tone the clarion call for the deposition of what was foolishly regarded as the domination of an unlettered Hausa majority" (Aloba, ibid, p.128).

The important point is that all this was hidden under the rhetoric of national interest, the need to implement the 1962 Six-Year Development Plan and the suffering, caused by the strike to peasants and other non-wage earners, and expressed in a socio-cultural and religious language familiar to the lower class in order to arouse emotion and anti-strike feeling.
The Daily Sketch

One other newspaper which followed the Morning Post line was the Daily Sketch. The Sketch was established by the disputed Premier of Western Region, Chief Akintola who defected from the Action Group. His party, the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) was actively supported by the Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC) and the Federal Government. In fact it formed an alliance with the NPC during the 1964 General Election. In essence the Post and the Sketch were supporting the same master; they were stable mates.

The Daily Sketch's editorial of June 1 condemned the strike as unnecessary. Like the Post it blamed the workers for impatience and for plunging everybody into avoidable hardship. It called for a stop to the strike and for negotiation between the government and the workers. In a June 17 editorial, headlined 'Industrial dispute or What?' the sketch saw an extra-labour dimension in the conflict. It said, "... there is sufficient reason now to believe that there is more to the present attitude of the labour movement than mere industrial dispute." What provoked this assertion were the demands by the labour leaders for the abolition of transport allowance to ministers and parliamentary secretaries, reduction in the number of ministers and the abolition of provincial commissioners. It must be noted that some of these demands pre-dated the setting-up of the Morgan Commission. It should also be noted that the minority report submitted by two members of the Commission, C.O. Nwokedi and O.I. Akinkugbe recommended some of these demands. In their report the two members recommended a general reduction in the salaries of the upper segment of the public service. They contended, in agreement with the Trade Unions, that the senior posts were colonial in structure and content and unrelated to the capacity of the national economy, nor to the degree of the responsibility attached to them. They declared; "We advocate a complete break with this humiliating past and would recommend one which would be a challenge to our nationhood and patriotism" (Morgan Commission Report, p.49).

A second minority report by Dr. T.M. Yesufu called for the abolition of basic car and inducement allowances, and the selling of government quarters. The inducement allowance had been introduced to encourage British officials to come to Nigeria to work in the colonial civil service. However, to the Daily Sketch these demands were not only "frivolous" they have:
gone beyond the scope of a labour dispute. There is a lot more to it. We cannot afford to be on the fence when some misled elements are trying to cause havocs which are likely to disrupt the sovereignty of this nation.

To the paper labour dispute was political because the demands made "Strike at the very foundation of the constitution of the land..." It seems the Daily Sketch has over-burdened the constitution to include stipulations on the remuneration and number of political appointees. It is however clear that the paper was using the argument to call to question the legality and legitimacy of the workers' demands and even their action and aim. According to the argument it was illicit and illegitimate for the workers to criticise the workings of the government or the conduct of its functionaries. According to the piece "The whole attitude of our labour movement to the present dispute is very immoral".

The substance of this editorial re-echoed about a week later in a Morning Post leader headlined "Where the love of country ends". After praising the government for making concessions "on almost every score" it accused the labour leaders of intransigence,

Or must it be simply said that there is a motive clear to JAC but yet unknown to the majority of our people - to bring the country to ruin and chaos so that out of the misery and confusion of the people the other ambitions of the JAC may be fulfilled?

One other assumption behind some of the arguments raised in these editorials was that labour matters, strictly interpreted by the papers as pay claim has nothing to do with politics. We have already seen how this forms part of liberal ideology of laissez-faire and the type of industrial relations practice it gave rise to. Under this arrangement the workers and the labour movement are expected to confine their activities and demands to industrial issues if not strictly wages. They should not get mixed up in politics which is quite a separate and unrelated realm of activity.

Not all the papers were unprepared to see the issues from another angle. One paper that somewhat differed from the rest was the Nigerian Tribune.
Nigerian Tribune: The Alternative Voice

The Tribune laid the blame for the strike squarely on the Federal Government and politicians "who are living in luxury when the masses are itching to exist". In a series of editorials entitled "Wrath To Come" (June 5, 6, 8, 9, 10 and 11) it developed the theme which formed the basis of the paper's argument - corruption, government insensitivity, incompetence and extravagant living among politicians. The paper disagreed with the view that the industrial action was irresponsible: "We see the workers as aggrieved persons who have been driven to the wall from where they find not an escape" (June 16).

The Tribune was against the basis of the industrial relations practice. On June 8 it criticised the government adherence to the ILO Convention that conditions of service is better left to workers and employers without government interference. According to the editorial this convention has been used by some employers notably Syrians, Lebanese and Indians and some local employers as an excuse to exploit their employees. It called on the government to do away with the practice "and face the stark reality in the Nigerian labour context... Many of the employers residing within the confine of Nigeria need a bit of harsh law to sit up to ILO laid down standard". Just as the Morning Post was unequivocal in its support for the Government, so the Tribune clearly stated its support for the striking workers,

The stand of the Nigerian Tribune and the interest it serves in the current labour crisis is no longer in doubt. Plainly, we are for the workers. To us it is an article of faith to be where the sweating workers are.

Also while the Post was against those shouting "slogans for carrying forward the socialist revolution" the Nigerian Tribune was for a socialist economy. On June 5 it editorialised,

We have told the government to socialise our economy by mounting on systematic nationalisation so that they (the workers) are doing the job in which they have shares. Deaf ear is turned to our call because it will affect the ruling class who are the sharers in the business to be acquired for the people.

The importance of the stand taken by the Tribune was not just because it was pro-labour or anti-government or contrary to the others.
Its significance lay more in the fact that it was the only paper that made some attempt to develop a different perspective. It offered, however limited, a critique of the structure of the economy and spoke of an alternative - a socialist economy. We could also notice that where other papers harped on the division between the workers and the rest of the lower class (farmers, market women, petty traders) the Tribune talked in terms of division between the working class and the ruling class. It was in this perspective that it was able to attribute the cause of the strike partly to the structure of the economy. It is also within this perspective that we could explain the non-mention of national interest by the paper. In other words the Tribune, because of the class perspective, adopted however limited, seemed to have accepted a divergence of interests between the working class and the ruling class. One other point we shall like to mention was that unlike the other papers, the Tribune did not lay any emphasis on the effects of the conflict either on individuals, groups or the economy. To do this would have contradicted its support for the workers, at least it could have undermined their struggle.

The alternative perspective developed by the Tribune was clearly stated on June 17 when the strike has ended and negotiations were going on. It said;

The remote cause of the present impasse could be traced to unequal sharing out of the national cake. The workers are angry because those who are saddled ... with state responsibility since independence are swimming in unparalleled wealth when they (of the working class) are writhing in abject poverty.

The negotiators, on behalf of the various governments in the Federation will be deceiving themselves if it is thought for a moment that by accepting Morgan's recommendation in toto (if that is possible), the workers would be silenced. The cause of the anger is so much deep rooted that only a complete shake-up in the distribution of the national wealth that could save the situation...

What is badly needed to resuscitate our faltering economy is a policy of levelling down rather than levelling up. The gap between the have and have-nots must now be bridged.

While the Pilot and the Daily Times were later to discuss the issues of corruption, extravagant living among ministers and parliamentarians and government levity in handling the situation, none of them was ready to go
as far as the Tribune for a "complete shake-up" of the economy which included a call for a socialist economy with workers' participation. We could also see that while the other papers were concerned with wage restraint by workers and for higher productivity, the Tribune believed that at least as a short term measure what was needed was a policy of redistribution of national wealth to bridge the gap between the poor and the rich. In line with this argument we can also note another major difference in the perspective offered by the Tribune. As we shall discuss later, while the other papers saw the solution in terms of negotiation between the workers and the government, which to us seems to connote that the main problem was inter-personal relations, for instance a break-down in communication between the two parties, the Tribune saw the issue almost exclusively in terms of the structure of the economy. We can see evidence of this difference in the stress the other papers laid on the attitude of the labour leaders and also the efforts of the (our) government to improve the lot of the common people. The Tribune made the attempt to develop its own argument and critique around the inherent antagonism between the working class (the have-nots) and ruling class who are the sharers' of the national wealth. So according to the Tribune and unlike the other newspapers such antagonism could only be resolved with a change in the economic system not through negotiations or inter-personal relations.

We would like to examine the reasons likely to be responsible for Tribune's attitude to the workers. As we have said in Chapter 7, the philosophy and policy of the paper was and is still closely associated with Chief Awolowo who regards himself as a socialist. The paper sees itself as the spokesman for the poor. Therefore its advocacy of socialism should not be surprising. In fact the former Managing Director and Editor-in-chief of the paper and one of Chief Awolowo's political lieutenants, Lateef Jakande once stated that among other things the Nigerian Tribune "believes in .. an economy organized on socialist principles..." (Nigerian Tribune, Monday, May 23, 1977). To our knowledge it is only in the Nigerian Tribune one finds such a policy, at least unequivocably stated, among Nigerian newspapers. We could also note that the Action Group, Chief Awolowo's party during the first republic, supported by the Tribune, adopted an ideology of 'democratic socialism' at its Jos Conference in 1962. In fact this was one of the immediate causes of the split in the party between the radical
wing of the Party, grouped around Chief Awolowo and the conservative wing led by Chief Akintola.

Any account of the paper's stand during the strike has to take into consideration this crisis and its aftermath. The Action Group had just been fractionalized and dislodged as the ruling party in the Western Region through the active support and connivance of the NPC controlled Federal Government. This helped to install the Akintola faction which has by 1964 formed the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP). Therefore the anti-federal Government tone of the editorials could have been to discredit the NPC and its ally the NNDP in the West especially in the run up to the 1965 elections. During the strike it was only the Action Group that came out to give "unqualified support" to the striking workers.

Enter the 'Inept' Ministers

As the strike entered the second week, it became clear to everybody including the press and those in the government that the workers meant business. The workers' rank remained solid and growing as earlier fence sitters joined the strike. This situation was further facilitated by the government insensitivity and mismanagement. Just as the strike was beginning the Labour Minister left for New York to attend a conference while the Prime Minister was holidaying in his home town. He later rushed back to Lagos to threaten the workers with an ultimatum to return to work or be sacked "without having either the credibility or power to enforce this order" (Cohen, 1974, p.166). The Minister available to deal with the conflict, the Minister for Establishment, Jacob Obande "dealt with the JAC in a manner that was somewhat less than deft" (William A. Friedlan, 1965, p.9).

These factors dictated a change in the stand of some of the papers, notably the Daily Times and the West African Pilot. Though they still believed the strike was unnecessary and should be called off, they now also believed that the government had mishandled it. On June 6 the Pilot said the government's "cocky attitude will certainly incense the workers who already feel slighted, and lead to more serious developments". While the editorial, "Tackling The Strike Problem" catalogued the problems caused by the strike in its introductory paragraph as follows,
Government offices are closed. So are commercial and industrial establishments. Communications have been disrupted, the ports are idle, and the life of the nation in almost every sphere of endeavour has grounded to a standstill. It is the general strike of workers that has put the nation in throes.

It however said,

Workers are being asked to make sacrifices. The conditions of the country demands it. But those who expect patriotism from the people must themselves show example. The best example is not ostentatious living with which ministers are associated. Those who belong to the affluent society and exhibit wealth have no right to talk of the fine points of austerity. This is what irks the workers.

This same argument was made by the Daily Times on the eighth day of the strike. It said, "One unfortunate fact that emerges from the present industrial dispute between the Government and the trade unions is that the vast majority of the salary and wage earners no longer believe whatever Government tells them". It blamed this credibility gap on the living style of ministers and senior government officials which was at variance with government policy and "no money posture".

By now all the papers except the Post and Daily Sketch seemed to be unanimous in the condemnation of the Federal Government especially the ostentatious living style of government ministers and politicians in general. Even the Northern Government owned Nigerian Citizen shared this view when in its June 6 editorial, it wrote "It is becoming increasingly difficult to explain to the ordinary people why some persons are so poor while others are so rich..." With this new line some journalists were even ready to criticise the former stand of their papers. On June 8 a Daily Times columnist, Off-Beat Sam, wrote,

I found the mealy-mouthism of the strike editorials of all the national newspapers absolutely infuriating. Here's the gist. In the interest of this country, workers should not have struck for 'Morgan'. Well, was it in the interest of this country when the publicly avowed nationalist - the M.P.'s increased their pay to £1,000 last year? Is it in the interest of the country that a Minister's car earns more than a labourer?

But that was as far as the criticism went. There seemed to be a general belief that things could have been otherwise if the politicians
had been less flamboyant, if corruption had been minimal and if the
government had been a little more circumspect and sensitive to the
workers' feeling and demand. In these editorials we did not find any
critique of the fundamental cause of the industrial conflict as being
structural, a manifestation of a particular mode of production and the
political economic arrangement in general.

It is also important to note that the criticism of the government
was not in the main concerned with the wage and salary structure. It was
substantially concerned with its handling of the Morgan Report,
especially the handling of the release of the White Paper and the
incompetence and insensitivity of some individuals especially the Labour
Minister, J.M. Johnson. The assumption of these editorials was that any
income inequality could be bridged within the present arrangement,
especially if government officials could be less corrupt. This type of
argument is very common and familiar in Nigeria. For instance, the current
problems in the country are usually attributed to corruption and
inefficiency. Though there is much truth in this argument, it is quite a
limited explanation. But it served an ideological purpose of obscuring
the structural features and problems of the political economy. To have
brought in an examination of the mode of production would have entailed a
more fundamental critique of issues like income distribution, the
relationship between profit and salaries and wages and the entire class
structure. It could have raised the question of which social group benefits
and to what extent from the economy. This would have posed a more critical
challenge to the dominant groups.

What the discussion up to this point has demonstrated is that with
the possible exception of the Tribune all the papers disapproved the use
of strike as a weapon by workers in pursuit of their demands. In fact we
can say that the Press was against strikes in general and not the particular
one we are concerned with here. For instance, since 1963 the Daily Times
has stated his opposition to the labour leaders and any attempt to go on
strike. In an editorial on September 16, 1963, the paper said,

The twenty man joint action committee set up by the Nigerian
Trades Union Congress and the United Labour Congress to press
demands for a nation-wide wage review will have quite an
uphill task calling out workers on a general strike. Not
since the agitation of the NTUC two years ago that the
Government should fix a national minimum wage of £20 have
trade unionists harried the leaders of the people with such irresponsible demands and threats as they now frantically dangle before the workers.

As we have already explained, this general anti-strike stand stemmed from the feeling and assumption that strike is injurious to the national economy. It is not only the strike that is so injurious, so also are wage increases. It was explicit in the editorials that wage increases were not in the interest of the economy. But no mention was made of profit. In essence, the press accepted the economic structure as it existed at the time. Further the papers explained the strike as resulting from personal emotions and attitudes - anger and frustration against ostentatious living by government officials and government levity in handling the crisis. Only the Nigerian Tribune made any effort to go outside this limited perspective.

The significance of this mode of explanation is that industrial relations is reduced to personal relations. The gist of the argument is something like this: The workers are not happy because the government did not care for them; as if they are children in need of parental care. For instance the Morning Post almost reduced the conflict to a family affair when in its June 6 editorial it said "happily the Government has already returned 'to my father' doing everything in its power to reduce waste". And to the Pilot the strike was "the result of accumulated wrongs and grievances" against ostentatious politicians. To the press therefore the issues involved were more or less limited to better understanding, goodwill and trust between the government and the workers and not a structural problem of inequality, the inherent contradictions in society and the economy and the power relations in society. With this type of explanation all will be well in industry if all those concerned could be a little more tolerant of each other's feeling and point of view.

Apart from the general condemnation of the workers, especially their leaders, the press employed certain themes, for example national interest, economic development to signify to their readers the issues at stake and their (the press) role during the conflict. Before we examine further how these themes were developed we shall discuss the 1974-75 editorials to see how they interpreted the events of that period.
The first thing to notice is that very few editorials were published during the 1974-75 period. In fact the 34 editorials published during the 1974-75 period were not up to the number published in June 1964 alone, 43 in all. The reason for this may be the sporadic nature of the 1974-75 strike and also the complexity of the Udoji Report and Government White Paper. Unlike the Morgan Report and Government White Paper which was mainly on salary and wages of low income workers the Udoji exercise was a massive and comprehensive review of the Public service. In that sense it might not have been easy for the press to reduce it to simple news items. The sporadic nature of the strikes could have created some difficulty for the press in terms of writing editorials on an issue they were not sure of its immediate movement, nature, duration and likely impact. The 1974-75 strikes did not throw up 'reportable' personalities and scenes which could have formed the subjects of editorials.

However the few editorials that were written focused mainly on two issues to the almost total neglect of other aspects of the Udoji Report and Government White Paper. The two issues focused on were the salary increases and their effects, and the strikes and their effects on the nation.

Relying on rumour, speculation and statements by some public officials including the chairmen of the Public Service Review Commission, Chief Jerome Udoji, the press since November 1974 had created an impression that an unprecedented inflation would follow the release of the report. For instance the Daily Sketch on November 6 in an editorial under the title "UDOJI : Myths and Realities" wrote "it is reported that some market women are already selling a number of essential items at post-Udoji prices even though the report has not been made public. Udoji chickens are being counted weeks before they are hatched. Workers are, in effect, being obliged to spend monies which have not yet got into their pockets." According to the editorial, price increases were inevitable. Two days earlier the New Nigeria has expressed this same fear of inevitable price increases. In its editorial of November 4 it said there were speculative stories of astronomical increases and "reports of creeping price increases" to pre-empt Udoji. According to it "The fear is that a serious bout of inflation would thereafter be triggered off".
Apart from the fear of inflation the press seemed convinced that salary increases will lead to redundancies and closure of some medium or small companies which might not be able to pay the new salary scale. Some of the papers appealed to the government to assist the private sector in paying the new salary scale, especially the arrears. The Nigeria Tribune on February 10 said,

The nature of the private sector is such that it is impossible to impose a general rule in matters of wages and salaries... There is a moral obligation on the part of the Government to assist the private sector to pay the arrears of salary. Having awarded nine months arrears to workers in the public sector, it is duty bound to cater for workers in the private sector. And the best way to discharge this obligation is to pay the arrears to the private sector.

And we are convinced that it is only fair that it should do so and thus remove the principal cause of the industrial unrest in the private sector.

In this vein the New Nigeria on February 3 called on the government to help "small and medium firms bought during the indigenisation exercise in forms of tax reliefs and soft loans" so that they can pay the new level of wages.

What is noteworthy in this suggestion is that it reflects the country's financial position during the period. This was at a time when many Nigerians including the government believed that money was not a problem in the country's development effort. Nigeria made $5,365.9 million from oil in 1974. So, it seems what the suggestion really amounted to was a call on the government to spread the sharing of the 'national cake' to include private sector employees. The suggestion also implied that nothing must be done to reduce the level of profit of private companies.

Just as was the case in 1964 the newspapers were universal in their condemnation of the striking workers. According to the New Nigeria of February 3, it was wrong for the workers to have gone on strike:

... the widespread strike actions by which trade unions and other professional bodies have sought to show their dissatisfaction are as unacceptable as they were unexpected... Their actions were not in the best interest of the economy.
On January 24 the Daily Times described the sporadic industrial actions going on across the country as "frivolous" while a week later it described the workers' demand as "unrealistic". According to the Times in its January 24 editorial, the actions of the workers were moving the country toward industrial and political chaos. It said the "workers and trade unionists do not appreciate that the rights they enjoy as individuals carries with it an implied responsibility which primarily should serve as a safeguard against breakdown of law and order in the society." From this editorial it was clear, from the Times point of view, that the issues involved are between individuals and not social groups or classes having different interests which may be antagonistic and inherent in the mode of production and the type of social structure it gives rise to.

The mention of law and order in the editorial implied an acceptance of the status quo. The workers and every other person as individual enjoy their rights, the editorial seems to imply, because of a stable industrial and social environment is to the benefit of everybody. The law, as an impartial agency works to safeguard this stable order. To disrupt it by strikes according to this argument, would be unrealistic and not in the nation's interest. What the editorial failed to consider is that different groups in society are differentially linked to that stable social order it assumed works in the national interest. The law is an expression of the dominant interests in the society.

Another issue predominant in the editorials was the advice that the workers should negotiate. On January 9 the Daily Times warned "to resort to industrial actions and threat of such actions without full exploration of all avenues for remedies will not be in the interest of anybody..." As we discussed in Chapter 4 an acceptance of negotiation or collective bargaining also implies the acceptance of the social order and its reward and distribution structure. In that sense by advising the workers to negotiate seems to show that the press accepts the structure of the Nigerian society as it is. Such an advice also constitutes part of the effort being made by the state to institutionalize industrial conflict and incorporate the labour movement through the establishment and enforcement of the collective bargaining procedure. This as we argued in Chapter 3 has been a crucial aspect of the Nigerian industrial relations policy since the colonial days.
The examination of the 1974-75 editorials has shown the similarity in the issues discussed by the press and the assumptions in which discussion were based with those of 1964. This further supports our arguments in the last chapter where we noted similar finding in the quantitative data. However there is one slight difference in the emphasis on the effect of wage increase on economic development, as expressed for instance in the concern over the prosecution of development plans. In 1964 there was a universal belief that the country could not afford to pay the wages recommended by the Morgan Commission without jeopardising the 1962 Development Plan. This was when Nigeria was financially and technically very poor. It was envisaged that 50% of the total capital expenditure in the 1962 Plan would come from foreign sources. In effect what the editorials were saying was that it was necessary to keep wages low in order to attract foreign investment. This type of argument was not evident in 1974-75. Then the financial position of the country was better. The press was rather concerned with the inflationary impact of the Udoji awards and also their effect on companies which have just been bought by Nigerian share holders during the 1972 indigenisation exercise. Hence the suggestion that the Federal Government should aid these companies. The point we would like to stress however is that despite this difference in emphasis, the substance of the concern as contained in the editorials was the same. It expressed the concern and interests of the Nigerian bourgeoisie. The emphasis on such concern and interests have shifted in accordance with the country's economic and financial fortune.

In the 60s the various Governments made strenuous efforts by giving a lot of incentives and tax concessions to attract foreign investments. (Asiodu, 1967). Assurances were given "of a friendly business climate, of the security of their investments and extended over-generous incentives to various categories of innovating venture" (Akeredolu-Ale, 1976, p.111). In the words of Peter Kilby the economy was opened "to an unusual degree". By the 70s the situation had changed with the coming of huge oil revenue. The bureaucratic and the business class felt confident enough to seek a redress in their relationship to international capital. Through the state they sought a better share and a stronger position as partner with foreign capital. This they were able to achieve through the 1972 and 1976 Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decrees. Despite the indigenisation exercises the Nigerian bourgeoisie remain, in General Obasanjo's apt description "trading post agents" to Western capital.
We now turn to isolating some key concepts in the editorials to see why the press was hostile to the workers' industrial action. These concepts or themes lead journalists and those who use them as a basis for explanation to see events and issues in a particular way. In that sense they are ideological. They embody a particular meaning of social reality which by and large conform to the social perspective of the dominant class or group in the Nigerian society. The use of these themes does not permit oppositional perspectives from coming into full play in the so called free market place of ideas. Unable to totally suppress such oppositional views, they are marginalised and stigmatised as unrepresentative.

Moreover it seems to us that these themes provide the crucial understanding to how the coverage was as we have described above. They provide the major elements in the press signification of how industrial relations should be practised and it seems in particular why workers should not exercise their industrial power. We are also suggesting that they provide the framework within which the media see its role, the issues involved, the industrial relations system and the structure of the Nigerian society and economy which underpin it. As Stuart Hall has argued,

The 'deep structure' of a statement had to be conceived as the network of elements, premises and assumptions drawn from the longstanding and historically-elaborated discourses which had accreted over the years, into which the whole history of the social formation had sedimented, and which now constituted a reservoir of themes and premises on which, for example, broadcasters could draw for the work of signifying new and troubling events (Hall, 1982, p.73).

We have already pointed out the social and historical origin of some of these concepts in Chapters 1 and 4 above. Though they are not necessarily false or fictitious, they are ideological. They are ideological in the sense that their selective articulation by the press and others do not adequately portray the essence of the Nigerian reality. A partial explanation was provided as if it were a complete and comprehensive one, thus offering the part as the whole. In the course of our discussion we attempt to provide some of the missing dimensions and/or alternative views from those provided.
These concepts are not mutually exclusive. They are interrelated and feed into each other. It is this that gives them meaning and significance. However, it appears that all the themes are woven around the principal issue of national interest.

National Interest

The press during the 1964 General Strike made an explicit case for the 'national interest' during the dispute. The image presented was one that suggested that there was no irreconcilable structural conflict but personal differences occasioned by anger and frustration. The national interest is something which is consensually agreed upon and worth protecting whatever may be the difference. Ralph Miliband's discussion of the use of the concept in liberal capitalist society could be appropriate here. Regarding such use as part of the Process of Legitimation in these societies he said,

From the point of view of dominant classes, nothing could be so obviously advantageous as the assertion which forms one of the basic themes of nationalism, namely that all citizens, whoever they may be, owe a supreme allegiance to a 'national interest' which requires that men should be ready to subdue all other interests, particular class interests, for the sake of a larger, more comprehensive concern which unites in a supreme allegiance rich and poor, the comfortable and the deprived, the giver of orders and their recipients (Miliband, 1973, p.186).

While the use of the concept, as Miliband went on to point out, cannot stop opposition and challenge, it however places such opposition in a position which appears detrimental and injurious to the 'national interest'. Demands for wage increases and particularly a strike are prone to be pitched against the national interest. Having been defined as such, any merit of such demands is undermined.

The workers, for going on strike, were presented in the editorials as a minority against this collective national interest of the majority. In this scheme the state, through the agency of the government was presented as the protector of the national interest. While the demands of the workers were seen as selfish and their action rash, the government's offer was shown as realistic and its action courageous. The government was also said to have been realistic enough to recognise the
ability of the economy to afford a certain level of pay. In this case the theme of national interest is associated with others like national economy, economic development, inflation, national welfare, political and social stability.

The Daily Times on June 6, 1964 used the theme of national interest in an editorial of that title to marshall all the arguments against the workers. The paper started off by assuming a public voice, speaking for the millions of non-wage earners. We reproduce it in full because it contained all the major themes found in the other papers.

Workers who are on strike today should realise that millions of their countrymen are not behind them in their action. These include millions of farmers, traders, peasants and others who are not wage earners.

And all the national newspapers are also not behind them in this strike.

The masses of the people and the Press have always shown sympathy for the lot of the workers and on the issue of increased pay for the lower income group of workers they still do.

But when the Morgan Commission made recommendations which are not justified by the economic facts of the country and the Government met the workers half way, all right thinking people, expect the workers would, as patriots, accept the offer of the Government. The Government's offer gives the lower income group more money than they are at present earning; although not quite as much as Morgan Commission recommended.

In arriving at its decision not to pay as much as the Morgan Commission recommended, all the Governments (sic) of the Federation are guided by three facts. These are:

* The ability of employers (both Government and private) to meet the magnitude of the amount involved in paying the increases with effect from October 1963.
* The inflationary pressure and the strain on the economy arising from heavy arrears, and
* The effect on the national development progress.

These are hard facts that the workers should appreciate.

If the Government and private employers are made to pay salaries and wages that cannot be met from revenue and profits, they would be compelled to reduce their staff considerably. This will add to already bad situation of unemployment in the country. And millions of housewives and children and old age people who depend on retrenched workers for their living will be thrown into penury and misery.
Is that what the workers want? Why not accept the offer of the Government and wait until later years when there will be more prosperity in the country and then ask for more pay.

There are millions of traders, farmers and peasants who are not wage earners; but who buy in the same markets and shops with the small percentage of wage earners who are getting more pay now.

If prices are inflated because a few thousand workers get wage increases what happens to these millions of wage earners?

It is in the national interest that the workers should accept the wages and salaries increases offered by all the Governments of the federation.

And therefore, they should call off the strike and return to work TODAY.

The reference to 'right thinking people' could be contrasted with an earlier description of the union leaders as "unthinking trade union leaders" in the Pilot editorial of May 4. The idea here was that anybody in his right senses should be able to see the 'reality' of the situation - how uneconomic it would be to increase wages or go on strike. This reality is not problematic; it is there for anybody to see and/or taken for granted. However for those who may not realise it, as the 'unthinking' Daily Times itemised some of the issues involved - ability to pay, inflation, unemployment, plight of non-wage earners and economic development. In short, higher pay to workers will have a negative impact on the nation.

We should look at one of the claims made by the editorial here. According to it the workers were already better off than other non-wage earners. In Nigeria, because of inadequate statistics, it is difficult to know the truth of such assertions. The income of farmers, traders and other groups in the informal sector of the economy cannot easily be fixed. Many of them might find it difficult to say how much they earn. It is however not uncommon to find very rich farmers or traders who own many houses or taxis. The government has sometimes used this, when it suited it, to impose taxes and levies on farmers, traders and other non-wage earners. And editorials have been written in support of such measures.

It is also not true to say that the workers are a separate group from other non-wage earners. As we have discussed in Chapter 2, urban workers fulfill a lot of traditional, social, economic obligations, to family and relatives
in the rural areas that could render any income comparison useless. Further rural dwellers and other non-wage earners share a lot in common with wage earners in terms of life-chances and world views that do create a common bond of solidarity and communal support for the workers demands during agitations and strikes over pay increases (see Adrian Peace, 1974). Apart from the political and ideological value of this argument to politicians, some academics and journalists it has very little basis in reality.

Leaving aside the above, we find the argument in the editorial obscured some facts which were not mentioned. The Morgan Commission found that an "effective minimum level" for an unskilled labourer with a wife and child working in Lagos would be £16 6s. This is twice the actual minimum rate at the time; therefore the commission concluded that "most workers are living under conditions of penury". After the strike, the minimum rate set for Lagos, £10 was £6. 6s. lower than what the living wage should be and £2 lower than what the Morgan Commission recommended.

While the editorial made a great deal out of the arguments supporting the government, it failed to mention anything about the unions' argument. For instance, no mention was made of the pay of high income earners - ministers, politicians and parliamentarians, and nothing was said about the level of profit made by the private sector. The main demand of the workers was for the scrapping of what they saw as an unjust 'colonial wage and salary structure' which was just indigenised after independence. As Peter Kilby noted,

The original JAC demand for a wage and salary revision was for a review of the entire wage and salary structure, anticipating downward adjustments for the highest paid salary-earners as well as upward adjustments for the lowest paid wage-earners... (therefore) ... 'the unions' grievances was not fundamentally about low wages but rather one of relative deprivation... (Kilby, 1969, p.287).

This argument is supported by a statement by a co-chairman of JAC, S.U. Bassey,

We don't attempt to justify the unions' position in economic terms or to say just where the Government is going to find the money. That is their job. All we can see is that they are spending plenty on themselves. It's time we got our fair share (quoted in Kilby, ibid).
On June 2, the Post accused the workers of "Cutting the Nation's Throat". In effect they were accused of having committed murder, the most grievous offence in the statute-book. The first sentence of the leader accused the workers of all atrocities and then said, "As for the nation, it stood paralysed by the doings of its own children, its economic life-lines cut, its ports dead, its workshop silent". The same 'National interest' argument was made by the Pilot on June 5 when it accused the Morgan Commission's concept of 'living wage' and for not considering how to foot the bill. The editorial praised the government for being reasonable and realistic in its offer. The editorial further absolved the government and ministers of any blame when it said,

It does not avail to charge that ministers and parliamentarians had since disobeyed this call for austerity measures by some imprudent acts, such as the increase in their allowance. The whole thing has to be looked at from the overall national interest.

At the conclusion of the negotiation that ended the strike the papers saw it as a 'National Victory', a 'national achievement', and to have regarded it "as a personal victory would have maligned the spirit of compromise which pervaded the whole deliberation".

During the post-Udoji strike in 1975, similar appeal to the national interest were made, though not as explicit and strident as in the 1964 editorials. The only specific mention was in the Daily Times editorial of January 18 captioned 'Negotiate in the Nation's Interest'. It urged both employers and employees to "negotiate in the spirit of give and take, IN THE INTEREST OF THE NATION" (capitals in the original). It further urged that the "noble aims of the commission ... be upheld and not be totally lost in the pursuance of self-gratification".

The issue of economic development with associated concepts like inflation or the health of the (national) economy also received considerable attention. It is often discussed with the 'national interest'. However it is important to note that like the latter, the structure of the economy, how 'national' is the 'national economy' were never mentioned or discussed as to who benefit and to what extent from it. In 1964 the effect of the strike on the economy was mentioned within the context of the first national development plan. According to the Daily Times of June 5, for the Government to have
paid the recommended wages would have jeopardised the Six-Year Development Plan and consequently the future development of the country. It stressed that the new scale was out of proportion to the "economic facts of the country" and therefore to have paid it was "to invite inflation and disaster, not only for the country, but for the thousands of bread winners and other dependants who will be affected by staff retrenchments. Inflated wages would bring chaos to the millions of traders and farmers who are not wage earners."

As we have mentioned in Chapter 1, the 1962 Development Plan was a neo-colonial document based on import-substitution strategy of development. The financing of the plan was heavily dependent on foreign and private investments and aid.

The press discussion of the economic impact of the strikes accepted the thesis that wage increases cause inflation and consequent economic problems. The Pilot of June 5 accused the Morgan Commission of using the concept of 'living wage' instead of the 'traditional cost of living index' in arriving at its recommendations. This accusation was based on the paper's belief that increase in wages would lead to inflation and affect the execution of the 1962 Plan. It said,

The cost of arrears alone to the Federal Government would have been enough to arrest significantly the growth rate of development plan. Add the cost to the private sector and we would have ended up in near disaster! Besides, it is almost unfortunate that the Commission did not address its mind enough to the problem of inflation which payment of arrears over a long period would have created.

When the strike ended and on the day the agreement between the government and the unions was to be signed, the Daily Times (June 29) was still convinced that the wage increase was useless because its gains would be wiped off by price increases. To drive home the point the paper stated in capital letters "IN LESS THAN TWO MONTHS, THE PENALTY OF WAGES INCREASE WILL BEGIN TO SHOW FOR CERTAIN IN HIGHER PRICES, HIGHER RENTS, HIGHER TRANSPORTATIONS - AND MORE BURDEN FOR THE WORKER. What then has he gained".
Editorialising Udoji

The editorials written on the Udoji Commission Report and the subsequent events were mainly concerned with the pay award and its inflationary effect, unemployment and ability of private companies to pay.

Before the awards were announced the New Nigeria, on November 4, 1974, has defined the issues involved in these terms. It was convinced that any salary award would trigger off "a serious bout of inflation". The paper returned to this argument a month later on December 2. In an anticipatory editorial titled 'Getting Apprehensive' the paper mentioned inflation and industrial unrest as the possible effects of any wage increase. On December 31, 1974, the paper said if private companies were to pay proportionate increase as in the civil service, many of them would close down or raise prices to prohibitive heights. It advised the companies to avoid redundancies "at all costs". The editorial continued "The New Nigeria is fearful that the inflationary dogs have been let loose and they will be more ferocious than the Central Bank fears. Udoji may therefore be an unfortunate watershed. The aftermath of Udoji may usher in unprecedented inflation. To avert the disaster, there must be effective price control." On January 2, the Nigerian Tribune while contending that the awards would not bridge the gap between the low and high income groups said it would lead to retrenchment in the private sector. In its own case the Daily Sketch (November 6, 1974) said price increase was inevitable. A month after the awards were announced the Nigeria Observer of January 31 was certain they had led to scarcity of food and where foods were available, "the prices were astronomical". In effect all the papers supported wage control because it was thought that wage increases would lead to inflation. The argument advanced by the papers was that in the name of economic development inflation must be held at bay and that meant wage control. This was presented as a commonsense and obvious case which responsible unions and right thinking people ought to see as a self-evident reality; "But the truth is there to see..." (Morning Post, June 9).

Another thing about these editorials was the assumption that the private sector must make profit, if not they could retrench workers. In this argument, it logically follows that a wage increase must be followed by increase in price of goods and services. We could say that the press by this argument supports the inequality in society, while the unions demanded a close in the gap. It also seems to us that the press did not bother to
question any link between profit and price level. It is taken for

granted that wage increase and not profit causes inflation; profit is a

legitimate earning of investors but not wage increase for workers. By

presenting a wage demand as detrimental to the economy, the press and

those who advance such an argument obscure the advantage of low wages to

bourgeois class in terms of profit. At least the silence of the press on

this issue points to this conclusion. We shall be returning to this issue

later.

From the editorials we can deduce what the press regarded as its

role, the image it held of the government, the unions and the employers

and the society in general. The press saw itself as the articulator of the

national interest which is pitched against the sectional interest of the

workers. It was taken for granted that there was and still is a consensus

on what constitutes the national interest and what actions, attitudes or

demands could jeopardise it. In articulating and defending this interest,

the press assumes the public voice, a spokesman for the innocent and

helpless public which is caught in the middle of a fight between the

'elephants'. It is in this light that we can explain the emphasis on

suffering by the public, on inflation, retrenchment and unemployment. This

argument also helps to explain the insistence on compromise and

negotiation and the idea that strikes are pointless and would not achieve

anything but chaos and ruin.

Also clear from the above is the idea that the differences that

exist in society are not structural. Any differences could be reconciled

through negotiation and compromise by supposedly equal partners in progress. This is in line with pluralist conception of the society which denies the existence of any fundamental structural difference. Society is said to be composed of plurality of interests all competing but none having greater power than the others. According to the editorials, social conflicts are products of intransigence, militancy or inefficiency by some individuals and therefore could be resolved by gentle persuasion and compromise. This emphasis on compromise by the press is partly an outcome of the professional adherence to impartiality by journalists. During conflict the press looks for the middle ground between the contending positions and appeals for a quick resolution. "All conflicts thus become translated into the language of compromise: all failures to compromise are signs of intransigence, extremism, or failure in communication" (Hall, 1974, pp.22-23).
Before we discuss another theme in the 'wage leads to inflation' argument, we shall like to note here that at least the 1974-75 awards were made to cushion the effect of the inflation in the country. T. Adeyokunmu and O.O. Ladipo have pointed out that the high inflation Nigeria experienced in the mid-70s was possibly due to four main factors: (i) the drought which reduced agricultural production in parts of the Northern States; (ii) imported inflation which resulted from international currency upheaval and inflation in the developed countries; (iii) the devaluation of the Naira which tended to increase the prices of imported commodities, relative to the prices of Nigerian exports; (iv) the expansion of the money supply, traceable to the increase in government revenue from petroleum (Adeyokunmu and Ladipo, 1982, p.146). In this vein Professor G.O. Nwankwo has blamed the problem on government economic policies since 1951; "to stimulate a fast rate of economic growth and development". In addition to factors mentioned by Adeyokunmu and Ladipo he mentioned deficit financing and indigenisation measures which resulted "in a huge expansion of bank credit". He said these measures fuelled inflation by pumping purchasing power into the economy without the adequate quantities of goods. This he attributed to inefficient production methods, inadequate infrastructure, inadequate management, the wartime massive destruction of capital equipment and human resources and diversion to military spending... (Nwankwo, 1982, pp.80-83).

In effect, the above factors which were ignored by the press were crucial in understanding the cause of inflation in the economy. As Sam Aluko has shown, the Udoji awards could have "added fuel to the fire, but it did not start the fire" (Aluko, 1979, p.195). After calculating that Nigeria was spending about 5% of her GDP on wages and salaries before the Udoji awards (increasing to 10% after the awards), he said "Unless it is an example of an economy where the tail is wagging the dog, the direct causes of the past and the persistent inflation in Nigeria cannot, therefore, validly be ascribed to the level of wages even if the wage level has a neutral effect on the structure and volume of production" (Aluko, 1976, p.196). Rather than the wage increase as the cause of inflation, Aluko opined that the problem was the unequal distribution of income and property. He showed that property owners who constitute 0.1% of the population earn about 50 times the average national income or 5% of the national income. He also argued that the Nigerian economy is not
only inequitable but also inefficient; he described the structure of the economy as,

tiny modernised sector but a predominantly primitive sector with low and elastic production function, irresponsive distributive network, infrastructural deficiencies and great inequality of income, wealth and opportunities (Aluko, ibid, p.200).

From this premise, Aluko concluded that "even without Udoji wage increases the economy would have continued to suffer the economic disequilibria that now appear to derive from the Udoji awards" (ibid, p.200).

If we have digressed to illustrate the causes of inflation in Nigeria it was to show the superficiality and how distorted press coverage of workers' demands could be. While we are not arguing that journalists should be economist or sociologists it is however pertinent for them, if they wanted to be taken seriously (as they definitely wished), not to discuss issues out of context. If it could be argued that the news columns could not accommodate such discussion, we think the editorials should be more comprehensive. Mass media presentation of issues could be regarded as publishing facts without any due attention to the social context within which those facts exist. This tends to obscure than to illuminate. It is in this case of presenting the part as the whole that news reveals its ideological character.

More substantially the obscuring of fundamental issues either by omission or distortion is ideological. Issues that are obscured from public discussion for example, inequality, are features of a particular mode of production which operates in the greater interest of the dominant groups in society. Though we are not suggesting any deliberate act, to omit them in any discussion bothering on such an economy is not only to serve the status quo but to seek to perpetuate it. It is to accept as legitimate the features of that economic arrangement and all the underlying structures or features. This becomes clearer if, as the press seemed to have done, any challenge to that social order was presented as irrational, pointless, disruptive and therefore illegitimate.

Need for Profit

As we have already mentioned, the argument that wage increases lead to price increases and inflation implicitly assumes that the level of profit
by manufacturers must be maintained. It seems that this assumption is in turn based on the economic argument that higher profits would lead to further investment and expansion of the economy with other advantages following from this. This argument may hold in an autonomous developed economy but doubtful in a dependent neo-colonial one where a good percentage of the surplus flows outside the country in forms of rent, royaly, import bills, salaries and profits by multinational corporations. The point is that the Nigerian economy is substantially foreign controlled. In 1970 foreigners owned 63% of paid up capital while private Nigerians owned about 10% while the state owned the rest. With indigenisation in 70s the situation has remained largely the same, though Nigerians now own majority share holding in many companies (Akin Iwayeun, 1979, p.58). According to the London Financial Times (24.12.86), foreign companies still hold 42% of market equity. Following a 10% reduction in December 1985, the country is spending 30 per cent of its annual foreign earning to service foreign debts of around $19 billion.

Apart from this outflow of money, a substantial part of the internally retained percentage is spent on extravagant and exhibitionist consumption and projects. Anybody familiar with Nigeria of the 70s will realize this point. Another source of drain on the nation's resources is corruption. In Nigeria many probes over the years have revealed high level of corruption through kick backs and over-value contracts, in top places.

Related to the assumption that wage restraint is needed for economic development is the belief that money thus saved would be used for economic development. Experience has proved that this may not necessarily be so. If the availability of money had been the main ingredient of economic development, Nigeria must have become a developed economy by now. Between 1977 and 1983, Nigeria was making an average $10 billion a year from oil. But as a former Managing Director of the Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC) said,

oil revenue is spent on the importation of various consumer goods, capital goods, rice and other agricultural produce which could be cultivated in Nigeria. Thus we earned our oil revenue only to use it to keep foreign industries going (quoted in Falola and Ihonvbere, 1985, p.89).
The point we are making is that economic development has been hampered not by lack of money but more by waste, corruption, unproductive use of resources and in general, the features of the neo-colonial dependent economy we run.

We versus Them

In its role as the 'Voice' of the public the press "exaggerates the commonality between people and plays down structural division of interest" (Phillip Elliot, 1982, p.246). When the mass media are able to recognize any division in society it is done within a populist under-class ideology of we versus them. The 'them' being those who threaten the common interest while the 'we' are the majority who suffer from the effect of the threats. This is against the common usage of the words. In his study of English working-class culture, Richard Hoggart defined 'them' as

a composite dramatic figure, the chief character in modern urban forms of the rural peasant big house relationships. The world of 'them' is the world of the bosses whether those bosses are private relationship or as is increasingly the case today, public officials (Hoggart, 1958, p.72).

The media thus turn these words on their heads from their populist usage. In this sense the media remove the use of the words from the social relationship to which they were originally mean to express or denote.

IMAGES OF WORKER, GOVERNMENT AND THE PUBLIC

The presentation of the workers as those who threaten the 'common interest' brings us to the type of images the press presents of the workers, the government and the public.

The Lazy over-paid Labourer

Apart from presenting the workers as disruptive and against the society, the press also presented them as indolent and selfish; not caring for others in the pursuit of their narrow monetary interests. In creating this impression the press compared the earning of the workers with those of farmers and other non-wage earners. According to the press these groups not only earn less, they also suffer from inflation and high prices which inevitably follow a wage increase. In its typical metaphorical
language the Morning Post, in its leader of June 11, accused the workers of wanting to divide and share the farmers' cloth among themselves. Convinced that the strike was "aimed at dislocating the national economy and at disrupting the steady march towards the fulfilment of our national progress (and) an assault on a nation that has done nothing to deserve it" it went on to declare that "it is worse, it is an unkindly assault on the vast majority of the people, the peasantry whose garment the workers want to divide among themselves". The Daily Sketch (June 26) said its greater sympathy was to the unemployed who it claimed "are increasing daily and who have become a national problem". On January 3, 1975, the Nigerian Tribune criticised the Udoji Commission and the Government for not considering the plight of those it called the 'neglected majority' who will suffer because of higher prices.

The significance of the above idea was to show that the interests of the worker are different and antagonistic to those of farmers, traders, the unemployed and others. This is very significant for its 'ideological import' (G. Williams, 1980, p.46). It has its academic parallel in the labour 'aristocracy thesis' which we discussed earlier. Briefly according to the thesis,

wage and salary earners constitute a labour aristocracy whose strategic economic position and bargaining ability enable them to gain a disproportionate share both of the social products, which enables them to engage in "discretionary consumption" at the expense of peasants, and of employment opportunities (ibid, p.44).

The thesis argues that increases in the wages paid to workers are at the expense of national development. It is assumed that if there were no wage increase the money saved could have been used to develop the rural areas, or reduce the taxes paid by the peasants. In Nigeria, there is no reason to believe that these assumptions could be true. History provides evidence against them. There is abundant evidence to prove that the surplus appropriated from farmers in the Western Region in the 50s and early 60s were used to finance the ruling political parties and their senior officials and followers. We could also say without any fear of contradiction that Nigeria's development pattern has never taken the rural areas or the farmer into much consideration. The cumulative effect of this is the deterioration of agriculture and the massive food-import bills since the 70s.
The thesis further argues that workers engage in higher consumption than those who expropriate the surplus of their labour. This may not be the case. Nigerian workers, as Williams has rightly observed "seek to escape from wage slavery by saving up enough to establish their own business". He went on to observe that,

When commercial profits depend on contracts and favours, the rich may be inclined to consumption rather than to savings and to investment in producer goods. And even investments in machinery are often oriented to gaining control of monopolistic distributive privileges and depend for their profitability on the restriction of petty commodity production (G. Williams, 1980, pp.45-46).

We could also say that any tendency to higher propensity to consume by the working class was a reflection of what was happening among the rich and even the government. The 1970s saw the massive purchase of luxury items and conspicuous consumption by the rich - champagne, private jets, expensive cars and houses. That was a period any government project worth its name must be quoted in millions.

As we said earlier, the significance of the 'labour aristocracy' thesis is not for its false or valid assumptions but its ideological importance. It is in this sense that its propagation by the press becomes important. The idea that there is a conflict of interest between a faction of the lower class, here the workers and other factions is an example of what Ken Post has called the "displacement of the 'primary contradiction' between the exploiters and the exploited on a 'derived' contradiction between the exploited classes" (Post, 1978).

Many of the editorials contained the general belief that the average Nigerian worker was lazy. Sometimes this implied that he did not deserve to be paid the level of wages he earns. The laziness angle was emphasised by the Post in its June 6 editorial which we referred to earlier on. In 1975 the Daily Times under the title 'Curing a National Malady' said,

The inertia of the average Nigerian worker is a well documented fact... sadly enough, the attitude of the average Nigerian to his assigned role, including his only means of livelihood, is conspicuously devoid of any sense of responsibility and commitment. Incessant lateness to work, truancy at work, lack of any sense of discipline, constitute our stock in trade.
As T.M. Yesufu has shown, this image of a lazy, unproductive worker might not be true, (Yesufu, 1962). The belief has its origin in the early colonial period when workers were being forced into the colonial service, on the railways and public works construction, under conditions they were not familiar with and sometimes under compulsion. A study of the labour condition of the period had this to say,

The movement from the land to the factory, from family and village to bureaucracy and the town was rather painful and rigidly resented. Thus when the African worker was carried in this wind of change he was not psychologically prepared for the consequences as it were. This situation was compounded by the rather alienating and inhuman treatment meted out to them by the colonial officials. The net effect of all this was to create a largely dissatisfied and belligerent industrial workforce (N. Nwabueze, Nigerian Tribune, October 12, 1985).

Though the colonial environment of working place has changed in terms of personnel, the social condition of the Nigerian worker is still very deplorable and unconducive to higher productivity. Indigenous managers not unlike their expatriate predecessors still treat junior workers with contempt and disdain. A study of management attitude to junior staff concluded that "The indigenous manager does not pretend to hide his social and economic superiority..." (Fashoyin, 1980, p.62). The transportation and health delivery systems are inadequate. The health problem of the working class could be appreciated through this statement of a labour leader, Onisokumeni Zudonu,

I have been living in Ajegunle (a high density suburb of Lagos) since 1945. I cannot find a single patent medicine store at Ikoyi, except at Falomo Shopping Centre. But here in Ajegunle every second or third house has a patent medicine store because people living in slums are very sickly. They consume more drugs than food. And this has contributed a great deal to low productivity because the people are physically and mentally sick. (The Guardian, Saturday, October 13, 1985).

The point is that press discussion of workers' indolence failed to mention some of these social problems. Such discussions also failed to consider the issues like work place welfare and industrial safety. According to Fashoyin, contemporary industrial relations in Nigeria is predominantly concerned with wage issues (Fashoyin, 1980, p.131).

T.M. Yesufu has also observed this narrow focus of industrial relations
when he said "... decisions on wage levels, productivity agreements, employee training, transfers, et cetera tend to be taken only in the context of monetary exigencies, without adequate, if any thought at all about their wider and longer term implications". He went on to say that "No issue is of such fundamental importance for industrial relations and yet so sadly neglected as that of social security". (Yesufu, 1980). Moreover, some of the negative behaviours of Nigerian workers, such as laziness and the obtaining of sick leaves may be 'hidden' or covert forms of protest by the workers against their position in the scheme of things (Cohen, 1980).

We have already mentioned how the demands of the unions were characterized as irrational, unrealistic and frivolous. We have also mentioned the attempt to divide the rank and file of the workers from the leadership. On February 7, the New Nigeria criticised the union leadership for poor quality leadership, "that is more self-centred than workers-centred". The impression created was of ordinary workers who were being used by their leaders for political purposes. The Morning Post tried to make a case for outside influence on the course of the 1964 General Strike. This was subtly hinted at in at least three editorials. On June 13, the paper accused the Daily Times of more or less supporting the workers because of "graph on the circulation board". The important point was that the editorial was on a visit by Cecil King, the publisher of Daily Times. On June 29, when the Okotie - Eboh agreement was signed, the paper in an editorial title 'National Victory' said

Some evilmongers and detractors - particularly the foreign press and the imperialist organs - were loud in anticipating that the strike would imerge this country into a blood birth unprecedented in the history of strikes in the world. Others prayed for a complete disruption of the economy, and total breakdown of law and order.

The Government

In contrast to this general negative image of the trade unions was that of a benevolent and realistic government in its actions and decision. It was in the attempt to prove this that the Daily Times went through the gamut of issues the government considered before slashing the recommended wages by the Morgan Commission. Having accepted the government proposal as realistic and reasonable, the press has accepted the dominant framework
in looking at the issues at stake. Any counter proposal has to be constituted within this framework and by and large such opposition becomes incorporated within the limits set by the dominant meaning. We have already seen how the government was able to limit the workers' demand for a total restructuring of the entire wages and salaries structure to a demand for an increase in the wages of low income workers. It was within this narrow limit that the press interpreted the actions of the government and the workers. The fact that the government was ready to make a small increase in wages was seen as a concession by the government.

The government was also presented as being ready to listen and negotiate while the unions were said to be intransigent. But the government would only negotiate if the workers went back to work. The Pilot of June 11 put the government position like this: "... there is this cardinal point in trade unionism, on which the Government appears to be resting its case, that negotiation cannot be made under the duress of strike. It is hardly fair to hold the Government to ransom by hanging the strike weapon over the negotiating table like a sword of Damocles". In its role as manager of conflict the state sets up various institutions to reconcile the ensuing differences. In this situation, those concerned are obliged to make use of these institutions whose decisions are supposedly impartial and above class or group interests. In the press reporting of industrial relations it is presented as if it was only within these institutions that groups or individuals could realise their interests. Hence strikes are pointless and useless; they do more harm than good. This could explain the insistence on negotiation. We have seen how the Post made a fetish out of it. Another good example in our materials is the Daily Times editorial of January 18, 1975,

... the Daily Times does not believe that they (the workers) acted wisely in working to rule without first of all pursuing their grievances with the appropriate body specially set up by the Federal Government for the purpose of reviewing grievances... But it is our strong belief that these extreme actions should be resorted to ONLY after the machinery of conciliation talks and arbitration set up by government have failed to resolve the disputes.

To embark on industrial action without full exploration of machinery for redress is intolerable in any law-abiding society.

Any group of organised labour that have (sic) grievances should submit their cases for negotiations with their
employers: Employers too ... should negotiate in the spirit of give and take, IN THE INTEREST OF THE NATION (capitals in the original).

The point we are driving at is that to the press all issues are negotiable through compromise, goodwill, courage and realism. This view is taken as dictated by commonsense and obvious to all 'right thinking people'. This could be so because the press had already presented the workers action, which may be seen as an alternative to its own perspective, as useless and of negative effect. It could also be so if all the parties to the negotiation are equal, in terms of power and resources at their disposal and also if the agency conducting the negotiation is disinterested and impartial. It seems without any questioning or thorough examination of these assumptions, that the press takes them as such, or as a working premise. In press reporting of conflict, things go wrong or out of control because of blunders committed by politicians or the intransigence of trade unionists or sometimes, but rarely mentioned, the greed of employers. We have already seen how the strikes were attributed to lack of patience by union leaders. We have also seen how some papers modified their stand in 1964 to include a condemnation of bungling politicians which became apparent as the strike went on.

We may again digress a bit to look further at this point before we consider the place of the public in industrial relations news.

Stars in the News

The point we want to consider is the press orientation towards personality and the personalisation of events. The press personalises issues for easy reporting; social conflicts and events are reduced to a contest between persons who are turned into instant stars. This is the basis of the love for human interest stories. As Chris Ayu put it "The press tend to work with a 'great man' theory of history in which history is made by the conscious activities of individuals more or less independent of social forces" (Ayu, 1984). News is made by the 'news makers'. These are not just ordinary men in the street but stars who incidentally must have been created by the press. In a situation where such stars or celebrities do not already exist, the press must find or create one. In 1964 the press found such stars in Michael Imoudu, Adebola and Goodluck in the labour side; on the government side were J.M. Johnson and Jacob Obande, the Ministers
responsible for Labour and Establishments respectively— and later, Tafawa Balewa, the Prime Minister, came on to the 'stage'.

Imoudu seemed to have been the chief star. He was already a prominent militant labour leader. He led the 1945 General Strike and before that the colonial administration banished him to a remote corner of the country for his militant anti-colonial politics and labour activities among Railway workers. In fact, up till today, he is known as Labour Leader No. 1. But in 1964 he was neither the secretary nor chairman of the JAC, but his influence on the workers was immense. He came to occupy the centre stage when on May 30, just before the strike started, he had led the workers on a march from Yaba through Carter Bridge to Lagos in defiance of a government ban on demonstration and procession. He was reported to have literally dragged Adebola, the JAC spokesman, to lead the march from Ebute-Meta to Lagos. According to Wogu Ananaba, Adebola reluctantly agreed to continue the demonstration "In order not to allow Imoudu to take credit for a job well begun..." (Ananaba, 1969, p.240). On the Carter Bridge, Imoudu and Adebola were among those injured in a clash with the police. They and other JAC leaders were later arrested, prosecuted but later discharged. Adebola and Goodluck were joint chairmen of the JAC, so they were 'naturally' expected to feature prominently.

The two government ministers mentioned came in by virtue of their offices. But their prominence was for what they failed to do to stem the tide of the conflict. They were accused of bungling the government handling of the strike, before and after it was started.

During the 1974-75 period no 'star' was able to emerge to dominate the headlines. This was due in the main to the scattered nature of the strikes and the fact that they were organized and led by plant officers and not central labour leaders as was the case during the 1964 General Strike. These plant leaders might have avoided press publicity to avoid arrest and indefinite detention without trial. Strikes were illegal during the time.

A likely effect of the "culture of the star" in the News is that any social group that cannot produce a credible or interesting, dramatic person to speak on its behalf may have problems getting its views across through the mass media. It seems many organisations and even governments are aware
of this process, hence the search for newsworthy and eloquent persons by such bodies. We have already noted another implication of this form of reporting - the neglect of underlying issues for immediate and dramatic statements and theatrical activities of the stars.

The Public

Press editorials on the industrial conflicts supposedly speak on behalf of and for the public or the nation. This approach stems from how the press sees its role in the society. Liberal-pluralist account of the press regards it as the fourth-estate of the realm. It is an independent force or voice, speaking or supposed to speak on behalf of all, especially the powerless majority, against the government and other forces. Nigerian journalists believe this conception of their role. This is evident in their clamour for freedom of the press.

During the two periods of our study, the public was presented as a 'victim' of the workers' action, by constant harping on the effects of the strikes. In doing this, the press picked mainly on the more visibly vulnerable groups, children, women, the sick and farmers. As we have shown in some of the editorials quoted and in our discussions, attempts were also made to show that the interests of this vulnerable group of people were different from those of the workers. The workers were presented as a group different and separated from the public, a race apart as it were. It is also presented as evident that an increase in the wages of workers would directly result in misery for the non-wage earners. Though all the papers were agreed on these issues, this section of the Morning Post editorial of June 2, 1964 put the case eloquently,

Yesterday, our children (the workers children) sweated and panted as they walked miles from home to school. Pregnant women stood fainting as they waited in vain at bus stops; or precariously hung to mammy wagons in the anxious bid to keep their dates with doctors. Market women were kept from their daily rounds, could not go after their merchandise. Such workers as were still prepared to remain faithful to their charge were deprived the means of transport, and lost hours waiting or trekking to work. The farmer's harvest lay waste. As for the nation, it stood paralysed by the doings of its own children, its economic life-lines cut, its ports dead, its workshops silent.
Strikes are regarded as regrettable and costly phenomena, causing hardship and suffering to the innocent who have nothing to do with the issues at stake. The vehicles of this orientation to human suffering is the human interest story and personalization of issues. The press takes the point of view of the consumer who has missed his 'appointment with the doctor or unable to get electricity supply'. Just as the workers are presented in industrial relations news mainly from the point of view of consumption and distribution so is the public. But as David Morley has pointed out,

... this elevation of the consumption sphere is very misleading - precisely because it neglects the sphere of production and our different relations to the means of production - which generates the structural conflicts, which cause the disputes by which we are all inconvenienced (David Morley, 1976, p.258).

The Employers

The employers rarely appeared in the editorials though they appeared more in the 1974-75 editorials than in 1964. This may be excused if we take the position that the strikes were initiated by government actions but as we have discussed and as other studies have shown, the employers do not generally feature in industrial relations news. However, what is significant is that their appearance were very sympathetic - the need to maintain their profit margins. For instance, the Tribune (January 6) and Daily Times (February 6 and 7) advised the Federal Government to aid the private sector in paying the arrears that went with the Udoji awards - while the New Nigeria appealed to the employers to avoid redundancies "at all costs".

CONCLUSION

Our examination of the editorials leads to one main conclusion, that is, the main Nigerian newspapers we examined offered no fundamental critique of the country's socio-economic and industrial order, at least during the periods chosen. Despite the differences in the history, ownership and policy of the papers and the tone of coverage, the view contained in their coverage was limited. The definitions of reality presented were within the dominant perspective which rarely questioned the existing structure and source of inequality in the Nigerian society. This is evident in how the workers' actions were presented almost exclusively in terms of
more pay and disruption. Social divisions stemming from different locations in the system of production and in the distribution of wealth and opportunities were ignored. Differences in society were presented as personal and/or as marginal abberations that could be solved through personal understanding. Efforts by workers as a group to challenge the social order or advance their interests were generally stigmatized and condemned. Oppositional perspectives were marginalised.

We have already suggested that instead of approaching the issue as a case of deliberate bias we should examine the prevailing assumptions and ideas, and the professional ideology which inform media operation and how they interpret their role in society. The press sees itself as interpreting the voice and opinion of 'right thinking' members of the society. In its role as an interpreter, it tries to relate issues to the conventional; the everyday facts of life, the self-evident or 'obvious'; in order to make them intelligible and unambiguous. This mode of interpretation and explanation of events provides a simple and uncomplicated understanding of society. But such explanations and understandings because they are rooted in the visible everyday practical experience do not go beyond the surface of events. They are restricted to what the readers could relate to. For instance, strikes do actually cause disruption which inconvenience people. And as David Morley has pointed out "The concept of 'national interest' is not entirely ideological; we are all involved in the economy". What is ideological about it and other assumptions is that they restrict "attention to the level of the phenomenal forms of social life, without considering our differential relations to the means of production and therefore our differential relations to the 'national interest'. In other words, as Mepham has argued "The basis of ideology is precisely in its apparent justification by the perceived forms of empirical social reality" (Mepham, 1972). Following his interpretation of Marx's work on ideology, Stuart Hall said,

that ideology works because it appears to ground itself in the mere surface appearance of things. In doing so, it represses any recognition of the contingency of the historical conditions on which all social relations depend. It represents them, instead, as outside of history: unchangeable, inevitable and natural. It also disguises its premises as already known facts (Hall, 1982, p.76).
It is against this background that we have to understand the long-term ideological effect of the mass media. Readers may not always accept what they read in the press. In Nigeria, especially because of the dominant government ownership of the mass media there is a lot of cynicism and suspicion of media reports. Apart from this mass media contents could permit different interpretations from that intended by journalists. A lot of factors like class position, and cultural and institutional background of the readers do come into play during the process of interpretation. In other words there may not be a necessary correspondence between a text and how it is decoded by the receiver. But as Steve Chibnail has suggested, it is easier to reject the factual content of a newspaper than the more latent and explicit interpretative framework in which such factual contents are embedded. The "backdoor" absorption of such a framework by readers is largely unconscious (Chibnail, op cit, p.45). This process of absorption becomes easier if we considered that the press acceptance of the dominant perspective narrows-down the range of discourse thus limiting critical awareness and the choices available.
CHAPTER 10

MEDIA ROUTINE AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS NEWS

In an earlier discussion we argued that the concept of bias is inadequate to explain the selection and production of news. Rather we contended that we have to examine the routine procedures which interact with each other to affect news production. Such an approach is more illuminating in the sense that it allows us to move further in locating the ideological and long-term influence of news on the readers. In this connection, Golding and Elliot have observed that journalists,

are concerned with the short-term and deliberate manipulation of news, and its immediate and direct effect on viewers. The sociologist has a different perspective, being concerned rather more with the long-term, routine and non-deliberate manufacture of news, and by corollary, with the long-term and cumulative influence on viewers (Golding and Elliot, 1979, pp.8-9).

In order to account for this 'routine and non-deliberate manufacture of news' certain theories and ideas have been propounded about how and why news has come to be what it is. Such theories could be grouped into three. According to Peter Golding and Sue Middleton the first one is a biographical account which "sees journalists as malevolent or ignorant, the articulate representative of an unholy mass of prejudice and cant". Much of the early gate-keeper studies were informed by this perspective. A lot of journalism is attributed to bias and prejudice on the part of journalists. The second theory is organisational, which sees journalists "as the object of a variety of constraints erected by the routines of work, of news gathering and of production, and by the deliberate and regular interventions, conspiratorial or otherwise of those with an axe to grind and the muscle to do so effectively." Such an approach will include the influence of the economic and commercial imperatives, the structure of the news organisation and the division of labour, e.g. the hierarchy of control in the organisation. Lastly they identified an ideological perspective, "an imprecise shorthand for a variety of more complex explanations, in part incorporating the first two ... but as two aspects of the complicated machinery by which the dominant values ... of society are given form and authority (Golding and Middleton, 1982, p.113).

Herbert Gans also produced a list of four theories by which news production could be explained. We only need to mention three because one of the four, organisational theory has already been mentioned above. The
first one he labelled as journalist-centred. Here it is argued that news is influenced by the professional criteria and judgement of journalists. Another one he called 'event-centred' or 'mirror theory'. This is that it is the event that determines story selection with the journalist holding a mirror which reflects the image of such an event to the public. The last "set of theories" is externally-centred; it explains story selection by looking at forces outside the news organisation. Such external forces or institutions include technology, economic or commercial consideration, national culture, the audience and sources which provide news. This last one seems to us as the same, at least in the issues examined, as the organisational theory. It could have been included by Gans just for emphasis and clarification.

However, as he pointed out, none of these theories can on its own provide a complete explanation of news production. But as Todd Gitlin has said,

Professional, organisational, directly economic and political and ideological forces together constitute, from the traces of events in the world, images of The News which are tilted towards the prevailing frames (Todd Gitlin, 1980, p.251).

In this chapter we want to examine how these broad theories help us understand how and why industrial relations news is what it is. Central to our discussion is the routine procedures that have developed and used by journalists in carrying out their task as professional purveyors of news. This is under the belief that "by examining routine procedures, it is possible to develop an account of the material and sources used regularly in media production" (Philip Elliot, 1977, p.159). As we did not conduct any production study most of the materials came from informal and unstructured interviews and discussions with fifteen labour reporters and other journalists. Such discussions were either conducted with individual journalists or in groups. Access was relatively easy and direct because many of the journalists were either former colleagues or classmates at the University.

Our discussions and interviews involved where industrial relations news comes from; who do the journalists go to for news, how do they rate such people in terms of the importance and credibility attached to the information given and why? How easy or difficult is it to approach each of
the main type of actors - the government, the unions and the employers - and obtain news from them? Which of the actors do they frequently go to and why? In general terms how do they find the labour beat in terms of constant and relatively ready-to-use, up-to-date and publishable stories? We also ask them the possible sources of pressures (both external and internal) and whether they have been subjected to such pressure in the past, by whom and how successful it was.

In the course of the discussions we also sought to know whether any of the journalists have any friends or those they did not like among the trade unions and the reasons for this. We also asked about their opinions of the labour movement and some of the individuals in the movement. This led us to ask, do such opinions or personal relationship affect your professional work?

To further understand the news-making process we gave some hypothetical news situations and asked the journalists to describe how they would approach them, who they would go to for information and the aspect or angle they would play up in writing the stories and why? Why factors or issues would determine how the news would be written and what to include or omit and why? Our discussions usually end by asking the journalists of what they regard as their social role as labour reporters and in general as journalists.

There are very few correspondents exclusively dealing with industrial relations. We could count only five correspondents, each at the Daily Times, Punch, Tribune, National Concord and The Guardian. Though some other papers have reporters designated 'labour correspondents', such reporters also undertake general reporting, sometimes even more than labour reporting. Such reporters use their titles when there is any 'big' news on the labour beat. Specialization is still at its rudimentary stage in Nigerian journalism. In this regard the observation made some years ago by Golding and Elliot that "apart from sports there was no subject specialization in Nigerian journalism"(Golding and Elliot, 1979, p.99) is still largely valid. An editor at the Nigerian Tribune told me that many newspaper organisations could not afford specialization among their reporters: "Not that it is not good but the money is not just there for such a luxury". Another problem he mentioned was that there are not many well-educated reporters in some of the areas needing specialization, "the
technical knowledge is lacking", as he put it. He said some of them who have specialized are not better than general reporters in their chosen areas.

Another senior journalist with the Daily Times said some special correspondents tend to be corrupt and "sometimes too big". They become too close to some persons on the beat "they become more or less P.R.O. for them". He mentioned the labour beat as one of the areas very susceptible to this tendency. Others he mentioned were the Police and the National Assembly during the Second Republic. This view was somehow confirmed by some labour correspondents who accused each other of being too friendly to some individual labour leaders. There was the case of a labour editor who, I was told, was at a point regarded as an official of the NLC. The association of labour correspondent, Labour Writers Association of Nigeria (LAWAN) was seen by some journalists as an attempt by a group of labour reporters to integrate themselves into the labour movement.

The view that labour reporters and journalists in general are corrupt is shared by trade union leaders. Some trade unionists told me that they have had occasion to give money to some reporters before their stories could be published. A trade unionist at Abeokuta told me that reporters will not attend a press conference if they believed that there will not be "lavish entertainment and 'brown envelopes' ". Many journalists confirm this though the accusing finger is pointed to others. Nobody was able to own up to having demanded and received gratification.

Most, if not all the labour correspondents are stationed in Lagos. This does reflect the geographical structure of the Nigerian economy. Apart from being the political capital of Nigeria, Lagos is both the industrial and commercial nerve centre of the country. According to Adebayo Adejugbe, Lagos with 17.51 had the highest location quotient* of the regional distribution of manufacturing establishments in the country by 1973. The nearest to it was Kaduna with 1.47. Lagos also employed 49% of the labour force in medium- and large-scale manufacturing in the country (Adejugbe, 1979, p.43).

* Location quotient measures the degree of industrial concentration in a sub-area compared with the general concentration in the whole area.
Sources of News

Research has shown that newsmen develop routine channels or sources for gathering news. The process involves the use of experts or informed and authoritative persons. As Hartmann and Husband put it "The newsman comes to see events in terms of human actions and so uses personalities and experts to provide him with material." (Hartmann and Husband, 1974, p.158). We have to note that the search for sources is not a neutral or haphazard affair. It is structured by the disposition of power in society and as Lee Sigelman has pointed out it is "guided by a set of explicit or implicit hypotheses" (Sigelman, 1973, p.145). In a sense journalists as he further noted are "hypothesis testers, whose news gathering procedures consist of checking the empirical validity of their preconceptions" (ibid).

Moreover Steve Chibnall has suggested that these sources provide first order account from which journalists select and interpret events: "journalists do not gather news; they construct second order account of reality from materials provided by sources" (Chibnall, 1981, pp.85-86). This process of journalist-source relation would to an extent depend on the attitude each has about the other.

There are three main bodies as sources of news to the industrial relations correspondent - the trade unions, the management or employers and the government. However journalists see the labour beat as a poor source of news in terms of regular supply of topical and up-to-date news. This may explain the observation that most of what passes as labour pages on Nigerian newspapers are commentaries by the so-called labour editors.

This tendency to value personal opinion and commentary more than news reporting may not be peculiar to industrial relations journalism. The former Chairman and Managing Director of the Daily Times, Babatunde. Jose, has noted that the graduate journalists he recruited for the Times in the 70s preferred features writing to news because of the prestige of a byline. Also noting the lack of investigative journalism in the Nigerian press, Graham Mytton said, "freedom of the mass media seems to be valued mainly as the freedom to criticize rather than to discover something worth reporting" (Graham Mytton, 1983, p.123). A correspondent of the London
based monthly magazine, South, described Nigerian newspapers thus, "running banner headlines that vie furiously with each other for the readers' attention, but mostly presenting a thin diet of news and a surfeit of opinion" (Richard Synge, 1982, p.41).

Despite the paucity of regular news from the industrial relations beat many journalists see the trade unions as the main source of news. In fact they all define industrial relations news as 'labour news', that is within a narrow definition of labour as workers and their unions. Jeremy Turnstall has noted the same among British labour correspondents who said they have "found the British trade unions and strikes better materials for news stories than were management and policy" (Turnstall, 1971, p.90). Bola Adedoja, a former news editor with the Daily Times and former President of the Nigerian Union of Journalists explained the predominance of trade unions in the provision of materials for industrial relations news thus,

There has been a solid alliance since the colonial days between the press and labour; in the sense that labour by itself is a veritable source of news because news by its definition has to do with human beings and of all human activities labour is a very prominent one. Therefore the press cannot afford to ignore the activities of the labour movement.

Clear in this statement is the almost exclusive definition of industrial relations news as the activities of the labour movement.

Though we do not carry out any separate consistent analysis of the content of the labour pages, however a cursory reading does show that almost all the stories were about trade unions or news released from them.

According to a labour correspondent, though the trade unions are the best source of news, "they have their problems". One of these problems is that the trade unions cannot get their views across in usable form. Some studies have noted how news production is becoming more passive (Golding and Elliott, 1979, Golding and Middleton, 1982, James Carey, 1969). This passivity arose in part from the now prevalent use of press releases regularly issued by individuals and organised groups to put their views across to the public through the press. A press release has a higher chance of being used if it conforms to the format of news writing, that is the inverted pyramid
style. Therefore for the trade unions to get into news they must be able to issue reportable news releases. The correspondent said the unions issue releases that are often unprintable because such releases "trade in abuses and name-calling against the management or fellow trade unionists and even the government". He showed me a copy of a release from a union secretary full of some allegations against the company management that were not supported by any evidence. I was told the secretary had been dodging the reporter since he issued the statement.

This has led many reporters and news editors, partly for fear of libel and their credibility, to treat trade union releases with mistrust and sometimes scorn and neglect. The reason for this may be due to the poor finance and organisation of the labour movement. Also the literacy level among trade unionists is still very low, despite recent changes. As Adedoja put it "Most of them were virtual illiterates who were only committed to the cause of their colleagues". For these reasons and sometimes due to ignorance and apathy many unions do not have the required technical personnel, in this case public relations officers. It may be surprising to note that not a single Nigerian trade union, not even the NLC has a newspaper.* A reporter with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) said "the information and publicity machinery of the unions are deficient. As a reporter you cannot rely on it."

My experience during the research period seems to confirm this. At the NLC Headquarters in Lagos the Public Relations Office is a small cubicle tucked away in one corner of the four storey building. It is staffed by only one person surrounded by a duplicating machine, bundles of duplicating papers, posters and other publicity materials. The officer seems to function more as a personal assistant to the NLC President than a spokesman and image maker for the Congress. He travels with him all over the place. I visited the NLC offices three times during the research period without meeting the officer once. I was told by reporters that this was the usual case. Reporters seldom even approach the P.R.O. for information on the activities of the Congress; they prefer the President or the Secretary-General. According to one of the reporters the PRO "knows next to nothing on what is happening". There are many trade unions without any press officers and where they exist, according to the

* In the 60s the NTUC had a newspaper, Advance, while the ULC had the Nigerian Worker. Since their death no other union has established a newspaper, though I was told the NLC was planning one for 1986.
NAN reporter referred to above, they are "glorified messengers booking hotel accommodations for the presidents and secretaries of their unions". He further said many of the PROs act to obstruct than help reporters: "They act as shields for their bosses".

From the above one can begin to understand why the rank and file of trade unions rarely become sources of news. Apart from the fact that things are done for them or on their behalf by their virtually illiterate leaders", they are regarded by many reporters as ignorant. A reporter said "some of them don't even know why they go on strike". This attitude is informed by a general disdain for the labourer among educated Nigerians. He is seen as lazy, ignorant, if not a fool when issues about 'book knowledge' are mentioned. It is this type of attitude that pervaded Ebenezer Williams' front page comment in the Morning Post after the ill fated Unity Talks at Ibadan in 1962. Among other things he said,

Alhaji H.P. Adebola rode some of his human horses last week. So did Mr. Michael Imondu. And I am tempted to suggest that the "riding in majesty" will continue for some time because the Nigerian worker prefers to be ridden to riding, to be exploited mentally and physically by the secretaries he pays (Morning Post, May 7, 1962).

In the article he called the supporters of Imoudu (whom he accused of hobnobbing with Communists) "silly crowd that shout in unison with him..." Two days before, he had written another contemptuous article on the trade unions. In the satirical article he called a delegate to the Unity Talk Conference a "thug on Campos Square"* and accused his union of fraudulent practices.

Among reporters it is believed that union members or even some officials do not understand issues and legislations on labour not to talk of economic policy in general. A Daily Times reporter told me that only very few trade unionists could comment intelligently on, say, the budget. He further said,

Though things have improved since the NLC was created, many of our so-called labour leaders are rabble-rousers who know nothing except to call workers out on strike. They are very

* Campos Square on Lagos Island is a notorious place full of hemp addicts, thugs, pick-pockets, robbers and such anti-social elements.
corrupt, stealing union money and deceiving their ignorant members. I know some of them.

Another point to emerge from our discussions was the belief among reporters that trade unions do not engage in publicity until, as one reporter put it, they are in trouble. There is the general assumption that the best time to look for news is when there is a dispute or a strike. This incidentally is how reporters see the government and employers as sources for industrial relations news. According to a reporter on the economic desk of NAN the government becomes a good source of news mainly in "times of crisis". He said the Ministry of Labour is a 'dead place' to look for news. The general complaint among reporters was that only the Minister of Labour could speak and as one of them put it "he is usually not on seat". In this instance one can note the problem of civil servants as news sources. They do not like talking to journalists. This might be due to the civil service orientation that 'civil servants are to be seen, not heard'. This problem is particularly acute in Nigeria where almost every file and issue are stamped secret. Secrecy seems to be an important aspect of the Nigerian Civil Service Culture.

The problem of the Ministry could also be due to the fact that it is always a large Ministry sometimes incorporating Information, Sports, Culture, Youth and Social Development. For instance, in the 60s, the minister in charge of labour was also dealing with Sports, Youths and Social Development. During the 70s the Commissioner, Chief Tony Enahoro, a former journalist was in charge of information, culture, youths and sports. It could be expected that with such a heavy portfolio the person in charge will tend to be more interested in one area at the expense of the other. For example, just before the 1964 General Strike, Minister of Labour, J.M. Johnson, left for New York to attend a Youth Conference.

Journalists see the lack of adequate access to the Ministry and other government sources as inhibiting investigative and analytical journalism. They complained of lack of facts and figures and that when they are published they are usually dated. As a reporter reminded me "you can't use three year old figures in news, that is for features, at best a mere background, one or two paragraphs at the end of a story."

Though most of the journalists are equally skeptical of the
government as a news source, they accept there is a better chance to publish government material than the trade unions. A National Concord reporter said, "you can't ignore a statement from Doddan Barrack¹ but you can throw away a release from a trade union". Another reporter said "it is a big story to get an exclusive from a minister but there is nothing exclusive from Chiroma"². The reason for this according to the reporter was that the government could be considered speaking on behalf of the country while a labour leader speaks on behalf of his union members. The government statement is considered more important and authoritative than that of a trade union leader. Another reason I was given was that there was less risk of libel from a government statement. We could also note that the government information and publicity machinery is likely to be more elaborate and extensive than that of a trade union. Generally journalism, according to Golding and Elliot has come to rely on "central political institutions of parties and government than other areas of social life" (Golding and Elliot, 1979, p.151). Most stories in Nigeria mass media are predominantly rehashes of government statements and promises and appeals to the public.

Relatedly many of the journalists I spoke to accept that the role of the government is to act in the national interest. They also accept that industrial disputes should be settled through negotiation between labour and management, while the government should establish machinery to arbitrate.

The employers are not of much importance in industrial relations news. None of the reporters mentioned them, either individually or collectively, as a source for news. A Daily Times reporter said he has never been asked to interview an employer on industrial relations. However the little that come from them get published. This I was told are mainly on promotion, training, opening of canteens or what one reporter described as "public relations kind of materials". Many of the journalists expressed dislike for publishing some of these materials. This view of the employers as poor news sources fits into the narrow definition of industrial relations we have noted above; the activities of the labour movement, which by and large exclude management activities which may affect labour either in the short- or long-terms.

1. Doddan Barrack is the residence and offices of the President.
2. Chiroma is the current President of the NLC.
Predictably no other source was mentioned by reporters. When asked about ordinary members of the public I was told by one reporter that there was "no point in just stopping somebody on the street because you want a story. If there was a strike, you may do a vox pop but when there is none, what do you ask them about?" He told me his paper had done one on retrenchment because "it is a topical issue".

**Organisational Constraint**

The internal and external environments under which news is produced do exert pressure on news production. Such pressure could be overt or covert; its source varying from government, proprietors, those with the economic power, e.g. advertisers, political parties and other organized pressure groups. These social and institutional forces constitute "the network and flow of power that define the scope of the mass communicator's tasks (his 'freedom'), guide his attention, and limit his choices" (George Gerbner, 1969, p.242).

As anybody familiar with the debate on freedom of the press in Nigeria either among journalists or members of the public would have noted, the government is usually seen as the major constraint to news reporting and freedom of the press. This view is evident in Babatunde Jose's statement that,

> As soon as government editors take possession of the editorial chair directing or misdirecting editorial policy, newspapers that had hitherto established reputations for forthrightness and objectivity, peter into slavish and almost sycophantic government megaphones and thereby lose their virility (Jose, 1975, p.256).

This view has also informed both academic and layman's assessment of African press. It is reflected in the call by many Nigerians for government disinvestment in press ownership.

Though no labour correspondent or any general reporter among those interviewed said there has been at any time, a government official has told him how to write a story "the fear of the government is always at the back of your mind". In other words as one editor once said, journalism in Nigeria is "heavily mined politically and one has to tread carefully" (West Africa, June 14, 1982). More out of fear than conviction, many
journalists believe they have to bear in mind the interest and concern of the government when they write their stories. Among some older journalists this is expressed in terms of the national interest. For instance, Babatunde Jose while warning African journalists not to act like their American counterparts wrote,

My strong view is that the African press cannot use the strategy and weapons we used against colonial governments against our own government whether elected or in army uniform. It would be self-destructive (Jose, 1975, p.259).

Government pressure is not likely to be directed at the reporter but rather at senior editorial executives and even the proprietors, who through a lot of links are close to those in government. Some editors hold their posts at the grace of those in power.* Though the pressure may be greater in government owned media especially Radio and Television, it is a constant factor in the minds of journalists and editors. In order to avoid harassment from the police some newspapers avoid covering controversial topics while others do a lot of self-censorship.

A reporter with the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) told me that during the 1981 two-day General Strike the station was told to black-out the news of the strike and that on some occasions deliberate falsehoods were broadcast as news. He said such news came as statements from the Department of Information in the President's office. Toyin Falola and Julius Ihonvbere reported the situation where the NTA was announcing the collapse of the strike, yet the workers who were reported to be working were at home hearing the news on the television (Falola and Ihonvbere, 1985, p.161). The lack of trust in the mass media during the strike was so great that the NLC had to instruct its members not to return to work until they have seen the NLC President on the 9 O'clock network news announcing the end of the strike.

I witnessed a similar situation during the fieldwork when resident doctors went on strike. Two days after the strike had started, the Ogun State Television reported that all in-patients at the State General Hospital, Abeokuta had been discharged. But surprisingly the next night the same station reported that five people had died in the same hospital

* See Ebenezer Williams 'My Great Ordeal' (n.d.) for an interesting account of the power-play in the defunct Morning Post.
because of the doctors' strike. The story was later used by other media houses. On enquiry it was found out that the story came from the state Ministry of Information. Actually it was signed by the Commissioner for Information. The news editor at the station told me they had no option but to use the story despite the fact that they knew the story could not be true. He said "people know that the government is lying".

Since the activities of the labour movement cannot be separated from the government overall economic policy and the larger issue of political stability and peace it means the fear about the government would affect the production of industrial relations news. It is suggested that the government would be interested in such news. This is for instance reflected in some of the anti-strike decrees enacted by the military; for example Decree 53 of 1969 which bans the media from giving "undue" publicity to strikes or lockout. A reporter told me that his news editor is always very skeptical of claims by union leaders, especially when they accuse the ministry of Labour or any government official "so when I write my stories I always tone it down, if not totally remove any reference to the government". Another implication is that any serious critique of the system could easily be suppressed because it could be construed as political.

Another organisational constraint is the policy of the owner, defined "as the more or less consistent orientation shown by a paper, not only in its editorial but in its news columns and headlines as well, concerning selected issues and events" (Breed, 1955, p.327). None of the journalists interviewed said his paper had a stated policy on the coverage of industrial relations. In fact the policy statement of the mass media organisations that we came across are stated in general terms, mainly concerned with maintaining national unity and upholding the integrity and sovereignty of the country. However, some reporters believe that their papers "have their preferences".

One correspondent told me that his paper will not "support a socialist labour movement". Another said that though his paper tries not to discriminate, "you can sense that we prefer a moderate union". This is the opposite of what a Tribune reporter told me. According to him, the paper tends to report socialist or radical union leaders in a "better light" than some they considered conservative. He mentioned the names of certain
trade union leaders whom he said will "almost always" get their views reported in the paper.

The important point is that though the owner of a newspaper seldom gets involved in the direct production of news, he has many indirect ways of intervention. For instance, as we have noted above, the appointment of key editorial positions would by and large reflect the type of policy he wants to pursue. By virtue of their position in the hierarchy these senior editorial personnel exercise a lot of influence in the how and why of news gathering and production. Journalists over the time become socialised into the dos and don'ts of their various organisations (Breed, op cit).

Furthermore the overall State policy do have a general implication in structuring the political, economic and ideological environment within which news is produced. For example the concern over national unity is a key aspect of the theology of national interest preached by members of the ruling class. A Nigerian writer who has traced the origin of the slogan of 'national unity, stability, security and discipline' to the oil boom era of the 70s has said, "The cry of national unity by the ruling class is at once tied up with a new type of nationalism. The economic boom made the 'love of Nigeria' an ideological imperative for those who are in position to plunder it collectively..." (Madunagu, 1982, p.12). Though the historical origin of the doctrine may be debatable, the point is that calls for secession before the civil war ceased after it, which incidentally saw the beginning of the oil boom and the emergence of 'emergency millionaires'. In other words the important point in Madunagu's statement is that the call for national unity is a call for the unity of the ruling class.

From this premise we are making the point that the newspaper policy has already adopted a particular definition of the Nigerian reality - the primacy of national unity at least as a prima facie condition for our collective existence. Such a condition, as we have argued above, precludes class or structural division in the Nigerian society. In this case the main problem in the country is ethnicity. The debate over national unity and national interest by and large involve the reconciliation of the factional interests of the various ethnic chieftains connected to the general populace by a network of client-patron linkages. Such intra-elite
struggle since the 70s is reflected in the struggle over who controls the federal government because of the increased federal government revenue from oil rent. This is distinct from the immediate post-independent struggle over who controls the regions when surpluses appropriated from farmers through the marketing boards and taxes gave the regional governments a more secure financial base than now.

The press is part and parcel of the mechanism for the maintenance and reproduction of this situation we have described above - that is the displacement of primary contradictions in the structure of a neo-colonial dependent capitalist economy by secondary contradictions - ethnicity and tribalism (see Adelumola Ogunade, 1982, and John D. Chick, 1971). Bisi Aborishade has argued that "The Nigerian mass media do see themselves as part of the establishment and identify with the aspiration of the power-that-be and perpetuate it ... (Aborishade, 1977, p.19).

For further clarification, if we extend this argument to the coverage of industrial relations we can see that the press' predominant emphasis on the effect of strike within the context of national interest and public suffering connotes an acceptance of the status quo. It also precludes any discussion of the nature of the economy, in whose interest it is operated and the power relations and interests involved. Strike is seen as an aberration which should be brought to an end quickly for everybody to assume his or her place in society.

Another implication of the above argument is that a threat to the status quo could easily become or be interpreted as a threat to the national interest. In that case reporters have to be wary and careful. It also implies that the government's definition of the issue at stake, usually clothed in the rhetorics of national interest assumes primacy, and more credibility and legitimacy than any opposing definition or view. An illustration of the point we are making here is provided by the editorials we discussed in Chapter 8. We saw how newspapers' hostility toward the strikes which occurred during the periods of our study were explained within the context of national interest and economic development, as if these were pre-ordained issues.

In reporting industrial relations one has to consider the implication of the press linkage with capital. In other words we have to
ask the question: how independent is the press from capital and from labour. Though we recognise the autonomy of journalists, this autonomy is however circumscribed by the dependence of the press organisation on capital. As Stuart Holland has shown,

... the power of decision on content, criteria for production and service, frequency, location and type of market, the social and economic class of readership, control through ownership and the power of hiring and firing lie essentially with capital rather than labour. In other words what is produced, why, when, where, to which class, in whose interest and with whom employed all lie with owners as controllers, rather than with intellectual or manual workers as producers of news, press content or the paper or journal itself (Stuart Holland, 1978, p.99).

Newspapers by and large do not make profit as other businesses. One major characteristic of the newspaper industry in Nigeria is the rapid rise and fall of many papers due largely to weak financial base (Omu, 1978). A study by Elegalem revealed that many newspapers do not pay tax because they do not make profit (Elegalem, 1985, p.68). It then follows that most, if not all, Nigerian newspapers exist on subsidy, either directly from the public purse or from subsidiary companies in the case of privately owned newspapers. Here we may note again that the leading four privately owned newspapers in the country are part of conglomerates run by four rich families - Awolowo family owns the Tribune, The Punch is owned by the family of Olu Aboderin, the ITT Chief, Moshood Abiola is the owner of the National Concord while the Ibru family owns The Guardian. While we are not making a case for direct relationship between ownership and news production and content it seems to us clear that those who establish newspapers do not do so to undermine the social order within which they accumulate their capital. As Todd Gitlin has argued, "the main economic structures or 'relations of production' set limits on the ideologies and commonsense understandings that circulate as ways of making sense of the world - without mechanically 'determining' them". From this premise he went on to say that the fact that the American TV networks he studied "are capitalist corporations ... does not automatically decree the precise frame of a report on socialism, but it does preclude continuing, emphatic reports that would embrace socialism as the most reasonable framework for the solution of social problems" (Gitlin, 1980, p.10).

Our discussion on the likely influence of capital is derived from
our understanding of the Nigerian press and not strictly on our inter-
action with journalists. In fact they seem unaware of it. No journalist
mentioned it and, more surprisingly, advertising as sources of pressure.
Two reasons may be given to explain this. First, pressure from capi-
tal as we have explained above would likely be brought to bear on senior
officials of a newspaper organisation. Media owners, businessmen and
advertisers are closer to editors, and other senior management people than
to reporters who are invariably down the ladder in the hierarchy. The
power over which story goes into a newspaper, its position and even tone
and direction rests more with the top editorial personnel than with
reporters. So it is plausible to argue that reporters may be more
immune or shielded away from such pressures while at the same time they
respond to them without being conscious. The second explanation is that
their not mentioning it may be due to lack of sophistication or awareness
of the process of how such pressures work. We have already mentioned that
many Nigerian journalists and the public in general view the government if
not the only obstacle, at least the main one to freedom of the press. In
the debate for press freedom, people hardly mention the influence of big
business, advertising and such other less visible social forces.

Journalists' Views and Attitude

Journalists are not dry clothes who just helplessly soak-in
materials provided on the beat or like straws bend to the demand of both
internal or external pressures. Journalists as human beings cannot be
expected to be detached or indifferent to their work or be seen as
"political eunuchs" whose works are unaffected "by the prejudices,
convictions and sympathies that are much part of their social make-ups as
of anybody else's" (Golding and Middleton, op cit, p.137). Though many
journalists would lay claim to neutrality and objectivity, such a claim
hinges on the ritualised procedures they employ in gathering news for
example the balance they seek to steer between competing voices, but not
necessarily competing meaning. Objectivity in Tuchman's term is a
"strategic ritual" used by journalists to "defend themselves from critical
onslaught".

Such prejudice and personal attitudes could be explained as an
expression of the ideological orientation among journalists. This
orientation is seen as whether a journalist is socialist or capitalist
inclined. According to Adedoja,
Approach to reporting depends on your personal orientation, either ideological orientation and so on. If for instance you are socialist or worker oriented you'll see the problem from worker's angle. If you're capital or investor's oriented you see it from the angle of the investors.

This same argument was made by Segun Obilana, the labour editor of the Punch, at a seminar organised by the NLC for labour correspondents before the Lagos conference of the Organisation of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU). In answer to criticism from labour leaders and workers at the seminar he said "reporters as human beings work according to their individual ideological beliefs. Every reporter has his favourites among the unions." Whatever truth this position may contain, and it certainly does, there is more to the issue than just ideological differences. For instance it will not explain the high degree of similarity in the content of newspapers and in responses we got during the interviews and discussions unless of course it could be shown that Nigerian journalists or at least labour reporters are of the same ideological bent. Another issue raised is the fact that many journalists see their work as truly reflecting the situation they report on.

It seems to us that while bearing in mind the issue raised above we can obtain a better picture by examining the beliefs and attitudes journalists have of organisations that provide industrial relations news. We agree with Gaye Tuchman when she said that "content is ... related to the newsman's interorganisational relationships, for his experiences with those organisations lead him to take for granted certain things about them" (Tuchman, 1972, p.661). In other words a reporter's view of an organisation will affect his relationship with it.

Some of the prejudices or personal beliefs of journalists are derived from the mainstream of social beliefs and attitude toward the working class, some of which we discussed in Chapter 4. We have already referred to the attitude shared by journalists that the low income workers are ignorant mainly because they cannot read or write. Many of the journalists interviewed were of the opinion that the rank and file of union members are not knowledgeable about union or labour matters and policies not to talk of more 'technical issues like the economy, politics and the law. I was repeatedly asked 'Do you think they know what is going on' or questions similar to this. It is taken as truth that
ordinary workers are not interested in how their unions are run nor do they trust their leaders. Because the workers are regarded as ignorant, they are seldom interviewed. A reporter who said he covered a strike by junior civil servants in Ogun State in 1983 said he made effort to interview some messengers and cleaners "but they could not tell me anything newsworthy, they were even afraid to talk". Another reporter said "the only thing they can tell you is that we want more money". As if to illustrate the irrationality in the workers action he added they would follow anybody who can "shout and confront the employers and government. Their leaders are no better."

Another attitude among journalists which is closely linked to the above is that Nigerian workers are lazy and unproductive. One reporter, pointing to the office messenger and typist in the newsroom said "without somebody present they will not work." This attitude as we have explained above, has a long pedigree. During the colonial days, the earliest Nigerian workers on the railways and in the mines were forcefully removed from the idyllic environment of their villages and transported to work under strict supervision of colonial officials in alien and sometimes hostile environment. They were unable to adjust quickly or understand the new work ethics while the European officials, equally unable to understand their problems took them as lazy and unproductive. In short the attitude is one of the colonial-hang-overs that have persisted.

The low income worker is still seen with that colonial eye; he would not work except under close supervision. Part of this belief is that he lacks initiative which could also mean that he cannot help himself. The argument could run as follows - "the worker is lazy, therefore he cannot help himself to rise above his class position, why sympathise with such a person." This type of argument is in line with the position that sees poverty as individual problem and not structural.

The fact that this attitude still persists among journalists as in the rest of the society may be rooted in the social value and the emphasis on individualism and work ethics. Much of journalism, as in other creative work, is very individualistic demanding personal initiative and sometimes persistence. One can expect that those who work under such environment will be less sympathetic to those they feel cannot exhibit such personal attributes. Another reason is that many Nigerian journalists are of humble
origins who have progressed in the profession by 'dint of hard work' to use a popular Nigerian cliche. Awolowo, a former reporter himself, once described early Nigerian journalists "as the flotsam and jetsam of the community of Nigerian intelligentsia ... (who) took to journalism because they were no good in anything else" (Awolowo, 1960, p.80).

The accusation that Nigerians in top positions are corrupt is one that the leadership of the labour movement cannot be expected to escape. Therefore one is not surprised that journalists hold the strong opinion that trade union leaders and those in government are corrupt. There is the widespread belief that many trade unionists are in the movement because of what they can gain out of it financially and not for any commitment to the cause of the working class. Though both labour leaders and government officials are regarded as corrupt, the argument could however be made that such a view is used to assess the labour leaders in their capacities as trade unionists. The same could not be said of government officials or politicians in their involvement in industrial relations matters. For instance it is usually argued that trade union leaders have no moral right to criticize those in government if they could not put their house in order. The Guardian made such a point in an editorial when it said,

... the NLC has to demonstrate the moral authority for a credible demand of rights. A labour centre that is still finding it difficult to render financial accounts to its affiliates and persuades these affiliates to render accounts to their members has little moral authority to demand a statement of accounts from the government. The path out of the forest is that the organisation of Nigerian workers must raise its moral standards (The Guardian, June 22, 1985).

We doubt if the same question of probity could be raised against the government if it had demanded a statement of account from the unions, as it normally does through the Registrar of Trade Unions. Of course such an issue will not even arise when discussing anything connected with the employers. At least it is assumed that they would be spending their legitimate profit.

The crucial point raised in the editorial quoted above is that the pronouncements of labour leaders are treated with cynicism. Once doubt is cast over the integrity of a speaker any issue he may raise becomes suspect.
Another point that emerged from the interviews was the existence of a feeling against "so-called" socialist labour leaders. They were variously described as 'noise-makers', 'publicity seekers', 'pretenders' or 'trouble makers' who deceive their members. Though many people in the labour movement and outside (and even among journalists) mentioned a former Daily Times labour editor as the 'main enemy' of the radical wing of the labour movement, our interviews do reveal that there are many journalists who share the view that radical labour leaders are trouble makers. A reporter said he disliked them because they are "selfish". "They call out workers on strike at the least provocation. That is all they know. What does Imoudu know apart from calling workers out on strike?" He said labour leaders should be able to negotiate, "strike should be the last resort, a rare weapon to be used. Workers don't gain from strike. We all suffer. Look at this doctors' strike. The poor people are suffering, not those in government." The preference of many of those interviewed was for moderate or as one of them termed it "cool-headed" trade unionists.

Generally journalists are not known to be leftists or radicals, rather they pride themselves as liberals. In the Nigerian case one has to take into consideration the background and training of many journalists as members of the middle class. Much of social science education in Nigeria is within the Western liberal tradition. This is reflected for instance in the politics, economics and social life of the country. One can of course find a radical nationalist variant within the orthodox tradition. Such nationalist outlook is however unable to transcend the models and concepts prevalent in the dominant orthodoxy. In particular journalism training in Nigeria, just as the practice itself is Western or more precisely American in orientation.*

The point we are making from the above is that journalists have their own prejudices, attitudes and convictions like other people. Brucker has said that one of the reasons why journalism cannot be perfect is that journalists as human beings are fallible (Brucker, 1973, p.3). As we have shown the origins of these idiosyncrasies are varied, and that directly or indirectly they affect the way the labour movement is reported. It may be difficult to determine how far this mental and social make-up of journalists about the labour movement affect the production of industrial

* At the time of our research all the 10 lecturers at the Department of Mass Communication, University of Lagos, were trained in America. The same situation applies in other institutions.
relations news, were so since we did not conduct any production or participant observation study. It will however be wrong to assume that news is produced in a vacuum, unaffected by some of these stereotypes and prejudices. The influence of the issues we have been considering interact with and/or are reinforced by the operational ideology and norms of journalism.

News Values

To become news, an issue has to become an event. However it is not all events that become news; for an event to be selected as news it has to exhibit certain characteristics which are collectively termed 'news values'. Such news values include drama, recency, negativity and personification among others which we discussed in Chapter 6. News values are derived from the process of producing news just as they are criteria and justification for selection and presentation of materials. In that sense they are "working rules, comprising a corpus of occupational lore which implicitly and often expressly explains and guides newsroom practice" (Golding and Elliot, op cit, p.114).

The operation of these values has created a condition that has made news "not a mirror of social conditions, but the report of an aspect that has obtruded itself" (Lippman, 1922, p.216). In other words, news is not about social process but "essentially a topping-up mechanism, a means of adding to areas of defined interest and importance the latest incremental happenings within them which become apparent" (Golding and Elliot, ibid, p.148). The mass media are more disposed to handling discreet isolated events, e.g. a strike or riot which can easily be accommodated within the time schedules of news production. Evolving conditions or social processes are not very suited to this type of time-bound routinized process until they reach a dramatic end when all the antecedents are more or less buried in the hurly-burly of the moment.

The coverage of industrial relations is not different from this process. As a reporter with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) put it "There is no point sitting at a negotiating table because you want a story. There is nothing in it until the end. Readers want to know what has happened". Another reporter said it is "when unions use their power that you know you've got news". The demand for up-to-date news means that only the immediate could be reported. In our case only strikes and its effects are the real stuff out of which industrial relations news is made; hence
the view among journalists that it is a dull beat. The annual report of
the Ministry of Labour do not fit into this stuff; it is dated as a news
material before it is even published. Actually many journalists have not
seen any of these reports! One of the journalists told me that as a
reporter such reports have very little relevance to his work, "they are
for the feature and editorial writers". As we have noted above, Nigerian
journalists prefer opinion writing to news and most of what we call
feature articles are commentaries. They lack any depth, supporting facts
and figures, full of accusations and criticisms of some individuals and
institutions. Nigerian journalism is noted for its sensational and
cantankerous character. In the words of Graham Mytton, "In Nigeria,
freedom of the mass media seems to be valued mainly as the freedom to
criticise rather than to discover something worth reporting" (Mytton,
op cit, p.125).

It may be that the resources - time, money and the experienced well-
educated personnel - to carry out investigative reporting are lacking.
For instance some journalists complain of lack of reference books, ready
access to facts and figures and such supporting materials. Anybody
familiar with Nigeria will readily agree with this complaint. But it
seems this is a justification for professional inadequacy, an inadequacy
inherent in the mode and norms of media practice. As we have noted above
journalism is more attuned to the daily occurrences than unfolding
processes. In the race to meet deadlines and get published, journalists
do not have the time and patience to dig deep on issues. Therefore only
persons and events that can provide materials for 'instant' reporting are
more likely to be reported. This accounts for the lack of process or
thorough background in journalism.

Drama, conflict and controversy are essential elements of news-
worthiness. These elements are part of the attempt to meet audience taste
or demand; the familiar argument that 'we give them what they want'. The
readers demand excitement in the news. As Daniel Boorstin put it "There
was a time the reader of an unexciting newspaper would remark, 'How dull
is the world today!' Nowadays he said 'What a dull newspaper!' He later
quoted an editor's definition of news as "anything that makes a reader say
'Gee Whiz'" (Boorstin, 1963, p.20). But the commercial imperative to
maintain or even increase sales figure may not be too far deep down beneath
this argument. However, Bola Adedoja presented the audience preference
A journalist must have an open mind approach to any situation that you might want to report on. Though disaster often attract more attention. You know human beings generally are easily attracted to disaster. If you say a Bishop will come to an arena to preach, except you induce people, except you make a lot of noise, a lot of propaganda about it, you may not find people but if you say one criminal is arrested there before you know what is happening everybody has gathered. Look at the Nigerian public anytime you hear Ole! Ole! Ole! people rush out. It is not the just who wants to report the bad side of things but rather in reporting you have to take into consideration the mentality of your public.

In 'considering the mentality of his public' the journalist's 'nose for news' is tuned to smell the slightest disturbance in society. The reporting of disturbance, conflict and the dramatic is not limited to industrial relations but apparent in all areas of life, politics, education, business and sports. The implication is the same - the evacuation of history and processes from events.

The interviewed journalists were asked of the factors they take into consideration when selecting and writing their stories. The general opinion was 'you know a good story when you see it'. One of them told me that "all journalists want to get published and the sub-editors look for stories that will be read. So you're always on the look out for current things, something that will interest the readers."

All the journalists interviewed were asked how they would report on hypothetical situation. They were asked to imagine a situation where union leaders were negotiating with management while some placard carrying workers were demonstrating outside. All of them said their emphasis will be on the demonstration, as one of them put it "that is where the front page story is". Though they said the negotiation will be mentioned in the story, the story, I was told, will "definitely start with the demonstration". The implication of this, as anybody familiar with the practice of journalism especially sub-editing will know is that the headline to the story will emphasise the demonstration angle. The headline is usually a condensation of the first few sentences called the lead or intro.

However, journalists as Adedoja explained above believe that they
do not deliberately go out to look for strikes to report or slant their stories to reflect the unusual. To them they faithfully report "what is happening on the beat". A National Concord reporter put it this way "there is nothing in the labour beat but disputes, strikes, threats, accusations and counter-accusations". He added that Nigerian workers do not respect any labour leader who cannot call a strike or "yap the G.M. or even the government". He went on to remind me that the most popular union leaders in the country "from Imoudu, Goodluck to Hassan Sunmonu are those who talk tough and confront the government. I report what is happening and the workers like it."

This attention to the exceptional may reflect what is available but it is a partial reflection, obscuring the normal and the routine of life as daily experienced by the people. In the area of industrial relations the trade unions and workers, the government and the employers are involved in many activities that do not make headlines in the press because they are too normal or commonplace to be noticed or reported. The effect of this undue attention to the unusual in the news is that,

In repeatedly presenting unusual cases they implicitly appear typical or common, whereas by scorning the commonplace as dull and unnewsworthy, the routine of life's pattern is rendered invisible (Golding and Middleton, op cit, p.128).

Another implication is that by promoting the unusual as the typical some other issues and concerns are driven out of the public agenda or at best become mere subordinate to the more visible issues. In this case of industrial relations, issues like exploitation, profit, workers' welfare are rarely mentioned while strike, productivity and discipline at the workplace regularly make the headlines.

In its effort to capture the dramatic aspect of events, news relies on persons and their actions. This is the practice Galtung and Ruge called "personification", that is the tendency to focus attention on persons and present events as the outcomes of action and activities of such individuals or group. The alternative to this would be to present events as the outcome of "social forces", as structural more than idiosyncratic outcomes of the society which produced them". (Galtung and Ruge, 1965, p.68). News is about people and their actions. People are more visible and identifiable but this is not so with abstract issues - social forces or structural
features of society which may not be intelligible to many people. But journalists' reliance on people for news is discriminatory; it is not just anybody or any group. Those who provide the news are mainly the elite, the powerful in society. They are able to do this by their structured access to the mass media. When the ordinary worker comes into industrial relations news is more to provide the 'physical action' to back up the 'verbal action' of the leadership of the unions, the government and the management. The workers are sought for interviews on the picket lines or in surroundings depicting suffering caused by the strike. Though the pressure for visuals may be greater in television, the press still needs photographs to 'brighten' up the pages of newspapers.

Summary

From the above discussion so far it seems clear that news production is a complex process which may not be reduced to a single explanation. From the discussion we can see the reliance of journalists on sources who are however differentially regarded as credible and therefore newsworthy. In this way news, as we discussed in Chapter 7, tend to accord differential legitimacy to the various actors in society. Though from the interviews it was clear that the unions are the most 'productive' sources of news, they are the least trusted. It also seems clear that the dominant conception of industrial relations is that of conflict and disruption, usually initiated by the unions. This of course fits into the definition of news as the 'unusual'. In this, it is not surprising that many journalists regard the labour beat as being unproductive compared to politics or crime and the police beat in general.

Also by this definition the employer or management rarely make news. In that case labour matters, usually disputes become almost exclusively defined as issues between government and the labour movement. This interpretation is supported by the empirical analysis in Chapter 7. This in a way reflects the development and practice of industrial relations in Nigeria and especially the role of the government in the economy both as a major employer and investor and as a guarantor of socio-political conditions necessary for capital to realise its main objective; profit. As we have also seen the state is heavily involved in the pay fixing procedure and the practice of periodic wage review through government appointed panels had, on many occasions, led to industrial disputes. As we have shown in
Chapter 7, it is usually during such disputes that the workers and the trade unions become newsworthy subjects and industrial relations become very prominent in the news.

We have also seen the type of views held by journalists of the labour movement. These views are similar to the image of the workers and the unions that we have historically explored in Chapter 4. Though we are not suggesting that journalists go out on a crusade against individuals or groups in the labour movement, it would be inadequate to discount these personal opinions in an explanation of how news of industrial relations is constructed. Journalists try to avoid injecting their personal opinions into the news columns in the name of objectivity. But there is less restriction in features, news analysis, editorials and signed columns. Therefore the importance of such opinions could be seen in the Nigerian context where 'opinion-writing' by labour editors is valued more than 'straight' news writing. At least some trade unionists believe that certain labour reporters and correspondents are against them for one reason or the other. At the NLC I was shown a file of newspaper cutting of articles, written by a particular labour editor, which the NLC General-Secretary said were against certain individuals in the Congress. The journalists' views of the trade unions and the Nigerian society are products of their socialisation into the society through the agencies of the school, family, peers and the work settings.

Other possible explanation that could be deduced from the above discussion would include the organisational policy and commercial considerations, especially the drive to attract advertisements. This would be through the packaging and presentation of items and the tendency towards the dramatic and the sensational in the coverage of events. This could be reflected in the use of banner headlines by almost all Nigerian newspapers. Commercial considerations would also tend to push the press to the least 'common denominator' from opposing positions, the least controversial and the easily comprehensible so as to attract readers and advertisers.

Lastly there is the close integration of the Nigerian press into the state. This gives the members of the ruling class the potential for control through the setting of over-all cultural policy, the allocation of resources, appointment of key staff and sometimes direct intervention in production.
Our argument is that these external influences have explanatory value and therefore must be taken on board in the analysis of news production. The fact that they constitute the everyday working environment and context of news production means they exert some pressure and influence on media production. But we should not over-stress their importance. Over-playing their influence would deny the journalists the autonomy they claim and which to some extent is real. They could also not account for the built-in bias of the news production process. Further, relying on them alone would not account for the similarity among the papers studied or the similarity between our findings and the Western studies we have referred to. We should therefore link them up with the assumptions, routine and values of journalism. We contend that these values structure what is produced as news by the mass media. They form the working rules of what is good or bad journalism; the implicit rules of judgement which allows the journalist to decide what is newsworthy or not.

They help him sift the plethora of available events into those which are newsworthy and those which are not, and from the raw material provided in this way reject some and process others into news stories. News values help further in deciding how those stories which finally make the news should be handled (Hartman and Husband, 1974, p.148).

The point we are making is that these implicit rules and the implied routine judgements are of primary consideration in the selection, writing and production of news. Other factors on many occasions take a subordinate role in the making of news. Another importance of these values and professional ideologies is that it helps in explaining the media's link with the power structure while avoiding the notion of conspiracy, manipulation, and/or force or coercion exercised by the ruling class. As Hall has argued, the operations of these professional rules have led to a situation in which the structure of power and the structure of the mass media are articulated together.

The mass media are differentially connected to the powerful in society and the general public. Members of the dominant class, because of their positions and location as accredited 'representatives' of the nation or as experts are able to set the frame within which public issues are discussed in the mass media. In this process they become the 'primary definers'. Any contribution to the debate has to start from this definition
of 'what the problem is'. In other words they set the media agenda. A contribution outside the set framework is constrained by the dominant structure and terms of the debate already current in the mass media. It could easily be marginalised or ruled out of order. Journalists by the demands and current practices of their profession cannot change the tone of the debate already set by the powerful.

Without ruling out issues like censorship, bias or prejudice, this line of argument contends that the mass media, by their adherence to 'objective' professional practice, do act as agents of the dominant classes in legitimising the status quo. For instance impartiality and balance are exercised within a framework of assumptions about the distribution of power and terms of the debate which seems to accord with the dominant definition. This presupposes the legitimacy of the social order. Also adherence to the principles of impartiality and objectivity push the press towards the middle ground of contentious issues where compromise might be made between the contending parties. In promoting such 'spirit of compromise' the press stigmatises those who cannot work within this framework as extremists or intransigent or unpatriotic. Therefore by adhering to the principles of good and responsible journalism the press may not necessarily suppress some views on an issue but its coverage would reproduce the dominant perspective, thus devalue and neutralising alternative ones. In that case while conflict is allowed, it is equally contained and domesticated. In the words of Stuart Hall,

... there is no 'perfect competition' in the market of public opinions, where each individual member of the audience has an equally open chance of structuring the public discourse. Despite the requirement of 'objectivity', 'balance', 'impartiality' etc., the media remain oriented within the framework of power; they are part of a political and social system which is 'structured in dominance'. Objectivity, impartiality and balance are exercised within a framework, and that framework is one which overall, the powerful, not the powerless - elites, not audiences - crucially define. The commitment of the media to the reflection of 'more than one view point' does not in any way contradict the media's overall tendency to reproduce the hegemonic ideology with all its contradictions" (Hall, 1975, p.129).

This tendency is further enhanced by media's conception of their social role. That is the constraints imposed on the media by the idea of social responsibility. One of the functions of the media is the
surveillance of the society for threats to the social order. As Warren Breed has observed the media reinforce tradition either by publishing items that support the established order and by suppressing or omitting those that threaten the socio-cultural structure (Breed, 1958). Many studies have shown how the press reports conflicts in terms of legitimate authority and those involved in such social conflicts are presented as extremists threatening the social order. This is done, as we have shown in this study by, for instance, playing up (not necessarily deliberately) the effect of such conflicts on the public and the nation. The point is that this pattern of media coverage tends towards the maintenance of consensus and by and large the support of the status quo.

From the above therefore while we do not discount the factors which we have collectively identified as the 'external environment' of the news production process, we contend that accounts of news production cannot be reduced to either the individual prejudice of reporters or proprietors or to the dictates of organisational policy. The crucial factors which orient the press towards the prevailing dominant ideology are the occupational ideologies and professional values of journalism. And as Phillip Elliot has argued the use of these professional values and conventions "may produce unwitting bias but the victims of this bias are generally the deviant or disadvantaged with little power in society" (Elliot, 1977, p.154).
CONCLUSION

This study has raised a number of issues. In this concluding chapter we attempt to draw them together. Before this however, we need to stress that the conclusions to be drawn from the thesis are tentative and exploratory, at least within the Nigerian context. First, the theoretical approach that we have employed as a framework for our discussion is different from what could be called the dominant orthodoxy in communication research in Nigeria and indeed in Africa. Unlike what obtains in the West and in Latin America, communication studies and research in Africa is still predominantly based on the empiricist and functionalist tradition.* Communication and culture in general have not received the critical attention they deserve among African researchers as one would find in economics, political science and sociology (Malletart, 1979, p. 35). For example, it could be argued that the dominant research question in Nigeria is still concerned with the form (pattern of ownership) without any systematic and rigorous investigation of the substance, the social significance and underlying assumptions of communication contents and their contribution to the process of reproducing the inegalitarian social structure in the country.

The point we are driving at is that the contribution of the 'ideological state apparatuses' to the imposition and maintenance of bourgeois rule and hegemony has not received the attention it deserves in Africa, nor have the manufacture and reproduction of consent through such cultural institutions as the mass media. Where the question of culture has received any attention as in the works of the 'modernization' theorists it is usually in terms of the dichotomy between what they regard as the archaic stultifying traditional culture and the 'civilizing' modern (usually Western) culture. In this case the mass media, being part of the modern culture, are seen as agents of social change and development. The question of social control does not enter the debate nor the type or meaning of development being undertaken. These, we propose, are crucial questions that must be addressed.

The implication of the lack of critical studies of mass communication in Nigeria is that it has not been possible for us to offer a comparative

analysis related to local conditions. Rather as evident in previous chapters much of the empirical evidence and theoretical framework available are derived from Western studies and tradition. We have drawn from them because the institutions that we have studied, the mass media and the Labour movement and the industrial relations system in general are largely products of Western colonialism transplanted in the Nigerian soil. Their development has continued to be influenced by the developed Western models. We think this was evident in the similarities between our findings and the British and Canadian studies we referred to above.

Another problem worthy of note is our inability to provide enough evidence to support some of the arguments that have been made. As is well known to many students of Nigeria, basic statistics and data are very difficult to gather and compile. The accuracy of the available ones are difficult to ascertain.

We have also been unable to empirically explore all the themes, ideas and social beliefs that we discussed in some of the chapters particularly Chapter 4. It would have been difficult for us to do this in one study. For example, this might have involved readers' perception of horoscope columns in the newspapers! It seems to us that a better exposition of these traditional beliefs would likely be found in traditional music and drama in the broadcast media, theatre and cinema. A study of the novels written by modern Nigerian writers and what has come to be known as Onitsha market literature would also be helpful in this direction. Examples of Nigerian made films whose themes are based on traditional social beliefs in witchcraft, juju, predestination are the works of Nigeria's foremost dramatist, Herbert Ogunde.¹ Many plays by Yoruba Travelling Theatre groups are also based on these themes.² Such themes are also predominant in Apala, Fuji, Sakara, Waka and juju music which are the main music forms among the Yorubas, especially among the lower classes of workers and peasants. All these forms of cultural expressions have not received much attention, if any, among researchers.

1. This is evident from his three main films, AIYE (This World), AYANMO (Predestination) and ARO PIN' TENIYAN (Evil Thoughts of human beings).

2. See Jeyifo, Biodun (1985), Chapter 10 for a discussion of the functions and social uses of the Yoruba Travelling Theatre; and the recent study of Television drama by Oduko, O. (1985).
However, we hope this modest attempt will stimulate future studies in these and other areas which will further our understanding of the Nigerian mass media and communication process.

The concern of many studies with government ownership stems in the main from the predominant concern of such studies with the pattern of press coverage of certain political controversies and crises. Such studies try to look for examples of favourable and unfavourable coverage, and try to account for these. One inadequacy of this type of research, as we pointed out in Chapter 7 is the notion of deliberate bias, either externally imposed or through self-censorship, inherent in the research question. Such studies invariably deny any autonomy to journalists, seeing them as more or less mere information transmission belts. The approach cannot adequately account for daily news production.

The most important published study on the Nigerian press is Omu's Press and Politics in Nigeria, 1880-1937 which covered the activities of the emerging press before the Second World War, that is the early period of the Nationalist Movement. The study is mainly concerned with the origin, development and ownership of the press and its contribution to the growth of Nationalist sentiments especially among the Lagos elite. Another study by Grant (1971, 1975) was more concerned with the press in post-independent Nigeria, 1960-65. After dividing the press into four ownership patterns, he examined how this structure of ownership affected the coverage and attitudes of the various papers he studied on some issues, including the 1964 census and elections.

The pre-occupation of these studies with external influences on press performance; colonial administration to Omu and ethnicity and party affiliation to Grant, has led them to overlook the factors that are internal to the journalism profession and the media organisations. Because of this, these studies are unable to provide an adequate explanation of the link between news production and the power structure. Many of them have mechanically and crudely equated ownership with control. Because of the pluralist and functionalist assumptions of these studies, issues like the class structure and the struggle for wealth, status and hegemony and control are absent from their analysis. Though such studies (see Aboaba, 1979, Ogunade, 1981) take the issue of press freedom as their starting point, they rarely offer any theoretical and historical analysis of the concept.
Press and Social Structure

Because of our belief that the mass media cannot be adequately analysed in isolation of the wider social context, we have attempted a discussion of the Nigerian social structure as the starting point of our study. In Chapter 1 we tried to develop an historical and class analysis of the Nigerian society starting from the pre-colonial social formation before proceeding to their partial transformation by colonialism and the latest phase of neo-colonial capitalist development. This study has been concerned with the events of the last phase.

In the discussion we argued that the pre-colonial social formations consisted of three main modes of production sometimes co-existing among the various communities which now make up the geo-political entity called Nigeria. Within these communities there existed a dominant mode setting limits and exercising pressure on the others. Thus for example, among the Yorubas and the Binis a feudal mode developed alongside the communal mode but this was subjected to the feudal social relations of production.

Colonialism, as a manifestation of 19th century imperialism, incorporated these various social and economic systems into the expanding world system of capitalist economy. Apart from imposing the capitalist system as the dominant mode, the pre-existing ones were subjected to its requirements without necessarily destroying them. Colonialism also consolidated the dominance of the indigenous feudal-aristocratic classes where they existed, for example among the Hausa-Fulani or tried to create such a class as it attempted among the Ibos. Later, an elite class was created mainly through Western education to serve imperialism. It was these elite and bureaucratic classes in partnership with the traditional and the commercial elite who collaborated with the colonial power to ensure the dominance of capital and bourgeois rule over the rest of the population. It is this new dominant socio-economic system which, as we have argued, continues to determine (in the sense of setting limits and exerting pressure (R. Williams, 1980, p.32)) the country's development including cultural and social practices. Though there still exist indigenous forms of cultural expression and practices, the new forms introduced by colonialism have become dominant. As we have argued the mass media, as part of the new cultural practices, have become over the years, more and more integrated with the state structure, setting further limits on the articulation of alternative modes of discourse different
from and opposed to the dominant one. We also argue that the mass media as part of the ideological apparatuses of the state controlled by the dominant classes must be seen as a crucial aspect of the engineering and manufacture of consent and the process of imposing bourgeois hegemony. In this sense the role of the mass media in society has to be studied by examining the social perspective, that is the ideas and interests dominant in the media, their historical and social roots and not just the counter claims of the various factions of the dominant class which in the Nigerian case is translated into ethnic differences. The starting point of such a study should be an analysis of the state and not the complexion of a particular government.

In the process of ideological control and the imposition of bourgeois hegemony the colonization of the media space is very crucial. Such a process is dialectical, involving the use of force and coercion and the forging of a consensus. We have tried to tease out the various ideological elements and themes that are being used to manufacture this consensus and their social and historical origins. We have shown how these themes are deeply rooted in the country's history and social structure. They form the interpretative framework within which the average worker and the activities of the labour movement are viewed. They also form the assumptions which inform the dominant perspective of the Nigerian political economy. Those who speak against this consensus are likely to be labelled as deviants and disruptive and unpatriotic elements who are against the national interest, thus delegitimising their activities.

The mass media do not create these labels and themes. The media do organise them by selecting, categorising and contextualising information so as to assist the audience or readers to make sense of their environment. We have argued that for this to be effective, these themes and popular beliefs must be connected to the daily life experience of the audience. In that sense they are not necessarily false, though the process of selection could disconnect them from their socio-historical context. In that case they do not fully or adequately reflect the social reality they are selected or organised to portray. It is through this process of selection and decontextualisation that the mass media do reproduce the dominant social view, though without any deliberate effort at manipulation or deception. It is in this sense that Raymond Williams has pointed out
that the media work through the process of incorporation rather than imposition. In the long term and unwittingly, as against the implied immediate impact suggested by traditional 'bias' studies, the media get the subordinate class incorporated into the dominant world view. It is in this context that we argued that the mass media are agents of social control and do act in support of the status quo.

Explaining the Role of the Press

The mass media's contribution to the diffusion and imposition of the dominant social perspective is achieved much by what they select to publish as by what is omitted. After reviewing studies on the media's role in socialization, Warren Breed came to the conclusion that,

By expressing, dramatizing, and repeating cultural patterns, both the traditional and the newly emerging, the media reinforce tradition and at the same time explain new roles. Members of the society thus remain integrated within the socio-cultural structure. As a form of adult socialisation, the media are seen as guarantors that a body of common ultimate values remains visible as a continuing source of consensus, despite the inroads of change.

He added that the same goal is also achieved through omission, "they (media) omit or bury items which might jeopardize the socio-cultural structure and man's faith in it" (Breed, 1958, pp.110-111).

Two opposing processes could be said to be involved here. First is what has come to be known as agenda-setting. The main idea is that the mass media select from a wide range of available issues, events and topics and by giving them differential treatment, attention and emphasis (headline types, space and position in the papers) signal to or define for the readers the relative importance of each selected item. Through such process of selection and differential treatment the media do quite inadvertently thrust certain issues forward for public debate, fixing and thereby limiting the terms on which those issues are to be discussed. Because of certain organisational and professional constraints (see Chapter 6) the media must select from the available events. This process of selection does indicate that the press does not and cannot reflect reality but rather filters and shapes it. In effect the implication of the agenda-setting role of the media is that the,
... concentration over time on relatively few issues and subjects and certain aspects of these subjects, out of the vast range of possible issues and subjects generally leads to the public perceiving these relatively few issues and subjects as more salient or more important than other issues or subjects (Weaver, 1981, pp.538-9).

The opposing process is what Noelle-Neumann (1974) called the 'spiral of silence'. Basically the idea centres on the ability of the mass media to remove from public view and attention certain issues and topics. It is assumed that individuals, in an attempt to avoid isolation tries to conform to the majority-held opinion, attitudes and beliefs or those that are current. The belief that certain opinions are in the majority sets off a spiralling process by which those holding minority views begin to be silent, or modify their opinions and the perceived majority opinions become the established ones. The media become important as people turn to them for the prevailing definition of the situation. They are the main source of what the prevailing consensus is. The underlying logic according to Dennis McQuail "holds that the more a dominant version of the opinion consensus is disseminated by the mass media in society, the more will contrary individual voices remain silent, thus accelerating the media effect - hence a 'spiralling' process" (McQuail, 1983, p.202).

The point that has to be considered is that the so called majority opinion may actually be the opinion of a vocal and powerful minority who has better access to the media of mass communication and opinion formation.

In this study we have tried to look at what the press provided and omitted in its coverage of industrial relations. We have seen that the focus of press attention was on industrial conflicts, the disruption of what is considered to be a normal industrial life and the negative effect of this on the society and national development. We argued that the coverage was selective and out of context in that certain crucial issues, for example the nature and structure of the Nigerian state and the Nigerian economy were omitted.

Apart from its effect on long-term public perception of the issues at stake, the process also affects policy initiatives and the administration of industrial relations matters. When industrial relations management is defined from the point of view of the problems posed by the
unions in their struggle for a better living standard policy becomes concerned with how to deal with the problem as defined. From our discussion of Nigeria's industrial relations system we found that the main purpose of industrial relations laws, especially since the 1970s has been how to domesticate and control the labour movement, prohibit strikes and prevent the unions from becoming political. The strategy of the state has been to contain and institutionalise industrial conflict. We have seen how the state took it upon itself to reorganise the labour movement in the 'national interest'. Based on the myth and stereotypes of the lazy and unproductive worker, many companies have initiated productivity schemes tied to wages paid to their employees.

Further, the link usually made between wages and inflation and low investment (economic development) seems to have been responsible for the wage freeze imposed by the Federal Government since 1969. Since the mid-70s many wide-ranging cuts have been made in the salaries and allowances "particularly those due to junior workers in the public sector. This action reduces the proportion of the national income allotted to wage-salary earners and raises the proportion going to shareholders, middlemen, and other rentiers" (Bala Usman, 1985, p.569). The justification for this income policy was that wages and salaries should not be allowed to rise without corresponding increase in productivity. One of the main reasons that led to the establishment of the Productivity, Prices and Incomes Board (PPIB) "was the realisation that the awards that follow the work of wages and salary commissions invariably have adverse impacts on the economy by aggravating inflation and increasing cost of living and the degree of uncertainty in the economy". In setting up the Board the Federal Government also felt that any increases in incomes must be related to productivity and "not the self-defeating effort to relate increases in incomes to past price developments" (Awosika, 1982, p.368).

We may however note that while wages of workers have not been allowed to rise and have actually fell in real terms by 30%, companies have been making huge profits despite the downturn in the economy which has led to massive retrenchments of workers. According to a general review by the London Financial Times (FT),

The 1984-85 results for some 46 quoted Nigerian companies show that while gross turnover was marginally higher - up 2 per cent - pre-tax profits increased by 30 per cent.
Profit margins - (pre-tax earnings as a ratio of turnover) widened handsomely from less than 9 per cent in 1983 to 12.7 per cent in 1984 and 16.2 per cent last year, virtually doubling in the last two years (FT, February 24, 1986).

It is worth noting that the reasons given for "this almost bizarre trend" included "a weak trade union movement, firm labour discipline under the Buhari regime and large scale retrenchment" (ibid).

Even in academic discussions of industrial relations in Nigeria much attention is devoted to the problems of the unions without any mention of the position of the workers in the neo-colonial capitalist economy and the class structure (see Yesufu, 1962, Kilby, 1969, Fashoyin, 1982 and Ubeku, 1983).

However, despite the usefulness of the agenda-setting and spiral-of-silence models in explaining the media's contribution to defining social reality or the dissemination of the dominant world view, they fail to account for the sources of what is placed on the agenda or excluded. As David Weaver has pointed out, pressmen do not "generally select, consciously or subconsciously, issues and subjects for news coverage..." (Weaver, 1981, p.547). What the press could do is to "precipitate or provide the form and vocabulary for these agenda and attitude" (Golding and Middleton, 1982, p.237). The question then is what is the source of media agenda, who sets it, how and for what purposes?

Following Hall and his colleagues' distinction between 'primary definers' - the powerful who enjoy ready access to the mass media and are thereby able to lay down the issues at stake and the terms within which to discuss them - and the mass media as 'secondary definers' - reproducing and interpreting the stock of ideas and terms provided by the primary definers, we have provided the answer to these questions with illustrations of how the linkage between the two types of definers operate.

In our analysis of the history and structure of the Nigerian press we discussed how historically the press is linked to the dominant class either through state ownership or party and individual/company ownership. It is the members of the dominant class who exercise legal and allocative control over the mass media. They also formulate and execute policies including the power to hire and fire staff. This power also gives them the potential to intervene directly in production and coerce journalists.
However, there is a limit to such direct intervention. The dominant class may not necessarily get the contents of the media to conform to its interests or the interests of a particular faction by any physical or conscious effort. It is here we disagree with the notion of conspiracy inherent in 'bias' studies or those that stress government intervention in media operation in Nigeria. Though we cannot rule such intervention out, more important and central to our thesis are the routine assumptions and professional values inherent in the news selection and production process. It is these factors more than any other which produce a media 'world view' that is consistent with the prevailing values and de-centre alternative ones. We need not go into the discussion of these factors here as we have reviewed them in Chapter 6. Also we have discussed the assumptions that have informed the policies of many Nigerian newspapers.

In our study we have seen how the press coverage presented the workers actions as a clash of personalities between the workers represented by their leaders and the government represented by some selected ministers. In the content analysis presented in Chapter 7, we found that very little mention of industrial relations was made in the press prior to the industrial actions undertaken by the workers during the two periods. We also saw the overwhelming attention focused on the negative effects of the strikes which occurred during the periods. The concentration on the negative effects was largely the outcome of the media's limited focus on the workers' pay claims and awards. This, by and large, pushed other issues connected with the workers' case off the pages of the newspapers.

Further, we saw that attention was concentrated on elite persons, government officials and union leaders. The tendency was to rely on them almost exclusively as the sources of news, thus making them dominate the news. The implication of this was to personalise the industrial crisis and reduce the whole thing to human error and inadequacy. This was evident in how the press blamed the labour minister for ineptitude and the labour leaders for selfishness and intransigence. This we argued is very superficial and shallow in that it, for example, directs attention away from the fundamental issues inherent in the industrial actions. An alternative interpretation of the workers' actions could have pointed out that the actions were acts of working class struggle against the bourgeoisie; a struggle between labour and capital. This could have
raised a lot of different and more fundamental issues than those provided by the press. Such a perspective was provided by the Tribune in 1964.

We have seen how the news of the workers actions and the editorials written on them reiterate certain selectively chosen ideas and themes to form the context within which the industrial conflicts were reported. The perspective provided in the press, we have argued, fitted the image of the Nigerian labourer that has been historically created since the beginning of wage labour in the country. This image is that of a lazy, inefficient and unproductive yet highly paid worker. These high wages are compared to those of the peasant-farmer who it is said cannot enjoy the full benefits of economic development because the money that could have been spent on rural development or the generation of more economic activities and therefore further employment was being spent on urban wages. This comparison creates an artificial division between the various factions of the underprivileged classes. This to our mind, whatever may be the truth in the rural-urban wage differential, is an ideological tactic of displacing primary contradictions between the bourgeois class and the lower classes to contradictions and differences between the various factions of the latter, for example, farmer versus workers. In a similar vein we contended that the assumptions and ideas which informed the press coverage, for example the concept of national interest and national development are part of the ruling class ideology and that their selective articulation and the image of the Nigerian society created obscure the contradictions inherent in the Nigerian political economy.

Our overall conclusion is that the press unwittingly and without any conscious or deliberate bias presented a negative image of the workers and trade unions during the two periods of study. While the unions' legitimacy was called into question as a corporate group, we found that the press singled out individual government officials for criticism and condemnation for inefficiency. The employers were more or less absent. The fact that the activities of the unions during the two periods came into prominence following wage increases and the strikes that followed them supports this conclusion. Such an image was further reinforced by the tone and pattern of coverage among the papers. It is here we found some differences among the papers, for instance the critical anti-workers paternalism of the Morning Post and the more subtle yet negative approach
of the others. The focus of news on personalities, conflict and the negative impact of the strikes and the themes and assumptions that form the interpretative framework of the press coverage devalued the political context and meaning of the workers' actions. That is, the challenge, however limited, such actions posed to the neo-colonial economic system in the country and its main beneficiaries. Therefore news of industrial relations during the chosen periods of this study was in support of and a reaffirmation of the prevailing class relations in Nigeria. In that sense news is ideological in that it "provides a world view both consistent in itself, and supportive of the interest of the powerful social groupings" (Golding and Elliot, 1979, p.208).

The process by which this link between news and the dominant interests is achieved or how the mass media come to serve as 'agents of power' has already been discussed. There is the interplay between organisational constraints and professional routines and ideologies on the one hand and the reliance of journalists on elite source, the 'primary definers' for news on the other. Linked to this is the stress on personalities and the conflictual and the orientation towards discrete and recent events. Further, for commercial reasons, news has to draw on the established social consensus and the familiar, thus pushing it towards the commonsense and the non-problematic. These factors are further reinforced by the close integration of the mass media with the state and the members of the dominant social groups which gives them both control over policy and the potential for intervention in news production.

The net outcome of this process is that the powerful are in a better position to determine which action is in the collective national interest and therefore legitimate and acceptable or otherwise. They are able to establish the primary definition of a situation which the media then reproduce and reinforce. Any other definition may have to conform to the established one or be consigned to the margin of the media space. This does mean that though for professional reasons, for example the demand of objectivity, the media may not necessarily exclude alternative views, they however help to contain and channel them by pushing them to the margin of public debate by the way they are signified and interpreted for the audience. The framework employed in this process of signification and interpretation also tend to come from the established social views.
From their study of broadcast news in three countries, Golding and Elliot observed that two key elements are absent from the news; social process, and power in society (Golding and Elliot, 1979, p.209). On the absence of social process or history in the news they contend that by the emphasis on the present or the immediate past and single events news presents an image of statis or a recurrent fast-changing kaleidoscope of events that are unconnected with each other. Everything looks the same yet separated in time and space. Through personalisation certain individuals, mostly elite and authoritative figures come up onto the world stage, perform their acts and disappear to be replaced by others. History becomes the actions of individuals, the great men of history; social events are reduced to the manoeuvres of such men with no visible underlying social process appearing.

This focus on individuals leads to the second missing dimension—power. News is concerned with the activities of individuals not social or corporate groups, "thus individual authority rather than the exertion of entrenched power is seen to be the mover of events". Even this concentration on authority figures is partial. The economic and business elite and men of property seldom make news. The focus of media attention is on political office holders and the political arena and rarely on the boardroom and the institution of production.

Thus power is reduced to areas of negotiable compromise, and politics to a recurrent series of decisions, debates and personalities. It is removed from the institution of production. Thus news bears witness to the institutional separation of economics and politics, a precondition for the evacuation of power from its account of the world. Power is absent from news by virtue of this severance of politics from economics; power is located in authority not in control, in the office-holder not in the property owner. News thus provides a particular and truncated view of power, and in this sense power is a dimension that is effectively missing from news (Golding and Elliot, 1979, p.210).

It is in this way that news produces accounts of the world which are supportive of the dominant values and interests. The absence of those two key elements, the emphasis on discrete events, personalities and institutions involved in conflict management and resolution and the established consensus rather than structures, corporate and social groups, issues, ideas and ideals renders news ideological. The stress on the former
precludes the development of views which might challenge the established order with its structure of power and material base.

Our findings and the arguments we have developed in explaining them are in agreement with the above observations. This to some extent indicates the homogenisation of cultural production across the globe.\textsuperscript{1} This crucial dimension, that is despite differences in internal political and socio-economic set up, news exhibits a lot of similarities between the Third World and Western countries, is missed by many studies of the mass media in the former. Such studies always start and end with the assertion that it is the internal political structure of these countries - military rule, one-party political system, ethnicity - that determine media performance without any thought to the professional values and ideologies that inform news production itself.

As we have said this position is usually the result of the emphasis placed on the concept of press freedom which is implicitly, if not explicitly stated, as being the bedrock of Western journalism and by implication 'good' journalism.\textsuperscript{2} Starting from this position without looking at the contents of the media, the image of the society such contents portray or the values that govern news selection and production could be misleading and inadequate. Such an approach also fails to consider the notion that media contents as cultural and ideological products contain specific meanings which more or less tend to support a particular mode of production, social values and class interests without the main beneficiaries of such interests decreeing it. As Seth Siegelaub has pointed out "... communication is nothing more, nothing less, than the articulation of the social relations between people" (in Mettelart and Siegelaub (eds.) 1979, p.11). Therefore media messages have to be placed and analysed within the class structure and the system of social control and ruling class hegemony of any particular society.

Studies which have stressed the influence of ethnicity on the performance of the Nigerian press fail to consider which social groups

\begin{enumerate}
  \item Incidentally Nigeria is one of the countries in the study by Golding and Elliot cited above. The other two are Ireland and Sweden.
  \item A recent work that proceeds from this assumption is Graham Mytton (1983) \textit{Mass Communication in Africa}, London, Edward Arnold.
\end{enumerate}
originate this or benefit most from its use. It is true that media ownership, readership and even contents are vertically divided across the country. It is also true that staff recruitment follows this division. However, it is our contention that we have to pierce through this vertical (ethnic) division to see the underlying assumptions, social views and class interests under this formal organisational structure.

If we can take an example to illustrate our point here. Marcia Grant, in the study we cited earlier, used the 1964 census crisis to illustrate the ethnic orientation of the Nigerian press immediately after independence (Grant, 1971). Though it is true that the Citizen (predecessor of the New Nigeria) owned by the Northern Region government and the Outlook published by the Eastern Region government traded in ethnic stereotypes during the crisis, an adequate explanation of this must be related to the politics of the census in Nigeria. Population figures among the various geographical/ethnic constituents in the country is a crucial factor in federal revenue allocation, the siting of federal projects and award of contracts and the distribution of seats in the federal parliament. In that situation, to the regionally constituted ruling class the census, like many other issues, is an aspect of the struggle for wealth, status, political power and hegemony and therefore it cannot but be highly politicised along ethnic lines.

It should also be noted that ethnicity, now called federal character or quota system, has more or less been institutionalised as part of the established political consensus, at least for the sharing of state offices and other resources, among the Nigerian ruling class. The point is that ethnicity as such is not a matter of social significance or problem until so constructed by certain groups of people for whatever purposes or ends. As we explained in Chapter 1, ethnicism should be seen as a social construct and therefore ideological. As President Babangida pointed out recently, "Tribalism, sectionalism and nepotism have been institutionalised and the elite among us have taken advantage of the situation to the detriment of the ordinary people of this country" (Concord Weekly, 10 October 1985, p.19). Any discussion of its use as a language of political discourse must take this into consideration.

The Limit of Government Intervention

Though instances of government or proprietorial intervention in production could be found and while cases of threat of legal sanctions
could be cited,* our argument is that their explanatory value is limited. They cannot account for daily production or the built-in structural bias of news. Such interventions are more likely to be made during a period of critical political crisis or breakdown in the established consensus when the faction of the dominant class in power can no longer guarantee its own legitimacy and the consent of other factions or classes to its world view and political authority. Though such situations are prevalent in Africa, they are not yet of everyday occurrence in all countries! And at least in Nigeria we are yet to see institutionalised censorship. Though many journalists do complain of governmental intervention, contending that such interference inhibits freedom of the press, we are not aware of any who has resigned in protest at such interference. It could be argued that some journalists make such complaints in defence of their own inadequacies and subservience to the power elite.

What we are driving at is that media research should be concerned with the class-based pictures of the world presented by the news media. Such a study must start from,

the basic conceptual and ideological framework through which events are presented and as a result of which they come to be given one dominant/primary meaning rather than another (Morley, 1976, p.246).

This process of framing, as we have emphasised in this study is not necessarily a conscious process on the part of the journalists, media owners and the state. It is more the outcome of the unconscious absorption, through socialisation, of certain assumptions about the social world in which news is embedded, and produced in order to make it understandable for the readers. It is the elements of this social ideology, constituted and presented as commonsense, the taken-for-granted, which connects the facts of news to the dominant interests in society.

Another issue this study has raised concerns the production of consent of which the mass media are a crucial part. The production and reproduction of consent cannot be seen in terms of the imposition of the

* A well documented case of physical attack on a journalist on the order of a military governor is provided in Wole Soyinka's prison notebook, The Man Died, London, Rex Collins, 1972, and the Amakiri case we mentioned earlier.
dominant social views on the subordinate classes through force or coercion alone. The dominance of the ruling class or its factions over other classes is secured not just through compulsion but "the elaboration and penetration of ideology into their commonsense and everyday practice" (Gitlin, 1982, p.205). The concept of hegemony, which we briefly discussed in Chapter 4 has been used to describe this process. The usefulness of this concept is that it allows us to grasp the dialectical relationship between force and consent of the subordinate classes for ruling class domination. As Gitlin pointed out, the concept,

encompasses the terms through which the alliances of domination are cemented; it also extends to the systematic (but not necessarily or even usually deliberate) engineering of mass consent to the established order. It is best understood as a collaborative process rather than an imposed, definitely structured order; in general, hegemony is a condition of the social system as a whole, rather than a cunning project of the ruling group (Gitlin, ibid).

We have seen how the activities of the workers and the labour movement were labelled as destructive and against the national interest. This effort to delegitimise the agitations of the unions did not of course preclude the use of force. The police was used to disperse the workers' demonstration a day before the 1964 strike. During the fracas some union leaders were injured, later arrested and charged to court. When the strike started some other unionists and a British researcher were charged in court for sedition. At one stage, the Prime Minister threatened to sack the workers if they failed to return to work. Some commercial houses did carry out this threat. During the military regime many union leaders were arrested and/or imprisoned. A unionist, Gogo Chu Nzeribe, was reportedly beaten to death while in official custody (Cohen, 1974, p.228). Journalists and media organisations were also affected by such official high-handedness. As Althusser has argued the difference between control through repression and ideology is relative rather than absolute. All apparatuses of control contain both elements of coercion and consent (Althusser, 1971).

The importance of the press was in its role as a signifier and interpreter of events. This role is not a neutral activity. It is based on certain historically and socially produced ideas and assumptions which directly and indirectly serve the interests of one social group or the
other in that "all discourses entail certain definite premises about the world" (Hall, 1982, p.80). Also the process of producing news is not a neutral activity. Implicitly it is governed by certain rules and conventions. In the words of Peter Dreier, "The process by which 'news' is identified, gathered, written and edited produces a particular version of reality that, overall, supports the existing social order" (Dreier, 1978, p.74). By its adherence to the tenets of 'good and responsible' journalism, professional values and ideologies of objectivity, balance and neutrality the press tends to operate within the terms of the prevailing consensus and thus unwittingly acts to preserve and reproduce the established social order.

Suggestions for Reform

The two main solutions usually proposed for improving the practice of journalism in Nigeria stem from how the problem has been conceptualised; that is government ownership on the one hand and poor professional standards on the other.

On government ownership it is proposed that the government should sell its shares in all newspapers to the private sector. This is to free such papers from state control. The assumption is that this will enhance freedom of the press.

Two issues are usually glossed over here. First, no consideration is given to the question of who are the people (and to which social group do they belong) who will buy these papers from the government. If the current pattern of private ownership is anything to go by, it is clear to our mind that they would be members of the privileged class who either have the money in hand or have access to the bank for loans. In that situation, change in ownership would mean that members of the commercial class would have better and assured access to and control of the press than at present. These could not be guaranteed under the present arrangements when the rapid changes in the composition of the state could mean changes in the alliance between different factions of the bourgeois class, especially between the political faction directly in charge of the state and its institutions and the commercial/business factions.

The second related issues are the inherent danger in selling state-owned newspapers to private interests. As S.G. Ikoku argued during the
debates on the 1979 constitution, "this ... give total ownership and control of our newspapers to the money class" (Ikoku, n.d., p. 176). The danger here is that revenue from advertisement would become so dominant as the life-blood of the press as government subvention would end with private acquisition. In the competitive drive for larger circulation most newspapers would likely go for subjects like sex, sports, music, scandal and sensation to attract readership. The economic pressure for profit would also further narrow the range of available views in press. The tendency, as the British situation has shown is to avoid contentious issues which might antagonise potential readers. In such a case the press tends to devote more space and attention to entertainment and less to political, economic and social analysis. In essence further commercialisation would likely result in a more 'depoliticised' press.

Further, ending government ownership would in essence mean that the fate of the Nigerian press is tied to the interests of the private business community which is by and large dominated by foreign capital. In other words an important vehicle of opinion formation and mobilisation would be placed at the mercy of the forces of neo-colonialism and underdevelopment. "And to that extent" as Ikoku pointed out, "it will work against our national development". He went on to say that selling government owned newspapers to private interests "constitutes a disservice to national independence, and a calculated attempt ... to sustain the existing social order of neo-colonialism" (Ikoku, n.d., p. 176).

It has also been suggested that a specific constitutional guarantee should be provided to safeguard freedom of the press while all inhibiting laws (Official Secrets Act, Law of Sedition) should be repealed or substantially modified. It could be noted that many Nigerians were against the Buhari administration (toppled in military coup last August) because of what they regarded as the government anti-press policy, especially Decree 4 under which two journalists were jailed for one year each. The decree has since been repealed by the present government.

The call for a constitutional provision reached its strident height during the making of the 1979 constitution. Despite all the campaigns by the press and many other Nigerians, the Constitution Drafting Committee rejected the call. Before the 1983 elections a somewhat similar suggestion was made in the form of the setting-up of a media council to
supervise the coverage of the elections by all government-owned media houses. It was claimed that this would ensure a fair and an impartial coverage.

What is evident from the above suggestions is that many Nigerians who have talked about the 'problem' of the Nigerian mass media have always identified such problems with government ownership and control. This solution, whatever may be its attractiveness or merit may not necessarily lead to a genuinely plural press that will be able to seek and accommodate the views of all competing groups and classes. Publishing many viewpoints on an issue does not necessarily mean that such views are from opposing social perspectives. Where the problem is posed in terms of ethnic or regional competition, it should be pointed out this is not so. The competition in Nigeria is between social classes and groups. Therefore the various suggestions are not concerned about the restructuring of the press to take account of such competing social perspectives.

Another problem with the suggestions is the uncritical acceptance that private ownership of the press will guarantee a free press. As the Western situation has shown, this is fallacious and misleading. Apart from the problem of structural bias in the news which we have mentioned on many occasions above, Dennis McQuail recently summarised the fallacy in the argument thus,

Not only have monopoly tendencies in the press and other media made this (freedom of the press) a very doubtful proposition, but the extent of external financial interests in the press seems to many as potent a source of constraint on liberty of expression as any governmental activity. Moreover, under modern conditions, the notion that private ownership guarantees the individual the right to publish looks absurd (McQuail, 1983, p.89).

It could also be seen from the suggestions that they are in the main derived from the Western liberal philosophy of the press and therefore aimed at the adoption or the reproduction of a Euro-American

1. For a journalist's view on this issue see Ray Ekpu, Journalism Is In Chains, Sunday Concord, June 19 - July 24, 1983.
type of media system including its values and practices and professional ideologies. The Western model of journalism and media practice is regarded as the standard which should be aimed at. One has to note that to adopt such a system also involves the adoption of the politico-economic and social system that supports it. That means the entrenchment of the neo-colonial capitalist social order in Nigeria. The celebration and flattering of Western journalism by Nigerian commentators is in ignorance of recent critical appraisal of Western press performance. For example, Kaale Nordenstreng is of the view that American press backstops official conservative policy;

> Given shared values and idiosyncrasies across the media and government lobbies, the outcome is a symbiotic relationship whereby most of the media turn out to be largely instruments of official policy ... independence and objectivity in the sense of traditional American thinking about journalism is a myth ... checks and balances and the fourth branch of government are all part of the same mythology, or rather professional doctrine, which amounts to political ideology (Nordestrong, 1982, p.151).\(^1\)

It has also been suggested that the solution lies in improving the professional standard of journalism practice in Nigeria. It is argued that Nigerian journalists are not as well trained and therefore as professional as their Western counterparts. Nigerian journalists are largely regarded as half-educated, immature and subservient to the power elite because of these inadequacies.\(^2\) The poor image of the early journalists painted by Chief Awolowo is still very much abroad in Nigeria. It is said that the world has become a more complex place requiring better informed, educated and more sophisticated reporters. According to Michael Echerou, "We must .. find ways of cultivating in both our newsmen and the general public a sense of intellectual curiosity and a corresponding interest in detailed truth" (Echeruo, n.d. p.181). Echeruo went on to suggest further specialisation among journalists. Better and more training for journalists is an age-long issue. Far back in 1920 the American journalist, Walter Lippman, wrote that he finds it

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2. See the collection of articles on the debate on freedom of the press during the making of the 1979 Constitution, in The Great Debate, Lagos Daily Times Publication.
"altogether unthinkable that a society like ours should remain forever dependent upon untrained accidental witnesses" (Lippman, 1920, pp.78-79). It is also worth noting that the UNESCO International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, otherwise known as the MacBride Commission, recommended that journalists must have 'broad educational preparation and specific professional training' before they could be treated as professionals. According to the Commission, "In many countries even today, journalists are not regarded as members of an acknowledged profession and they are treated accordingly. To overcome this situation, journalism needs to raise its standards and quality for recognition everywhere as a genuine profession" (UNESCO, 1980, p.262).

The approach to solving the problem has been to set up training institutions in the universities and polytechnics. There are now four universities offering bachelor degrees and about five polytechnics with HND programmes in mass communication. Recently the University of Lagos started an M.Sc. programme in Mass Communication while the University of Ibadan also has a Masters programme in Communication Arts. In addition the Newspaper Proprietors' Association and the International Press Institute (IPI) has an Institute of Journalism in Lagos while the Daily Times and the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) have their own training schools. Recently the Nigerian Union of Journalists recommended that the minimum educational qualification of a journalist should be a diploma in journalism.

Though, despite recent improvements, many Nigerian journalists would definitely benefit from better and broader educational and professional training, the problem with this solution as Golding and Elliot have pointed out is that it would not resolve the important questions: what type of training, what skills, for what purposes and ends, using what techniques and grounded in what assumptions and axioms? (Golding and Elliot, 1979, p.213). From our experience, much of the training given to journalists is designed to produce good professional 'reporters' well skilled in the use of English and other technical and practical journalistic techniques.

Another related suggestion is that Nigerian reporters should be more daring and investigative. Nigerian journalists are generally accused of being too complacent, and too ready to accept hand-outs at press
conferences or of practising what has been called 'cocktail or brown envelop journalism'. It is common to hear of comparison with American journalism especially the glorification of the coverage of the Watergate scandal by the two Washington Post journalists. That was taken as an example of investigative journalism par excellence and the triumph of freedom of the press. Journalists are advised to go behind the facts provided by official spokesmen on any issue and publish the hidden facts. The not so new idea is that journalists should be more inquisitive and sceptical. We say 'not so new' because one of the long-held canons of 'good journalism' is that it should be inquiring and not ready to accept the 'too obvious'. Journalists are generally taught to beware of 'public relations' men and handouts (C.D. MacDougall, 1968, pp.43-44).

As we discussed above, the idea of improving the professional standard of Nigerian journalists is also influenced by Western standard and model of journalism practice. The point that should however be noted is that professionalism has been a mechanism for the entrenchment of Euro-American values and the incorporation of Third World media practitioners into the global culture of media production.* Professionalism as Peter Golding suggested is "in effect, integration into a dominant global culture of media practices and objectives as developed in the media of the advanced industrialized societies... In other words, the development of professionalism among Nigerian journalists is nothing more than their increasing integration into a community sharing values and standards developed by major Western news media". Golding later concluded that "media professionalism is an ideology imposed on countries in a situation of dependence, and concealing more than merely prescriptions for technical proficiency"(Golding, 1977). This is what has come to be known as cultural or media imperialism, "a process which serves to reinforce existing economic and political relations between nations" (Boyd-Barrett, 1977, p.132).

Further, as Gaye Tuchman has noted and this study has tried to show, professionalism in journalism is an agent of legitimation. By its values and ideology of practice, journalism tend to legitimise the status quo. According to her "... the professional methods so limit

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access to the media that they have become a means not to know"
(Tuchman, 1978, p.109). Tuchman went on to say that professional methods
of news gathering and processing have inhibited the capturing of events
in their totality.

An Indigenous Model of Journalism

There have, however, been calls for 'an indigenous press model'
that is different in its objectives from those of the Western social
responsibility press model. Such a model, it is argued, should take into
consideration the peculiar nature of the Third World. Its objectives
should be defined in terms of development, unity and other national
objectives, and policies. While some of its advocates have likened it to
social responsibility theory (Shelton A. Guneratne, 1980) others argue
that such an indigenous model should reject any libertarian pretences, for
example, the notion of "a rigid separation between the press and
government". A Nigerian advocate of such an indigenous model has spelt
out its essential features;

The rigid application of the libertarian press model in Nigeria,
indeed in the Third World, does not accommodate the added
responsibility of Nigerian journalists as agents of national
development. The press in Nigeria ... are (sic) service agents
whose roles are (sic) unavoidable in the promotion of national
development goals, educating the public and fostering national
unity. The press must necessarily cooperate with the
government in the pursuance of these goals (Bosah Eboh,
National Concord (Lagos), December 12, 1985).

The argument here is the same as that advanced by the advocates of
development journalism which we briefly examined in an earlier chapter.
As we argued in that chapter, this brand of journalism, but for the
ideological and political rhetoric which has attended the debate, is
essentially the same in its assumptions, practices and values as the
social responsibility theory of the press. As Gees Hamelink has pointed
out,

... pointless is the conflict between those who see the public
media as principally a form of social criticism (the tradition
of the press as fourth estate, investigative reporting, etc.)
and those who see the media as simply conforming instruments of
national development planning. If actual media practice in most
countries is examined closely, it is evident that something of
both of these ideal types may be found. In countries where the
freedom of information philosophy is an important criterion for
information policies, information is still expected to support broad national goals and in practice, the media tend to support the dominant political and economic interests (Hamelink, 1982, p.83, see also Altschull, 1984, Chapter 11).

And, as Denis McQuail has also pointed out, though each of the media theories available may be connected to a particular politico-economic circumstance "... it may not deviate far from a general type" (McQuail, 1983, pp.84-85).

The proponents of development journalism argue that it is unfair to use Western journalistic yardsticks to judge the newsworthiness of events for news in the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. They contend that events for news ought to be judged in the context of socio-political and development needs and aspirations of the countries concerned. A one-time editor-in-chief of the New Nigeria, Mamman Daura, once argued that, "African societies are not yet articulated ... there are so many forces that have to be balanced. The press, therefore, should be an agent in mobilizing the society, in educating the society, in consolidating independence or, in one or two cases, revolution." (quoted in Stokke, 1971, p.88).

The ideals of development journalism are enumerated in a definition provided by N. Aggarwala,

Development news is not different from regular news or investigative reporting ... In covering the development news beat, a journalist should critically examine and report the relevance of a development project to the national or local needs, the difference between a planned scheme and its actual implementation and the difference between its impact on people as claimed by government officials and as it actually is (Aggarwala, 1979, p.181).

It could be pointed out that this socially-purposive use of the mass media towards achieving certain stated political and economic goals stems from the reality of the African situation, a situation of economic dependence, inequality and poverty, and political instability. It has been argued that development journalism is a reaction to the problem of media imbalance in the international flow of media products. Some of the advocates of development journalism want the mass media to help combat the negative picture of the Third World portrayed by Western mass media, foreign (mainly
Western) domination and cultural influence. The media are also expected positively to contribute toward the attainment of the often difficult task of nation-building, that is, the creation of national-consciousness and unity, the encouragement of self-help, cooperation and peaceful co-existence among a culturally heterogeneous population. The mass media are regarded as a means of promoting national sentiments and symbols against the destructive influence of regionalism and ethnicity in many African countries. This sometimes explains the predominant state ownership of the mass media and their centralisation. The late Kenyan President, Jomo Kenyatta, once told the press to,

positively promote national development and growing self-respect since in Africa it can have a tremendous influence on nation-building. (IPI Report, 17, 1968).

In his analysis of the practice of development journalism by Nigerian broadcasters, Peter Golding discussed four ways of which it could be produced,

First, by stressing the generally educative function of news, either about specific pieces of information or by the arousal of general awareness of events and their implications. Second, by producing stories which displayed particular social needs or problems it was hoped that government would be provoked into action. Third, by giving prominence to local self-help projects, news could encourage emulation of such activities in other communities. Finally, the news could tackle specific problems, such as corruption, often with prudent obliqueness (Golding, 1977, p.303).

As we said in an earlier chapter, the origin of development journalism is longer than many writers have dated. It is rooted in the anti-colonial struggle in many African countries. The press and journalists were in the forefront of such struggles to win political and economic concessions from the various colonial powers and later political independence in the 1960s. It was after independence that the concept was elaborated, largely by American modernisation theorists like David Lerner (1958), Wilbur Schram (1964) and Lucian Pye (1965) among others. Economists and communication scholars then argued that the mass media are part of the process of modernisation. In the main this consisted of the transfer of Western developmental models and ideas, capital, technology and the know-how, and other infrastructure to the newly independent countries. The orthodox 'media and development' theory is grounded in an idealistic and
uni-linear view of development that could be externally induced and promoted by the media.*

Historically, it could be argued that instrumental or purposive journalism as represented by development journalism is not an aberration as such. Objective journalism or the concept of the press as a fourth estate of the realm is a development of the latter part of the last century. Before then there existed a political press. As Herbert Altschull has pointed out, during the 17th and 18th centuries the entrenched political forces and the rising challengers of political orthodoxy used the press as an instrument to disseminate their various political views. "And gradually the press came to be recognized as a potential tool to educate the people. It can be said that the clergy, the commercial interests, and the political forces all sought to use the press for purposes of education, which to them meant to propagandise target audience. For the first time it became significant to the powerful to use information to win over the masses" (Altschull, 1984, pp.9-10). Further, as James Carey has also noted, traditionally the journalist was an advocate, a critic and an independent interpreter of events. The development and institutionalisation of objective reporting eclipsed "the traditional journalist roles of advocacy and criticism" (Carey, 1969, p.33).

The rise of objective reporting and the ideology of the fourth estate, for example in England, coincided with changes in the political, economic and social structure of the English society - the rise of the bourgeoisie, the industrial revolution among others (see Siebert et al 1956; Golding and Elliot, 1979; Leonore O'Boyle, 1968; on the American press see among others, Dan Schiller, 1979, 1981; Schudson, 1978). Speaking of the American situation, Carey said,

Objective reporting became the fetish of American journalism in the period of rapid industrialisation. Originally the development of this form of journalism was grounded in a purely commercial motive; the need of the mass newspaper to serve politically heterogeneous audiences without alienating any significant segment of the audience (Carey, op.cit.)

The point is that objective journalism and the concept of the press as a fourth estate as a professional ideology held and promoted by

journalists and other liberal minded commentators is a product of a particular historical, socio-economic and political conjuncture. Within this context the argument of Third World advocates of development journalism is basically that the experience and social conditions of their societies are different from those of the West and therefore the social role of the press should be different.

The fortune of development journalism has been a mixed one just as the definition of the concept and its mode of practice could be very vague. The vagueness and confusion in the definition of the concept is clearly stated by Christine L. Ogan thus,

Depending on one's definition of this 'new' concept, development journalism belong either to the authoritarian or to the social responsibility theory of the press. It is just another example of new wine in old bottles (Ogan, 1983, p.11).

Ogan arrived at this conclusion after distinguishing development journalism from development support communication which "refers to the communication process used only to serve the development goals of the government in power". According to her, this practice is in accord with the "authoritarian view that truth is a quality vested in the state and the state supersedes the individual who, in turn, is dependent on the state for achieving advanced civilization". On the other hand, development journalism is in line with social responsibility theory, "when defined as evaluative and critical of government development programmes" (Ibid, p.10).

It seems many of the proponents and adherents of development journalism would like to identify it with the social responsibility theory of the press. Narinder K. Aggarwala has said that development journalism is not synonymous "with government-controlled news and information handouts". He went further to say that development journalism should be critical and evaluative. "Thus conceived, a development news story will be markedly different from a government handout and will be similar to feature or investigative articles that appear in Western newspapers regularly" (Aggarwala, 1978, p.200). Another scholar, Shelton A. Gunaratne, has said that development journalism has something positive to offer as a substitute for Western professionalism. He also made an explicit case for equating development journalism with social responsibility theory of the press. According to him,
However one defines development journalism, its aim goes much further than the information and entertainment function assigned to the mass media under the libertarian ideology. It could be looked upon as an integral part of today's new journalism which involves analytical interpretation, subtle investigation, constructive criticism and sincere association with the grassroots (rather than with elite) (Gunaratne, 1980, p.100).

The achievement of development journalism in Africa has been a mixed one. A review of the situation came to the positive conclusion that,

A genuine achievement of the media in modern Africa is that they are supported as a legitimate and powerful means of informing, educating and motivating. The impact has, without doubt, been tremendous, especially in radio. The radio, in most of rural Africa, has the force of the Bible (Domatob and Hall, 1983, pp.16-17).

In a similar vein, a study by Frank Ugboajah found that Nigerian radio stations were more development orientated than the press. It was in realisation of this fact that the government has massively expanded broadcasting facilities in the country (Ugboajah, 1985, pp.233-234).

Radio has also been successfully utilized in Latin America. Such efforts, for example, the Radiophonic schools in Colombia, Rural Radio Cassette forums in Uruguay, are usually under the direction of the Catholic Church which in essence means that they are outside the mainstream established commercial media. The generic name of these efforts 'communication popular' reflects their general characteristics and features. It is rooted in the struggle of the 'silent majority' of the population, with active support of the church and sympathetic urban-technical elite, to intervene in the social condition of their existence. According to an editorial in the journal MEDIA DEVELOPMENT,

Communication popular as a concept must, firstly, be understood as a social and political protest against the individualism, materialism and alienation epitomised by Western industrialised society. 'Communication' is not the objective of communication popular. The aim is an equitable social and economic whole in which the individual is not reduced to an object but is able to find fulfillment as a total human being. Communication, however, is an indispensable instrument for realising this socio-economic vision and is an integral part of it (Media Development, No. 3, 1980).
To the rural people and their supporters, communication popular is an effort at self-assertion and the preservation and creation of a cultural identity that meets the reality of everyday existence. "It is a protest against mass media and the consumer culture of the elite as well as a course of action aimed at overcoming domination by both" (Ibid). In most cases the initiative comes from within a lower-status movement. As Robert White has pointed out it "is peasant or worker groups speaking among themselves or to other similar groups. These channels are socially horizontal in that they do not go 'up' to a communication centre controlled by higher-status individuals and then back 'down' again to other lower-status groups but are direct from one lower-status group to another... Such groups are all involved in the struggle against the institutions of a hierarchical, dependency structure and caudillismo (bossism)...." (White, 1980, pp.4-5).

The church holds most of the radio licences while some of the radio stations actually evolved from church's radio school programmes among the rural peasant communities. A notable example of the latter is the Accion Cultural Popular (ACPO) in Colombia which evolved out of the radio programmes in basic education for rural communities designed by a Colombian Priest, P. Joaquin Salcedo, in the late 1940s.

As evident from the name, 'popular or people's communication' the total involvement of the rural community is an essential component of communication popular. The local population is involved in the entire activities of the radio station, from programme making to management. Radio Popular opens up avenues to various peasant groups to express themselves and gives them opportunity to prepare their own programmes. Some of the radio stations have neighbourhood reporters who report from the peasant point of view. Such reporters select what they think are important and relevant to the community they serve. Such "reporters are more concerned with critical analysis of, and information on, cases of exploitation, the neglect or mistreatment of illiterate peasant farmers by public officials, agrarian conflicts, epidemics and other problems that are not getting the attention they need" (White, 1983, p.7). Themes for drama sketches are selected by the people in a community who also act, direct and produce such plays for recording by the mobile unit of the various radio stations. Such plays reflect the needs and concerns of the local people.
Feedback is also a prominent feature of communication popular in Latin America. Its encouragement and popular response by the people make communication popular go beyond the established 'sender - receiver' model of communication. Communication is participatory; "within and across a whole class of society, transforming and elevating its consciousness through shared action" (Media Development, 1980, p.2). Writing about the Peruvian and Uruguayan experiences, the Latin American communication scholar, Luis Beltran said, "The most important and unusual feature ... is their intention of democratising communication. They do not treat the peasant as a passive and subordinate receiver of messages but as a discriminating and participating unit, an autonomous producer of messages, all in an atmosphere of creative dialogue" (Beltran, 1978, pp.43-44).

Evident from the discussion so far is the political-ideological framework and social vision which support communication popular as an alternative communication system to the established commercial system. We can point out two origins of this framework and social vision. One is the theology of liberation embraced by the radical section of the Catholic Church. The other is the heavy influence of Paulo Freire. These two factors combined, for instance, to produce the emphasis on participation and the concept of education for freedom, emancipation and conscientisation of the people.

Before we go on it is necessary to point out that the limitation of communication popular in Latin America is inherent in its structural set up, and organisational and institutional support. It seems marginal to the influence of the urban-based commercial media which are still the predominant forms of communication in the region. Its success could be attributed to the commitment of the Catholic Church whose influence seems unparalleled in any African country. We could also note that the peasant movement in many Latin American countries is very strong with a longer pedigree of political struggle than in Africa.

Another positive aspect of development journalism, and which quite distinguishes it from Western media values, is its sensitivity and orientation to collective ends and interests rather than to individual ones. On this wise, the media become a collective or public resource, designed and used for the achievement of collective or community ends rather than serving the commercial, economic or political interests of their owners or
some powerful minority groups. This, as many writers and politicians have argued, is in accordance with the culture of many African societies.

We could also note that the emphasis of development journalism is for Third World journalists to be more inward looking; an aspect of the struggle for cultural autonomy by peoples of the Third World. The values and concerns of Third World journalists should be informed by the social realities of their societies. The success of this inward looking strategy will have socio-cultural, political and professional implications in the sense of lessening the influence of the West in many of these societies.

Despite the above, development journalism has been criticised by many scholars and even some journalists as "government say-so" journalism (Lent, 1979, p. p. 25). According to one analyst the successes of development journalism, especially its sensitivity to local realities, has been a source of its problem,

... in many instances, development journalism backfires because its successes alert governments to the importance of economic and social reporting and its potential usefulness to mobilizing mass support behind government policies. Governments eventually extend the concept to cover all mass media and integrate them into their official information policies (Munir K. Nasser in Martin and Chaudhary, 1983, p. 50).

At a more fundamental level, two issues could be raised against the practice of development journalism. First, the advocates of the model have not adequately spelt out the features of the model in detail and the canons of practice for the 'new journalism'. One assumes that it will still be based on the Western model with its professional ideologies and assumptions. For instance, it seems to us that the sources of news will still be predominantly the powerful and other institutionalised sources who have ready access to the media. They will still be able to set the agenda and terms of public debates, and in the main, determine the contents of the media. A study of newspapers in eight developing countries by Christine Ogan and Jo E. Fair found a high deference to government sources. It was further found that most of the stories were spot-stories, that is event-oriented rather than process-oriented as should have been the case. Not surprisingly the two researchers found that "live or human sources were consulted more frequently than were documents in most of the stories..." (Ogan and Fair, 1984).
Further, our interpretation is supported by the view of some of the advocates of development journalism, like Gunaratne and Aggarwala, who have likened it to social responsibility model of the press. And Leonard R. Sussman has pointed out, "Third World journalists who inspired these programs (in development journalism) employed Western news media ideology - including the rough separation of press and state - to advance their profession and, in turn, the development of their countries" (Sussman, 1978, p.76). This, as we have pointed out above, creates a lot of tension and role conflict for many journalists in Africa; the tension arising from the dilemma of marrying two opposing philosophical and ideological models of journalism;

The tension between the idea of news as information deliberately selected and shaped to serve defined social purposes, and news as an objective and randomly selected capture of reality, disinterestedly distributed, often proved difficult for African journalists caught between two currents of thought... Thus a natural inclination to see journalism as socially purposive is given a guilt complex by training in the creed and practice of objective reporting as preached and conducted in European and American media (Golding, 1977, p.303).

It could also be argued that in the concept of development journalism is an implicit acceptance of the status-quo. For instance, while advocates like Aggarwala and Gunaratne insisted that development journalism must be investigative, one rarely finds any detailed discussion of the nature of development. There seems to be the assumption that development is non-problematic and class-neutral. Much of the discussion is based on the assumption that 'national development' is the goal, an apolitical national imperative which transcends any class or group interests. In other words, development is what 'we' are all striving for. This is of course the result of taking the 'nation' as the unit of analysis. It could also be seen that much is made of 'economic development' (a kind of economic determinism) with little mention of political and ideological dimensions of development. If these issues have been adequately taken on board, it could have been evident to advocates of development journalism that the mass media are part of the cultural mechanisms for maintaining social order. With this in mind, one finds it difficult to see how the media as presently constituted in many African countries could provide an alternative definition of development and the strategies for executing it.
Related to this, it could further be argued that development journalism shares with its forebear, the social responsibility theory, an acceptance of the consensual basis of society. It also seems that advocates of development journalism share the liberal view of the state and government as disinterested arbiters in the society, and that the government will always act in the general interest. But as Graham Mytton has aptly pointed out,

"The fact that a government holds power to protect the public from harm is no guarantee that the same power will be used in that interest. Development journalism requires that governments or their agencies supervise, decide, judge and act in a field in which they are subject as well as object. Reporting on governments and their activities is a legitimate part of the media's function: therefore governments are not reliable and independent arbiters of what the media ought to be doing. Because their own activities form a major component of the news, governments have a very obvious and immediate interest in how they are reported (Mytton, 1983, p.138).

Our second main critique stems from this. The proponents of the model have failed to consider such questions as what kind of government, or whose government, whose nation and whose media? Also not much attention has been given to the issue of whose interests are being served by the national policies the media are supposed to support and promote. Further, we also need to consider the crucial issue of who determines national goals? It seems advocates of development journalism are not very interested in examining the socio-political and economic policies pursued by the state and the social and class interests they represent and serve. It could be contended that a meaningful step toward achieving the ideals of development journalism must start by asking questions about the meaning of development and its class basis and content. Development is not a neutral value free phenomenon whose benefits fall equally on all members of the society like the rain. Even under the rain some people are better able to protect themselves than others. Advocates and practitioners of development journalism must address themselves to the crucial but hitherto neglected issue of power relations in society.

In summary it is clear that the adherents of development journalism are motivated by certain noble ideals about how to make the mass media in countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America more responsive and sensitive to local needs and realities. Without any attempt to downplay its achievement
and potentials, it seems, however, that a more meaningful approach has to start from a critique of the class character of the state, development projects and the system of production and material reward in society. As of now these crucial issues are missing from the literature on development journalism. This may be due to the fact that the concepts and categories used in defining and describing the 'new journalism' are borrowed from the Western social responsibility theory of the press.

Further, it also seems apparent that more attention has to be paid to the professional values and ideology which must inform the practice of development journalism. As the Latin American situation has shown, it is also necessary to take a critical look at the issues of ownership, control and organisational structure of the mass media in African countries. The application of Western journalistic values and the present organisational structure cannot cope with the attainment of the ideals set out for development journalism by its advocates. And as Ogan and Fair recommended, "Needed is greater use of critical sources, extensive or even medium-range analysis of the development topics and less dependence on government for the sole sources of information" (Ogan and Fair, op.cit., p.187).

However, the Rome based international news agency, Inter Press Service, has successfully tried to provide process-oriented development news about the Third World. It has been able to transcend the conventional news values in its report and develop an orientation toward process of development. A study by C. Anthony Giffard found that the average length of IPS story was 340 words per article compared to 200 words a story in AP and UPI (Giffard 1985, see also Al Hester, 1979). Another study by Al Hester found that the IPS was pre-occupied with "economic growth, governmental and national development, relations with other developing nations (and sometimes with developed nations), and a high level of emphasis on "people" stories, showing how individuals cope with problems of the Third World... No attempt was made by IPS to chronicle "spot news" events, with only a few exceptions" (Al Hester, 1979, p.92). A similar conclusion was reached by Giffard in the study earlier mentioned.

The IPS success story is in contrast to that of the Non-aligned News Agencies Pool (NANAP). In a comparative study of AP, UPI and the NANAP, it was found that in a number of areas NANAP foreign news was not much different from those of the two American agencies. For instance,
while 92% of UPI stories were event-oriented (i.e. spot-news), NANAP had 73% and AP 82%. The study also found that NANAP stories were shorter than those of UPI and AP and mainly based on the activities of elites (politicians, presidents, diplomats) as were those of the AP and UPI. However, it was found that unlike the stories carried by the US agencies, NANAP stories were less crisis-oriented and covered a wider variety of topics and themes. The study further concluded that "contrary to the claim of some advocates of NANAP, however was the lack of interpretative background, investigative reporting, and contextual materials in the NANAP news stories we studied (M. Kirat and D. Weaver, 1985, pp.45-46).

The difference between the two agencies, IPS and NANAP, may have to be found in an examination of the origin, philosophy and aims of the IPS which would clearly reveal its political choice and orientation. As we pointed out in the case of communication popular in Latin America, IPS is not a commercial venture as the big Western News Agencies but mainly "functions as a collection of journalists who determine both policy and appointments". Its profits are not shared out but reinvested for further expansion. The policy, activities and type of news provided by IPS has been influenced by the world view and political concern of its founders. The main brain behind it, Roberto Savio, was described as "a self-confessed utopian, (who) dreams of a democratic world free of hunger and scarcity" (P. Hall, 1983, p.54). Al Hester summarises the philosophy of IPS thus,

IPS desires to foster movements toward democracy, social integration of the people within a country, work toward social and internal justice through reforms and movements toward real national sovereignty (Hester, 1979, p.89).

IPS approach to news "is horizontal rather than vertical" rejecting the established convention that news properly flows from top to bottom, that is, from journalist to reader. According to Savio, IPS is for "a horizontal process - the exchange of information between individuals, between social groups, and between nations" (quoted in Altschull, 1984, p.229). The IPS approach to news is further emphasised by the themes which underpin its coverage. These are "facts related to needs of the Third World and efforts to satisfy them, facts related to potential ways for autonomous and self-reliant development, and facts related to efforts to change socio-economic structures" (Hester, 1979, p.89).
We should also note the Latin American origin of the IPS. It was established in 1964 with the aim "to bolster budding Christian Democratic reform movements in Latin America by writing features on development there" (P. Hall, op.cit). It was the rise of right-wing military dictatorships in the region that forced a change in policy to embrace the entire Third World. According to one analyst, "As the failure of reform in Latin America became increasingly clear, IPS saw that their journalistic activities would have significance only if they contributed to eliminating the relations that kept Latin America and other Third World countries in perpetual dependency. The guiding philosophy of IPS became the "decolonization of information" (Hamelink, 1983, p.74).

The main point evident from the above discussion is that IPS's orientation to and definition of, news have been influenced by a clearly stated objective and guided by a philosophy different from the established journalistic convention. This I would like to suggest is a conscious political and ideological choice. The point I am driving at is that a different social vision, ideological and political commitment, and an organisational and institutional arrangement is a necessary component of implementing an 'alternative' journalism or development-process oriented journalism that would be distinct from the established norms of journalism.

**Recommendations**

To my mind any genuine attempt to resolve some of the issues raised in this study would have to involve a restructuring of the society toward a more democratic one. This necessarily would involve a radical change in the exercise of power and the distribution of material rewards. This is in the realisation that news and the mass media in general are part of the power structure in society. Issues connected with this socio-cultural changes are outside the main concern of this study, and the immediate confines of the mass media or professional organisations.

The operations of the media are structured by many internal and external factors which could be analytically grouped into three - organisational, socio-cultural and professional. In terms of organisational factors we have to examine the structure of ownership and control, the economic and commercial imperatives of media operation, the hierarchical structure of the news organisations and access by various social groups to
the media, that is how open the media are to competing social perspectives. At the level of social structure, attention has to focus on the political context of media-state relationships, ideological, legal and cultural constraints which one way or another impinge on the way the media operate. Lastly, analysis of professional constraints would involve the education and training of journalists, professional ideologies and values. All these factors are interrelated. For instance, while the socio-cultural, historical and ideological context of news production to some extent determines how the social role of the media is conceived, journalists also enjoy some measure of autonomy. Such autonomy is however circumscribed by the structure of ownership and control, and the economic and commercial imperatives of mass media organisations. Moreover, as I pointed out in the discussion on development journalism, while the acquired professional values and ideology demand that the news be a disinterested and objective capture of social reality, the socio-economic and political peculiarities of the Third World push the journalists toward a more socially purposive conception of the news.

From the above, it is therefore clear that any fundamental movement toward change has to involve changes at all the three levels. A necessary step toward this is an adequate and comprehensive analysis of the complex relationship between the three and how such connections structure the news and other media products. The point is that any form of reform cannot be divorced from changes at the levels of the larger society. The media may be autonomous, they still exist as part of the social structure. In this case, I will argue that the real issue at stake is how information and communication policy is conceived, formulated and implemented in any particular society. Such a policy is informed by the economic, political, cultural and ideological forces at play in that society.

The main focus of this study has been to see how professional values structure the production of industrial relations news, keeping as the background socio-structural, ideological, political and organisational factors mentioned above. Within this context the recommendations set out below are made in the hope of achieving short-to-medium term reforms. It seems that certain space could be gained in a concerted effort for change. The awareness for such changes must come from the realisation of the limits and inadequacies of current professional practice. That has been the modest aim of this study.
News as currently defined is incapable of capturing the totality of social life. As this study has demonstrated, by its very nature, and mode of selection and production, news concentrates on the surface of events disconnecting them from their social context, history and the relations of power in the society. This superficiality of news, we have argued, is an outcome of the media's adherence to the notion of objectivity, translated into a rigid separation of news, defined as the facts of an event, from comments, regarded as the subjective opinions of the writer. This separation is in itself superficial and ideological. This is in the sense that news, despite its reliance on 'hard' facts contains a viewpoint. As James Curran and his colleagues have shown even a human interest story, usually considered the most neutral, non-political and non-ideological of all materials in the press,"embodies a particular way of seeing the world" (Curran, et al, 1980, p.306). It is also necessary for us to note that the mass media are part of the cultural mechanisms available in the society for managing and maintaining social order.

The point I am making is that despite the media's adherence to the notion of objectivity or because of it and other professional values, the established definition of news and the practice of journalism in general, fragments social reality, neglecting social processes needed for a comprehensive and historically meaningful understanding of events. As Cees Hamelink has observed,

... "information about the world" is presented in incoherent fragments (especially in "newscasts") or in pre-digested explanations which can only be passively filed away. In this way "information" functions as an oppressive tool since, by its manner of presentation, it keeps people from shaping their own world. The incoherent fragments preclude the holistic perspective which enables insight into the interdependence between happenings, into the involvement of one's own context, and into the possibility of acting upon the challenge thus posed. The ready-made explanations preclude the insight of the world as something problematic and changeable (Hamelink, 1976, p.120).

One way of making the news more comprehensive is to break down the uneven distinction between news and comment. This would allow journalists the opportunity to pay more attention to the presentation of more complex background materials. It would mean that media practitioners must find a way of redefining the news to incorporate in it both the immediate fore-
ground and the background historical context. It would also involve the employment of different methods of news gathering and presentation. A step toward this would include more documentation "in order to put events in their total perspective". Further journalists must carry out more investigative journalism based on thorough research "to unearth structural relationships between events which are harmful to powerful interests" (ibid, p. 121). The type of investigative journalism envisaged here is different from the current practice which seems to be predominantly concerned with unearthing corrupt practices with the main focus on individuals and the probable psychological factors (creed, wickedness, love of power) with little or no mention of structural factors. For instance, one rarely finds in such investigative reports the point that corruption is a mode of primitive capital accumulation peculiar to a particular type of production process.

The point I am making is that if the mass media are to contribute to the better understanding of social issues (as they claim or aim to do) they must be able to portray reality in a more comprehensive, coherent and holistic way. Facts must be put into the context of history and social processes. Journalists must experiment with new forms of news reporting able to incorporate social events and issues which traditionally are considered unnewsworthy. Such new forms must be more process-oriented than is the case at present.

Journalists must realise that better and more comprehensive news coverage would require an awareness that relying on the current news values cannot provide the insight needed to portray the processes of social development.

The production of news is too much concerned with news gathering than with the processing of the news, except in the sense of packaging (layout and writing style). It could be argued that the news gathering procedure is very passive; journalists in the main receive news from their sources. The news resulting from this practice, we have argued, is partial and skewed against the powerless and those who do not have a ready access to the media. We also contend that the emphasis on spot-news cannot provide a comprehensive perspective needed by members of the society so that they can intervene in how the reality of their live is constructed.
An alternative to the established practice must be more active and creative in the development of the news - instead of reacting to events largely issuing from the political arena. This would mean that journalists must be able to initiate their own enquiries and be more creative and independent in carrying out such enquiries than is the case at present. A more active and independent journalism would have to be based on different procedures and criteria for the gathering and production of news. For instance, such an alternative method must go beyond the present dependence on institutionalised and authoritative and elite sources, and seek out the views of underprivileged and the powerless who are usually the victims of the social exercise of power. It must also be more analytic and interpretative to give meaning to events. The journalist must allow himself more space to creatively intervene in the search for news and its construction. A crucial journalistic value in this regard would be relevance, not just to the concerns of powerful but to those of the powerless.

The point behind the idea here is that, as we have emphasised in this study, the current emphasis on spot-news unwittingly plays up certain issues to the neglect of others which are crucial for a better understanding of events. It also 'annihilates' (in the sense used by Gaye Tuchman, 1961) certain views. More fundamentally, objectivity and impartiality are not value-free concepts as claimed by journalists but ritualised labels for a set of rules used by journalists to justify their claims to truth and neutrality. Moreover as Golding and Elliot have pointed out, their employment by journalists "produce a body of knowledge which, lacking the dimensions (history or social process and the exercise of power) which could cope with a critical account of society, is manifestly conservative, and in the broadest sense, consensual ... (and) in which dissenting perceptions and values are made to appear peripheral or ephemeral" (Golding and Elliot, 1979, p.217).

We could also remind ourselves of the point made by James Carey that objective reporting was developed and designed "to report a secure world of politics, culture, social relations and international alignments about which there was a rather broad consensus concerning values, purposes, and loyalties ... one can be content with 'giving the facts' where there are generally accepted rules for interpreting the facts and an agreed set of political values and purposes. Today, no accepted system of interpretation exists and political values and purposes are very much in contention" (Carey, 1979, p.35).
Within this historical context, it becomes difficult for the mass media, relying on the established professional values and ideologies, to achieve a pluralism of competing voices they aim for. This becomes more so when the media enter the terrain of highly controversial and contentious issues. As Anthony Smith succinctly puts it "The whole idea of news is that it is beyond a "plurality of viewpoints"... (Smith, 1973, p.109).

Based on the above I would like to suggest that an alternative journalism practice must take a clear position on the events it is reporting. Such a position must be well informed, analytical and critical. It must be based on facts placed within the proper political-historical context.

Training

The issue raised above would, to a good extent, revolve around the professional training journalists obtain. In a sense this study has highlighted the limitations of professionalism. To that extent to implement an alternative media practice based on a redefinition of the news and its social role would mean a professional education based on a new premise or philosophy.

To many people implicit in the idea of 'journalism training' is the inculcation of technical skills in new recruits especially 'on the job'. In this regard journalism training is seen in terms of news writing, layout, sub-editing or the production of broadcast materials with some doses of basic media law and politics. Evidence of such thinking could be seen in the establishment of the Nigerian Institute of Journalism (NIJ) and training schools by some employers like the Daily Times and Nigerian Television Authority (NTA). The main emphasis of these training establishments is technical rather than academic. Even university or college training is seen in this light.

It is my contention that this type of technical training is inadequate to meet the demands of a complex society. An adequate comprehension of such complexity (to aid the journalist as an interpreter of events and not just as a chronicler or reporter), needs a formal education whose breadth and depth go beyond the acquisition of technical skills. It could of course be argued that it is not the duty of the journalist to supply answers to fundamental social problems or act as a
social scientist. Further, it could be contended that academic training could impede rather than facilitate the detached understanding of events needed by the journalist qua journalist to function as a disinterested observer and reporter of different everyday occurrences.

In response to these arguments it could be pointed out that the preference to technical training was brought about by the commercialisation of the press. According to one analyst, "corporate attitude towards newspaper journalism as something that is subject to rational commercial management may have heightened the interest of publishers in the need for a technically-skilled journalist workforce whose output would be commercially sound and predictable" (Oliver Boyd-Barrett, 1980, p. 320). He further added that the emphasis on training in the apparent neutral skills of journalism is itself a form of normative socialisation "which ignored the broader ideological arguments about the social functions of journalism, and the conflict-model of society to which such debates can give rise..." (ibid).

The present professional practice was developed to meet the commercial imperative brought about by the need of the press to satisfy an heterogeneous readership. Historically, as James Carey has pointed out, the journalist was conceived as an independent interpreter of events;

Journalism was traditionally conceived as a literary genre rather than as a species of technical writing. Journalism was not characterised merely as reporting which put the words and actions of others into simpler language, but as a fluid interpretation of action and actors, an effort to create a semantic reality that invested the ordinary with significance. A journalist traditionally induced his audience to come to terms with old realities in new ways (Carey, 1969, p. 32).

Therefore to call for a change in the training of journalists that will include an attempt at developing a broader social vision and a recognition that the society is composed of different social groups with diverse and often antagonistic interests is to call for a return to the traditional social function of journalism. For the journalist to be a credible interpreter he needs to know the social forces operating in his society. In addition, such training must be able to reveal the normative assumptions of professional ideology of objectivity, balance and other news values and their limitations and implications; that is, the unwitting manner in which
the established mode of practice supports the status quo and marginalises oppositional values and perspectives.

It could be argued that allowing for a critical perspective in the media would not necessarily lead to social change or even the democratisation of the society. Journalists only supply information, they cannot guarantee that such information will be used by the public or how. We also have to note that information alone does not and cannot alter the structure of power or the system of material reward.

Be that as it may, I would like to suggest that acquiescence to social inequalities is sometimes out of ignorance of the sources and nature of such inequalities by their victims. If the structure and institutions supporting such inequalities are to be effectively challenged, the necessary information must be made available to those who want to mount such a challenge. Hegemony is based on the effectiveness of social ideas of the ruling bloc. The struggle against this ideological dominance would involve the effective propagation and diffusion of oppositional radical ideas.

Another argument that could be raised against some of the suggestions above is that those in power and others who currently benefit more from the established mode of media practice will not allow the opening up of the media space to critical analysis. This is very likely because a change from the present monopolistic control over the definition of news and the construction of reality by the dominant groups could have some implication for the basis and exercise of power. While it will be unwise to dismiss this argument, its possibility should not preclude the struggle for change. It should serve as a pointer to how intense such a struggle would be.

As we have already pointed out, implementing these recommendations would not be easy because, in the main, it would involve the exercise of power. In the short-term, therefore, we call for a critical self-appraisal by journalists of their professional values and social assumptions. Reliance on 'nose-for-news', objectivity and such values and routine practices need to be re-examined and their short-comings acknowledged. It is not enough for Nigerian journalists and others to blame the government for all the ills of journalistic practice in the country. They must know that their own working rules are also inadequate. Journalists
must see themselves, not as mere transmitters of 'obvious' facts and information, but as interpreters of social events. Such interpretations, however unintended, have both political and ideological implications for the audience and the society at large. The journalist is a link between different social groups; a mediator of social knowledge. Journalists must also realise that the news they disseminate is a product of a particular conception of the society, for instance, news is embedded in the nature of the relationship of domination and subordination. The nature and structure of these social relations must be "revealed in order to be challenged, challenged in order to be changed" (MIR, in Mattelart and Siegelaub, op. cit. p.133).

A major problem with this suggestion is its voluntaristic nature and the assumption that individual journalists could determine the quality of the press. As James Curran has pointed out "This fails to take account of the way in which the organisation of the press constraints what journalists do and shapes even their perception of what constitutes professionalism" (Curran, 1986, p.125). However, it would appear crude to lump all journalists together or not to recognise the limits imposed on journalistic autonomy by the established work practices and structure. It is noteworthy that among journalists are some 'dissidents' whose activities have tried to go beyond the limitations imposed by the established practices and ideology. Such journalists must be recognised and supported.

We should also realise the possibility of utilising the limited space offered by the current media practice for oppositional views. As Stuart Hall recently said, the media system is a "leaky" one because it is subject to such contradictory pressures (Hall, 1986, p.60). It must be realised that news is not a totally closed system as such. It is a field of constant and continual struggle in which competing social perspectives and discourses fight for dominance and legitimacy.

Concluding Remarks

We chose to focus on industrial relations news in this study because we feel it will reveal how social conflict and opposition in the Nigerian society is reported and interpreted in the press. It is also clear that the conflicts in society will be most apparent in industrial relations
news than in other type of news. This is in the realisation that the primary source of contradictions in society is generated by the conflict between capital and labour. The inherent contradictory social perspectives in this conflict should ideally be made available to the public through the press because of its proclaimed adherence to the values of objectivity, neutrality and balance. The press is also viewed as the fourth estate of the realm. In this case, we should expect to find in the press the competing images of and ideas about the Nigerian society. In a general sense, therefore, the issue touched on in this study is the role of the press in the Nigerian society.

Further and in a more general way, it is illustrative of the more general process by which representations of reality are constructed and conveyed by the mass media. An understanding of how social events and everyday occurrences are constructed by journalists is an essential step in grasping how a dominant social view is maintained despite challenges and opposition from many quarters.

In today's world, the mass media constitute our major repositories and disseminators of social knowledge. In this case they exert considerable influence over our perception of groups, social movements and events outside our immediate experience. They have the ability to create issues and define the boundaries of debate. They are also able to organise opinions and develop world views by providing structures of understanding in which isolated and unarticulated attitudes and beliefs may be fitted. In that sense they signal how events and issues are to be decoded by the audience and readers. Their interpretation of events and the symbols and collective values they provide, while they may predominantly express a particular social perspective, transcend social and cultural boundaries. In other words, the mass media address an heterogeneous audience and readers.

This potential power of the mass media to define reality makes it important that we subject them and what they produce to critical and systematic scrutiny and analysis. It is also important for us to understand the factors, interests, considerations and assumptions which collectively influence the production of news and other products.

Our aim in this study has been to understand these constraints
which are implicitly accepted by journalists as 'facts-of-life'. We have tried to offer a critical analysis of the nature and likely implications of a particular media product - industrial relations news. The main conclusion is that, and here lies the significance of the study, the Nigerian press did not offer an adequate and historically informed analysis of the nature and source of inequality in the Nigerian society. This, as we have said above, is not a deliberate act but the outcome of a production process governed by certain professional ideologies and social assumptions, and the reliance on raw materials which are already ideological in that they express a particular world view. It needs to be stressed, however, that this ideological character of the news is not necessarily the result of conspiracies organised by the power elite, media owners, journalists or other interest groups to manipulate or control the news. Rather, one explanation we offered is the ready access to the media enjoyed by those in powerful and privileged institutional positions. They are the primary definers of issues and agenda. This is the result of two aspects of the news production process - the pressure for timely and immediate reports and the professional demands for objectivity and impartiality. The media thus tend to reproduce symbolically the structure of power in the society.

In this study we have seen how attention was focused on government ministers and labour officials to the almost total neglect of ordinary workers and members of the public. One outcome of this was the image of drama and personality clashes between labour and government officials. Further, there was the stress on intrasigence and irrationality displayed by some individuals. The important point about this type of explanation is not just that it may serve to distract attention from the more substantive and fundamental issues. Rather, it offers a model of industrial relations analogous to personal relations. In other words, a conflict having its origin in government policies over many years, and the kind of society and economy we live in, is reduced to personal petulance. The solution, this type of argument goes, is not to be found in a restructuring of society but in goodwill among the actors. This, we have argued, begs the real question of whether industrial relations are mainly a question of understanding and goodwill rather than of structured inequalities and the exercise of power. If the media explanation could be restricted to the level of attitudes and emotions, the alternative explanation based on socio-historical and economic origin of conflict is
avoided or at best marginalised. Social morality becomes equated with personal virtue.

Further, we argued that the reliance of journalists on professional values and ideology of objectivity produced an account of industrial relations which is partial, not in the sense of the traditional understanding of 'bias' (sometimes based on the idea of conspiracy to deceive or manipulate the news) but in the sense of conferring legitimacy on one group rather than on the other in a conflict situation. From our findings we suggested that the government was accorded better legitimacy than the trade union. This was indicated in many ways; the fact that union activities during the two periods studied received more coverage during the two strikes than before and after, the unions are often quoted more than the government or the employers and that the unions had more adjectives applied to them than the latter two. In other words, the press either found it necessary to call on the unions to account for their actions (mainly defined as disruptive and irrational) or to indicate to readers what they should think about the workers and unions.

Moreover, through the unwitting selective 'promotion' of certain issues to the neglect of others, the press tends to delegitimise the actions and demands of the workers and the union movement. The issue which, in the main, formed the context within which the workers' demand and actions were discussed largely presented a negative image of the labour movement. On the other hand, against the articulated ideology of national interest the government had a more sympathetic and supportive coverage, especially if the image of the government as an institution is distinguished from what the press regarded as the blunder and levity of individual ministers and politicians. We argued that this is the outcome of equating government actions and pronouncements with the 'general will' or the national interest.

Other channels used by the press to signal a preferred reading of the situation reported included (a) the press penchance for the immediate or spot-news which mainly concentrated on the dramatic and the visible 'surface' of events, in this case the effects of strikes and pay increase to the virtual neglect of the social origin of industrial conflict; (b) the mediating roles of objectivity and balance; (c) the utilization of a relatively narrow spectrum of views in media debate on the issues, and
lastly (d) a collectivist consensual ideology or perspective which fails to recognise group or class division in society. The implication of the last point is that as an agent of socialisation and public forum, the press contributes to the construction of social and political consensus. This can be illustrated by the insistence of the editorials studied that the workers should subsume their interest under the national developmental efforts. Development or the national interest was regarded as apolitical, non-problematic and class-neutral.

The findings of this study are in line with the argument that the mass media help to contain the scope and impact of social conflict by their tendency to keep alternative radical views on inequality to the margin of public debate.
APPENDIX A
CODING SCHEDULE

1. Case No. Paper 1
   Year 2
   Month 3
   Item No. 4

2. Total column inches (including headline and pictures) 6

3. Picture side (in column inches) 8

4. Picture caption.

5. Description of picture.

6. Cartoon caption.

7. Description of cartoon.


9. Lead (first sentence)

10. Further notes and summary of story (continued on the last page).

11. Type of story
   News story 1
   Editorial 2
   Feature article/News Analysis 3
   Columnist 4
   Letter/public opinion 5
12. Position of story

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main lead story</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other front page story</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back page</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour page</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News/inside page</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter/public opinion</td>
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13. Main source of news

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statement/speech</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication/pamphlet</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporter's interview</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Press conference</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Other</td>
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14. The Main Speakers

<table>
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<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordinary worker</td>
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<tr>
<td>State agencies</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politicians</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politicians</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIP</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of public</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Others (specify)</td>
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15. Main Subject Matter

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16. Parties Involved (Yes 1, No 2)

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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Employers/management</td>
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<tr>
<td>State agencies/government</td>
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<tr>
<td>Political party in power</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opposition party</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The rich, the powerful, VIP</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The poor, the masses, the unemployed</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traders, market women</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of the public</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
17. Actor's Comment


   Negative

   A. Trade Union/Worker

   B. Government/State Agencies
| C. Employers | 56 |
|             | 57 |
|             | 58 |
|             | 59 |
|             | 60 |
|             | 61 |
|             | 62 |
|             | 63 |

| D. Politicians/VIPs/The Rich | 64 |
|                             | 65 |
|                             | 66 |
|                             | 67 |
|                             | 68 |
|                             | 69 |
|                             | 70 |
|                             | 71 |

| E. Member of the Public | 1 |
|                        | 2 |
|                        | 3 |
|                        | 4 |
|                        | 5 |
|                        | 6 |
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<td>B. Government/State Agencies</td>
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<td>C. Employers</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. Politicians/VIP/The Rich</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. Member of the Public</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
19. Causes of Industrial Action

20. Effect of Industrial Action

21. Effect of Pay Increase

22. Context Theme
23. Solution Offered
APPENDIX B
CODING INSTRUCTION

Item 1: Case No.

(a) Paper
Daily Times 0
West African Pilot 1
Morning Post 2
New Nigeria 3
Nigeria Tribune 4
Daily Sketch 5
Nigeria Observer 6

(b) Year
1964 - 1
1974 - 2
1975 - 3

(c) Month
April 0
May 1
June 2
July 3
August 4
September 5
November 6
December 7
January 8
February 9

Item 14: Main Speakers

1. Trade Union leader/official. Any elected or appointed official of a trade union or central labour organisation at national, regional/state or company level.

2. Ordinary worker - any worker or union member who is not an official. It must be clearly stated in the story that he is a worker.

3. State Agencies - the government, ministries, police, military, state agencies and institutions - price control board, wage tribunal, governors, head of state, prime ministers, premier, ministers, civil servants, e.g. permanent secretary, board members.
4. Politicians - parliamentarians, members and officials of political parties. Must be speaking as such and must not be a minister or board member.

5. Employers - will include employers, management, bosses both in general and in particular enterprise, company officials, e.g. public relations officer. Employers associations, shareholders (must be specific) directors. Must be speaking and identified as in any of these categories.

6. VIPs - religious leaders, traditional leaders, leaders of civic organisations, the well-to-do, university lecturers. Must not be identified as in any of the above categories.

7. Members of the public - traders, ordinary people, the poor (distinguish from workers if explicitly stated as such).

8. Others, e.g. students, the sick, farmers.

Item 16: Parties Involved

1. Trade Union/Worker - will include workers, the working class, trade unionists, industrial unions, central union organisations, shop stewards and other work place representatives.

2. Employers/Management - as above in item 14.


4. Political Party in Power - at the federal level, i.e. NPC and its allies (must be speaking not as a government representative or officer).

5. Opposition Party - other parties not in the federal alliance, e.g. Action Group.

6. The rich, the powerful, VIP - as defined above in item 14.

7. The poor, the masses - any specific mention as a general category.

8. Traders, market women - those engaged in petty trading generally.

9. Members of the public - the old and other vulnerable groups, farmers.

10. Others - tax payers, all of us, the nation/country.

Item 17: Actor's Comment

1. Trade Union Official and ordinary worker - as defined in item 16 above.
2. State Agencies - as defined in item 14 above.
3. Employers - as in item 14 above.
5. Newspaper columnist, feature articles, personal columns.
7. Trader, Market Women.
8. VIP, religious leaders, traditional leaders, heads of civil organisations identified as such.
9. Member of the public - ordinary man on the street, consumers, hospital patients, farmers.
10. Others - those not identified according to any of the above categories.

Comment (see table)

Code any making sure the number corresponds to the party that made it. If any of the above actors is quoted but did not specifically make any of the first twelve comments code other/quoted.

Item 18: Characterisation of Parties (see list)

Trade Union/Worker - as already defined above.
Government/State Agencies - as already defined.
Employers - as already defined.
Politicians/VIPs - as already defined.
Members of the Public - as already defined.

Item 19: Causes of Industrial Action (see list)

This generally answers the question, why do workers go on industrial action, i.e. the reasons given in a story for an industrial action (strike, go-slow, work-to-rule etc.) either specific, projected, threatened, current or speculative.

Item 20: Effect of Industrial Action (see list)

It answers what are the likely or actual effect of industrial action as broadly defined either actual, projected, past, current or speculative.
Item 21: Effect of Pay Increase (see list)

This could be connected with a pay increase already made, intended, under negotiation or just demanded by the workers/union.

Item 22: Context Theme (see list)

Code only for clear and explicit reference to any of the themes listed.

Item 23: Solution Offered

This refers to how an industrial action should or could be resolved. Code clear and explicit suggestions according to the list.
APPENDIX C
CODING LIST

Item 15 : Subject Matter

1. Projected industrial action, strike or threat of such including preparation, negotiation and likely effect.

2. Current industrial action (or one that has just ended) its cause and effect, negotiation or statement on it.

3. End of industrial action, return to work.

4. Pay claims, including offer, award, acceptance or rejection.

5. Economic context of industrial relations, e.g. unemployment, cost of living, price control.

6. Government statement on economic policy on industrial relation including any specific reference or statement on a strike, work-to-rule.

7. Political statement - pro-government (must be on industrial relations in general but excluding any particular industrial action).

8. Political statement - anti-government (must be on industrial relations in general but excluding any particular industrial action).

9. Activities or reports of industrial tribunals, wage commissions.

10. Activities of the police or security agencies specifically on industrial relations.

11. Relations between unions - negative.

12. Relations between unions - positive.

13. Union organised events.


15. Other.

List for Item 18

Negative

1. Angry, bitter, furious, annoyed, threatening.


3. Illegal, unpatriotic, against national interest, sabotage, unconstitutional.
4. Irresponsible, selfish, irrational, uncooperative, not ready to negotiate.
5. Incited by outsiders, being used.
6. Politically motivated.
7. Ethnically/tribally motivated.
8. Lazy, unproductive, indolent, inefficient, incompetent.
9. Unsympathetic, lacks understanding, not interested in workers plight/national development.
10. Uneducated, poor leadership, poor management, ignorant.
11. Weak, not firm, powerless, divided.
15. Poor/bad labour policies/law, oppressive.
16. Ill-judged, ill-timed, unwise, foolish, short sighted.
17. Dishonest, lying, unfaithful, deceitful.

Positive

1. Responsible, reasonable, rational, cooperative, realistic.
2. United, showing solidarity; strong.
4. Good/experienced leadership, good management.
5. Poorly paid/treated, poor working conditions.
7. Upholding law and order, rule of law.
8. Restraint, sensible, correct.
10. Not exploitative, good pay to workers.
11. Ready to negotiate/pay new wages.
12. Happy, joyous.
List for Item 19: Causes of Industrial Action

1. Inflation.
2. Political motives.
3. Government economic policies, oil boom.
5. Wasteful spending, ostentatious living.
6. Corruption.
7. The gap between the rich and the poor.
8. Employers' reluctance to pay/negotiate.
9. Militant labour leaders/workers, non-cooperation by unionists, poor union leadership.
10. Bad management, poor communication, poor industrial relations, incompetence.
11. Intra-union dispute.
12. Outside influence (political party, ex-politicians, communists).
15. Other.

List for Item 20: Effect of Industrial Action

1. Inflation.
2. Increase wage bill.
3. Low investment, fear by investors, reduce economic activities/development/loss of production.
4. Political instabilities; chaos.
5. Suffering by members of the public.
6. Damage to plants, disturbances, violence.
7. Lay-offs, dismissals, problems to workers.
8. Undermine government policies.
List for Item 21: Effect of Pay Increase

1. Inflation, higher rents.
2. Unemployment, redundancies, company closure.
3. Wasteful spending by workers, ostentatious living.
4. Slows down economic development.
5. Armed-robbery, burglary, social vices.
6. Rural - urban migration.
7. Widens income gaps.
8. Problems for non-wage earners, members of the public.

List for Item 22: Context Theme

1. National unity, peace, stability, national interest.
2. Discipline, law and order.
3. Economic development, investment, industrial peace.
4. Outside influence, i.e. non-labour influence - foreign or local.
5. Ethnicity, tribalism, North/South struggle.
7. Inflation, cost and standard of living.
8. Unemployment, redundancies, job loss.
9. Labour unity, rivalry.
10. Quality of labour-management/industrial relations (bad, good).
12. Counter inflation measures/social services.
15. Public suffering/hardship.
17. Increase wages, wage demands.
18. Past industrial protest (e.g. 1945 strike).
19. End of strike, return to work.
20. Corruption.

List for Item 23: Solution Offered

1. Return to work.
2. Negotiate with government/employers.
4. Establish minimum wage standard.
5. Change economic policy, better management of the economy.
6. Ingenisation, nationalisation.
7. Increase production, faster industrialisation.
9. A better wage policy, reorganise industrial relations practice.
10. Accept new wage structure, government should pay new scale to all workers.
11. Reorganise the trade union movements, educate workers.
13. Enforce trade union laws.
14. Curb inflation, enforce price control.
15. Encourage agriculture, develop rural areas.
16. Stop rural migration.
17. Better working conditions.
18. Better and cheaper social services, e.g. transport, health.
19. Pay (better) fringe benefits, e.g. rent subsidies, tax loans and allowances.
20. Establish cooperative shops.
22. Government should consult employers on economy/labour/wage policies.

23. Workers, employers and government should cooperate on policies.


25. Let workers participate in government.

26. Dismissal.

27. Go to industrial tribunal/court, appoint a panel of inquiry.

28. Go on strike or continue on-going strike/work-to-rule/go slow.

29. Exercise patience, restraint, don't strike.

30. Government should protect workers.

31. Others.
### APPENDIX D : CODING LIST FOR ITEM 17

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