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**INFORMATION IN THE INTERREGNUM:
THE PRESS, STATE AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN STRUGGLES FOR HEGEMONY,
ZIMBABWE 1980-1990**

by

RICHARD GERARD SAUNDERS, B.A., M.A.

A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of
the requirements of the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Political Science

**Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario
December 1991**

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The undersigned hereby recommend to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
acceptance of the thesis,

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Abstract

The first ten years of Zimbabwean independence were marked by intense political struggles within the state and civil society over the remodelling of the inherited minority-oriented social infrastructure. This study looks at an important component of that infrastructure, the domestic press, and examines how it served both as a terrain for these struggles, and as an object of them. In this dual capacity, the press' shifting, tension-ridden relations with the state and ruling party, ZANU(PF), are seen to reflect deeper lines of political fracturing borne of ZANU(PF)'s increasing attempts to consolidate its political, moral and intellectual authority -- hegemony -- throughout the social formation.

The dissertation investigates government print media policy, its implementation and political repercussions in the 1980s. The focus falls initially on the "public" press structures created by the government in 1981, namely the Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust, and its primary responsibility, the Zimbabwe Newspapers (1980) Limited newspaper chain. It is argued that the "neutral, free and nationally-responsible" public press envisaged by the government in 1981 did not materialise, having been hindered on the one hand by financial, management and political weaknesses; and on the other, by ZANU(PF)'s emerging hegemonic ambitions.

These underlying dynamics of the public press are seen to be corrosive not only of its development role, in providing a national space for popular information and debate, but also of its political utility to ZANU(PF) as an instrument of the party's hegemonic programme. Ultimately the public media are portrayed as counterproductive elements of political mobilisation for the ruling party.

In contrast, the growth and increasing popularity of the large sector of the private press, based in and speaking to (and often on behalf of) a vibrant civil society, are seen as posing a vital challenge to the public media order erected by ZANU(PF). It is held that the diverse collection of media in the private press came to serve as a new locus of social and political authority in the national media, particularly in the late 1980s in a period of mounting popular dissatisfaction with the state and government. This development cast in doubt the professional and political credibility of the public press, and more broadly, the social authority and hegemonic ambitions of ZANU(PF).

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This dissertation was researched, thought and re-thought, written and rewritten in Zimbabwe. I therefore owe profound thanks to my colleagues, comrades and friends in Harare and elsewhere who kept it moving along, with their large injections of inspiration and support -- political, logistical and moral.

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Finally -- in the finest of African (and Maritimes) tradition -- the family. Were it not for the constant support, criticism and common sense of my parents and many siblings, this dissertation would never have been taken to its conclusion. Special thanks are due to Ron, who for six years has acted without complaint (and with better things to do) as my personal banker, secretary, hotelier and stress therapist; and to Eileen, Ross and the children, for so much of the same.

But in the final instance, it is Mary and Wilf who are responsible for this particular historical bloc of forces -- so it is to them that I offer my warmest thanks.

If the ruling class has lost its consensus, i.e. is no longer "leading" but only "dominant", exercising coercive force alone, this means precisely that the great masses have become detached from their traditional ideologies, and no longer believe, what they used to believe previously... The crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear.

Antonio Gramsci, *State and Civil Society*

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AAPS	African Association of Political Scientists
ADMA	Advertising Media Association of Zimbabwe
CAZ	Conservative Alliance of Zimbabwe
CFU	Commercial Farmers' Union
CIO	Central Intelligence Organisation
MMT	Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust
MOI	Ministry of Information, Posts and Telecommunications
Nwico	New World Information and Communication Order
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OCCZIM	Organisation of Collective Co-operatives in Zimbabwe
RF	Rhodesian Front¹
RPP	Rhodesian Printing & Publishing Company
Sadcc	Southern African Development Coordination Conference
SAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
Zanu	Zimbabwe African National Union -- Patriotic Front
Zapu	Patriotic Front-Zimbabwe African People's Union
ZBC	Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation
ZCTU	Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions
Ziana	Zimbabwe Inter-Africa News Agency
Zimco	Zimbabwe Institute of Mass Communication²
Zimpapers	Zimbabwe Newspapers (1980) Limited
Zis	Zimbabwe Information Services
Zum	Zimbabwe Unity Movement

Notes on Acronyms

1. The party retained this name until June 1981, when it maintained its acronym but exchanged "Republican" for "Rhodesia". In July 1984 the initials "RF" were dropped, when the party was renamed the "Conservative Alliance of Zimbabwe", CAZ. From 1964 to early 1987 the party was headed by Ian Smith. With constitutional changes in 1987 eliminating the twenty seats reserved for whites in the Legislature (fifteen of which were won by CAZ in the 1985 white-roll election), CAZ was removed as a party from the House of Assembly.
2. In 1983 became the Division of Mass Communication, Harare Polytechnic.

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Introduction

In the final analysis, the mass media in any country is an instrument of the dominant social forces in that particular country... In independent Zimbabwe, the formerly oppressed masses have now become the dominant social force. The media should reflect their wishes, and help them consolidate their political gains as a result of achieving national independence.

Prime Minister Robert Mugabe, July 1981¹

This study examines the problematic construction of political, social and moral authority, or "hegemony", in the new society which emerged with the birth of the state of Zimbabwe in April 1980. It is an historical investigation of how leading social forces go about meeting the challenge of establishing consensual authority and imposing domination, while accommodating the requisites of national development under conditions which often are hostile to this task. As a means of investigating the mechanisms, dynamics, tensions and consequences of the struggle for hegemony, the dissertation focuses on a vital component of social leadership, the national print media. It is argued throughout that the Zimbabwean press, with its disjunctures of private and public components, and its widespread development and growth in the 1980s, is exemplary of the emerging social contradictions and struggles for hegemony which have characterised national politics in the post-independence period.

It is held that the decade of the 1980s saw an oscillation in the patterns of both formal political integration and, in broader terms, what is usually referred to by the paradigms of traditional social science as "nation-building". While the old racial order

of Rhodesia had not been entirely eradicated, so too was it the case, that the new order of Zimbabwe was slow in emerging in a coherent, consistent fashion. The explanation for this observation is seen to turn on the question of the unfulfilled hegemonic project of the politically dominant fractions within the country, represented most directly in the ruling party, the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front [Zanu], which since independence in April 1980 has formed the government of the country by itself and in combination with its main political competitor, the Patriotic Front-Zimbabwe African People's Union [Zapu], and other smaller political groupings.²

This analysis implies two significant departures from the mainstream of commentary on Zimbabwean political economy. First, with regard to hegemony, the study entails a reassessment of both what constitutes social authority, and how it is implemented in practice. Here, the theoretical innovations of Antonio Gramsci are employed. The Gramscian approach holds that the formation of national identities, political "common sense" and the whole order of thoughts, practices, rituals and patterns of social behaviour which help determine them are intimately bound up with and limited by the evolving constellations of social class and class interests emergent from the organisation of production. It sees the construction of any particular national identity, or common-sensical social "authority", in relation to wider tendencies of class and class interests resonant in the social structure as a whole; that is, in the realms of the state and civil society. Using this approach, this dissertation argues that any hegemonic project on the part of Zanu and other political groups was confronted

by the array of social fractions which crystallised and slowly consolidated their organisational and political bases in the 1980s.

The second innovation of this study concerns the narrowed case study consideration of the national print media and their role in the political process. Using Gramsci, the formal and informal institutions of civil society -- and particularly the terrain of the media -- are investigated with a view to their placement in struggles for social leadership. More traditional discourses on the media in Zimbabwe, against which this dissertation was in some measure conceived as a response, dwell on the counterposition of vaguely defined categories (for example, "press freedom" and "media responsibility") without systematic reference to the array of conditions and structures which determine the limitations and placement of media as social agents. Most of these populist appropriations are keen to compare and contrast optimistically the Rhodesian "unpopular" with the Zimbabwean "mass-democratic" media.³ Inside Zimbabwe this rather uncritical approach has typified the popular debate on the media since independence.

In contradistinction, this study argues that such populist appropriations of the role of the Zimbabwean press fail to uncover the social and political undercurrents of the media's development; and indeed, have helped to sustain, as popular interpretations, the potency and viability of some media infrastructures -- such as the newspapers of the government-dominated Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust -- which otherwise could be seen to be anti-popular in content and practice. To get at the deeply rooted political underpinnings of the press, it is argued here, attention must be

paid to the nature of press ownership and control, the material and political infrastructural boundaries within which media organs function and the character of linkages between these media and the constituencies within civil society to which they minister.

These priorities can be addressed fully only if the media are considered within the context of the social class configurations of state and civil society, and the dynamics of social power contained therein. Once these benchmarks have been identified and ascertained, and only then, can the press -- as the most direct, structured "organic" interface between the space of public consciousness and different social fractions -- be properly situated and analysed as both the terrain and object of generalizable social struggles. It is this nexus linking the realm of the media, the space of civil society, the activities and programmes of the state and ruling party, and underlying social struggles for hegemony, which renders the dissertation and its regional case study of the press and communication policy in Zimbabwe a fundamentally political one.

Public and Private Poles of Power: Themes of an Argument about the Press

The essential grounds of argumentation maintained throughout this study, are that the heterogeneous and tension-ridden nature of the Zimbabwean social formation pre-empted the coherent elaboration of a hegemonic programme by Zanu and

secondary socio-political entities in the 1980s. While it is acknowledged that the leading social role of the ruling party was a tangible reality at the outset of independence, and that this fact facilitated Zanu's early construction of a range of institutions and structures in the state and in the interstices of civil society supportive of the party's hegemonic pretensions; it is also held that the potency of these organs of social organisation was not a durable one in the face of rising social tensions, which were manifested in intensifying popular demands "from below" that Zanu concretely implement its enunciated mass-popular political programme.

As social fractions in civil society gradually took on the responsibility of organisational and political mobilisation independently of the state and ruling party, new nodal points of political and social contention emerged out of the initial mass-oriented rhetoric of Zanu's independence political platform. By the end of the 1980s, the ruling party's own ideological tenets of socialism, rural development, popular democracy and committed, clean management, stood as key weapons of political attack against government and ruling party, in the hands of a diverse grassroots constituency made coherent by an abiding, loose programme calling for popular, mass-participatory democracy in the decision-making process. With its own distinctive political rhetoric turned against it, and the domination by petty bourgeois social fractions of key sectors of the party and state, Zanu's status as a potentially national-popular, leading social institution was more endangered at the end of its first decade in power, than at its outset.

This study argues that a significant element in the deconstruction of Zanu's social leadership was the national print media. In this regard, the terrain of the press is seen as exemplary of wider social tensions and political developments in the state and civil society, for two main reasons. First, the same cleavages of public/private society which figured so prominently in Zanu's problematic administration of the national political economy -- that is, in the party's stated ambition of building a socialist society on the back of a blossoming neo-colonial, minority-controlled capitalist infrastructure -- were replicated in the sphere of the press, where state-regulated and private (and, typically, white-owned) print media existed side-by-side. Secondly, the social, political and juridical conditions of existence of the national press together created a situation whereby certain components of the print media took on the guise of organic intelligentsia, functioning directly and indirectly on behalf and behest of different social fractions. In this sense, nodal points of political articulation in the media were established for a variety of competing, historic blocs of social forces rooted in the social formation.

Like its economy, Zimbabwe's press is arguably the most intensively and extensively developed in the southern African region north of the Limpopo.⁴ Since 1980, it has certainly been the fastest-growing, the number of regular publications having more than tripled in the first six years of independence.⁵ That development has occurred mainly in the private sector press, although there was significant expansion of what became the public print media with government's indirect 1981 buy-out of the country's only national newspaper chain. Both sectors mirror the wider

political programmes of competing class fractions. On the one hand, the launching by government of the Mass Media Trust as an "experiment" in national press management embodied Zanu's project of penetrating civil society with the aim of enhancing its social authority from "above" and "below"; on the other, the remodelling of inherited print media, and the establishment of new ones, by different civil organisations represented an attempt by parts of civil society to create new, autonomous political discourses inside of Zanu's new social order.

In the latter regard, it is vital to underscore the similarity of the state's mediation of the private sector press, and the entire commercial private sector (of which it usually formed a part): in both instances, both were left to operate relatively unmolested, in deference to Zanu's political policy of "reconciliation", and economic policy of private sector-led development. Crucially, the juridical status of the private print media was not altered at independence. No legislated barriers or conditions barring or governing the publication of material in Zimbabwe, outside of those relating to pornography, public decency, racist incitation and national security, were erected. If anything, there has been a relative lifting of restrictions since 1980 (with some exceptions, as will be seen) owing above all to the new government's dispensing with official censorship and, notably, the corps of censors which had worked openly in the Smith regime's Ministry of Information.⁶

In short, the state has not availed itself of any constitutional measures allowing it consistent and direct regulation of the press -- as it has done in the realm of the broadcast media, which operate as a parastatal under the immediate supervision of the

Ministry of Information. As a result, the private media in Zimbabwe have flourished, restricted primarily by inadequate supplies of materials (like newsprint), shortages of foreign currency, rising production costs and the limited size of the national media market and advertising revenue. This relative freedom of manoeuvre has enabled the establishment of a constellation of heterogeneous media, alongside the consolidation of a similarly heterogeneous collection of emergent and emerged social fractions in civil society. They operated parallel to a set of media institutions established by Zanu under the Mass Media Trust and the state, led by the Zimbabwe Newspapers group, but also including the Zimbabwe Inter-Africa News Agency, Zimbabwe Information Services and Zimbabwe Institute of Mass Communication.

This study contends that this array of private and public media became intimately entangled in Zanu's struggle for consensual social authority in the 1980s, and contributed directly to the undermining of the ruling party's position. This happened for several reasons related to the internal functioning of "Zanu's" media, the activities of the private press and the changing nature of civil society. In the first case, the retention of commercial viability as a modus operandi in most of the apparatus of the Mass Media Trust's media foreclosed the sustainable possibility of the transition to a mass-oriented, mass-accessible public press infrastructure; a fact which, along with openly partisan management at Zimpapers in particular and the failure of the Trust experiment in "neutral" editorial control and co-ordination, did much to render the public media "unpopular" in form and content. Secondly, the more resolute and direct representation of community social groups in the private

sector media gave more authentic voice to the specific interests and programmes of political entities outside of (and often competing with) the ruling party. Thirdly, the crystallisation of class cleavages, and their institutionalisation throughout the 1980s via the mushrooming and reform of civic and occupational associations, provided fertile ground for any media which aimed to criticise and alter Zanu's governing programme.

Nearing the end of the decade, it is argued, these factors combined to serve as a foundation for a direct attack from below, on Zanu's self-ascribed "unassailable" leadership status. The series of political struggles in the media which erupted onto the formally political terrain in the "Willowgate" crisis of 1988-1989 demonstrated, more than anything else, the resurgent vibrancy of Zimbabwean "mass society", and the deep fragility of Zanu's standing as the primary social authority outside of the state. It is seen as no coincidence that "Willowgate" -- and later, Zanu's 1990 lifting of the longstanding State of Emergency and abandonment of its one-party state ambitions -- were the direct, palpable outcomes of a popular activism on the part of sections of the national print media. This is not to say that contemporary Zimbabwean political life turns on the ground of the national press; but rather, that the print media have been structurally conditioned and placed within the social formation in a way which has facilitated and sometimes provoked their crucial intervention in the space of national political life.

Means of Procedure

Given the diversity of the centres of social and political power at the historical core of this study, the scope of the analysis is, of necessity, as variegated as the nature of the sources with which it works.⁷ Such is the nature of all investigations into the concrete mechanisms of hegemonic programmes. Here, the unavoidable problem one confronts is the essentially disguised, derivative, unapparent manner in which hegemonic projects and agendas typically are presented. Hegemonic projects are identified most easily when they do not succeed; but in the interregnum between success and failure (which is always only tentative, in any case), their location and assessment is less straightforward. Still, following Gramsci, it is possible to chart out the likely (multiple) poles of nascent social leadership and consensus-building in the Zimbabwean social formation, perhaps just as astronomers "guesstimate" the locale of seemingly invisible "black holes" in the universe. The key to mapping, in both cases, is to pay close attention to the ebbs and flows of tensions and tendential forces running across the terrain which is under investigation.

As Gramsci correctly argues, the base point for any study of political life is the well-spring of social relations which nourish it. In this regard, this study begins by examining what is meant by such social relations, and how, at the level of theory, they can be seen to condition the day-to-day practical space of politics, including the activities of institutions and individuals on the terrain of the media. This theoretical inquiry is then used to dissect the underlying social forces and dynamics of the

Zimbabwean social formation in the 1980s (Chapter 2), as attention is focused on the Rhodesian inheritance and the Zimbabwean reality of the state and civil society, and Zanu's emerging, contradictory political programme. The aim of that discussion is to identify central nodes of political contention, and the social fractions which animate them historically. The argument is that Zanu presided over the differentiation -- not the unification -- of class fractional interests, and that indeed, the gaps separating the popular quarters (Zanu's claimed constituency) from leading minority fractions and the ruling party actually widened in the 1980s. This analysis serves as a precursor to the investigation of Zanu's relations with civil society through "its" public media, and through its dealings with the private press, in the context of an inherited media infrastructure skewed to entertain minority social interests, and biased in favour of a commandist state and ruling party (Chapter 3).

In looking at the creation of the public print media sector, and in particular, the Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust (Chapter 4), the study examines how Zanu subtly structured its leading role into the nominally "neutral and autonomous" national press, relying heavily on the ruling party's direct access to the Ministry of Information. Further evidence of partisan intervention in the press is found in the emerging order of editorial and managerial production at the most important of the public media, the Zimbabwe Newspapers chain (Chapter 5 and Chapter 6). Together, these discrete discussions of the Trust and the public press institutions operating under its juridical authority demonstrate the complexity of the task of hegemony facing Zanu, and the

contradictions it faced and created anew while attempting to consolidate its political and social leadership.

The political-hegemonic implications of tensions within the public media necessitates an examination of the private sector press (Chapter 7) -- the significant "other" in Zanu's battle to impose its consensus within the media. The discussion here first seeks to establish the ties that bind certain "politicised" segments in civil society with their respective articulating voice in the press, and then demonstrates how, when and why these media came to intervene in the space of public consciousness via political debate, criticism of the status quo and so forth. If it can be shown that variously organised groups in civil society employed the media either directly or indirectly to commit their own perspective to the public realm, or that some mass-popular sections of the private media were employed by such groups, then it can be established that the private media was a locus of struggle between the state and ruling party, and different sections of civil society.

The political impact of such "struggles" can best be gauged by examining the reaction of the state and ruling party directly, in terms of policy adjustments in the public press and responses by the state and ruling party to the critical private press; and indirectly, via the reaction of the public press to private sector moves. This exercise involves the investigation of different instances of inter-media struggles centred on political themes thrown up by wider political contradictions in the state and civil society (Chapter 8). If the struggle for hegemony is most clearly seen in the episodic opening and closing of cracks in broad social agendas, this chapter's

examination of the waxing and waning of political battles in the media can be considered a concrete appraisal of the trajectory of Zanu's hegemonic project in the 1980s. What this investigation shows is that the social, political, moral and cultural "authority" of the public media infrastructure was severely undermined by the advance and proliferation of a critical private sector press in the 1980s. At the same time, socio-economic and political tensions in the social formation contributed to the decline of Zanu and its state as the unique national-popular authority on social and political issues requiring adjudication and mediation from above.

The concluding discussion draws on these latter findings and, returning to Gramsci, speculates about the implications of Zimbabwe's fragmented society for Zanu's seemingly "failed" public media policy. Within the context of the organic-intellectual role forged open by certain media struggles of the 1980s, the possibility of a renewed national-democratic, mass-popular, participatory intervention in the space of the public and private media will be considered.

References

1. Robert Mugabe, "PM Opens Zimbabwe News Agency", Zimbabwe Press Statement 486/81/RH, 1 July, 1981.
2. A brief note on nomenclature. The official name of the ruling party of Zimbabwe headed by President Robert Mugabe since (effectively) 1976 is the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front, or Zanu(PF). From its founding in 1963 as a splinter group of the Zimbabwe African People's Union (or Zapu) until 1976, Zanu(PF) was known simply as the Zimbabwe African National Union (Zanu). With the formation of the war-time coalition with Joshua Nkomo's Zapu, Zanu attached "PF" to its name to designate the coalition party's differences from the Ndabaningi Sithole-led rump of the old Zanu, called "Zanu (Sithole)". At the same time Zapu was relabelled PF-Zapu, and later this was commonly shortened to "Patriotic Front" or "PF", upon the splitting up of the coalition before the election of 1980. For purposes of clarity here, Zanu(PF) will be referred to throughout as Zanu, and PF-Zapu as Zapu, unless exceptional usage is employed.
3. The most notable independent examples of this populist stance are to be found in Elaine Windrich's The Mass Media in the Struggle for Zimbabwe (Gwelo: Mambo, 1981), and Julie Frederikse's None But Ourselves: Masses vs. Media in the Making of Zimbabwe (Johannesburg: Ravan, 1982). Given their populist politics it is interesting to note that both authors are American. Other early accounts of the post-1980 Zimbabwean experience were to continue in the same vein of nascent optimism: see for example, Pachedu Francis Zvinavashe, "The Transformation and Orientation of the Mass Media System to Meet the Realities of Zimbabwe" (Stefan Gheorghiu Academy, Faculty of Journalism, Bucharest: B.A. thesis, 1982); and Helmut Osang, "Kommunikationspolitik im Ubergang von der Kolonialen zur Nach-Kolonialen Gesellschaft Eine Untersuchung am Beispiel, Zimbabwe 1980-1982" (Universitat Salzburg: Ph.D. thesis, 1984).
4. Francis P. Kasoma, "The State of the Media in SADCC Countries", Paper presented at Nordic/SADCC Media Seminar, Harare, 1988, p. 21. See Appendix A.
5. See Appendix B. In 1981 a Government survey showed 41 regular publications in production in Zimbabwe including newspapers, magazines, in-house journals and trade bulletins. (Zimbabwe Ministry of Information, "Publications in Zimbabwe", mimeo, 1981). These ranged from the weekly Sunday Mail newspaper (circulation 90,000), through items such as the domestically-focused news and entertainment magazines Parade & Foto-Action and Prize! (monthlies, both 24,000), to the business weekly Financial Gazette (6,000). The ensuing period saw the rapid growth of readership and circulation figures for most publications. By 1986 there were at least

133 titles registered with the General Post Office, and vastly expanded print runs for many of those already in existence.

6. According to the Ministry of Information there were fourteen censors employed by the Ministry at the time of independence, none of whom were kept on in that capacity after 1980. See N. Shamuyarira in, Parliamentary Debates - House of Assembly, vol.5, no.19, 15 July 1982: cols. 760-61.

7. See Appendix C.

Chapter 1. Politics, Hegemony and the Problem of Nation-Building

In the post-Independence era there will be a big battle between old and new ideas of organising our society. The old ideas from traditional society and from the era and < sic: of? > colonial government will not die easily. The new ideas stemming from experiences of the struggle for national independence and those who fought for it who are now in positions of power will not terminate easily also. The task of the Press in these circumstances, both urban and rural, is to project and articulate the new ideas which are based on science and knowledge, and to destroy the old ideas based on obscurantism and/or racism.

Minister of Information Nathan Shamuyarira, 1983¹

Introduction: the Idea of "Nation-Building"

The question of political "integration" or in the case of newly independent countries, "nation-building", has long featured as an element in the paradigms of western social science in their attempt to dissect and describe social formations both "old" (therefore "modern" and "stable") and "new" (by contrast: disintegrated, uncohesive, "traditional"). The roots of this concern displayed in the first wave of modernisation development problematics lie firmly in the Parsonian school of social science engineering, bounded by the descriptive dictates of "pattern variables" and the imperative to elicit, maintain, and/or deepen the modern civic consciousness and "culture" of the social order.² There were indeed to be many variations on this theme, not the least of which were those which applied this "investigative" schema to the newly independent or developing societies in the 1950s and 1960s.

These studies seized upon the paradigms of others which quantified the essentially economic and political "backward" or "traditional" nature of these societies, and helped explain such features in terms of any number of missing or undeveloped affectations of western society most directly associated with the latter's integrated (bourgeois conformist) status quo; for example, Lerner's "achievement" factor. If there was a distinct failure of exercises in "integration" in some developing societies, it was held that this could be partly ascribed to the incomplete penetration of the universalising norms of industrial democratic western society. The latter included, most notably, a deep sense of liberal entrepreneurship and accompanying notions of equality, liberal democracy and ultimately, institutional stability.

Many of the early responses to this static, ethnocentric stigmatising of non-industrial society were equally reductionist. Most did not question the initial analyses of indigenous industrialisation and development patterns, with a view to examining their effects on local social formations. Rather, they often relegated the issue of the internal politics of peripheral societies, by locating the determination of developing societies in a mammoth, over-arching world capitalist economy and political system.³ Adjustments to this position, notably through the elaboration of the "articulation of modes of production" perspective, in many ways maintained this distance from the issue of indigenous political formation and integration, as one eye of the analysis was continually trained on the peripheral society's articulation to the dominant element in the production dynamic -- international capital in its different forms.⁴ Most analyses within the "articulation" approach dealt only tangentially with the underlying tensions

of class and interest group dynamics arising out of the concrete historical interpenetration of international and domestic economic systems.

The various neo-Marxist analyses which surfaced in answer to the above perspectives in the 1970s and in the following decade have gone much further in shedding light on the national dynamics of political practice and struggle than previous development paradigms. Within the general Marxian perspective, this has been facilitated in large part by a much more nuanced, less dogmatic approach to class analysis (particularly in the African context) than was previously the case in the realms of academia and official state ideological production.⁵ Certainly it can be argued that in African political economy, a new generation of analysts and activists has surfaced which is less confined by the strict categories of a formerly pervasive economism and the accompanying poverty in the theorization of the "political".

But the advances made have had their own limitations as more often than not, the focus of attention has been on the so-called "state bourgeoisie" (it goes by different names) of petit bourgeois intelligentsia, a group taken to be firmly ensconced in a dominant centralised state structure, using this position to establish its perspective as the predominant one in the social formation.⁶ However, the prioritisation of this "class" or "strata" and the consequent near-autonomy sometimes analytically rendered the state structure itself has more often obscured, rather than illuminated, the domain of national politics -- a realm which despite claims of the solidification of petit bourgeois rule continues to serve as the locale for vigorous political activity in many African states.

For different reasons then, the mainstream approaches which have been employed over time to deconstruct the workings of the "political" sphere in Africa and elsewhere have not been able to account systematically and fully for the specificity of these struggles on the national terrain. Typically the latter are characterised by reference to something "other" -- be it western values and legitimacy, or the imperialist/capitalist world system; or in the case of later theories about the state bourgeoisie, with inadequate situation of the formally constituted "political" within the realm of the social formation and civil society.

It is clear that together these analytics share a common weakness: the power to investigate the waxing and waning of different social groups' attempts to express leadership in civil society and state through coercion and consent on the terrain of changing social formations, in light of the latter's essential class, ethnic and other tensions. More often than not the discussion of these issues remains fixed at a narrowly institutional level, the content of critical reflection confined to the limits implied by the phenomenal appearances and form of such structures. There is in other words an absence of a fully fleshed-out material and social dialectic running through these studies of the political. How then may one proceed to integrate concerns of class formation, state activity and observed formal and informal national political struggles when trying to come to terms with the notion of nation-building and political integration? In other words, how is the investigative process involving an analytical deconstruction (or disassembly) of the component parts of any nation-building exercise

undertaken? The theoretical "solution" embraced here lies in the employment of the concept of "hegemony" as developed through the intervention of Gramsci.⁷

Gramsci and Hegemony

The Gramscian innovation is useful for the current study by the fact that it addresses precisely these questions of integration, identity, political and civil institutions within a framework which attempts to pinpoint and deconstruct the tensions and determinations running through them. The utility of this perspective is not only that it ingrains with deep, systematic political tensions, sectors of social activity not often seen to be political as such, but also permits the conception (and investigation) of their diverse, apparently "autonomous" activities and institutions in terms of their situation within and contribution to wider struggles over the construction of "national-popular" authority.

For Gramsci this issue is approached as primarily a practical, historical problem; and it must be noted that due primarily to his own historical "conditions" of intellectual production, a systematic enunciation of how these types of studies can be theoretically constituted in full form was never produced. But it is possible to interpret the disparate pieces of his political writings -- tensions, ambiguities and seeming self-contradictions included -- to assemble an initial, overall outlook leading to the real-concrete formulation of research programmes. In this sense the

resourcefulness of Gramsci's work lies in its two-fold thrust: on the one hand involving the effective relative autonomy of the political moment; on the other, continually insisting on the dynamic, conditioned concreteness of the latter, its ties with less readily apparent class struggles, and the necessity of demonstrating and employing this insight. From an initial discussion of Gramsci's elaboration of these themes, this section will move on to examine how his framework can be employed to constitute objects of investigation theoretically within a more general consideration of Zimbabwean political struggles in the 1980s.

The broad outlines of the Marxist methodological tradition provide the essential underpinnings of Gramsci's approach; and it his reworking of the practical and theoretical shortcomings of both Lenin and the "economism" of Marxist orthodoxy (represented coherently in the Second International) which most clearly serves as the groundwork for his original reconception of hegemony.* In this context Gramsci's immediate theoretical project was to combat the varied "reductionism"s contained within the historical Marxist tradition which had on different accounts imported a sterile class determinacy into the consideration of the terrain of the political, particularly with regard to the issue of political consciousness, its formation and effects. As Gramsci declared,

The claim, presented as an essential postulate of historical materialism, that every fluctuation of politics and ideology can be presented and expounded as an immediate expression of the structure, must be contested in theory as primitive infantilism, and combated in practice with the authentic testimony of Marx, the author of concrete political and historical works.⁹

For Gramsci the struggle to attain moral, intellectual, political and economic leadership within social formations is interlaced with -- but not directly determined by -- that of classes, groups of classes and class fractions implied in the social organisation of production. The task of establishing leadership is one which permeates and intertwines all "levels" of the social formation, meaning those analytical categories of the political, economic, cultural and ideological which are typically taken as objects of narrow investigation. And with Gramsci a significant portion of this battle among classes to achieve hegemony is waged indirectly through the realm of ideology, culture, "everyday life": in sum, within the domain of ideas, customary rituals and practices, art, information, "common sense" and so forth. "Hegemony" refers to the end goal of these struggles on the part of distinct fragments within the social formation to attain comprehensive authority in all spheres of social activity, a process which is largely managed via the broadly ideological organisation of a balanced "spontaneous consent" and "domination".

In general, hegemony is taken to be (impermanently) achieved when a certain grouping of social forces is able to project throughout and elicit in society its own coherent, prescriptive, wide-ranging "world view". But in all cases the concrete social agents involved are to be pictured in light of the broad array of social forces, or specific "historical blocs", which imbibe them with political content. Here then the essential materiality of "ideologies" -- for there is no one thing to be called "ideology" as representative of all forms of it -- emerges with Gramsci in a two-fold manner: political ideas and beliefs have their conditioned origins in alignments of

classes in production and their embodiment in institutions, structures, roles and roles throughout society; and via these and other means move people and groups to rearrange and structure social activities -- in other words, ideas produce concrete material effects in the social organisation of life.¹⁰ If hegemonic projects are to be investigated at the instance of ideological fragments of struggles around them, it would seem that this perception is of significance and should be retained as a fundamental factor illuminating the research.

Certainly it is crucial to bear in mind the materiality of production in its arrangement of social groups when charting hegemonic trajectories. As Gramsci argues, the struggle to erect hegemony is one which passes through many phases, indelibly marked with developments in the deeper field of class and economic relations.¹¹ In this regard "hegemonic" agendas are distinguishable from other political programmes which are not fully committed to establishing overall social leadership per se; in fact the latter often practically culminate in the former. Gramsci typically sees the development of a specific, new, organised or articulated political consciousness as starting with the limited awareness of individuals of common economic interests shared with other individuals, this maturing through private organisation of practical structures and articulated interests into a developing awareness of "corporate" interests which are class or class fragment-specific, and which are portrayed as such in the public space. A social group only begins to enter a hegemonic phase when it attempts to go beyond the stage of self-interested corporatism to articulate the ideas and interests of other groups and classes outside its

narrow borders, within its own publicly-advanced position. Concretely, organised corporate interests may be seen in the plethora of associations related to the business and trades professions, isolated community issues, and so forth. What distinguishes these from political parties is that they have not created agendas which aim to reach out to and win over the rest of society by explaining political reality to it. In other words the practical political ethos of corporate organisations is defined and limited by self-interest, rather than collective leadership.

The movement towards hegemony inevitably involves an unstated, internalised project of "negotiation", or genuine rearticulation of diverse perspectives, ideas and beliefs held by other social fragments within aspiring ruling groups as they attempt to propound a generally acceptable "collective will", or broad coherent assortment of views and practices explicating the "natural" or "legitimate" qualities of the social status quo. By these means an assortment of apparently isolated social interests, groups, fractions and class-segments can be molded together as the basis for political agency, with what some have referred to as a "hegemonic principle", or essential ideological precepts grounded in class interests, at its core.¹² Importantly, however, the organisation itself does not propound a narrow class perspective: to do so would be to lapse into the isolationist mode of corporatist politics.

Rather, a hegemonic political agency draws to itself an array of topics and events for critique and, through a process of "give and take", rearticulates them to its own perspective.¹³ In this manner, hegemony building comprises the "popular construction" of political alliances and bloc of social forces -- that is, the open

mobilisation of various leading social fractions behind a ruling conglomeration. Part of this process must include inevitably the "popular deconstruction" of previous and current leading groups, a dynamic which entails calling into question and revealing fundamental contradictions within the ruling group and its established political "way of life". At the formally constructed level of issues, the inevitable focus of energy for any aspirant bloc of social forces falls on the rearticulation or renewal of what is meant precisely by the idea of "national-popular", or the formalised image-entity of the society at the level of conventional politics. In their decisive phases, hegemonic struggles involve movements of national-popular deconstruction and reconstruction, in which leading groups may be challenged by diverse aspiring ruling blocs, or may reassess and repackage the "rules" and content of their own "national" political consensus in line with a changing socio-economic environment.

Given this, it is not surprising that Gramsci sees the political party as being the singularly dominant form of organisation when it comes to hegemonic projects. The party -- the "modern Prince" -- alone is capable of openly assembling different social interests within itself using the combined techniques of domination and popular appeal. This is not by any means to say that all political parties attempt or are capable of hegemony, as this is clearly not the case: there are after all a range of possibilities for single issue, corporatist and other sorts of parties to spring up. Gramsci's claim is that it is only political parties which are related to some wider basis of class affiliation which can hope to impose themselves in the hegemonic sense; hence, hegemonic

struggles among competing political forces are principally class struggles in refracted form.

It is evident that this kind of mass creation [that is, of a political party -- rs] cannot just happen "arbitrarily", around any ideology, simply because of the formally constructive will of a personality or group which puts it forward solely on the basis of its own fanatical philosophical or religious convictions... Any arbitrary constructions are pretty rapidly eliminated by historical competition... whereas constructions which respond to the demands of a complex organic period of history always impose themselves and prevail in the end, even though they may pass through several intermediary phases during which they manage to affirm themselves only in more or less bizarre and heterogeneous combinations.¹⁴

Hegemonic struggles then would seem to be organised primarily via the central articulating medium of political parties, linked in some fundamental terms to specific class interests which are reflected in the logic of the hegemonic principle defining the scope and aims of any one coherent social group. But in fact Gramsci is saying much more than this, and it is clear that he does not limit the struggle of articulating hegemonic positions to the realm of political parties, for to do so would be to reduce the field of "ideology" and politics to the formally constituted level of the political or "state". Given that Gramsci devotes considerable energy to weighing the role of the realm of private relations, or civil society, in the construction of any "national consensus", it is inappropriate to overestimate the power residing in the public sector in this regard. This poses the concrete problem of determining where and how the essential creative momentum driving hegemonic projects is organised, in general spatio-political terms. How is it possible to conceptualise the underpinnings, effects and phenomenal forms of hegemonic projects, from the presence of a state which

sometimes seems to have the final role of enforcing what cannot be attained by "consent"?

Clearly, there is a noteworthy ambiguity in the many fragments of his work on this issue of state and civil society. At times it would seem that there is a distinct conceptual differentiation with regard to what comprises "leadership" and how it is constructed exactly in terms of these distinct channels of state and civil society. In some texts these different juridical spheres imply the separate respective "functions" of obtaining leadership through the means of "coercion" and "consent". As Hall has specified;

Hegemony is that state of "total social authority" which, at certain specific conjunctures, a specific class alliance wins, by a combination of "coercion and consent," over the whole social formation, and its dominated classes: not only at the economic level, but also at the level of political and ideological leadership, in civil, intellectual, and moral life as well as at the material level: and over the terrain of society as well as in and through the condensed relations of the State.¹⁵

Others have found Gramsci's work to elicit a more equivocal understanding of how state and civil society stand in relation to each other with regard to the organisation of power, particularly as the latter is refracted through the entity of "leadership". At times, it is argued, the state seems to be the critical locus of "domination" when the organisation of spontaneous consent "fails", while elsewhere the state and political parties within it are pictured as active components in the construction of hegemony in civil society. As Anderson and others have pointed out, the confusion here stems partly from the shifting notions of the state/civil society boundaries in Gramsci's spatial conception of the social formation, between the poles

of considering the two separate (with their respective functions of domination and adherence), or distinctly intertwined (domination and "hegemony" exercised to varying degrees in both instances).¹⁶

Yet, according to Mouffe, there is ample evidence to be derived from Gramsci's own scattered texts to demonstrate the discreet interconnectedness of hegemonic projects in these two realms: for example, at the level of political-strategic activity, where the public organisation and private roots of the political party facilitate its operation in both spheres and, precisely for this reason, invests the party with certain advantages used in a single project of hegemony.¹⁷ For Mouffe the essential consideration is the manner in which private and public domains are permeated by the same intentions, if not equipped with the same mechanisms of actualisation. This commonality stems from the fact that these struggles do not take place in a vacuum, but rather are linked to wider conditioning conflicts over social organisation. In other words, hegemony is multi-dimensional by definition and embedded in and bordered by the larger topography of the class struggle;¹⁸ is indeed characterised by reference to the latter:

Can there be cultural reform, and can the position of the depressed strata of society be improved culturally, without a previous economic reform and a change in their position in the social and economic fields? Intellectual and moral reform has to be linked with a programme of economic reform -- indeed the programme of economic reform is precisely the concrete form in which every intellectual and moral reform presents itself.¹⁹

This is not to say that the differences in the modes of struggle waged in varying realms such as those of state and civil society should be ignored or dismissed

as "epiphenomenal" in investigation. Rather -- and importantly -- they should be evaluated in light of the manner in which they mediate hegemonic struggles, as structures and practices with evolving, specific inherent social, ideological, cultural and political contents. The singular advantages, disadvantages, challenges and facility presented by certain historically-situated individuals and organisations -- whether they be political parties, state administrations, community pressure groups or newspaper chains -- must therefore inevitably be included in any study of how hegemony is strived for through the "political", since these agents together constitute a crucial part of the strategic terrain and object of such struggles.

It is by reading these episodic or "conjunctural" struggles and apparent shifts, wins and losses in light of the underlying conditions of the "decisive nucleus" of the economic that observers are able to gauge their class-political significance -- their "organic" quality.²⁰ These are not configurations which can be structurally determined "in thought" prior to their materialisation in the concrete. Rather, attention must be paid to the concrete historical array of individuals and structures participating directly in, and "organising", the struggle to elicit new modes of political consent. In fact, one of Gramsci's most compelling theoretical innovations is precisely his reconceptualisation of the role of political "actors and institutions", based on his observations about the historical process of hegemonic construction.

Functionaries of Hegemony: Intellectuals and Institutions

For Gramsci, a vast collection of agents and institutions which characterise day-to-day life in civil society (as well as the state's points of contact with it) provides the basis for all organic-political hegemonic projects. If class-grounded political interests and ambitions provide a certain underlying logic and historical momentum for the erection of a hegemonic programme, institutions and individuals -- together and apart -- are responsible for the actual building of the political edifice. In this regard, Gramsci pays particular attention to both individuals falling under the designation of "intellectuals", and the diverse array of public and private institutions contributing to the generation and alteration of popular attitudes, rituals, customs, beliefs and "popular consciousness" in general. It is by and through these instrumental means that struggle among classes is "deputised" and carried out indirectly and simultaneously at different junctures in the social formation.

An essential component in these struggles is the individuals who owing to their status, professional placement and/or degree of moral or cultural authority in society, are in a position to influence that diverse accumulation of knowledges, beliefs and practices which together make up the common notions and customs cementing together the social formation. These agents of class projects are the "intellectuals", of which Gramsci conceives two essential sorts in relation to class struggles in the age of capitalism: "organic", those attached to specific classes and their hegemonic projects; and "traditional", those which are inherited from previous social regimes and

apparently independent from contemporary machinations of class but in fact involved in the formation and solidification of new orders.

Due to their central contemporary role in the elaboration of class projects the main focus is placed on the former.

Every social group, coming into existence on the original terrain of an essential function in the world of economic production, creates together with itself, organically, one or more strata of intellectuals which give it homogeneity and awareness of its own social function not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields. The capitalist entrepreneur creates alongside himself the industrial technician, the specialist in political economy, the organisers of a new culture, of a new legal system, etc... It can be observed that the "organic" intellectuals which every new class creates alongside itself and elaborates in the course of its development, are for the most part "specialisations" of partial aspects of the primitive activity of the new social type which the new class has brought into prominence.²¹

It is these agents of the new order, both working within it and helping to shape the common sense which abides by and reinforces it, who are the "deputies" of classes in their struggles to cement society with their own ideological, politicised agenda.²²

Their particular role: the "disarticulation-rearticulation" of fragments of "common sense" and the whole range of accumulated "accepted" rituals, practices and so forth, into a continuously updated generalised conception of the social order.²³ These individuals include not only the formally classified "intelligentsia" found in universities and schools, but also artists and writers, politicians, state planners and cooperative organisers, copy writers and journalists, and so on: in sum, the whole range of roles and positions which in some stated or less direct way contribute to the

production and interpretation of the social order from within the interstices of state and civil society alike.

Any "cultural movement" (read "political movement") which wants to replace the dominant social perspective with its own must, as Gramsci says, never tire of reiterating its own "truths" through these channels; and,

...work incessantly to raise the intellectual level of ever-growing strata of the populace, in other words, to give a personality to the amorphous mass element. This means working to produce elites of intellectuals of a new type which arise directly out of the masses, but remain in contact with them to become, as it were, the whalebone in the corset...²⁴

This does not mean, however, that individuals and institutions "belonging" (through occupation or ownership, for example) to a particular class fraction are obliged to work on behalf of that class fraction. Rather, Gramsci stresses that organic intellectuals, linked directly to specific class groupings and their hegemonic projects, are not of necessity members by occupation of the primary class grouping which they help represent. For example, writers who foster and give credence to the norms of bourgeois culture are not necessarily capitalists themselves. Rather, they typically stand beside and share interests with the leading group(s) i.e. . hegemonic coalition of social forces, and serve in their own way to popularise and homogenise (through rearticulation and self-awareness) the aims of this grouping expressed in terms of "collective will". Moreover it is clear that different hegemonic groupings would tend to include different categories of organic intellectuals, owing to the structure of production and the varying types of activists and class loyalties systematically

encouraged; that is, the organisation of the social formation itself helps put into place the interlocutors of various classes.²⁵

In light of this, the liaisons of the intellectuals with socio-political groups provide a pivotal point of intervention into class struggles for not only aspiring ruling groups but also observers of these struggles, with important implications for the programmes of both.

The relationship between the intellectuals and the world of production is not as direct as it is with the fundamental social groups but is, in varying degrees, "mediated" by the whole fabric of society and by the complex of superstructures, of which the intellectuals are, precisely, the "functionaries". It should be possible both to measure the "organic quality" of the various intellectual strata and their degree of connection with a fundamental social group, and to establish a gradation of their functions and of the superstructures from the bottom to the top (from the structural base upwards).²⁶

In this way, the outlines of the shifting social balance of forces at the myriad locations of society -- from narrowly economic to cultural and ideological -- may be charted as an intimate part of researching the process of hegemonic construction.

This then leads Gramsci to explain other intellectual segments which exist alongside the organic intellectuals: namely, the "traditional intellectuals".²⁷ Their existence and influence -- in the form of "the academy", "the church" and other inherited authoritative cultural and social entities -- demonstrates both the endurance of seemingly surpassed social forms, and the complexity of social and ideological determinations in contemporary societies.²⁸ For Gramsci, the lingering notions and widespread social rituals -- or "historical traces" -- represented directly by the traditional intelligentsia, intersect with and help to continually reshape the present.²⁹

The unique sets of social conjunctures produced as a result of this interpenetration, "historical blocs", form the social constituencies of hegemonic campaigns.

Thus, traditional intellectuals, although not systematically participant on the side of one class grouping or another in hegemonic struggles, are nonetheless and inevitably drawn into the battles of the contemporary organic intellectuals in their capacity as historical social authorities imparting and adjudicating a certain degree of common sense, knowledge and customary ritual. At times, Gramsci notes, the immediate strategic aims of a hegemonic project might include the assimilation and "ideological conquering" of traditional intellectuals, though the task of establishing hegemony is considered to be much quicker and more efficacious if the aspiring group involved simultaneously elaborates its own organic intellectuals.³⁰ But this is a matter which cannot be prejudged, can only be determined in the historical circumstances of a society in light of its level of technical, and specifically, educative development. After all, there do have to be adequate levels of development in intellectual and productive skills in order that such a strata of organic intelligentsia could exist in the first place.

In concrete terms of inquiry, the latter point refers the discussion back to the question of how intellectuals and other agents are arranged physically within a social formation, and how a study of them and their "contents" can be undertaken as castes or groups so placed. The revitalisation of Marxist theory in the 1960s and 1970s by means of the "structuralist" intervention led in one direction to a reconsideration of Gramsci on this theme, in an attempt to pinpoint the dynamics of hegemonic

formation in advanced capitalist society. In one of the most celebrated initiatives in this regard, that of Louis Althusser's essay on the "ideological state apparatuses"³¹, attention was given to the structured institutional presence of the "state" (writ large) throughout society, by means of a whole range of structures extending from those of schooling and religion, to the media and private community clubs. At the same time, Althusser held that the coercive functions of the state in enforcing hegemony were concretised in the "repressive state apparatuses", including the army, police and other agencies of defence and security. With Althusser, the double function of the organised reproduction of consent and coercion came to be rooted in the institutional complex of an expansive state, and indeed the autonomous realm of civil society practically dissolved.³² The underlying assumption of all this was that the essential relations of production in the social order -- hegemony itself -- were more or less unproblematic.

In this regard, one significant corollary had to do with the reassessment of ideology's "materiality", as the systematic historical limitations surrounding the struggle for consent became theoretically overshadowed by a conception based on a more subjective understanding of ideology in general. Here "interpellation" was introduced as the "constitution" of political subjects by instrumental political subjects through the vaguely defined, discursive activities of "ideological struggle".³³ Moreover, it soon became evident that the basic distinction between ideological and repressive state apparatuses was more problematic than enlightening. By what logic could the ideological content of the nation's defence concretised in the army, for example, be ignored, or the repressive functions of the educational system be denied?

Dedicated in one sense to the unearthing of the materiality of hegemonic construction via an investigation of some of the institutions which were forthrightly implicated in capitalist society's attempt to maintain its "consensus", the Althusserian analysis had rather opted for materiality in its crudest incarnation, at the level of concrete social structures formally operated by the state. In condensing civil society into the state this problematic portrayed class struggle and the relations of production as being primarily articulated within the public realm. Yet the value of the Gramscian contribution on the issue of the materiality of ideology lies not so much in the fact of ideology's phenomenal appearances in institutions (for this is understood at the outset), but in the manner in which ideological projects enable material, political interventions (ideology is not either simply "true" or "false consciousness") in relations of production, not simply in the reproduction of existing relations.

This is not to disavow the significance of the more organised forms of hegemonic construction which fall under the jurisdiction (but not by any means the complete control) of the state; but it is to emphasize that all such formally and other informally or "individualised" means of ideological intervention are more broadly situated within the context of the tension-ridden social formation. Therefore the challenge of hegemony for any social group is not just one of reproducing via institutions the necessary norms and practices for "its" social order. Rather, it is in confronting the systematic social dislocations arising from production which appear in various conjunctures: in articulated political and corporate challenges, within hegemonic alliances and notably, within the functioning and organisation of

apparatuses and agencies of "ideological production" themselves. Whether or not these episodic struggles and institutions appear to be rooted in civil society or the state, it is certain that they are undercut by the same tensions within the social formation. Like the terrain of political parties, these struggles provide direct clues regarding the configuration of social forces arranged in the mode of production. Moreover, the arrangement of such institutions and agencies of ideological production in the locales of state and civil society can provide evidence about the amplitude of class cohesion and articulation, particularly with regard to the ability of some class alliances and fractions to "capture" the state and project a "national" perspective.

Defining Research Priorities

[I]n studying a structure, it is necessary to distinguish organic movements (relatively permanent) from movements which may be termed "conjunctural" (and which appear as occasional, immediate, almost accidental). Conjunctural phenomena too depend on organic movements to be sure, but they do not have any very far-reaching historical significance; they give rise to political criticism of a minor, day-to-day character, which has as its subject top political leaders and personalities with direct governmental responsibilities. Organic phenomena on the other hand give rise to socio-historical criticism, whose subject is wider social groupings -- beyond the public figures and beyond the top leaders. When an historical period comes to be studied, the great importance of this distinction becomes clear.³⁴

It should now be possible to specify more concretely how to go about investigating -- that is, analytically deconstructing -- a particular episode of hegemonic struggle, by reference to a region of activity within it. To recall and paraphrase Gramsci: it should

be possible to measure and delineate the "organic quality" of certain intellectuals and their structures, and determine their mediation by the whole fabric of society and by the complex of the infrastructures pertinent to their professional roles. The aim should be to discover the resulting strengths and limitations of national-popular hegemonic projects which involve these intellectual agents. It is worth reiterating at this point the essential tenets of the Gramscian analytic which will stand as the analytical watchwords of this formulation: "hegemony" is held to be negotiated and many-sided. It takes place at a number of different "levels" of society, operationalised by agents (individuals, institutions or structures) which are deeply rooted in and inextricably conditioned by economic and social interests thrown up from the mode of production. Finally, it is always contingent, always in need of "renewal" and "repackaging" in order to express the national-popular "collective will".

The first task that presents itself is the theoretisation of the historical context of the social formation in the specific case of Zimbabwe as a newly emerging society in the developing periphery. This involves a reconfiguration of the problem of hegemony in terms of the social categories and broad issues which characterise Zimbabwe, as an initial step towards the identification of both the concrete classes, groups, agents and institutions for study, and pertinent regions of the social formation meriting investigation.³⁵ Some educated speculation must be undertaken at the outset to locate possible points of interest in analysis.

In this regard, it is important to underline the emergent nature of the Zimbabwe "nation" (in all senses) in the early 1980s and the consequent significance

of "nation-building" as both issue and terrain of political formation. As Gramsci conceived the issue, in a way which is particularly germane in the case of "new" societies, hegemonic groups must be able to establish a full-fledged "national identity" as part of their programme.

[T]he particular form in which the hegemonic ethico-political element presents itself in the life of the state and the country is "patriotism" and "nationalism", which is "popular religion", that is to say it is the link by means of which the unity of leaders and led is effected.³⁶

This is doubly the case in the instance of social formations which are not as fully integrated or "homogenized" as those of advanced capitalism, with their extensive elaboration of civil society and hegemonic projects.

The situation of newly-independent countries in the developing periphery, and especially those in Africa, provides a prima facie example in this regard. Such social formations are typified by an initial, potentially multifarious determination of the "national interest", ranging from the objectives of former colonial powers and foreign capital to the aims of indigenous classes, nascent classes and class fractions. In this context the crystallisation of articulated social forces is largely "incomplete" or "in process", often having taken second place to the primary nationalist/populist aim of gaining independence and political power -- in a word, indigenous or "majority" rule.

These are social formations in which primary "nation-building" projects are unconsolidated in terms of their leading class-political components at the time of independence, and in which this fact of class-hegemonic "underdevelopment" is evidenced in the degree of structural disorganisation or emergent form of hegemonic

projects. This is not to claim that the existence of institutions and other structures used in "ideological" propagation of such projects confirms the emplacement of a "new" hegemony; rather, that they reflect moves in this direction in very specific historical circumstances.

To investigate the relative "success" of attempts to construct hegemony on the part of leading social groups in post-independence social formations therefore involves the examination of the linkages joining these institutions to elements in the new social order -- but this is only the first step. The second and more important criteria is to study the degree to which leading groups have been able to articulate a "national-popular" programme comprehensively via the use of these structures and other diverse elements in the interstices of society, have been able to "nationalise" themselves as a cohesive group representative of an array of differing social interests at the centre of political power. This is not simply a technical matter, resolvable through the construction of "national" apparatuses and discoverable via summing up of the same. Instead, its core resides primarily in the composition of forces within any aspiring hegemonic group, and the extent to which it can accommodate the class-related interests of other social fragments. To examine this process a study must consider the concrete "building blocks" by which alliances are worked out and consolidated: that is, the mediation of actual organic and traditional intellectuals under given historical conditions.

This research considers a set of institutions and intellectuals which are indisputably participant in the Zimbabwean post-independence struggles to create a

new national polity with a corresponding politically articulated "national-popular collective will": the domestic public and private print media. That such agencies have played an important structured role in the attempt to shape new norms and practices conversant with the new social regime is readily apparent, owing to the media's mass reach and its authoritative status on a range of political and social issues; and by the primary fact that it forms the central means by which such diverse information is digested and disseminated on a national scale. This is not to argue that there are no other forms of information, nor that the impact of the medias' messages is as intended (for this is a multi-layered question which has its answer in the issue of determination of how hegemonic projects progress). Neither is it to claim that the media are the most important means of hegemonic or ideological struggle.

Rather, the print media stand as a poignant illustration of broad hegemonic struggles, because they are the site for the overlapping of public and private intervention in information production. This process of information production involves not only formally constituted political parties (and the state) with hegemonic aspirations, but also a diverse array of interest groups and alliances of more or less corporate intent (in the Gramscian sense of the term). On top of the political and ideological challenges that this panorama of print media suggests, the press also tellingly elicits something of the wider blockages to aspirant hegemonic strategies; namely, those stemming from the "economics" of publishing which restrict the technical implementation of structural development plans in the "industry" of information production and distribution.

How then to measure the "organic" content of various media and their interaction, with a view to the overall class projects of attaining and retaining "leadership"? In the case of Zimbabwe this task involves a series of steps, aimed at establishing on the one hand the linkage between media institutions and articulated social interests; and on the other the range of tensions which are internal to the media as a sector (public versus private), and to isolated institutions within it. These factors must be studied in light of the manner in which episodic and tendential political struggles have an impact upon the media. Though the role of individual "intellectual" or media workers will be considered at critical conjunctures, in this study, the focus will fall more on the structured institutions which contain and function by these individuals.

The main reasons for the "structural focus" are the sweeping structured policy interventions of government in a significant part of the press, and correspondingly, the rather "derivative", underdeveloped nature of the professional category of journalists as a social category. In the first instance, the state's media policy itself forms an important object of investigation. In the second, it must be noted that on the whole, a professional "corps" of media intellectuals is still very much in the process of formation, owing to recent historical circumstances related to the racist training and hiring practices of the previous colonial regime. As a result, this study looks directly to different institutional fragments of the national print media, and seeks to determine the organic or nascent components of their activity through their regular functioning as structures of information production.

The aim of determining the "class polarity" of different print media over time implies a series of investigative procedures. First, the mediation of the social fabric in the organisation of the press must be taken into account. This implies two fundamental tasks: the periodisation of classes and class fragments, nascent classes and fractions, and other production-related interests and social groups in the social formation and represented most concretely in the instance of civil society; and the outlining of the particular elements represented in the public sector of the state and commanding national political power -- the ruling group. At some point it should be possible to determine the limitations to and demands upon any probable hegemonic or corporate agenda forthcoming from the governing leadership. In similar fashion the array of print media institutions can be delineated. Initially this schematisation should be undertaken taxonomically, with a view to patterns of ownership and juridical control and supervision: what social interests or articulated class fractions, represented in which concrete groups, are linked with specific media institutions? Are there some print media which have no fixed "belonging" to social groups? Are there new media which are created by some interests because they do not have a structured, public voice?

Given the structure of the Zimbabwean print media a major concern will clearly be that of the public press, that sector which has been reconfigured most directly by the state with the defined intent of its transformation in line with the "national interest"; and which therefore is central in the institutional mediation of this "national" project. The question is, what forms of internal mediation of this

infrastructure have there been in light of its inherited practices, social basis and unique industrial attributes (or "historical traces"). All of these areas of concern imply as well those intellectuals who are constituted partially by such structures, and help to mediate their formal-juridical operation. The aims of such an examination of the public sector press must initially be two-fold: to identify its internal coherence, and describe the formally-delimited political linkages with the public sector.

Evidence of the internal coherence of the public sector must be sought out at the related "levels" of structure and professional personnel, in their capacity as "intellectuals". Is there cohesion between new political conceptions of press functions as a social component and the operation of relevant structures? Are there systemic tensions within the structures, and between them and the intellectuals? Do the intellectuals form a coherent organic bloc? These are queries theoretically formulated with regard to larger social tensions; their (partial) "answers" can best be arrived at by observing the actual episodic intervention of these concrete structures and groups on the terrain of struggles within the region of the press, contextualised by more formally-constituted political and economic conflicts and debates arising at different historical conjunctures. Along with a consideration of the de facto and de jure chains of authority and practice which connect this public sector press to state and party, some conclusions can then be reached on its internal coherence in terms of its "organic quality".

The wider issue of "external" challenges to establishment of leadership by the public press can be configured in terms of the conglomeration of print media within

civil society, their connections to different social interests and the positions they adopt on conjunctural conflicts. In basic categories, this represents (albeit incompletely) a regional schematisation of social group articulation and struggle within the space of civil society; the indicator in this regard will be the aforementioned taxonomy of institutions. In the more specific case of actual struggles, the "private" press is important not only as a potentially deconstructive counterpoint to the public media; it is also significant as an internally differentiated collection of articulations for different social fractions, and as the terrain on which less explicitly class-representative, broadly "popular" viewpoints are heard.

By weighing together all of these artifacts of institutionalised structures and practices on the ground of their historical development in the era of independence, some steps can be taken towards identifying the problems of constructing hegemony faced in the 1980s. The backdrop to these problems, of course, is the struggles among evolving social forces -- struggles which are glimpsed from time to time in the varying interpretations of political life by the media. It is these deeper movements of class and class fractions, with all of the limitations and conditions on political practice they imply, which circumscribe the historical potential for the formation of alliances, coalitions and groupings -- and the possibility of any group consolidating its consensual, spontaneous leadership by cloaking itself successfully in the image of the "national-popular". It is for this reason that the discussion now turns to examine the Zimbabwean social formation, in order to chart the trajectories of underpinning social struggles as they emerged in the 1980s.

References

1. N. Shamuyarira, "Statement of the Honourable N.M. Shamuyarira, Minister of Information, Posts and Telecommunications", Murewa Kubatana News (Insert), 18.05.1983.
2. Examples abound of this entire school of sociology and its products in the field of "development", but see in particular: T. Parsons, Essays in Sociological Theory (New York: The Free Press, 1954); G. Almond and S. Verba, The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963); D. Lerner, The Passing of Traditional Society (New York: The Free Press, 1958); D. McClelland, The Achieving Society (New York: Van Nostrand, 1961); L. Pye, Politics, Personality and Nation-Building (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963).
3. A.G. Frank, Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1967), and Latin America: Underdevelopment or Revolution (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1969); I. Wallerstein, "The Rise and Future Demise of the 'World Capitalist System: Concepts for Comparative Analysis", Comparative Studies in Society and History Vol.16, No.4 (September 1974), pp. 387-415.
4. See as a representative example, E. Laclau, "Feudalism and Capitalism in Latin America", Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory (London: Verso, 1977). For discussion and critiques see among others, J.G. Taylor, From Modernization to Modes of Production: A Critique of the Sociology of Development and Underdevelopment (Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1979); C. Leys, "Underdevelopment and Dependency: Critical Notes", Journal of Contemporary Asia Vol.7, No.1, 1977; J. Banaji, "Modes of Production in a Materialist Conception of History", Capital and Class 3 (Fall 1977), pp. 1-43.
5. For more innovative approaches and critiques within Marxist class-analytical scholarship, see for example, Dennis L. Cohen, "Class and the Analysis of African Politics: Problems and Prospects", in D.L. Cohen and J. Daniel, eds., Political Economy of Africa: Selected Readings (London: Longman, 1981), pp. 85-111; Jean Copans, "The Marxist Conception of Class: Political and Theoretical Elaboration in the African and Africanist Context", Review of African Political Economy, 32 (April 1985), pp. 25-38; John Saul, "The Role of Ideology in the Transition to Socialism", Richard R. Fagen, Carmen Diana Deere, Jose Luis Coraggio, eds. Transition and Development: Problems of Third World Socialism (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1986); and, John Saul, "Ideology in Africa: Decomposition and Recomposition", Gwendolen Carter and Patrick O'Meara, eds. African Independence:

The First Twenty-Five Years (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), pp. 301-329.

6. The notion of a state bourgeoisie was advanced in the analysis of many African states before independence came to Zimbabwe. For examples, see Issa Shivji, Class Struggles in Tanzania (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976); and John Saul, "The State in Post-Colonial Societies: Tanzania", in R. Miliband and J. Saville, eds., The Socialist Register 1974 (London: Merlin Press, 1974), pp. 349-372. In Zimbabwe, Ibbo Mandaza, among others, has been a leading proponent of this analytical perspective (see Chapter 2). For critiques of these renditions of the state bourgeoisie, see for example, Bjorn Beckman, "Imperialism and Capitalist Transformation: Critique of a Kenyan Debate", Review of African Political Economy, 19 (September-December 1980), pp. 48-63; and Colin Leys, "The 'Overdeveloped' Post-Colonial State: A Re-evaluation", Review of African Political Economy, 5 (1976), pp. 39-48.

7. The concept of hegemony as understood by Gramsci is most clearly spelled out and widely available in his seminal collection, Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci, Q. Hoare and G.N. Smith, trans. and eds. (New York: International Publishers, 1971), hereinafter referred to as SPN.

8. Discussions of the historical antecedents to Gramsci's reformulation of the concept can be found in many locations. One of the most comprehensive is that of C. Mouffe, "Hegemony and Ideology in Gramsci," C. Mouffe, ed. Gramsci and Marxist Theory (London: RKP, 1979). This perspective was subsequently elaborated and investigated in further detail in the initial chapters of C. Mouffe and E. Laclau, in their Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics (London: Verso, 1985).

9. SPN, p. 407.

10. Gramsci clearly sees his position here as stemming from certain of Marx's fragmentary formulations. For example (SPN, p. 377):

It is worth recalling the frequent affirmation made by Marx on the 'solidity of popular beliefs' as a necessary element of a specific situation. What he says more or less is 'when this way of conceiving things has the force of popular beliefs', etc. Another proposition of Marx is that a popular conviction often has the same energy as a material force or something of the kind, which is extremely significant. The analysis of these propositions tends, I think, to reinforce the conception of historical bloc in which precisely material forces are the content and ideologies are the form, though this distinction between form and content has purely didactic value, since the material forces would be inconceivable historically without form and the ideologies would be individual fancies without the material forces.

11. See for example the historical discussions in the section of writings under "State and Civil Society", SPN, pp. 210-276.
12. C. Mouffe, "Hegemony and Ideology in Gramsci", C. Mouffe, op. cit., passim.
13. C. Mouffe, "Hegemony and Ideology in Gramsci", op. cit., p. 181. As part of the discussion, Mouffe quotes Gramsci on this point:
...obviously the fact of hegemony presupposes that one takes into account the interests and tendencies of the groups over which hegemony will be exercised, and it also presupposes a certain equilibrium, that is to say that the hegemonic groups will make some sacrifices of a corporate nature.
14. SPN, p. 341.
15. S. Hall, "Race, articulation and societies structured in dominance", Sociological Theories: Race and Colonialism, Marion O'Callaghan, ed. (Paris: Unesco, 1980), p. 331.
16. Several of these ambiguities are concisely, if unsympathetically, chronicled by Perry Anderson in "The Antinomies of Antonio Gramsci", New Left Review 100 (1976-1977). Mouffe argues that within the overall Gramscian problematic, the state/civil society distinction can be conceived as being more suggestive than definitive in its implications for historical analyses. In this sense, the schism between the strictly considered "coercive" function of the state and the "consensual" mode of hegemonic struggles in civil society is one which arises at the level of theory, within approaches which miss -- which cannot "think" -- the anti-reductionist, non-instrumentalist intent of Gramsci's thought. See for example, Mouffe, op. cit., p. 201:
The fundamental error of the economic conception -- its epiphenomenalist and reductionist conception of the superstructures -- manifests itself... by an instrumental conception of the state and of politics. In identifying the state with the repressive apparatus it reduces the field of politics, since its vital relation with the ideological struggle is severed.
17. Mouffe, op. cit., pp. 189-191.
18. A claim repeated many times by Gramsci; for example (SPN, p. 161),
...though hegemony is ethical-political, it must also be economic, must necessarily be based on the decisive function exercised by the leading group in the decisive nucleus of economic activity.
19. SPN, p. 133.

20. See the discussion in S. Hall, B. Lumley and G. McLennan, "Politics and Ideology: Gramsci", (pp. 52-54) in, Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, ed., On Ideology (London: Hutchinson, 1977), pp. 45-72.
21. SPN, pp. 5-6.
22. "The intellectuals are the dominant group's 'deputies' exercising the subaltern functions of social hegemony and political government", SPN, p. 12.
23. The terminology of "disarticulation" and "rearticulation" is that of Mouffe, and although she goes on to employ this in a fashion borrowed from Althusser, stressing undue emphasis on the rather subjective role of "ideas" as such in hegemonic struggles (cf. "interpellation"), the terms are nonetheless descriptively accurate when it comes to the dialectic implied in these struggles.
24. SPN, p. 340.
25. The exact position of any class fraction's organic intellectuals in the interstices of the social formation is indeed a historical and strategic question, and it is observed that in some cases (as with subaltern or dominated class fractions) the category of "politician" is the form which the elaboration of "organic intellectual" assumes. The essential point is that different classes and class fractions come into being along with different hierarchies "of authority and intellectual competence" (SPN, p. 340) reflected within them through the organic intellectuals, and related to general structures in the mode of production as denoted, for example, by levels of intellectual development and positions in production.
26. SPN, p. 12.
27. For Gramsci, the "traditional intellectuals" are comprised of those whose roles and positions are inherited from previous social orders, and who derive a degree of authority from the fact that they "...represent an historical continuity uninterrupted even in the most complicated and radical changes in political and social forms". (SPN, p. 7)
28. In Gramsci's context of twentieth century Europe, the traditional intellectuals are those thrown up by the political and intellectual milieu of feudalism -- the ecclesiastics, state administrators, scholars and scientists, theorists, philosophers and so forth -- and it is in their self-assessed distancing from dominant social groups, expressed partly through an esprit de corps grounded in their unique qualifications, that they profess to maintain a certain social "autonomy".
29. The concept of "culture" and its ties to social classes and formations is a topic of investigation in itself, parallel to and implied by that of hegemony. The understanding of "culture" as materialised "ways of life" (exemplified in "rituals", structured

customs, patterns of housing and transport, and "entertainment") existing in tension within a changing social formation is perhaps most fully and sensitively developed within the English-speaking Gramscian tradition by Raymond Williams. See for example, Raymond Williams, Marxism and Literature (London: Oxford University Press, 1977), and Culture (Glasgow: Fontana, 1981).

30. SPN, p. 10.

31. L. Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation)," B. Brewster, trans. Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays (London: New Left Books, 1971).

32. There has been wide-ranging discussion of this and related issues; see S. Clarke et al., eds. One-Dimensional Marxism: Althusser and the Politics of Culture (London: Allison and Busby, 1980); CCCS, On Ideology, *op. cit.*; and M. Gane, "On the ISAs Episode," Economy and Society, vol.12, no.4 (November 1983), pp. 431-467.

33. With "interpellation", the emphasis is more concretely put on the structuring of political identities of subjects in terms of the latter's "imaginary relation to the real". The theme was further elaborated by Ernesto Laclau, and comprehensively critiqued by, among others, Paul Gilroy. See E. Laclau, "Fascism and Ideology," 1977, *op. cit.*; and P. Gilroy, "Steppin' out of Babylon -- race, class and autonomy," CCCS, ed. The Empire Strikes Back (London: Hutchinson, 1982), pp. 276-314. For a later reformulation and deepening of the concept of "interpellation", and its social democratic political "consequences", see E. Laclau and C. Mouffe, 1985, *op. cit.* A critique of this perspective from the left is found in Ellen Meiskins Wood, The Retreat from Class: A New "True" Socialism (London: Verso, 1986).

34. Gramsci, "The Modern Prince," SPN, pp. 177-178.

35. Here one can learn from Gramsci's recognition of the "tendential logic" implied by certain categories of social interests, and the concrete long term limitations which they impose upon activity. For example, with Gramsci it is the case that the centrally antagonistic class poles represented by the proletariat on the one hand and the forces of capital on the other cannot in the long term be reconciled within the same hegemonic fraction (and hence the ultimate failure of revamped bourgeois ideology to stave off a working class revolution). In the case of social formations which do not fit into the mould of that industrial West European one of twentieth century Italy which Gramsci had in mind, it would seem that the same restraints of contrapuntal class interests and projects would remain the case even though these class tensions might not be most directly represented in the poles of proletariat/capital. Indeed, the actual poles of tension would depend on the nature of internal structured articulations of classes in the organisation of production, and this is a matter for individual examination. In Africa, as in much of the developing world, this periodisation of class

cleavages and hegemonic projects is complicated by the presence of international capital, and colonial and ethno-clientelistic linkages.

36. C. Mouffe, "Hegemony and Ideology in Gramsci", op. cit., p. 195; citing Gramsci in, V. Gerratana, ed. Quaderni dal Carcere vol.2 (Turin: Einaudi, 1975), p. 1084.

Chapter 2. Party and Class, State and Civil Society: A Zimbabwean Political Economy

The history of a party... can only be the history of a particular social group. But this group is not isolated; it has friends, kindred groups, opponents, enemies. The history of any given party can only emerge from the complex portrayal of the totality of society and State... Hence it may be said that to write the history of a party means nothing less than to write the general history of a country from a monographic viewpoint, in order to highlight a particular aspect of it. A party will have had greater or less significance and weight precisely to the extent to which its particular activity has been more or less decisive in determining a country's history.

Antonio Gramsci, "The Modern Prince"¹

The emergence of Zanu as the foremost organised socio-political force in Zimbabwe in the 1980s was a dynamic fraught with deep contradictions. At the outset of independence, these frictions were not recognized beyond a small, rather marginalised group of intellectuals. Yet, by the end of Zanu's first decade in power, social tensions had erupted onto the terrain of daily politics and debate, eroding Zanu's political authority and undermining its efforts to elicit co-operation from a wide spectrum of Zimbabwean society. This process of the ruling party's popular deconstruction was reflected in, and came to involve instrumentally, the national press. Thus, the birth of Zimbabwe and the problematic entrenchment of a new "ruling group" at the head of state and civil society were to mark just as much a continuation of the patterns of political struggle established in the colonial past, as a new beginning.

This chapter examines the underlying difficulties faced by Zanu in its attempt to attain national-popular leadership, by revealing sites of political-hegemonic dislocation thrown up by organic contradictions inherent in, and emerging through, the "new" post-colonial order. These sites are found in the policy, planning and institutions of the state; in the ruling party's increasing scope of "private" political activities; and in the array of non-party private and "civic" institutions in civil society (from producers organisations and trade unions, to students associations and womens' rights groups).

As will be seen, all of these spheres were to intersect with the Zimbabwean print media, in varying ways. For example, the state was to establish a national public print media just after independence and slowly penetrate its editorial and management divisions in its continuing effort to develop an effective device of information manipulation. At the same time, the 1980s were to witness a remarkable growth in the private press, as different social fractions of civil society moved to establish autonomous, critical points of national-political articulation and information supply.

Underlying these specific media sites of contention, however, were more deeply-rooted contradictory tensions arising from the configuration of historic blocs of social forces. Standing as a backdrop to this study's discussion of the Zimbabwean media in the 1980s are the fundamental organic class tensions of the social formation. Early points of mass mobilisation -- namely, the policy of implementing a mass-oriented socialist transition -- became nodes of popular deconstruction for the increasingly conservative government, while the state's growing resort to coercive

strategies for eliciting partisan consent further undermined the ruling party's popular standing. At the same time, Zanu's efforts to absorb the organisation and subsume the contradictions of civil society by building dependent "mass" structures (including Youth and Womens' Leagues, but also a national confederation of Trade Unions and other mass-occupational bodies) turned out to be a crisis-ridden exercise.

Initially the country's heterogeneous civil society was "subdued" by the ruling group in the new Zanu state, in the post-liberation context of independence euphoria, ruling party discipline and civil society's relative disorganisation. But as challenges to Zanu's leadership in civil society mounted, pushed on by periodic economic crises and a growing sense of unfulfilled expectations on the part of most Zimbabweans, Zanu's goal of becoming the unique national-popular political entity slipped from reach. Ultimately, the party was unable to assimilate the range of contradictions exhibited in civil society's changing politics, and more directly, in the tensions within the realm of the public and private media.

By the end of the 1980s a rising counter-hegemonic challenge from the varied terrain of civil society was evident. Indeed, if there was a constructive process of "nation-building" underway in Zimbabwe in the 1980s, it was to be found in the slow emergence of this nascently mass-democratic, participatory "sensibility" from within the institutions and interstices of organised civil society. These included the national print media. In this light, the deconstruction of Zanu's "consensual leadership" was unofficially led by those groups with the keenest awareness of the governing group's anti-popular programme and empty ideology, and the greatest capacity for self-

organisation: the trade union movement and radical intellectuals, primarily university students.

The current discussion begins by looking at the conditioning heritage of the Rhodesian regime and the society reconstructed under the tutelage of the RF. It is argued that this inheritance, with its minority-oriented state, "closed" terrain of national politics and weakened African civil society, allowed for the continuation of commandist "democratic" within the state and civil society under the leadership of a new dominant ruling party -- but not without producing dysfunctional contradictions. The anti-popular content of Zanu's emerging political programme, and the new types of popular demands arising from the party's mass constituency, inevitably resulted in the development of tensions which distanced the state and ruling party from leading popular social fractions. The chapter ends by charting the rise of independent, national and popular groups to points of political articulation and critique in civil society. This analysis, in turn, serves as a precursor to later investigations of the "civic" role of the private press in the coalescence and maturation of Zimbabwean civil society in the 1980s.²

The Inheritance

In 1980 Zanu inherited a state with a long history of deep, minority-oriented intervention in the national political economy, and a civil society typified by extreme

political and economic diversity and tension. Throughout the colonial era, and even as governing control over white Rhodesia changed (white) hands in a reflection of shifts among power blocs in white society, the Rhodesian state remained a relatively stable organiser of minority-dominated capital accumulation.³ Part of this process involved maintaining a firm grip on popular political activity, in the form of keeping debate within the boundaries of "white" political discourse, and suppressing by all means available to the state the popularisation of nationalist critiques of the colonial order.

The 1950s and the liberal "racial partnership" project of the Central African Federation were particularly important with regard to the shifting role of the state in civil society. These years marked a period of rapid economic growth, and a concomitant transformation of the social texture of civil society.⁴ In African society, the emergence and consolidation of new social fractions, including small scale businesspeople, professionals, "kulak" farmers and an urban working class, were to result in nationalist political challenges⁵ -- led by a new wave of black "intellectuals" -- to the colonial regime.⁶ This assault on racialism and colonialism involved the mass mobilisation of blacks, a strategy which included the formation of nationalist political organisations in the late 1950s and the utilisation of black-oriented media as a popular-political forum throughout the decade.⁷ Ultimately the attack was brought to a halt by the coming to power of the Rhodesia Front [RF], a racially-cloaked political alliance of those social fractions most imperilled by African partnership and its implications for racially-based job, wage and market protectionism: white farmers and workers.⁸

Importantly, the RF regime used the state apparatus powerfully -- especially after the Unilateral Declaration of Independence [UDI] in 1965 -- to reassert the political and economic authority of the new ruling white social fractions. The RF "captured" the state and used it to reshape white civil society, in league with "independent" national organisations infiltrated by the RF. At the same time, the regime thoroughly disorganised African civil society by aggressively attacking the nationalist political project and popular civil institutions, in moves which ultimately provoked the liberation war led by Zanu and Zapu. In the case of both white and black society, the RF went to great lengths to bring under control the specific terrain of the media, using government-supervised censorship, the deportation and intimidation of journalists and, as a last resort, banning orders (typically implemented under Emergency Power Regulations).

All of these integrally related developments -- the RF's comprehensive capturing of the state and white civil society, its disorganisation of African civil society and its partisan decimation of once-vibrant national media -- had profound implications for the form and content of the social infrastructure inherited by Zanu in 1980. The first two of these political movements are examined here. The discrete question of RF's impact on the realm of the media will receive closer, separate attention in Chapter 3.

One of the most striking aspects of RF rule -- namely, the degree to which the political and economic neglect of the black majority, and the leading social role of the RF, were systematised⁹ -- implied the existence of a political infrastructure built with

those precise aims in mind. Indeed, underneath the blanket of minority privilege the RF had put in place a network of social management mechanisms, many of which would outlive the more sweeping statutory laws by which racial rule was legally maintained. These mechanisms established an unprecedented, powerful organic political linkage between the state and the ruling party, welding the public sector to the white minority economy, and facilitating the RF's invasion of the previously more open terrain of democratic (albeit exclusively white) politics. This was the result of the swamping of the colonial state apparatus by the narrow political programme and agents of the RF.

The process of RF infiltration into the state went far beyond the norms of "political patronage". Rather, it was part of a hegemonic project which included the reform and repackaging of the entire national cultural and social agenda -- an agenda which was revised in all its forms, from school textbooks and television programmes, to town hall meetings and national economic planning. To enact this reform, the RF employed an expanded, increasingly interventionist state to penetrate deeply into the interstices of the economy and civic politics. In the case of economic management, the state integrated itself deeply into the private sector, by way of an array of parastatals and other institutions (like industrial research facilities) it created to support domestic industrial and agricultural production at a time of biting international sanctions. With regard to civil politics, the use of extensive "security" mechanisms empowered by the State of Emergency declared in 1965 (and renewed without break thereafter),¹⁰ and the widespread practice of harassment of the white opposition by

both RF agents and "private" organisations affiliated to the ruling party, soon normalised the partisan role of the governing party in determining, adjudicating and enforcing the boundaries of acceptable political discourse.¹¹

Taken together, these "economic" and "political" actions both tied the state sector tightly into the minority-oriented economy, making the public and private sectors closely structured partners, and rendered much of the state apparatus an instrument of organic-intellectual activism on behalf of a single dominant political force represented by the RF coalition of minority white fractions. The specific, concrete effects of this reality on the daily political life of state and civil society were to have enormous influence on Zanu in 1980 and after, as it struggled to reconstruct a new social order using the tools of the old.

First, at the level of the state apparatus itself, the ingrained presence of the RF in the personnel, policies and concrete structures of government by the end of the 1970s¹² often rendered the state indistinguishable from the minority ruling party and its government. This domination of the state and government by the party had serious implications for the role Zanu was to play in relation to the state after 1980, particularly in light of the weakened, disorganised nature of large sections of black civil society (another heritage of RF rule). Zanu's twin role as a popular leading political party and occupier of the seat of government allowed the party to co-ordinate, within itself, the political rebuilding of the social infrastructures of state and civil society alike. This was particularly the case after the creation of the Executive Presidency in December 1987, and the elimination of constitutional minority white

representation in Parliament (which had been a constant source of public criticism)¹³ three months earlier¹⁴ -- two moves which were seen as representative of Zanu's plans to capture what previously had been more "open" institutions.¹⁵

The co-terminus erection and filling of institutions like local government structures, womens' and youths' groups, and umbrella co-operative organisations were to result in a seeming inseparability of party and state at the level of structures and personnel. Junior and senior officials of "official" public institutions typically held "counterpart" posts in Zanu's own extensive party structures, which ranged from village "cell" level, through an array of regional and provincial hierarchies, to national and executive-national councils, committees and ultimately, the "inner cabinet" of the Zanu Politburo.¹⁶

In many instances, where the personnel and structures put in place by the RF could be easily removed and/or adapted to new needs, the inherited situation enabled - if not encouraged -- Zanu to replicate the pattern of partisan domination of state structures established during UDI. By the mid 1980s, it had become difficult in many instances to distinguish the role of the senior levels of the party from those of the government and the state bureaucracy, when it came to policy planning and decision-making. Indeed, the 1987 introduction of the Ministry of Political Affairs -- one of only three "senior" Ministries in the government¹⁷ -- was to rationalise openly the connections which had long been in place, by taking the extra step of placing Zanu responsables for a whole range of specifically party organisations on the government payroll. For example, the entire administrative and publicity infrastructure of the

party, including the officers who produced Zanu's Zimbabwe News (and the material needed to turn out the publication), were moved onto the payroll and accounts of the Ministry in January 1990. Despite the arguments of some party leaders in 1990 that the Ministry was there to serve all political parties in Zimbabwe, President Mugabe later confirmed that the Ministry was dedicated to serving the interests of Zanu only, and that its staff were to be loyal first to the needs of the ruling party.¹⁸

The main exceptions to this general rule of Zanu's capturing of discrete apparatuses of the state included the areas of economic planning and agriculture. In these cases, the state, government and ruling party were confronted by a terrain dominated by white minority interests sensitive (like the ruling group in Zanu) to the implications of a popularly-oriented programme of economic and social reform. Elsewhere, in spheres dominated by the new politics of majority rule -- for example, the military, rural development, local government and culture -- the party and public typically mirrored each other in institutional structure and personnel.

But apart from Zanu's inherited domineering role in these areas -- a development which maintained the non-participatory, undemocratic modus vivendi within the public sector nurtured by the RF -- the institutional form of the state left to Zanu by the RF remained largely white-oriented. As such the state apparatus stood in stark contrast to the needs -- and political demands -- of the black majority at independence. In most cases, state structures were to challenge directly the idea of reform and render the 1980s reconstruction process a slow and extremely expensive one. At the same time, the take-over of the state by Zanu did nothing to alter the

underlying structures which the state had helped put in place throughout civil society. In the event, the latter, too, imposed a whole new set of restrictions on the Zanu government's development programme.

For example, there was the question of skills training. In the vast majority of cases, national skills training had been used as a tool to help white Rhodesia reproduce its hierarchy of privilege in perpetuity: in most professions (and indeed, many vocational trades), there were few, if any, blacks trained to take over senior positions. This is not to mean that many of Zanu's early plans for restructuring -- whether led by the state or not -- were forced to take account of the available skills resources (particularly following the exodus of whites at the time of independence), and the "political acceptability" to skills-rich white society of many of Zanu's programmes for social change. As will be seen in later chapters, the media was one industrial sphere where this issue of skills distribution and its mediation of Zanu's political initiatives was especially vital.

Of course, the monopolisation of the skilled labour market by whites was exemplary of what after 1980 would continue to be the white minority's dominant role in the private sector -- a domination based on monopolisation of arable land and other domestic capital resources, expertise, know-how and, less concretely, on a ubiquitous "old boy" network of white contacts. These accumulated advantages of white society stood as inverse historical counterparts to the experience of black society since the 1950s.

After rapid political and economic growth in the 1950s, black society was decimated by the RF during UDI. There was little substantial social infrastructural development for the growing black population. Political and social institutions built by blacks themselves, like trade unions, co-operative societies and of course, the different wings of the nationalist movement led by Zanu and Zapu, were undermined and suppressed.¹⁹ The first fact was reflected after independence in demands on the Zanu government to render the public social infrastructure relevant to the need of the vast majority, and particularly the eighty percent of the population living in the neglected rural areas; the second was seen in the near-complete inability of most popular groups in civil society desirous of such changes, to independently, coherently, and consistently mobilise their constituencies around them immediately after independence.

Together, these exigencies of political demand and institutional capacity invited the rise of Zanu -- in its twin guise of a victorious, organised political mass movement, and Zimbabwe's new governing party -- as the leading national-popular authority at the outset of the 1980s. In short time, however, it was to become apparent that the contradictions among and within many of Zanu's new roles and indeed within the party's own political programme would prevent Zanu from maintaining for more than a brief period its position of consensual moral and political leadership.

The Problematic Emergence of the Party and Its Programme

The fundamental tensions within Zanu revolved around the party's ambiguous political character which had been structured into the party long before 1980. This ambiguity was grounded in the heterogeneous amalgam of social interests brought together by Zanu in common "national democratic" cause during the protracted nationalist struggle.²⁰ It was only after the party entered the government, a move which saw the party leadership emerge in its own right as distinct from the war-time "mass base" and which took place in the context of economic instability and reduced flexibility of planners and policy, that the problematic nature of Zanu as a unifying political entity became clear. By then, other nodes of popular organisation were beginning to appear in the previous institutional wasteland of black civil society, at first under the tutelage of Zanu but later in opposition to it. Their gradual bubbling through to the surface of national politics, spurred on by intensifying sectoral grievances and demands, was the primary means by which the political and social leadership of the liberation movement parties were deconstructed "from below" in the 1980s.

For years prior to independence, the class diversity of Zanu as a liberation movement was recognised by the party itself and seen as a positive attribute.

We need to unite with all forces in Zimbabwe that oppose the settler regime. These include businessmen, Trade Unions, Women's Organisations, students, peasants and intellectuals, despite their ideological beliefs... This revolution is democratic in the sense that Zimbabwean nationals, peasants, workers, national bourgeoisie, etc. want the democratic freedom to

choose their own representative and voice their own opinions without fear. This cannot be done under the Smith regime, so we must unite with all these nationals.²¹

Huddled tentatively together under the umbrella of the national democratic movement in the 1970s were elements ranging from the petty bourgeois "elite" (a hodge podge of traders and businessmen, "intellectuals" such as teachers and other "educated" elements, doctors, nurses and low-level state functionaries), to peasants, trade unionists, urban proletarians and kulaks.²² The existence of this wide spectrum of social elements indicated that the task of uniting the social formation under the hegemonic leadership of any group would be a difficult one -- especially with the past struggles within the liberation parties and the disintegration of the hesitant nationalist alliance into its component parts upon the achievement of independence in 1980.²³ Each group and sub-group of fractions was to pose countervailing demands on the new government.

In the mounting of the armed component of the liberation struggle, it seems clear that no other social groups could claim the degree of strategic importance attached by the nationalist movement to the "rural masses", that heterogeneous population comprising landless families, peasant communal cultivators, freehold farmers and large numbers unemployed and/or engaged in the expansive informal sector. The vast majority of the landless peasantry who had been mobilised throughout the war by the guerrillas and their leaders armed with the promise of arable land to be redistributed from the whites, came to expect large scale land redistribution and resettlement and government assistance in the course of cultivation

and marketing.²⁴ Meanwhile, freehold farmers understood the same messages to mean the expansion of their land tenure and commercial operations, and improvement of services and market access in support of their commercial operations.

In Zimbabwe's urban townships, in its mining compounds and on the labour intensive plantation estates around the country, waged labourers had their own expectations of the majority rule government. Zanu's political commitment to Marxist-Leninist "scientific socialism",²⁵ which served as a background to party leaders' frequent indulgence of "worker-peasant alliance" rhetoric, had raised expectations among the large, poorly-paid and provided-for manual labour force that a more favourable labour relations regime would be put in place by the Zanu government. Indeed, from the strikes which took place after the March 1980 election and before the new administration took office in April it was made conspicuously clear that some parts of the industrial workforce especially, expected higher wage packets and improved conditions of work. Soon other demands relating to the growing crisis of unemployment, worker participation and declining local industrial investment were also made.

But the most important category of social fractions in Zanu at independence and from which was to come the party's leading or "ruling" group was the African petty bourgeoisie. The diverse composition of this collection of interest implied varying stakes in the new political agenda of majority rule. In 1980, the petty bourgeoisie contained elements of the black "commercial" sector (traders, small scale importers and exporters and transport operators) with an interest in the loosening of

restrictions on access to white-controlled markets and the extensification of small scale production and services. It also included fractions more intimately connected with white and especially foreign capital (for example local managers, partners and compradorial "facilitators"), whose aims lay in maintaining and deepening existing production relations.²⁶

After 1980 a new, important group was to be added: that category of individuals whose power and interests were derived from their placement within or access to the ranks of the public service and/or ruling party structures. This strata of functionaries, professionals, "politicians" and others was key in negotiating the post-1980 strategy of national development; that is, in adjudicating struggles among different classes and class fractions from its place within the ruling party and state. But this "adjudication" was neither neutral, nor unquestioned. Rather it was to be tempered increasingly by the social basis and interests of the governing group. It was during the ensuing struggle over the direction of government policy that the class commitments of this governing group emerged in their own right. While some Zimbabwean radical intellectuals speculated that this process of the petty bourgeois ruling group's consolidation was relatively unproblematic -- with the primary point of conflict lying in inter-factional petty bourgeois struggles over "ethnic" and "clientelist" competition -- the development of broader tendencies of class conflict were to call into question the popular political leadership from without.²⁷ In this regard, the more important motor of political struggle in Zimbabwe in the 1980s lay in the resurgence of civil society, in "opposition" to the state and its ruling group.

An open political space within civil society reappeared only slowly in the 1980s. Initially, an economic boom and the mass-oriented reconstruction programme which it permitted in the short-term, and the political domination of civil politics by the victorious liberation movements, left the ruling group room for consolidation of its leadership. This it attempted to do by gradually developing a set of policy instruments which addressed the popular demands of peasants, workers and others (including radical intellectuals, for example). These policies were couched within the Zanu government's broad political commitment to "scientific socialism", a term which was to mean different things at different times, and whose main utility to Zanu lay in its use as a nodal point of national-popular political mobilisation behind the party's broadly nationalist programme.²⁸

Inevitably, Zanu's plans for national transformation were of a limited, rather social democratic nature, despite the surrounding political rhetoric of Marxism-Leninism. In some ways the moderate ambitions of the ruling party reflected the economic and political constraints of independence, including the Lancaster House Constitution which had imposed restrictions on land expropriation and sale, and which had guaranteed white minority political rights for the near future. But the most important reason for the creeping conservatism of the government and state, as demonstrated in the various national development plans of the early and mid 1980s, was the class affiliations and interests of the ruling group within the Zanu government.

According to the Zanu's government series of plans, beginning in 1981 with the Growth with Equity policy statement, the mass-oriented national transformation towards socialism was to be leveraged improbably on the strength of the local capitalist economy.²⁹ Furthermore, it was anticipated that economic development would be enhanced by the co-operation -- and indeed by the additional investment -- of the former sworn enemy of the liberation struggle: foreign capital.³⁰ Remarkably, Zanu's misnamed "transformation process" saw the ruling party and its senior members entering the commercial sector as entrepreneurs and, in a reflection of such personal experience, supporting schemes (such as low-interest credit lines) to nurture the growth of "emergent African businesspeople".

For example, Zanu came to openly and aggressively support commercial groups like the Indigenous Businessmen's Development Council.³¹ As one anonymous black businessman noted in 1991, Zanu's support for the body did not mark a change of policy direction, but merely a renewed attempt to nurture black capitalism.

The government is embarrassed that it has so far failed to help its own people in business. Whites have been making money while blacks watched helplessly.³²

Added the Council's President,

It's part of a process whose cause cannot be pinpointed to any one thing -- a natural progression for a dynamic country like ours... [O]ur government has never been motivated purely by ideological concerns. It has always been pragmatic.³³

Indeed, figures from the late 1980s indicate that local national capital made significant inroads in certain areas of industry, notably small and middle level

manufacturing, and the "low-tech" service sector. At the same time, local capital increased its strengths in areas like publishing, paper and transport. By the end of the 1980s, only about 28% of companies listed on the Zimbabwe Stock Exchange were foreign controlled (though many of the larger industrial concerns were, like mining houses and computer companies, were not listed enterprises).³⁴

But while the black petty bourgeoisie made significant inroads into the domestic economy, the routine grievances of the majority of the population -- grievances arising from concrete disjunctures of Zanu's actual administrative practice from pronounced policy, and from the coalescence of class cleavages in the social formation -- started to seriously erode the political leadership's mass base of support.

In the early 1980s, heavy social investment by the Zanu government won the party massive popular support in black society. As the economy grew in spurts of 10.7% and 9.7% (in real terms) in 1980 and 1981 respectively, the state had invested (with the added help of foreign aid and substantial overseas borrowing) in a large reconstruction programme.³⁵ There were intensive capital inflows into the areas of health and education, in particular, as well as into the government's ambitious resettlement programme. Free primary education was introduced for all, and secondary schooling was vastly expanded to meet the demands of young black Zimbabweans. Hospitals and clinics were built in the countryside, and community primary health care introduced. Resettlement was begun on the 2.6 million hectares of mostly poor land purchased by government after 1980. In the same period, the stable of Rhodesian parastatals was taken over, and expanded, as part of the extension of the

public service to meet the needs of the heretofore neglected majority population. But various structured limitations to these initiatives soon became apparent.

Even in their early stages, the "welfare state" reforms undertaken by the Zanu government were highly ambiguous. Where the educational system was hugely expanded, there remained an inadequate supply of teachers and materials, a "foreign" (and inappropriate) Cambridge-based syllabus and few job opportunities for graduates. Where new rural clinics were built, there were no doctors or medicines to fill them. Where minimum wage levels were established, they quickly came to serve as the ceiling (and not the floor) limits of wage scales. Similarly, the rural resettlement programme, which in the early 1980s aimed to place at least 155,000 families on government-purchased farmland, largely stalled by 1984, with only 35,000 peasant families (and their 200,000 dependents) having been resettled on mostly poor quality land often unsuitable for intensive cultivation.³⁶ Together, such reforms were shown to be clearly limited, both in the short term, by their narrowed scope of intervention; and in the medium to long term, by a national productive capacity clearly unable to sustain them.³⁷

The recessionary shocks of the early 1980s were the final straw for Zanu's long term commitment to a mass-popular programme of social transformation. In its wake, education and health services were maintained or pared back -- often to the disadvantage of those poorer (and usually rural) Zimbabweans needing them most. The land resettlement programme was effectively suspended as public funds for land purchase and infrastructural development quickly dried up.³⁸ Further effects of the

government's commitment to debt-repayment and the nurturing of local and foreign capital were soon apparent in the deterioration of the wider social infrastructure upon which most Zimbabweans relied in their daily lives. Urban housing shortages increased tangibly, public transport systems crumbled under overloading, land hunger and degradation in the Communal Areas accelerated, and the cost of basic consumables, notably foodstuffs, spiralled up. While the "popular gains" of the "revolution", the mass-oriented social services infrastructure, evaporated under economic pressures, Zanu's deepening accommodation of private capital cut further into the claims of popular social forces on "their" people's government.³⁹ This policy option was later sealed by Zanu's gradual introduction of a World Bank-inspired Economic Structural Adjustment Plan [SAP] meant to replace the "failed" previous development model based on "socialist", inward-oriented central planning.⁴⁰

These new, hard features of Zanu's development programme increasingly became the object of concrete grievances for large sections of black civil society. The trajectories of these struggles were not, however, mechanically determined. Rather, the mediating instance of the structured political interpretation of them was crucial in their mass-appropriation, in their becoming "material" (recalling Gramsci). In this struggle to establish legitimate interpretations of the new social reality, Zanu was disadvantaged by the increasingly distanced, anti-popular and often repressive activities of the government and state under its guidance.⁴¹

The entrenchment of a regionally-based petty bourgeois "baronism", involving the staking-out of economic fiefdoms in different corners of the country (typically by

locally-dominant political "chefs"), was exemplary of the self-destructive politics of acquisition practiced by much of the senior Zanu leadership.⁴² This baronism led not only to intra-party factional fights among leading members of Zanu and their "lieutenants", but also intensified rivalries between the regionally based petty bourgeois fractions of Zanu and Zapu.⁴³ While the latter dispute was largely "resolved" by the Zanu-Zapu Unity Pact of December 1987 -- the "Berlin Conference", as it were, of the national economic terrain -- neither the popular image of such factional brinkmanship, nor the squabbles between and within many existing Zanu "fiefdoms", were ameliorated by the wider inter-party agreement.⁴⁴

Throughout the decade, the image of the ruling party leadership as being removed and acquisitive was greatly fortified -- again, typically by reference to Zanu's own early-established tenets concerning what would be expected of party leaders. In this regard, Zanu's 1984 adoption of a "Leadership Code", which aimed to set guidelines restricting property ownership and business conduct of Zanu members, and which some party leaders took to be a necessary step on the way to the socialist transition,⁴⁵ stood as standard against which leaders could be popularly judged for their acquisitive activities.⁴⁶ The Code was never enforced by the party, and indeed, attempts to rejuvenate debate on its implementation at Zanu's "unity" congress of December 1989 were outweighed by those (led by ex-Zapu leaders) to quash it altogether. In the event the Code was retained as a stillborn policy. Despite repeated statements by President Mugabe about imminent efforts to root-out "daylight robbers" from within the party, it is clear that the avaricious behaviour of senior party

members grew steadily in the 1980s. At the end of the decade, President Mugabe himself acknowledged that this acquisitive, anti-popular element had become a structured feature of the party leadership.⁴⁷

Importantly, many examples of such acquisitive behaviour -- some of it illegal, some of it involving highly irregular forms of business practice -- were to come to light frequently by the end of the decade, accentuating the popular view of the leadership as being corrupt, socially parasitic and at times, distinctly "tribalistic".⁴⁸ Such instances were revealed not by the ruling party but rather by critics outside of the party in civil society, who independently applied Zanu's Leadership Code to the party's senior ranks. In this regard, the print media assumed a leading role in the deconstruction of the Zanu's leadership self-ascribed image of irreproachability. The "Willowgate" scandal of 1988-1989, involving the illegal acquisition and dispensation of motor vehicles by senior party members, was the most prominent -- but not the only -- example of shifting public perceptions of the political leadership.⁴⁹

Another factor in the declining, more formally considered political legitimacy of the government had to do with the ruling party's increasingly frequent and partisan use of the national security agencies. The bench mark in this regard was the Matabeleland crisis of 1982-1983 (at least for the twenty percent minority of the population of Ndebele origin).⁵⁰ But the use of various security measures to harass and occasional crush Zapu structures and members was only reflective of a wider, increasingly high-handed approach taken by Zanu towards its critics. Throughout the 1980s, Zanu consistently resorted to using the RF's Emergency Powers to silence and

intimidate "opponents", real or imagined.⁵¹ However, if these tactics tended to smother open political debate, they did not erase -- but rather amplified -- popular antipathy to the ruling group. As one radical political observer noted,

It is difficult to effectively abolish one bourgeois "right" after another and maintain the position that democracy, and particularly popular mass democracy, is being entrenched, while economic equality is being constructed. At present, in fact, we have fewer and fewer bourgeois rights, and less and less economic equality. This puts great strain on the ruling party's popular credibility with its natural constituencies in society.⁵²

On the other hand, Zanu's most important systematic efforts to restructure civil society under its own partisan auspices through the building of party "community" organisations like the Womens' and Youth Leagues, also became the target of popular attack and, eventually, counter-mobilisation. Having been created as instruments of liaison between the ruling party and civil society, they came to be perceived by the Zimbabwean grassroots as tools of control and repression for the Zanu leadership. Although the party had developed an extensive national infrastructure over the 1980s, witnessed by its considerable hierarchy of cells, villages, branches, district and provincial committees, the hierarchial practices within the party tended to divorce these grassroots structures from the decision-making process. This distinction between the ruling group of the party and the rank and file was to become most evident with those specific bodies -- Zanu's Youth and Women's Leagues -- which were to represent the party to "the masses", and vice versa.

In practice the Leagues served primarily (and benignly) as a source of labour power for party activities, whether it was a matter of providing supervision for

rallies, raising funds in campaigns, undertaking demonstrations of support for the leadership (which sometimes appeared to be the sole reason of existence for the Women's League), or worse, intimidation and "press-ganging" (for which certain wings of the Youth League became notorious).⁵³ Where there were policy suggestions from these organisations, they were quite plainly engineered from above (in line with party policy) by the members of the leadership who officially headed the Leagues. Where such resolutions were incompatible with party policy, they were resolutely ignored.⁵⁴ This process was rationalised in 1990, when both Leagues were formally subsumed within the Ministry of Political Affairs, as Departments of that Ministry.

Within the Leagues and other "lower" party structures themselves, the practical dismissal of their direct political participation in decision-making at national level nurtured a tangible disillusionment with inner-party democracy.⁵⁵ There is evidence that the lowest levels of party structures purposefully divorced themselves from the higher chains of command, out of alienation from and disinterest in the clientelist machinations of partisan politics. These types of complaints surfaced most dramatically in the run-up to the 1990 national elections when, in a round of internal "primary elections" in Zanu designed to select Parliamentary constituency candidates by branch ballots, several senior parliamentarians were "deselected" in local protest votes (but later "reselected" on Politburo orders).

Outside of the party, such events contributed to the view of the ruling leadership as being high-handed and distanced from "the masses". By the end of the

1980s, one telling, embarrassing outcome of this unfavourable perception was the virtual boycotting of Zanu's old, preferred form of popular communication, the political rally, by ordinary Zimbabweans.⁵⁶ For political observers, the declining rally attendance was symptomatic of a wider political malaise grounded in the evaporation of Zanu's moral-political leadership, an event catalysed by economic decline and unfulfilled popular expectations in majority rule.⁵⁷ As Andrew Moyse noted,

How could one ever claim to have conscientised, to have mobilised the people around them, when so much has been hidden from the people in the first place? ... Now that socio-economic problems like those involving land, transport, housing and unemployment, are coming home to roost, people are prepared to speak out. They see chefs driving beautiful Benzes to even more beautiful houses, while they themselves wait on the road for hours, trying to catch rides back to their homes in the high density suburbs, or rural areas. They are also aware of senior politicians who have acquired vast tracts of commercial farmland. At the same time, the people know that something called the "Leadership Code" still exists.⁵⁸

Yet, the deconstruction of Zanu's leading social role should not be attributed primarily to some "technical", "interpellative" failing on the part of the "organic intellectual" instruments (like the Womens' and Youth Leagues) used by the party to elicit discipline and consent. In reality, the more important factor was the full-fledged implementation of Zanu's capital-centric development programme which pre-empted the compliance of civil society in the government's plan of action, and profoundly endangered Zanu's own revolutionary "credibility and legitimacy".⁵⁹ Having placed considerable stress, before and after 1980, on the need to "conscientise the masses" about the goals and benefits of mass-oriented socialist development, the Zanu

government proceeded to provide objective conditions for the pursuit of class struggle against its unfolding administrative programme.

More specifically, Zanu created ideological and organisational "nodal points" of opposition to its implementation of a neo-colonial socio-economic regime. In this regard, the establishment and growth of a national labour centre, collective co-operatives movement and various other civic organisations (ranging from "women's action" and squatter associations, to human rights advocacy groups and fora for radical intellectuals and students), in a period of declining real wages, increased pressure on workers from the state and harassment of government's political critics, proved decisive.

Locales of Community Coalescence: The Case of the ZCTU

Central to and exemplary of this process of building a nascent counter-hegemony in the civil space were developments in the formal sector, and particularly, the evolving role of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions [ZCTU].⁶⁰ The ZCTU was created on the initiative of government in 1981, after serious labour unrest in 1980-1981 had interrupted the docility of the fragmented, generally corrupt corporate union status quo inherited at independence. The unrest led to the introduction of legislated minimum wages for the formal sector (excluding the large public sector) of 1.1 million workers, and heralded government's direct interference in the internal

organisation of the labour force. Both actions were soon to impinge on worker-state relations. The government's initial harsh treatment of the early wave of wildcat strikes,⁶¹ and the establishment of the unified national labour centre itself, gave every indication that old RF tactics of African labour control would be continued.⁶²

In the first instance, the short term gain of legalised minimum wages was to turn into a long term disadvantage. While minimum wage increases were pegged below the rate of inflation, real wages fell consistently, and minimum wage scales came to define wage ceilings.⁶³ In the second, the establishment of the ZCTU represented an effort by government to enforce greater "discipline" and "responsibility" in the work place. This goal was shared by capital, the state and the clientelist leadership of organised labour⁶⁴ -- while undercutting the independent, social and political organisational capacity of the trade union movement. Out of this latter action, however, grew an institution which gradually assumed a leading role as an independent, community-based critic of parts of the government's programme. In reality, Zanu had created a nascent nodal point of counter-hegemonic organisation.

The ZCTU's inaugural congress of February 1981 came after a year of internal union faction-fighting and government-labour disputes. Immediately there were complaints from within the Congress that the Minister of Labour, through accreditation of union delegations, had rigged the congress -- thereby ensuring the election of Zanu stalwarts to top posts (including Albert Mugabe, the Prime Minister's brother, who became Secretary-General).⁶⁵ Continuing factional wrangles and administrative turmoil within the ZCTU, fanned by public exposure of corruption

in succeeding executives and open warfare within and among affiliated and non-affiliated unions, was the excuse used in 1984 by the Ministry of Labour to intervene. Ministry officials took temporary, supervisory charge of the body.

In the following year the Ministry tabled a substantially revised Labour Relations Act, which entrenched the decisive authority of the state in the field of industrial relations and collective bargaining. Among other clauses aimed at ensuring labour control by the state, the Act stipulated that labourers deemed part of an "essential service" would not be permitted to stage legal strikes. By its broad definition of "essential services", this clause covered the vast majority of workers.⁶⁶ Indeed, from 1984 to 1990, there were no legal strikes in the country, although there were numerous instances of "illegal" labour stoppages and slow-downs, many of which were dealt harshly with by a state armed with powers of arrest and detention without trial.⁶⁷ According to its own leaders, the trade union movement had become a target of, rather than a partner in, Zanu's development programme.

In actual fact, the government is not interested in allowing us any significant input into debates and discussion on socialism, and the role of workers in the Zimbabwean socialist society. That's especially the situation when it comes to drawing up legislation relating to workers: legislation that helps to control organised labour, but not in the interests of workers.... In terms of controlling labour, we are the most controlled labour unions, I would say in the whole world! At the moment it's practically impossible to institute a strike action.⁶⁸

But the docility of the ZCTU would not endure. By early 1988, it had become apparent to union organisers that effective self-defensive action lay in the realm of better mobilisation. The ZCTU's effectiveness was greatly enhanced after the holding

of a special national congress in mid 1988, which led to the revamping of the labour centre's administration. For the first time, the body established a full-time secretariat, and took important steps on the way to normalising accounting and management practices.⁶⁹ The same actions also highlighted the conscious return of the union movement to the domain of national politics at the head of what it saw as a nascent, broad-based counter-hegemonic alliance. As ZCTU Secretary General Tsvangirai opined,

The workers should not advocate the principle of "workerism" at all, because eighty percent of our population are peasants. What they should do is try to link up workers and peasants into strong structures to advance their interests... The role of such a group would be that of the leading force in society, through the arm of popular organisations... The ZCTU would like to step in and help others mobilise -- not just unionists and other workers, but also those who are not within the union movement. We would like to get in touch with society's progressive, popular grassroots.⁷⁰

Despite an economic downturn which led to spiralling unemployment and increased pressures on unionised labour's wage demands, the ZCTU's strategy of intensified worker and community organisation began to have its impact. Economic stagnation and the government's accompanying austerity programme, more than anything else, provoked the initially self-defensive mobilisation of workers.⁷¹ With twenty-nine affiliate unions comprising two hundred thousand workers (another two hundred and fifty thousand became affiliates after the forging of links with OCCZIM, the Organisation of Collective Co-Operatives in Zimbabwe), the organisation soon developed renewed political strength.⁷² Even where it could not legally reach, the ZCTU exerted influence.

Significantly, by the end of the 1980s, over 180,000 workers were located within the public sector and therefore, outside the organisational reach of the ZCTU (public employees are subject to separate labour legislation, and fall under the jurisdiction of the parastatal Public Service Commission). This did not dissuade attempts by some public sector employees to liaise with the ZCTU during wage disputes, such as the nurses and non-graduate teachers' strikes of May and June 1990, respectively. Indeed, the wave of strikes which swept Zimbabwe during 1989 and 1990 were largely confined to the public sector, in which strikes and stoppages were nominally disallowed.

The important point was that the political direction and allegiance of much of these public sector union membership was accorded to the ZCTU, because of its growing combative stance adopted towards the government. In this regard, interventions were made in a range of public debate, extending from "trade liberalisation" to housing, educational and health policy, often with the support and participation of fragments of the local "left" intelligentsia.

By these means, ZCTU Secretary-General Morgan Tsvangirai emerged as a key national opinion-maker, appearing frequently in public fora calling for a return to Zanu's original, mass-oriented administrative agenda outlined at independence. Importantly, Tsvangirai's critiques self-consciously started from a "common denominator" position which demanded the extension and deepening of basic human rights and political democracy; but typically, they also employed the ruling party's

own socialist ideology, in order to attack government on its slipping commitment to both workers and the peasant "masses".⁷³

For the ZCTU, direct involvement in setting a new agenda of public debate meant its attraction of both vociferous support from civic groups like student organisations and the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace -- and government ire. Inevitably, key links in this loose alliance of associations and individuals became targets of more overt government attack. In October 1988, Shadreck Gutto, an exiled Kenyan lecturing in law at the University of Zimbabwe, was unceremoniously deprived of his permanent residence status and deported, after quietly speaking in support of student demonstrations against corruption. Harassment of University staff and students continued. In May 1989, Gutto's lawyer colleague, Kempton Makamure, was detained for four weeks after a radio broadcast in which he criticized the government's new trade liberalisation scheme.⁷⁴ Tensions between students and riot police (who had become frequent campus visitors since Makamure's arrest) peaked some months later, with the detention on October 4 of the entire Students Representative Council and the temporary closure of the University.⁷⁵

After speaking out in support of the "democratic" demands of the students following their incarceration, the ZCTU's Tsvangirai was also detained by Zimbabwe's secret police, the Central Intelligence Organisation [CIO], under the same Emergency Power Regulations used to silence the students.⁷⁶ With the case against him having been found unsubstantiable by three different High Court Magistrates on three separate occasions, and domestic and international pressure for

his release mounting, Tsvangirai was released in November 1989 without charge.⁷⁷

According to Tsvangirai, the episode was an indication of Zanu's jittery political insecurity in respect to its formerly obedient constituency.

Such repressive activities from the state only helped consolidate the popular credibility of those targeted by the state, as further, sometimes unlikely, allies were won over to the cause of community based mobilisation against unpopular government actions. These new allies included various domestic business and employers' associations, all of whom found a home in a common position on the question of political democracy and the need for its deepening.⁷⁸ For Zanu, the new social tendency calling for greater mass-participation in government decision-making, less high-handedness and (especially, in Willowgate's aftermath) the punishment and elimination of corruption, took on more ominous features because of other more formally-political developments which grew out of mounting popular grievances.

In April 1989, the Zimbabwe Unity Movement [Zum] was founded by former Zanu Secretary-General Edgar Tekere, in an opportunistic reaction to popular concerns related to rising corruption, and the phantom of the legalised one-party Zanu state.⁷⁹ Zum was the direct political product of the compendium of popular grievances aired by civic groups like the ZCTU. Aside from the issues it inherited from the civics, Zum's "platform" evoked only vague images of a confused, anti-Zanu conservative social "policy" broadly aiming to remove "foreign ideologies" from the Zimbabwean political landscape, and instil a full-blown "market economy".⁸⁰ In this regard, the party was a rough -- and the only -- reflection of populist sentiment

bubbling up in the civil space, at the level of the formally political. In this regard, its unique status was indubitably the primary reason explaining the party's remarkable attraction of interest in 1989-1990, despite its nearly complete lack of organisational and ideological coherency.⁸¹ It was also the reason why Zup -- with few identifiable members, no offices and an untested political strength -- quickly became a decisive point of Zanu counter-attack in the latter's efforts to recoup popular credibility (particularly as the 1990 elections drew nearer). Zup meetings were broken up by police as being "illegal", candidates and members were detained and sometimes beaten, and various sorts of threats from Zanu leaders became a regular feature of the ruling party's public discourse.⁸²

Yet, this process only attracted popular sympathy for the fledgling party, which sometimes resulted in the formation of loose, bizarre political affiliations. Marxist-Leninist university students, for instance, came to broadly support the "monetarist" movement of Tekere, joining leading elements of the black Zimbabwean petty bourgeoisie and the rump of Ian Smith's old RF, the Conservative Alliance of Zimbabwe.⁸³ For Zanu, the formation of such unfathomable political liaisons, in the context of spiralling unemployment,⁸⁴ renewed debate over old issues like land redistribution⁸⁵ and popular alienation from party "grassroots" structures, all pointed in the direction of a potentially dangerous challenge "from below".

This challenge, and the general popular dissatisfaction with the government's performance, were reflected in the 1989 national by-elections. In a round of by-elections in 1989 (to fill seats vacated as a result of Willowgate-related resignations),

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tiny voter turnouts and a significant movement towards Zup (despite widespread intimidation and polling irregularities) -- roughly 33% in urban constituencies -- implied voter alienation from the "people's government".⁸⁶ This trend carried over into the March 1990 national elections, in which Zanu won a resounding victory in the House of Assembly, taking 117 of 120 seats up for election, in the context of a dramatically reduced national turnout and reduced share of the vote. In the 1980 and 1985 elections, well over 90% of eligible voters cast their ballots; in 1990, this figure had dropped to as low as 54%.⁸⁷

Just as importantly, the polls reflected the deepening political schisms which a decade of Zanu administration had nurtured, and which the growth of independent community action in urban civil society had helped consolidate. On average, 26% of the voters in Zimbabwe's large towns and cities cast their ballots for Zup (the national average was 17%), while in the vast rural constituencies spreading across the country Zup support was negligible. If the elections demonstrated the united Zanu's stronghold on the national electorate in an environment of increasing political apathy, they also underscored the fact that there was resistance from broad sectors of the population -- particularly urban communities -- to Zanu's aims of subduing civil society to the goals and instruments of the ruling party and the state.⁸⁸

The same observation held for the post-election period in 1990, when the ZCTU, collective co-operators, students, church groups, the private press and other organisations in civil society successfully campaigned in a loose coalition for the

lifting of the 26 year-old State of Emergency, and the shelving by Zanu of the legislated one-party state.

However, it must be underlined that the apparently "spatial" dimension of the "democratic awakening" in Zimbabwean civil society was based on fundamental differences in the class basis of urban and rural society. Years of declining real wages had most directly affected those not dependent on the land for their livelihood. More concretely, rising urban-centred unemployment and underemployment throughout the 1980s had been matched by deteriorating living conditions. These ranged from township residents (who suffered from housing shortages and increasingly, the breakdown of commuting transport), to middle class service industry employees and public servants, whose living standards were severely undermined by the slipping real value of wage packets.

On the other hand, the concrete gains of independence were most apparent in the rural areas of Zimbabwe. Although state-directed development like the construction of schools, clinics, dams, dip tanks and grain marketing depots typically failed to satisfy community needs, the very existence of such rudimentary infrastructural elements marked a significant advance over the socio-economic status quo of the previous Rhodesian regime. It was this considerable difference in daily needs between urban and rural society, and the ability of the government to minister to them in the long term, which bred the political distinction between Zanu's failed "socialist" hegemony in urban Zimbabwe, and the relatively more successful brand of grassroots populism which characterised the party's political discourse in the rural

areas. Therefore, it was not surprising that as Zanu came increasingly came under attack in the late 1980s from proponents of a more democratic and mass-participatory political regime, the party steadily withdrew to the comfort and security of a nationalist-populist rhetoric, typically couched in terms of "land hunger" and the peasantry's contribution to the liberation struggle under Zanu's leadership.

But this retreat in itself was an insufficient response to the mounting challenge posed by popular fractions of urban Zimbabwe, which in any case had strong links to the economy of rural households. Neither was it an effective palliative for the peasantry, particularly after the expiry of Lancaster House restrictions on land acquisition by government failed to materialise in the state's quick, substantial alleviation of swelling land hunger. Instead, in both cases the structured contradictions of Zanu's increasingly anti-popular programme were to supply further nourishment to the growing space of a civil society poised in challenge to its previously undisputed political mentor.

Conclusion: Nodes of Contention in an Unfolding Social Crisis

Having at one time been the deferential partners of the majority rule state in national development, and indeed, Zanu's front-line grassroots battalions defending the gains of independence, the nodal points of popular authority in the interstices of civil society had become, by the end of the 1980s, the exposed underbelly of the

ruling party. If there was indeed a "rank and file" voluntary cross-over to the side of Zanu, it certainly did not include the "masses" of workers, peasants, the unemployed or fractions of the middle class, who, for the most part, had visibly begun regular boycotts of Zanu community activities by the late 1980s. If there was a political mobilisation of, for and by "the people" in the wake of the Unity Accord, it remained to be specified to which social fraction these "people" belonged.⁸⁹

For the real grassroots of civil society -- including trade unionists, collective co-operators, district school building committees, human rights monitors, demonstrating university students, women's pressure and self-help groups, community health awareness organisations (... the list is endless) -- unity and democratic participation from below, undertaken independently of the "new" Zanu, were the authentic channels of popular mobilisation.

In the event, the wide-ranging, deeply structured challenge from the popular quarters of the social formation took on a new existence, as a concretely identified "grassroots" constituency of collaborative community organisations, NGOs and other groups emerged as a politically legitimate, living component of national political society. By 1991, the more direct, resolute and often better co-ordinated activities of these institutional and social fragments had already helped render obsolete Zuma, the first prominent, freshly-created standard-bearer of the new civil society (and the grassroots' initial proxy) on the national political stage. Not by mere coincidence, certain of these community based groups, notably the ZCTU (as seen in the discussion above), were simultaneously preparing themselves for leadership roles

which would take them beyond the articulation of narrowly corporate interests, and include their self-assertive, cross-sectoral representation of different constellations of social fractions.

When such manifold, disparate points of challenge to consensual leadership are considered in terms of their combined effects both within and without the ruling party, and in light of the embedded class tensions underlying them in the organisation of the social formation, one begins to dissect first-hand the trajectories and boundaries of the Zimbabwean hegemonic crisis. In this investigation, close attention must be paid to those elements within the social formation primarily responsible for the process of articulating and rearticulating of the agenda and limits of the struggle: that is, those individuals and institutions labelled by Gramsci as "organic intellectuals". In this chapter, the class and institutional basis of leading and nascent organic intellectuals in Zimbabwe in the 1980s have been identified. They include the structures of the ruling party, government and the state bureaucracy which, it has been argued, Zanu was able to co-ordinate as a network of partisan social intervention, but not without negative consequences for the social appropriation of that network from the below of civil society. By implication, then, there were also locales of organic political activism in the realm of private society, comprising, as noted above, various loosely affiliated groups and organisations, from liberal capitalists, commercial farmers and church societies, to trade unionists, collective co-operators and radical intellectuals.

In this investigation, the realm of the print media will be scrutinised as a particularly important terrain of hegemonic struggle, one on which the inevitably flawed character of Zanu's post-independence project of hegemony was to be soundly demonstrated. In the context of this chapter's argument, the media will be portrayed as a distinct locale of hegemonic struggle within the overall array of forces and class fractions in the social formation. Correspondingly, the variegated challenges posed to the regime through the press will be seen as political struggles; and the structures, issues and individuals involved, the political combatants of contradictory social forces and interests. As the next chapter demonstrates, the historical inheritance of the previous Rhodesian regime rendered this perception of the media a self-apparent, if not unproblematic one.

References

1. Antonio Gramsci, SPN, p. 151.
2. See Chapter 7.
3. See the following key studies for discussion of this process of racial capitalism's construction through laws and regulations focused on land tenure, goods marketing and labour relations: Giovanni Arrighi, "Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective: A Study of the Proletarianization of the African Peasantry in Rhodesia," Giovanni Arrighi and John Saul, Essays on the Political Economy of Africa (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1973); *idem.*, "Peripheralization of Southern Africa, I: Changes in Production Processes," Review, vol.3, no.2 (Fall 1979), pp. 161-179; Werner Biermann and Reinhart Kossler, "The Settler Mode of Production: The Rhodesian Case," Review of African Political Economy, 18 (May-August 1980), pp. 106-116; L. Cliffe, "Zimbabwe's Political Inheritance", C. Stoneman ed. Zimbabwe's Inheritance (London: MacMillan, 1981); Ian Phimister, "Zimbabwe: the path of capitalist development," David Birmingham and Phyllis Martin, eds. History of Central Africa. Volume 2 (London: Longman, 1983); and, *idem.*, An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe 1890-1948: Capital Accumulation and Class Struggle (London: Longman, 1988).
4. There is a wealth of literature (mostly uncritical and rather self-congratulatory) on this period of "partnership" in the Federation. For more subtle and serious analyses of this period in addition to aforementioned historical surveys, see Colin Leys, European Politics in Southern Rhodesia (London: Oxford University Press, 1959); Ian Hancock, White Liberals, Moderates and Radicals in Rhodesia: 1953-1980 (London: Croom Helm, 1984); Hardwicke Holderness, Lost Chance: Southern Rhodesia 1945-58 (Harare: ZPH, 1985); Clyde Sanger, Central African Emergency (London: Heinemann, 1960).
5. The renewal of nationalism was concretised primarily in the 1957 founding of the Southern Rhodesian African National Congress, the modern forerunner to Zapu and Zanu.
6. For an incisive discussion of the role of the "new intellectuals" led by "professionals", see David Moore, "The Contradictory Construction of Hegemony in Zimbabwe: Politics, Ideology and Class in the Formation of a New African State" (York University, Department of Political Science: Ph.D. Thesis, April 1989).
7. See Chapter 3.

8. For discussion of the class politics behind the rise of the RF, see in addition to Arrighi, Cliffe (1981) and Phimister (1983), *op. cit.*: Andre Astrow, Zimbabwe: A Revolution that Lost its Way? (London: Zed, 1983); Rob McBride, "Race, Class and National Liberation in Zimbabwe and Southern Africa: A Review of Recent Studies", The Insurgent Sociologist, vol.x, no.2 (Fall 1980), pp. 97-107; and C.M.B. Utete, The Road to Zimbabwe: The Political Economy of Settler Colonialism, National Liberation and Foreign Intervention (Washington D.C.: University Press of America, 1979).

9. This is not to mention the decimation of much of the black infrastructure which did exist, during the liberation war of 1972-1979.

10. The State of Emergency was lifted finally by the Mugabe government in July, 1990. See Chapter 8.

11. An interesting personal account of RF harassment in its early stages is given in Judith Todd, An Act of Treason: Rhodesia 1965 (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1966). For an excellent compilation of accounts and events, see especially Frederikse, *op. cit.*, Windrich, 1981, *op. cit.*, and David Caute, Under the Skin. The Death of White Rhodesia (London: Allen Lane, 1983).

12. For example, in the pattern of social services like health care delivery and education, and in the politicised activities of the various national security agencies.

13. The Lancaster House Constitution included provisions for the redrawing of legislative and executive wings of government after a seven year moratorium on such changes.

14. In December 1987 an executive Presidency was created and Prime Minister Mugabe was elected first Executive President by the House of Assembly and Senate, sitting once again as an electoral college. The same constitutional provisions created sweeping powers for the new President, allowing the Executive to, for example, dissolve the House of Assembly at will, and over-ride recommendations from the Legislature. The amendments were quickly drawn up, presented and passed by Parliament, leaving little opportunity for public debate (if any) on the issue. See for example, Welshman Ncube, "The One Party Political System: Which Way Zimbabwe", SAPEM vol.1, no.12 (September 1988); and, Ray Mawerera, "And a New President", Parade (February 1988), pp. 13, 45.

15. In September 1987, the 20 "white" seats were filled by a balloting of Members of Parliament. All of those elected were Zanu-sponsored candidates, and they included many whites -- among them, senior representatives of "white" industry and agriculture. Not one representative of unionised labour, peasant cultivators or cooperators were included on the Zanu "list", a fact not overlooked by the groups and organisations involved, and not unmentioned by representatives of popular community

organisations, especially the trade unions. As Judith Todd, a veteran supporter of the liberation struggle and "Zapu candidate" in the special Parliamentary ballot later remarked (see "A Personal View of the Last Decade", SAPEM, vol.3, no.6 (April 1990), p. 5.),

I watched Parliament voting for the new non-constituency MPs. It was a good exercise in humility to see ZANU-PF friends preferring former Members of the Rhodesia Front to people like Ruth Chinamano, Dumiso Dabengwa and myself. There were 15 ZAPU MPs present. As I got 16 votes I was able to give every ZANU-PF MP the benefit of hoping that he/she was the one who had disobeyed instructions and voted for me.

16. The Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development was key, because it is responsible for the running of community level government and development coordination, including the administration of the rural areas and districts in which the vast majority of the population resides. Falling under the Ministry's jurisdiction were crucial local structures, ranging from city and town councils, to provincial and district administrations, and district, ward and village development committees. In rural Zimbabwe, very little (if any) coordinated and sustained community activity can take place without the participation or cooperation of these key public community institutions.

17. The "senior" ministries of Political Affairs, Finance, Economic Planning and Development, Rural Development had their origins in the Unity Pact consolidation of Zanu and Zapu, and were distinguished as "senior" branches of government to mark their pre-eminent status in the chain of administrative command. At the time of their creation, the Zanu cabinet was host to over 50 Ministers and Deputy Ministers -- that is, more than half of the members of the 100 seat House of Assembly were represented at cabinet level.

18. Didymus Mutasa, Senior Minister of Political Affairs, presentation at Zimbabwe-German society panel discussion on "Accomplishments and Problems in Zimbabwe's First Ten Years of Independence", Harare, May 1990; Robert Mugabe in the Herald, April 1991.

19. State tactics included the use of "carrot-and-stick" persuasion and corruption, tribalist "divide and rule" tactics, statutory legislation and later, of course, state security agencies and the military, in the escalating war against the nationalist guerrilla armies.

20. The full investigation of emergent African social fragments, construed in terms of the effects of UDI and their leading participation in and contribution to the politics of the liberation movements, implies a considerable, separate study in itself. See the following for more focused discussion: Andre Astrow, Zimbabwe: A Revolution ..., *op. cit.*; David Moore, "The Contradictory Construction ...," *op. cit.*; *idem.*,

"Zimbabwe: A Revolution That Lost Its Way?" [Review Article], Review of African Political Economy, 34 (December 1985), pp.111-113; *idem.*, "The Zimbabwean 'Organic Intellectuals' in Transition" [Review Article], Journal of Southern African Studies, vol.15, no.1 (October 1988), pp. 96-105; *idem.*, "Creating a Ruling Culture: The Contradictory Development of Zimbabwe's Ruling Class," and Norma Kriger, "Mobilizing for Unity: The Zimbabwean War," papers presented at 'Workshop on Culture and Development in Southern Africa', Copenhagen University, 27-28 April, 1988; Phimister, "The Combined and Contradictory ...," *op. cit.*

21. Zanu(PF), "Political Education. ZANU's Party Line and Policy," mimeo, Maputo, 7 January, 1980.

22. The categories are open to a wide range of interpretation and speculation. Zanu's own prevarication and confusion on this issue of who can be "allies" under the umbrella of the officially Marxist-Leninist party -- a confusion which persisted to the end of the decade -- is one indication of the scale of the task involved here. For example, see the taxonomy of classes and class fractions in, Fay Chung and Emmanuel Ngara, Socialism, Education and Development. A Challenge to Zimbabwe (Harare: ZPH, 1985).

23. For discussion of the internal factionalism of the liberation movements, see Masipula Sithole, Zimbabwe: Struggles within the Struggle (Salisbury: Rujeko Publishers, 1979); *idem.*, "Class and Factionalism in the Zimbabwe Nationalist Movement", African Studies Review, vol.27, no.1 (March 1984), pp. 117-125; *idem.*, "Ethnicity and factionalism in Zimbabwe Nationalist politics, 1957-79 ", Ethnic and Racial Studies, vol.3, no.1 (January 1980), pp. 17-39; and, David Martin and Phyllis Johnson, The Chitepo Assassination (Harare: ZPH, 1985).

24. This was underlined in the report of the new government's commission into the conditions within and options for intervention in the inherited economy, the "Riddell Commission". Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Incomes, Prices and Conditions of Service (Salisbury: Government Printer, 1981).

25. Marxism-Leninism was officially adopted as the party's ideology at a meeting of the Central Committee in Chimoio, Mozambique in 1977, and confirmed by Zanu's Second National Congress in Harare, in 1984.

26. A useful categorical break-down of several different fractions of the petty bourgeoisie is laid out by Ibbo Mandaza in "The State in the Post-White ...", *op. cit.*, p. 49.

27. Ibbo Mandaza, the leading Zimbabwean "radical" political economist whose formulations owe as much to traditional elite theory they do to a class-centred political economy, is representative of this tendency among Zimbabwean intellectuals. For a brief summary and critique of his influential views, see Appendix D.

28. More concretely, variant strands of the Marxist tradition were loosely employed for different tasks: for example, Marx's caution to deal with history on its own terms was cited by Zanu's "socialist" leaders as a reason for not directly attacking (but rather, engaging) the Zimbabwean private sector; while Leninist views on the vanguard role of the socialist party was invoked to chasten critics from the "unscientific" popular quarters of the trade union and co-operative movements.

29. Reference here is made to the following plans, policy statements and reports: Zimbabwe, Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, Growth with Equity: An Economic Policy Statement (Salisbury: Government Printer, February 1981); *idem.*, Transitional National Development Plan, 1982/83-1984/85, Vols. I and II (Harare: Government Printer, November 1982, May 1983); *idem.*, First Five-Year National Development Plan, 1986-1990, Vols. I and II (Harare: Government Printer, April 1986, April 1988); *idem.*, The Promotion of Investment: Policy and Regulations (Harare: Government Printer, April 1989) [a significant update of the previously existing investment regime outlined in *idem.*, Foreign Investment: Policy Guidelines and Procedures (Harare: Government Printer, September 1982)]; *idem.*, Economic Policy Statement: Macro-economic Adjustment and Trade Liberalisation, including the Budget Statement 1990 (Harare: Government Printer, presented to Parliament July 26 1990); and *idem.*, Zimbabwe: A Framework for Economic Reform (1991-95) (Harare: Government Printer, 18 January 1991). These official policy documents were broadly informed by a series of investigative studies, commissions and government research projects. These included the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Incomes, Prices and Conditions of Service [The Riddell Report] (Salisbury: Government Printer, 1981). The documents and statements from the ZIMCORD donor conference of March 1981 also marked the early development plans of the state insofar as they indicated a reliance on foreign inputs; see, ZIMCORD -- Let's Build Zimbabwe Together, Report on Proceedings, Zimbabwe Conference on Reconstruction and Development, March 23-27, 1981 (Salisbury: Government Printer, 1981). Since then, a wide range of studies too diverse and numerous to list here have been commissioned and undertaken directly by government.

There are many surveys and critiques of these documents within the literature, which are helpful in identifying the salient points of Zanu's published plans and blueprints, and the latter's implications for Zimbabwe's political economy. See for example, Gavin Williams, "Equity, Growth and the State," J.D.Y. Peel and T.O. Ranger, eds Past and Present in Zimbabwe (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983), pp. 114-120; Christine Sylvester, "Continuity and Discontinuity in Zimbabwe's Development History," African Studies Review, vol.28, no.1 (March 1985), pp. 19-44; Xavier Kadhani, "The Economy: Issues, Problems and Prospects", *op. cit.*, pp. 99-122; Colin Stoneman, "The Economy: Recognising the Reality", *op. cit.*, pp. 43-62; Colin Stoneman and Lionel Cliffe, Zimbabwe. Politics, Economics and Society (London: Pinter, 1989), pp. 121-128, 162-167.

30. It was a view underlined personally in 1982 by then-Prime Minister Mugabe, in his "Introduction" to the Transitional National Development Plan (Vol.I, *op. cit.*, p.i). The Plan, he said,

... recognises the existing phenomenon of capitalism as an historical reality, which, because it cannot be avoided, has to be purposefully harnessed, regulated and transformed as a partner in the overall national endeavour to achieve set national Plan goals. Accordingly, whilst the main thrust of the Plan is socialist... ample room has been reserved for performance by private enterprise.

31. The Council serves as a pressure group for black businesspeople and aspiring businesspeople, and is committed to carving an entrepreneurial space for blacks by securing preferential financing, import allocations and market access.

32. Cited in, Tonic Sakaike, "Zanu-PF makes the big switch", Africa South (June 1991), p. 10.

33. In Sakaike, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

34. See Mike Humphrey, "An ownership profile of Zimbabwe's manufacturing sector", unpublished paper, CZI Economics Department, Harare, 1989, and, Roger Riddell, "Zimbabwe", Manufacturing Africa, pp. 337-411.

35. See Appendix E for a summary of Zimbabwe's economic indicators in the 1980s.

36. As much as one-third of the 2.6 million hectares of resettlement land bought by Zanu after 1980 remained unsettled by the end of the decade, primarily for reasons related to bureaucratic red tape and mismanagement. For extension discussion of land, land hunger and rural resettlement in the 1980s, see Sam Moyo, "The Land Question", in Mandaza, 1986, *op. cit.*, pp. 165-201, and Daniel Weiner, "Land and Agricultural Development", in Stoneman, 1988, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-89.

37. Colin Stoneman, "The Economy: Recognising ...," *op. cit.*, p. 49.

38. For a recent examination of the impact in the 1980s of recessionary trends and the emerging state policy of economic "liberalisation" on Zimbabwe's social services infrastructure, see Rob Davies, David Sanders and Timothy M. Shaw, "Liberalisation for Development: Zimbabwe's Adjustment Without the Fund" (manuscript for UNICEF, Harare, 1990).

39. See Patrick Bond, "Excesses of Money Power: Finance and Uneven Development in Zimbabwe and South Africa" (Johns Hopkins University, Department of Geography and Environmental Engineering, Baltimore: Ph.D. thesis, forthcoming).

40. After a protracted build-up, beginning with the posting of more liberal trade regulations in the May 1989 policy document, Foreign Investment: Policy Guidelines and Procedures, the first elements of the new structural adjustment programme were announced in July 1990. They were reconfirmed in the Economic Policy Statement published in January 1991. Initially, the new programme involved the decontrol of consumer and industrial prices and items on the Open General Import List, the introduction of across-the-board collective bargaining, and commitments from government to both remove state subsidies from consumer items and parastatals, and cut the public sector employment rolls by at least one-quarter -- all within the space of five years. Economic Policy Statement, 1990, *op. cit.*, and A Framework for Economic Reform, 1991, *op. cit.* For an overview, see "Budget Reflects Hesitation on Economic Restructuring", *Africa Information Afrique* (Harare), 3 September 1990, and Patrick Bond, "Riding the waves of uneven prosperity", *Africa South* (May/June 1990), pp. 6-16.

41. As Arnold Sibanda saw it, Zanu's jettisoning of its mass base by these measures opened the party up to serious challenge from the "mass" of civil society. See Sibanda, "The Political Situation," in Stoneman, 1988, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

42. Interview with Elphias Mukonweshuro, Harare, 3 December 1987.

43. Thus, popular discourse had it that Eddison Zvobgo was the "King of Masvingo", Nathan Shamuyarira the "Chef of Chinhoyi", Didymus Mutasa and Kumbirai Kangai the "monarchy of Manicaland", and Joshua Nkomo the "proprietor" of Matabeleland. In Zanu, the infighting at times erupted into open, public warfare between leading politicians and their respective regional "clients". The "Mahofa" affair of 1988, involving Zanu Cabinet member Shuvai Mahofa of Gutu, Masvingo, was one outstanding example: criminal charges of arson, and later, fraud, levelled against the MP led to a bitter intra-party dispute between supporters of Vice President Simon Muzenda and Masvingo "king" Eddison Zvobgo, with one faction using the scandal in an attempt to oust Mahofa, and the other defending the Deputy Minister. In the event, separate party delegations from the MPs constituency vehemently argued the case "for" and "against" openly in public.

44. It is worth noting that the Unity Pact had been arranged privately by the senior Zanu and Zapu leadership, and without due consideration given to the sentiments of the party grassroots. A grassroots "backlash" was in evidence 18 months later, at the united Zanu's People's Congress of December 1989. In the long term, the Pact was not the cure-all for factional disputation and inter-party which some had imagined it would be. For an insider's look at the continuing harassment of Zapu-affiliated district officials, by Zanu and the security forces in Binga, in northwestern Matabeleland North Province, see Cecil Dube, "After the Unity Accord -- My Observations, Binga District Growth Centre", confidential memo, Binga, June 1988.

45. Herbert Ushewokunze, "Ushewokunze Outlines Party Policy", Zimbabwe Information Services, ZIS/84/310/AM, 22 October 1984. Ushewokunze, Minister of Home Affairs and Zanu Secretary for the Commissariat and Culture, was speaking at a one-day Zanu workshop at Silveira House, Chishawasha, on the implementation of Zanu's Second Congress Resolutions.

46. The Code was adopted as party policy by Zanu's Second National People's Congress, and has remained an official principle of party practice. For details of the Code, see the record of the 1984 Congress Resolutions in, Zimbabwe News, vol.16, no.1 (January 1985), pp. 38-39.

47. See media reports of Mugabe's address to a Zanu Central Committee meeting in December 1988, in which he is reported to have stated that the public's image of Zanu leaders as crooks and thieves was somehow justified by numerous documented and undocumented cases of wrongdoing by senior officials. The meeting was held just as the Willowgate scandal was breaking.

48. Mukonweshuro, Interview, op. cit.

49. See Chapter 8.

50. The crisis, involving the use of martial law in much of Matabeleland in an effort to crush what Zanu claimed were Zapu-affiliated dissidents, reached an apex of sustained violence in 1983 and simmered in the form of dissident banditry until 1988. In the event, it is thought that some thousands of innocent civilians were killed, and many more injured and harassed. Interview with Mike Auret, Harare, 12 November 1990. At the time, Auret was the Public Education Officer for the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe.

51. Besides the ongoing persecution of Zapu by both the ruling party and national security agencies, there were many other instances of harassment and intimidation of government critics and even "non-aligned", ordinary Zimbabweans, which were systematically undertaken by the resort to Emergency Powers. In some instances, media organs of community-based groups were also made targets of CIO intimidation: for example, the Training Aids Development Group (publisher of Read On) and Women's Action Group (Speak Out) both received prying visits from the secret police. (see Chapters 7 and 8 below) For a discussion of documented instances of property expropriation and destruction, detention, kidnapping, rape, torture, murder and other abuses carried out by agents of the party and the security forces, see for example, Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, Zimbabwe: Wages of War. A Report on Human Rights (New York: The Committee, 1986); and, Africa Watch (Richard Carver), Zimbabwe: A Break with the Past? Human Rights and Political Unity. An Africa Watch Report (New York: The Africa Watch Committee, 1989). For a discussion of the political uses and abuses of Emergency Powers by Zanu, see "Harsh Treatment for Domestic Turmoil", Parade (December 1989), pp. 15, 30, 36.

52. Brickhill, Interview, op. cit.

53. The violent side of the Leagues' activities were most apparent at election time, and according to many Zimbabwe "professionals" interviewed, a reason for considerable caution at all times. (Interviews; Lawyer's Committee for Human Rights, op. cit.; Africa Watch, op. cit.; Babington Maravanyika, "People still being forced to attend party meetings", Moto no.62 (February 1988); Parade magazine, November 1989-February 1990)

54. See for example, "Resolutions of the Zanu (PF) Youth Conference" in Zimbabwe News, vol.16, no.1, (January 1985). The trend became even more marked and widespread as time went on; at the December 1989 Third Zanu Congress, there were vociferous complaints from party members inside and outside of the Leagues that internal debate on political issues was being muffled by the senior party hierarchy. See, Michael Mawema, "Unity Congress: Was Debate Avoided?", SAPEM vol.3, no.5 (March 1990), pp. 26-27; and, "The Forge of Unity - But democratic debate suffers", "Women silenced in debate on policy", "Congress exposed grass-roots division" and "Bulawayo query key clauses in constitution", all in, "Congress: Behind Closed Doors" issue of Parade (February 1990).

55. See "Congress exposed grass-roots division", op. cit.

56. See Welshman Ncube, "The post-unity period: developments, benefits and problems", in Canaan Banana, ed., Turmoil and Tenacity: Zimbabwe, 1890-1990 (Harare: The College Press, 1989), p. 312. By 1989 the problem had become acute. Africa Day-1989 celebrations in Masvingo and Mutare were cancelled owing to poor attendance, while parallel ceremonies in Harare and Bulawayo saw similarly dramatically reduced spectators compared to previous years.

57. See for example, 'Zimbabwe Correspondent [Richard Saunders], "Zimbabwe: Economic Decline and the Politics of Venality", Southern Africa Report (December 1989), pp. 26-29; Africa Information Afrique (Harare), "Series on Ten Years of Zimbabwe Independence" (January-April 1990); and, Lee Cokorinos, "Zimbabwe Ten Years After: Prospects for a Popular Politics", Southern Africa Report, vol.6, no.1 (July 1990), pp. 29-33.

58. Interview with Andrew Moyse, Harare, 4 December 1990. A published version of excerpts from this interview appears in, "On Defensive Psychology and free media in Zimbabwe", Moto, no.97 (February 1991), pp. 10-11.

59. In 1989 Robert Mugabe himself made reference to the looming problem for the soon-to-be (officially) "capitalist" ruling party.

As the working people and peasants become more organised and ideologically clearer, and as the industrial base expands and class contradictions sharpen, the workers will eventually assume a dominant

role throughout society... [I]n order to resolve socio-economic problems, the party should come up with a constitution and programme of action which are closely biased in favour of the proletariat, subsistence farmers and entrepreneurs. As a revolutionary party, Zanu(PF) is the principal instrument for the transfer of economic power to the masses. It is this revolutionary role which gives it both credibility and legitimacy as a people's party.

60. For historical background and analysis see, Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions, "Zimbabwe National Centre for the Labour Movement" (Harare, [1981?]); Andre Astrow, op. cit., "The Working Class Under Attack", pp. 175-183; Angela Cheater, The Politics of Factory Organisation (Gweru: Mambo Press, 1986); Jeffrey Herbst, "National Minimum Wage Policy", State Politics in Zimbabwe (Harare: University of Zimbabwe Publications, 1990), pp. 193-220; Brian Wood, "Trade-Union Organisation and the Working Class", in Stoneman, 1988, op. cit., pp. 284-308; Bruce Mitchell, "The State and the Workers Movement in Zimbabwe", South African Labour Bulletin, vol.12, nos.6/7 (August/September 1987), pp. 104-122; Lloyd Sachikonye, "State, Capital and Trade Unions," in Mandaza, 1986, op. cit., pp. 243-273, "The Labour Process and Workers' Struggles in Southern Africa", SAPEM vol.2, no.12 (September 1989), pp. 49-51, "Worker Mobilisation since Independence", SAPEM vol.3, no.6 (April 1990), pp. 6-9, and "Industrial Relations Crisis?", SAPEM vol.3, no.11 (September 1990), pp. 37-44; and the main publication of the ZCTU, The Worker.

61. Sachikonye itemizes strikes in 178 companies in 1980-1981 (Sachikonye, 1986, op. cit.). The strikes had been seen by government as particularly dangerous, as they indicated a rejection of existing structures of union command through wildcat actions. (Bruce Mitchell, op. cit., p. 107.) These labour stoppages were severely dealt with by the state. Personal threats were issued by the Minister of Labour and the Prime Minister, the police were brought in to quash demonstrations and disband pickets, and mass lay-offs by employers were sanctioned by the state. (Herbst, op. cit., pp. 206-207; Sachikonye, 1986, op. cit., p. 254, and Wood, op. cit., pp. 289-291.)

62. Astrow, op. cit., pp. 175-176.

63. According to Herbst, op. cit., p. 208, only the lower-paid occupations of domestic and agricultural labour had wage increases which were roughly on a par with inflation: all other occupational categories, including mining, and industry and commerce, suffered declining real wages over the course of the 1980s. Moreover, as Rob Davies notes ("The Transition ...", op. cit., p. 24), lower proportional increases for higher wage brackets meant overall suppression of wage increases in general. In this downward trend in real wages, government's acceptance in 1986 of the recommendation from the Employers Confederation of Zimbabwe that wage increases be pegged at half the rate of inflation was indicative of the "loss" the minimum wage

policy represented to organised labour, and foreshadowed trade union conflict with the state in the near future. (see Herbst's useful discussion, op. cit., pp. 208-211.)

64. Brian Wood, op. cit., pp. 290-292. Bruce Mitchell, op. cit., p. 105, pithily quotes the revealing Zanu view on "hard work" found in the July 1983 edition of the party's publication, Zimbabwe News:

The workers and peasants... must realise that socialism can only be realised through hard work.... The raising of their standard of living does not lie in laziness or complacency.... Exploiters are not only those who own the means of production and exploit the labour force, but also include those workers who are lazy. This necessarily leads us to the conclusion that co-operation between workers and employers in economic activities of the country is essential.

65. Bruce Mitchell, op. cit., pp. 113-114.

66. Interview with Morgan Tsvangirai, Harare, 23 January 1990.

67. See, Wood, op. cit., and Sachikonye, 1986, 1989, 1990, op. cit.

68. Tsvangirai, Interview, op. cit.

69. Until 1988, no regular accounts had been kept by the organisation, a factor reflected in the instances of maladministration and corruption which had plagued the labour centre from the outset.

70. Tsvangirai. Interview, op. cit.

71. Sachikonye, April 1990, op. cit., notes the upsurge in the social presence of the ZCTU as starting around 1987, and describes at length the types of day-to-day confrontations which the process involved.

72. Sachikonye, April 1990, op. cit., p. 8. See also, Zimbabwe, Ministry of Labour, Manpower Planning and Social Welfare, Labour and Economy: Report of the National Trade Unions Survey, Zimbabwe, 1984, Volume I (Harare: Government Printer, 1984). According to government's 1984 labour survey, the Zimbabwean formal sector included slightly more than 1 million workers. Although there was minimal growth in the size of the national workforce in the 1980s, there was significant growth in the number of unionised workers belonging to unions both registered and unregistered through the ZCTU: between 1981 and 1984, their numbers increased 100% from 125,000 to 250,604, while the proportion of unionised workers in the national labour force also doubled, from 12% to 24% (Zimbabwe, Labour and Economy, op. cit., p. 37). Wood, op. cit., pp. 293-298, argues that a trend towards industrial unionism was underway by the mid 1980s, reflected most concretely in the sectors of mining, building and construction. Sachikonye estimates

that the trend towards deepening unionization continued apace in the late 1980s, a period for which figures are unavailable.

73. See for example, an account of Tsvangirai's contribution to the public seminar, "The One-Party State: Whither Zimbabwe?" (University of Zimbabwe, 30 May 1990), in, "Abortive UZ debate", Moto no.90 (July 1990), p. 11.

74. Again, Makamure had been a key ideological protagonist for the ruling party in many public debates (for example, see Makamure in, "How Marxism inspired will to win the war", Herald, 15.03.1983). During the episode leading to his detention, two senior staffers of Radio Four (including its Head), the channel which carried the programme, were suspended without pay. They were later transferred to other posts in the parastatal ZBC.

75. See Moto, November 1989.

76. On his part, the labour leader was picked up for ostensibly having been "recruited by the South African Intelligence Services (NIS)... to create and spread discontent and turmoil in the Zimbabwe Labour Movement". The CIO charge sheet continued,

You are also under instructions from the NIS to use your position in the ZCTU to generate political discontent against the Government to facilitate its overthrow by unconstitutional means. To this end you have been uttering public statements designed to incite people against the Government and to be less vigilant of the South African threats.

77. See, High Court of Zimbabwe, "Decisions and Judgments in the High Court of Zimbabwe", Harare, Ca.e.HC. 4219/89, 18 October 1989, and, Ca.e.HC 4132/89, 25 October 1989, relating to the detention of Arthur Mutambara and others.

78. The rash of detentions at the time of the University crisis in October 1989 provoked the reaction of business leaders, underscored by the criticisms published in the pages of the national "business" weekly, The Financial Gazette.

79. Whether or not Tekere's "movement" was the outcome of personal ambition (as was argued by Zanu), the important point was that Zum cornered part of the national political terrain by appealing to these main issues of popular complaint against the ruling party.

80. Zimbabwe Unity Movement, mimeographed handout from "inaugural" press conference of April 1989; and, Zimbabwe Unity Movement, Manifesto: Towards a Democratic Zimbabwe, [March?] 1990. The constant reference to "foreign ideologies" -- by implication, Zanu's Marxism-Leninism -- was indubitably a play to popular contempt for and frustration with Zanu's self-assumed role of socialism's homegrown arbitrar. For further details and discussion, see L. Sachikonye, "The 1990 Zimbabwe Elections: A Post-Mortem", Review of African Political Economy, no.48 (Autumn

1990), pp. 92-99; and, Africa Information Afrique, "Election Analysis", Southern Africa Online (AIA Harare) vol.3, no.12 (13 April 1990).

81. Interview with Emmanuel Magoche, Mutare, 19 July 1991. For more details of administrative tensions and factional struggles within Zum, see author's notes from a Zum-(Magoche) public meeting, Courthauld Hall, Mutare, 19 July 1991; and from a press conference hosted by Giles Mutsekwa and Billy Singh, Mutare, 20 June 1991. (Businessman Singh, another "dissident" named by Tekere, was the former treasurer of Zum for Manicaland, and one of the party's consistent financial backers).

82. For details of harassment and intimidation, see interview with Giles Mutsekwa, Mutare, 9 June 1991. At the time of the interview, Mutsekwa was the provincial chairperson of Zum in the party's Manicaland stronghold. He subsequently was expelled/resigned from the party, following a leadership dispute between two factions led, respectively, by Edgar Tekere and Emmanuel Magoche. The dispute signalled the near complete organisational demise of the party, for the time being; a demise underscored by Zum's poor performance in national municipal elections of August 1991 (in which it won no seats in its Mutare base, and only a handful elsewhere in the country).

83. Student support for Zum, as a party which pledged to shelve the idea of any legal one-party state, was seemingly undeterred either by Zum's open election-time "alliance" with CAZ, or by Zum's apparent co-option of leading middle level black businesspeople, notably Zum National Organising Secretary, Patrick Kombayi. At the same time, the ZCTU refused to condemn Zum as a "capitalist" party, and rather publicly noted that there were few differences in practice between it and the ruling party in power. During the March 1990 elections, the labour centre refused to endorse any party, although this position only was made clear after unauthorized press statements by some of the executive were determinedly corrected by Secretary-General Tsvangirai.

84. Rising unemployment was due not only to the increase in the country's population (from roughly 7.5 million to 10 million by 1990) and the failure of employment generation to keep pace, but more particularly by the arrival on the job market of the first wave of post-independence primary and secondary students. At the end of the 1980s, it was popularly estimated that the number of school leavers had risen to nearly 200,000 annually (about a 100% increase in a matter of a few years), while at the same time only 10,000 to 15,000 formal sector jobs annually were waiting for them.

85. The Lancaster Constitution's ten year restrictions on "willing seller-willing buyer" land acquisition by the state were set to expire in April 1990, amidst continuing large increases in the market value of agricultural land, which according to anonymous sources in government and the farming sector had at least quadrupled in price between 1985 and 1989.

86. Intimidation and harassment included the banning, breaking-up or disallowal of Zum meetings by the police, under Emergency Powers. Voting irregularities were highlighted in the Kariba constituency in late 1989, where the ballot was postponed after the "united" Zanu failed to agree on a candidate before the closure date of nominations. Zum subsequently boycotted the poll. See Parade (April-December, 1989).

87. President Mugabe himself only received approximately 42% (2.026 million) of the eligible vote in a separate, simultaneous ballot for the Presidency, compared to Edgar Tekere's 8% (413,000). See Sachikonye, Review of African Political Economy, op. cit., p. 97; and Masipula Sithole, "The General Elections: 1979-1985", in Mandaza, 1986, op. cit., pp. 75-97.

88. A point also made by Sachikonye in Review of African Political Economy, op. cit., p. 98.

89. See Robert Mugabe, "The Unity Accord...", op. cit., pp. 357-358.

Chapter 3. The Rhodesian Inheritance and Zimbabwe's Policy Response

The mass media, that is to say all those who work on our press, radio and television, must live in the present and not in the past.

Robert Mugabe, P.M.'s New Year's Address 1982¹

The formulation of print media policy in the early 1980s was born of the interpenetration of the emerging social programme of the new Zanu government, the political constraints imposed upon it by the immediate political environment of independence (including namely, the necessity of making racial reconciliation appear to work), and the political and economic infrastructure of the print media which were inherited from the previous regime. The discussion in the previous chapter demonstrated the centrality of the ruling party and state in the policy making process, and the disruptive social consequences Zanu faced in its implementation of an increasingly conservative social programme, particularly in the context of a dynamic civil society in the course of its own regrouping and political consolidation. This chapter examines more closely the specific consequences of the party-state relationship, and the impact of disruptive, deconstructive tendencies within civil society, on the key political terrain of the national press.

It is argued that in the context of political and economic insecurity, and in the face of a well-developed, entrenched, generally politically hostile press, Zanu's media policy surfaced only gradually, in response to various specific issues. Aside from the

Zanu government's commitment to freedom of speech and of the press spelled out in the party's election 1980 Manifesto (and earlier, in the Lancaster Consitution),² the National Development Plans contained the essential precepts by which the public mass media were reoriented. These principles revolved around the concept of extending the previously white-oriented public and private social infrastructure to the black majority and, more specifically, to the neglected rural population. On the terrain of the media, they were to be translated as the imperatives of "decolonisation", "democratisation" and "conscientisation". When it came to specifying the mechanics of media expansion, however, the various development Plans were to make only cursory mention of Zanu's vision for the future;³ even then, references were largely confined to the operational needs of the Ministry of Information [MOI].⁴

In short, if there has been a "national media policy" as such, it has not been codified in any one document or set of documents. Although policy statements like The Democratization of the Media in Independent Zimbabwe⁵ made broad references to government's intent of indigenising and expanding segments of the local media, they did not identify any overarching concrete document or plan in which such moves were conceptualised as an integrated government programme. In fact, Zanu's "press policy" exists only as a vague set of guidelines and accepted practices, which observers themselves must piece together from Ministerial statements and ad-hoc directives, fragments of the ruling party's manifesto, and various official and personal contacts between the MOI and different media organs.⁶ It is the genesis of these pronouncements and initiatives concerning the press which this chapter traces.

To chart the course of this process of policy formulation is to examine the material origins of the infrastructure confronted in 1980, and the government's initial experiences and assessment of it in light of the new political demands incumbent with majority rule. This chapter begins by arguing that since the colonisation of Zimbabwe beginning in the 1890s, the development of power relations in state and civil society have been mirrored in the realm of the press.⁷ In the colonial era, white domination of state and civil society were reflected in the leading role played by the white-dominated print media. Although the different social fractions of white society were mirrored in their representative media, the development of Rhodesian society led to the emergence of a more significant pole of political contention, based on the entrenched system of racial domination. In the 1950s, the growth of a black press sympathetic and responsive to the nationalist struggle made the "black" (and later, "liberal white") components of the national print media targets for state repression.

It is argued that a major factor in the consolidation of white civil society behind the RF was the regime's expert manipulation of the public and private media, through take-over, banning, harassment and censure in both government and civil channels. Importantly, it was this cohesive infrastructure, operating in broad support of the ruling (white-dominated) social fraction as an "independent" voice in Rhodesian civil society, which confronted Zanu in 1980. For Zanu, the problem was how to go about consolidating its own new political programme and leadership in a civil society whose commanding heights were dominated by, and tailored to meet the needs of, a "hostile" minority. At the same time however, the new ruling party had inherited a

state whose commandist structures were staffed and guided from outside the public sector, from within the RF. This system was to be used to advantage by Zanu.

The MOI reflected especially clearly, both the re-politicisation of the inherited RF bureaucracy by Zanu, and the closeness of the connection between the latter's internal structures and those of the public sector. At the MOI, Nathan Shamuyarira, a Zanu Central Committee member and the party's Secretary for Information and Publicity, became Minister.⁸ Below him, a hierarchy of party members soon came to fill the state bureaucracy left vacant by departing whites. In the media under the MOI's direct supervision, a similar dynamic was evident, as the "bush broadcasters" from Zanu's Maputo-based, war-time Voice of Zimbabwe radio programme were slotted into senior positions at the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation. By 1984, Zanu's invasion of the MOI and media had reached the extent to which even Minister Shamuyarira could claim little distinction between the aims and goals of the ruling party on the one hand, and those of the public media, government, state -- and indeed, the nation -- on the other.

In practical terms, the most important aspects of Zimbabwe's media policy, as well as the decision-making surrounding its implementation and effects, were made by Shamuyarira in his dual capacity as Minister and Zanu Secretary of Information, in consultation with the government cabinet and its party equivalent, the Zanu Central Committee. Only when Shamuyarira left the MOI in 1988, while retaining his Zanu post of Information Secretary, was it made clear that the party structure was senior to the state's MOI bureaucracy and its new government chief. The evidence for this

distinction was to be supplied by the testimony of government's handling of various crises in the press, and eye-witness accounts of Shamuyarira's continued presence as the locus of political power within a Ministry which was no longer his government responsibility. Yet, for most of the decade, the differences among the party, government and state on questions of media policy and decision-making were few, and far outweighed by the degree of correspondence among these structures.

Within the media, the immediate question of Zanu's consolidation of its political and social authority as the new government was complicated by a number of factors, particularly at the main national newspaper chain controlled by the Rhodesian Printing & Publishing Company Ltd. [RPP]. Independence had provoked an exodus of white skills, with the result that senior management and editorial positions in the national press were held hostage to those (typically, whites) with the skills to fill them. As with other sectors in both state and civil society, this initial skills deficit meant that Zanu would have to give the impression of implementing its commitment to racial "reconciliation" and pluralist-participatory "democracy". Taken together with the massive budgetary and political demands on the Zanu state in 1980, and fears openly expressed by local whites, foreign capital and aid agencies that Zimbabwe would become another "African dictatorship", the skills trap made it difficult to rectify the inequitable situation of the past while establishing a new "social consensus" tailored to majority rule.

The result of these political and historical variables, this chapter argues, was Zanu's forced compromise on a number of policy options. The outcome of these

compromises was the placement of restrictions on Zanu's ability to harness the media to its hegemonic interests fully. On one hand, the Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust emerged as a short-term consensual "political solution" which both appeased the conservative interests of whites, foreign and domestic capital, and allowed future room for manoeuvre for the new ruling group in its instrumental use of the media under public control. On the other, the state was forced to abandon any immediate plan to reshape the media as a substantially expanded, black-run, rural-centred, "social service" national press. At the same time, Zanu's commitment to the maintenance of a free private press -- in contrast to the practices of the previous colonial regime -- made ruling party incursions into the realm of the private media more difficult to sustain.

However, despite these "safeguards", the inherited culture of media supervision by the state, together with mounting challenges to Zanu's social leadership from civil society, were to lead to new attempts by the ruling party to impose its own order within the new media.⁹ Zanu's "new" media policy, therefore, marked not just a departure from the censorship and manipulation of the RF, but also a continuation of previous, defeated hegemonic strategies.

The Inheritance

Despite claims by many local and international journalists and media observers that the Rhodesian press had been characterised by a considerable degree of press

freedom (tempered by restrictions on war reporting and other national security issues), after fifteen years of UDI the Zimbabwean press was typified by self-censorship and wide-ranging racial inequalities.¹⁰ Once a diverse collection of newspapers and magazines which had articulated the views of different components of white and black society, the national press under the RF had become a civil appendage of the ruling white fraction.

This process of subordination, beginning per force after the RF's capturing of state power in 1962, brought to an end several decades of media development and expansion in Rhodesian civil society. For the first forty years of the colony's existence this process had been dominated by white privately owned media, led by the RPP.¹¹ The RPP was an affiliate of the Argus Printing and Publishing Company of South Africa, the newspaper-based company launched in 1896 with capital from Cecil Rhodes, and with a view to promoting Rhodes' political and financial ambitions in the Cape.¹²

When Rhodes' Pioneer Column arrived in Salisbury in September 1890, representatives of Argus were not far behind. In the following year Rhodes' British South Africa Company administration offered Argus a monopoly privilege to print newspapers in the territory. Although Argus accepted the arrangement, its monopoly was not entrenched as other small newssheets did spring up. Still, linkages with the South African Argus corporation's bountiful resources -- including access to modern equipment, a skilled pool of labour and telegraphic links with Cape Town and Johannesburg -- privileged the small Rhodesian newspapers under Argus control.¹³

Parallel to the Argus investment was entrenched a constellation of other (white) South African-based media, including the South African Press Association [Sapa] and later, Sapa's Federation-based subsidiary news agency, the Inter-Africa News Agency [Iana].¹⁴

The Rhodesian press proliferated as the economic development of the colony in the 1930s and 1940s led to the appearance and political mobilisation of different social fractions. Most new publications were clearly aimed at a white readership. Many of these were to survive into the 1970s, though under the deepening restrictions imposed by the fact of RF rule and the deteriorating security situation after 1972.¹⁵ Meanwhile, a separate, identifiable African print media had taken root, echoing developments in civil society.

The "black" press had its beginnings with the launching of The Native Mirror (later Bantu Mirror) by the RPP in Bulawayo in 1931.¹⁶ The early white-owned "African" publications like The Mirror did little to conceal their project of evoking support for the liberal, white-led social regime among the black population, pointing to the small black elite of entrepreneurs and the "educated" as the leaders of the African community in the partnership experiment.¹⁷ These papers were "black" only to the extent that their readerships were: for example, The Mirror's senior staff, management and certainly its editorial positions were maintained in white hands, under the supervision of a white South African manager, C.A.G. Paver.

However, as the post-war boom years of the Central African Federation (1953-1963) led to a revival of both African and white nationalism, the black (and to a

lesser extent, the white) press was reshaped. A range of publications emerged to speak to -- and on behalf of -- various social interests, from manufacturing and agricultural capital, to black and white workers and intellectuals. The most dramatic changes took place in the black media, parallel to the radicalisation of black society in general. In the African community, a new generation of young intellectuals led a resurgence in African nationalism and employed the growing black press to full advantage in the process.¹⁸ This dynamic of politicisation was aided by the fact that many leading nationalist intellectuals, like Lawrence Vambe, Willie Musarurwa and Nathan Shamuyarira, were also senior journalists and editors in the white-owned African press -- notably The African Daily News and Parade and Foto-Action.¹⁹ In fact, they came to serve as leading organic intellectuals on behalf of the nationalist movement, occupying senior places in the liberation movements and later, the institutions of the state and civil society. But in the 1950s, the problem for the nationalists was that the success of the new black press in reaching a large constituency opened up those media to attack from the white colonial regime. Publications like The African Daily News, having addressed for the first time a range of uncompromising black viewpoints on issues of national debate -- and having found an audience in the process -- were destined to be banned or heavily censored by the RF after it came to power.²⁰

As white Rhodesia gambled on UDI, the RF's closure of the political space of the national press represented a crucial component in its co-ordinated programme to cement white hegemony at all levels of the Rhodesian social formation, by silencing

opposition voices and severely restricting popular access to information.²¹ Beginning in the early 1960s, using the organisational power of the Department (later, Ministry) of Information and direct access to existing public media (notably the Rhodesia Broadcasting Corporation), the RF was to meticulously construct an alternative perception of what constituted a broad social "consensus".²² After coming to power in 1962, the RF proceeded to silence the most significant political and media expressions of the nationalist movement through censorship or outright banning.²³ This strategy was soon extended beyond the nationalist movement to include that segment of white "liberal" opposition to RF rule which had its most consistent and direct articulation in the pages of the country's national newspaper chain. By its intervention, the RF was to contribute enormously to the skewed, anti-popular features of the RPP which were to confront Zimbabwean policy makers in 1980. But in addition, the RF was to set a precedent for government media interventions in the mainstream national press, in defence of "national interest" and particularly, "national security".²⁴

In both instances -- that is, the undermining of the white RPP and of the nationalist-allied press -- the "victims" of the state's onslaughts were those who called for the maintenance of a critical, participatory, democratic political space in civil society. In reality, the attack on the media reflected the RF's aim of capturing and controlling civil society through a combination of state and private sector initiatives -- using the coercive and persuasive capacity of the state, especially, to organise a "national" hegemonic campaign on behalf of the RF and its white constituency.

The particularly aggressive approach adopted by the RF towards the "opposition" media was evident soon after the formation of the party, when it engaged the advisory services of a South African Mosleyite, Ivor Benson. Benson, working within the Department of Information, developed a propaganda apparatus run by the MOI, which churned out brochures, pamphlets and films outlining the "real facts" about brave white Rhodesia.²⁵ This state-led programme was co-ordinated with a parallel "white grassroots" campaign, overseen by RF party structures and their civic appendages. A significant feature of both initiatives was the nurturing of antagonism towards the establishment liberal media -- an antagonism based on the RF's premise of building an independent white Rhodesia in the face of "liberal" world opinion "brainwashed and shell-shocked" by the onslaught of communist propaganda, and dutifully reproduced in the Rhodesian liberal press.²⁶ It was a position reiterated in the years following Benson's departure for South Africa in 1965, and its implications for the mainstream soon became strikingly clear.

The Press must be free -- no one denies that -- but it must be OUR Press, promoting OUR values and OUR interests. Only such a Press has any claim to the freedom to govern itself in OUR society. Who are the owners of the Press? Who are the individuals who ultimately control it? What are their real motives? Whose interests do they promote? What is the source of the values and the criteria which regulate their policies and their behaviour?²⁷

From the time of assuming office, the RF moved to mediate the content of the national press by referring to the "national" or "majority" interest. Already in 1964, this had led to the banning of the African Daily News under the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act for allegedly contributing to the spread of "alarm and

despondency", an offence for which other publications and individuals would be reprimanded and banned in the future. But the main target of the RF was to be the "monopoly" mass circulation press of RPP. The decisive phase of the state's intervention in this regard came in 1965 with UDI and full-fledged imposition of a State of Emergency. On the day UDI was declared in November 1965, government censors moved into the offices of the RPP in Harare and Bulawayo and for more than two years assumed the authority of approving all final copy and galley sheets produced by the daily and weekly papers.²⁸

Though some resistance and protest by the company was offered in response -- most notably, censored items were replaced by editors with blank spaces, until this too was ruled unacceptable by the government -- the accompanying campaign of harassment, professional arm-twisting and, most importantly, the shifting editorial politics of the RPP, soon led to the "pacification" of the company's papers. As Windrich has demonstrated, the RF's battle to gain an upper hand in both the public perception of the press and in the latter's practical operation was near to being over before (and as a precursor to) the final moves taken in the Rhodesians' illegal promulgation of independence.²⁹

One senior journalist at the RPP has noted that the company's staff was more or less content to follow public opinion rather than lead it, so that when that opinion underwent a decisive change it was reflected as well in the content and focus of the chain's papers.³⁰ In fact, the "changes in opinion" he observed were side effects of the changing arrangements in "historical blocs" of social forces (recalling Gramsci),

as the RF's pursuit and implementation of racial politics forced the previously dominant white liberal social fractions out of the country, or into quiet acquiescence with the new white order. Indeed, the RF had consolidated its strategic political alliance of white society to the extent that, by April 1968, the government was able to lift the formal censorship restrictions placed on the RPP in 1965.

As the white public had moved increasingly to support the idea and bear the inconveniences of a lasting UDI, so, too, had many of the editorial staff at RPP and other media (who had not been persuaded or forced by deportation into leaving the country) acknowledged compliance with the necessary limitations imposed by life under sanctions and international isolation.³¹ Through this combination of circumstances, a regimen of self-censorship and compliance was put into place. As The Herald's editorial of 8 April, 1968 observed,

The need for a degree of self-imposed censorship has always been accepted. Rhodesia's needs come before Government, party or press. Matters affecting national security or trading against sanctions have always had to be carefully examined to discover whether publication would be harmful to the country's interest.³²

The RPP papers offered only mild criticism of the RF's governing programme and consistent misinformation about the "terrorists" -- when they were permitted by the rules of censorship to name them. The proof of the RPP's political proximity to the state lay in the fact that other more independent, critical publications were banned regularly by the government. Besides the African Daily News and publications directly produced by Zanu and Zapu, prohibited journals included the liberal monthly Central African Examiner, the Catholic Church's Moto, Umbowo, and later, the

Lonrho owned and black-oriented Zimbabwe Times. Bannings and deportations of individual journalists were to last into the late 1970s.³³ But at the RPP, a steady commitment to the prevailing political views of the white suburbs and farms of Rhodesia permitted the chain to continue publishing without interruption.

By its managerial priorities as well, the company betrayed its deep roots in the norms of white Rhodesia: none of the senior editorial positions had ever been open to Africans, and more often than not, these positions were filled via recruitment from the Argus Head Office in Johannesburg. Until the late 1960s, there had never been a Rhodesian-born editor of a major paper in the RPP group, let alone an African.³⁴ The dearth of Africans in senior positions stood in spite of the availability of some black journalists with many years' experience -- though many senior media practitioners had long since been in exile or imprisoned as a result of their connection with the nationalist movement. Still, from the gradualist conception of "promotion through the ranks" implied by the company's cadet training structure, the company had made little initiative in the direction of correcting the racial imbalances in its employment practices.

The practical result was that the country was desperately short of qualified black print journalists in 1980, particularly blacks who were both trained and had access to African society and its grassroots leaders and concerns. Whereas in the days before the RF government there were different published outlets for African political opinion, the only long running newspaper which aimed itself at the majority in the UDI years was the MOI's hopelessly propagandistic (and free) African Times. Such

was the degree of polarization in the print media -- and of course, in the civil society -- engineered under the tutelage of the Smith regime.

The legacy of the RF in terms of the press, then, was multifold. Of primary importance was the content and target of the media. That significant sector of it represented by the RPP was rooted in white society and over the years had become docile in the face of continued RF pressure. The national press was typified at the end of the 1970s by the absence of critical debate and investigative research; reflecting the general lack of an effective oppositional media capable of challenging either the political status quo, or the censoring devices of the RF state. Correspondingly, the RPP and most other print media made no serious attempt to reach into the rural areas, home to over eighty percent of the population but only a tiny fraction of the print media readership.³⁵ Where the media did reach out to the black population, as was the case with smaller circulation publications such as the monthly Parade, the content was complacent or severely restricted by government, especially on political issues.³⁶

As for the other elements in the array of commercial, business and political media outside of the RPP, these were mostly concerned with interests located within white and white-dominated civil society; for example, the conservative Rhodesia Property and Finance weekly newspaper, the monthly Commerce and various other business and in-house magazines. Until the advent of the ceasefire at the end of 1979, the authentically oppositional, flagship publications of the parties in the Patriotic Front, Zanu's Zimbabwe News and Zapu's Zimbabwe Review, remained banned items inside the country. Thus the other negative inheritance of UDI was the utter

inadequacy of print media training schemes for blacks, and the consequent dire shortage of skilled African journalists able either to reach the majority or to communicate their interests and concerns.

In many ways, therefore, the RF was extremely effective in imposing its vision on the structures, practices and content of the print media. But the relative non-antagonism between the white private and public media which had developed by the late 1970s revealed more than anything else, the deep commonality of interests among increasingly embattled whites of all classes. It was the challenge to continued white rule which made it easier to accept blinkered reportage, and believe the slanted political content of the RPP and other white media. It also made the MOI's and the RF's overt penetration of these nominally private independent media more palatable, and allowed the normalisation of such state-press relations in the long run.

However, this state of affairs also meant that the dominant print media would fail ultimately as an instrument of hegemony. The RPP may have convinced many whites of the RF's perception of the country's crisis, especially with regard to the war, but blacks had long since lost faith in the papers' ability to report and reconstruct the reality which they faced in the townships and embattled countryside. This distrust was most pointedly the case with the MOI's differing attempts to manipulate information and news, notably via the bombastic radio and television broadcasts of the RBC, and the Ministry's own African Times. The same applied to most of the private, nominally "independent" media, including the national dailies and weeklies.

Yet even after the defeat of the racial society which supported them, the white public and private media continued to pose a direct political challenge to the incoming government in 1980. This challenge came in the form of demands from Zanu's critics that the "western-style", so-called "free press" of Rhodesia be retained. In the context of skills shortages, nervous capital investors and Zanu's policy of racial reconciliation, these albeit erroneous demands would play a part in shaping the government's media plans. But within the altered political environment of the new Zimbabwe, where no social consensus comparable to that of the RF's racial regime was possible, the long term impact of a formally "liberal" approach to the press would have an entirely new set of troubling political consequences.

Assessing the Situation in 1980

In 1980 the national press consisted of an amalgam of the RPP newspapers; a diverse collection of business, commercial, leisure and current affairs magazines and weekly newspapers; Sapa's subsidiary, the "national" news agency Iana; publications produced by the MOI;³⁷ and a limited number of imported periodicals including Time, Newsweek and the South African "white" leisure magazine, Scope.³⁸ While there were "progressive" publications such as Moto (which was unbanned and resurfaced initially as a weekly newspaper, later as a monthly magazine) on the market in 1980, the great bulk of the press, being directed at white Zimbabwe, was at

the very least unenthusiastic about the prospect of the new Zanu government. Beside and competing with this press were the publicly controlled electronic media of the Rhodesia Broadcasting Corporation, which became the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation in 1980. This radio and television monopoly continued to operate after independence as a parastatal, governed by the Broadcasting Act and run under the supervision of the MOI.³⁹ Behind this infrastructure stood a well developed advertising industry based in Harare which also catered primarily to the urban, predominantly white middle class and its rural "equivalent", the exclusively white commercial farming sector.⁴⁰

At the forefront of the print media, of course, were the RPP newspapers. Zimbabwe Newspapers (1980) Ltd. [Zimpapers], as the RPP was renamed in 1980, was to remain the dominant player in the print media scene by virtue of its network of regional and national papers, unequalled equipment and human resources and of course, its mass readership.⁴¹ Given its prominence, the Argus Zimpapers was the immediate focus of the state's attention in the formulation of a new press policy. Little energy was spent on restructuring the public sector's relations with the wide range of other institutions which comprised the private press in 1980. The state warned these other media to contribute to the development process via education and constructive, supportive criticism of the government, but it did little more. To date, there is no formal, regulatory "media policy" as such for that assortment of magazines and papers which constitutes the private press in Zimbabwe; indeed, the list of "banned" publications and films has shortened steadily since independence.⁴²

Yet, for the new government, the private media's diversity and relative "autonomy", coupled with their anti-Zanu stance throughout the war, posed a challenge to any project of popular "nation-building" which disenfranchised the old white dominated order -- including its more "moderate" offshoots as represented in the Muzorewa regime.

The totality of these inherited Rhodesian media, as the Minister of Information acknowledged, represented the preservation of the old order inside the heart of the new, and as such, had to be restructured.

Prior to independence the mass media here were owned and controlled by South African Companies whose interests they served and backed. The news coming from the Rhodesian press, radio and television was gathered, prepared and doctored by South African news agencies to support apartheid and to present a racist South African point of view. Secondly the mass media then, catered for and served the interests of the white minority in Rhodesia especially the entrenchment and consolidation of settler rule, power and privilege. Thirdly the politics, culture and history of the majority African population were totally ignored thus denying them a channel of expression and silencing them... News media with this kind of orientation could not be accommodated in nor serve a free, democratic and independent Zimbabwe whose goal is the establishment of an egalitarian socialist society.⁴³

The immediate challenge which this print media legacy posed for the new government was reflected in the day-to-day coverage of the nationalist movement and government offered by Zimpapers and Iana. At the same time, the internal organisational features of these companies, which remained directed towards serving minority needs and which depended on white skilled labour, came to highlight longer-term structural problems.

Given the press coverage of the liberation movements from the time of the signing of the Lancaster House agreement up to and after the Zanu election victory, it had become clear that the editorial position of the major newspapers (as well as the restrictive statutes and practices of government designed for the press) had changed little in content, and only slightly in tone, from the days of the Muzorewa and Smith regimes.

In this regard the reporting surrounding the election campaign of 1980 was typical, so much so that the Commonwealth Observer Group sent to cover the elections felt compelled to comment on the slanted and unhelpful role of the Argus press.

[I]f the election itself was a step towards reconciliation the media should have seen itself as an integral part of the process. We cannot... subscribe to the official view that the performance of the media was not an issue in the elections. Quite apart from the electoral question of balance, an important national opportunity was lost.⁴⁴

Despite claims of press "neutrality" during the election campaign, then, newspaper reports were to continually highlight actions of Zanla and Zipra "terrorists", successful attacks by the (white) Security Forces, and suspicions on the part of the latter concerning the sincerity of the formers' commitment to the ceasefire and assembly point regrouping procedures.⁴⁵ Items referring to the alleged dictatorial, power-hungry concerns of the PF leaders and Mugabe in particular, and of past struggles within Zanu⁴⁶, in tandem with articles generally supportive of Muzorewa and his UANC, left little room for speculation as to where the overall sympathies of the mass circulation newspapers lay in terms of the upcoming election.

The unofficial campaigning on the part of the press against the electoral chances of the PF and Zanu in particular had prompted a number of complaints from the PF to both the national newspaper chain and Governor Soames aimed at curbing the perceived bias of the white press,⁴⁷ but to no avail.

After the Zanu electoral triumph, the tenor of the papers vis-a-vis the new regime changed somewhat, as Zimpapers publicly stated that it perceived a new role for itself in contributing to the development of the nation.⁴⁸ Significantly, company editors maintained that a critically supportive stance would best enable the print media to assist the government in the construction of the new order, and insisted that any manoeuvres on the state's part which attempted to legislate the press' co-operation with government plans would be resisted in the name of an "independent and responsible press". From the ruling party's point of view the latter issue of responsibility was crucial, and begged the question concerning to whom, precisely, Zimpapers was responsible. Company editors replied that they were responsible to their readership and the "best interests of the nation". The MOI's own answer was that the company was legally owned and managed from an undeclared enemy state, and locally bound to the interests of white capital recently defeated in the war of liberation.⁴⁹

The "altered" content of the newspapers after April 1980 did little to alleviate the growing antagonism of the state towards the company, and in fact demonstrated the real limitations of mainstream white society in its coming to terms with majority rule. Despite various vague protestations of co-operation from Zimpapers and some

genuine attempts at shifts in news focus prompted by intensifying pressure from the government,⁵⁰ the overall focus of news coverage remained throughout 1980 much as it had been before: directed towards the interests and views of the white urban minority and its small allied fraction of middle class black "moderates"⁵¹. In terms of both the general posture adopted by the newspapers' editors and the content of coverage of issues and developments on the domestic and international scene, the national press continued to focus on white concerns in a way which did little to curb white fears and accommodate black interests.

This situation was highlighted in August 1980 when African journalists attending a government-sponsored seminar on the new media in Zimbabwe noted with alarm that events symbolically important for the new nation, such as Zimbabwe's formal admission into the United Nations General Assembly, were being given second-rate coverage, often in favour of quite parochial local "white" concerns.⁵² When coverage was offered of state politics, it was often in a way which antagonised the ruling coalition and, according to the PF, attempted to undermine confidence in the harmony existent within the government of national unity. By mid 1980 attacks on Zimpapers by Nkomo and others, followed by threats from some of the more partisan elements within Zanu, underlined the increasing tensions between the national print media and the government and pointed to the likelihood of a more dramatic intervention from the government.⁵³ Few media observers were taken by surprise when finally in January 1981, the Mass Media Trust was established with the primary aim of taking over control of the newspaper chain from South African interests.

The fact that it had not happened earlier says something about the heritage of the national print media encountered by the government in 1980, the initial fragility of the state with regard to white civil society and the administration's own financial shortcomings and priorities. If the one-sidedness of Zimpapers was apparent in its papers' editorial content, it was even more strikingly reflected in the composition of company staff. The senior editorial and management positions at Zimpapers were held by whites, and the limited in-house cadet training scheme in operation meant there were few black journalists who could be promoted into the upper echelons of the group from within the ranks of the company, and far fewer who could be said to be attuned to the development-related concerns of the state.

As part of its vow to adjust to new times, the company's white management had pledged in 1980 to accelerate the training of blacks in a move towards the gradual Africanisation of senior staff positions; but this recruitment and integration process, Zimpapers argued, should be left up to the company as an in-house matter.⁵⁴ However, like the chain's promise to alter the content of its papers in recognition of "prevailing circumstances", this further step towards the opening up of the papers to new interests in civil society and the state itself were neither spelled out on paper, nor guaranteed.

The internal cohesion at Zimpapers stood in sharp contrast to the initial disparate collection of personnel and planners within the MOI, and the limitations imposed upon the Ministry's activities by the vast programme of reconstruction taken on by the government. This situation was tempered by the difficult question of skills

development and replacement of white emigres. As in other sectors of industry and commerce, the emergent policy of "reconciliation" and "gradual indigenisation" was necessary in the media professions in order to forestall a complete, devastating exodus of practitioners. As it stood, there was a marked outflow of white print media professionals, many of whom were to find easy access to the Argus-controlled media inside South Africa.⁵⁵

The immediate aim of the MOI was to prevent further deterioration of this situation in the short term and work within the initial restrictions of labour power. An additional consideration underlying the restraint shown towards Zimpapers was the need in the first months of the new administration, to maintain the appearance of tolerance of some of the social institutions of white society in order to prevent a complete draining of human resources from the country. In this regard, the national print media was an important case in which much more than just media apparatuses were at stake. The high-profile status of the single national newspaper chain ensured that it would serve as a symbolic litmus test for the new government's commitment to traditional democratic rights and freedoms.

At the same time, there were countervailing pressures on government planners to come to terms with changes needed urgently in the media -- changes ranging from the question of access to media among the povo, to the necessity of building up defenses nationally and internationally against a surfacing "disinformation campaign" undertaken by interests hostile to the Mugabe regime, notably South Africa and its foreign backers. In short, the challenge posed in 1980 by the larger privately-owned

mass media echoed that presented by the entire inherited political economy: how was it possible to entice the white dominated private sector to restructure to meet expanded, new popular needs; and particularly in the case of the RPP, which was targeted for public investment, how could reshaping be undertaken without destabilising the media's viable commercial productive base?

The general intentions of state planners had been made clear even before the government took office, through scattered references to what the concerns of the press should be in the new Zimbabwe. In March 1980, the designated Zanu Minister of Information Dr. Shamuyarira cautioned,

...we are now entering the 'black north'. This is no longer a European country. It is going to be a black man's country. So I urge the Press to look to the north and not to the south... We have to move very rapidly and drastically reorient ourselves;⁵⁶ We are now part of black Africa and no longer a part of a white Southern Africa and this must be reflected in our media.⁵⁷

The modalities by which this shift in focus was to be brought about, however, remained open to speculation. Faced with labour skills shortages and forced to deal with an inherited information bureaucracy of its own, the MOI was forced at the outset to plan within existing structures, looking for ways to build constructively on these while preparing for a future transition to some form of indigenously-staffed print media.⁵⁸ As one means of coming to terms with a difficult situation, the new government slotted former practicing journalists into key positions at the Ministry. Nathan Shamuyarira was made Minister, while Justin Nyoka, a journalist who had

been trained on the job at the Herald and was later editor of Moto, became the Director of Information and put in charge of government-press relations.⁵⁹

The new Minister was key in bringing together different internally- and externally-based media workers and support groups, in an effort to make a mark on the domestic media quickly. In August 1980 a seminar was organised under the auspices of the MOI and financed by the West German Friedrich Ebert Stiftung,⁶⁰ grouping together practicing media professionals in Zimbabwe from the different ministries and the private press, MOI officials, media workers from Zanu and Zapu, prospective trainers and foreign consultants. It was, as one participant noted, a time when the whole question of the press was "in a state of flux". The seminar was designed to help in the reassessment of existing structures, by identifying needs, capabilities and policy options for the near future.⁶¹

In this early process of needs assessment and stock-taking, the state played a significant role in setting a broad agenda for media development -- an agenda which at its outset, departed dramatically from the aggressive, partisan and vitriolic approach of the RF epitomised by Benson.⁶² As an ideological foundation for future policy, the MOI introduced the linked concepts of "decolonisation" and "democratisation". These terms underlined the MOI's aim of indigenising, reorienting and restaffing the press institutions inherited in 1980, and their interpretation stressed that such actions were part of a broader political process of national rebuilding. For example, the agenda of democratisation at the level of the local press presupposed the

structural decolonisation of ownership patterns, namely the removal of foreign control.

By the process of decolonisation, foreign ownership of local media and the foreign bias in media content and style were to be replaced by indigenous ownership with new editorial priorities and a better grasp of Zimbabwean information needs. Although serving as the most important feature of moves towards decolonisation, this concern with "indigenisation" was paralleled by a broader interest in remodelling Zimbabwe's international communication links, on which so much of the local media had for so long been dependent for information. Here, critical reference was made to the global "information order" and the need to extricate Zimbabwe from its previous placement in it.

To counter imperialist propaganda and Western domination of our mass communications media we must decolonise and indigenise them so that they serve the interests of the peoples of Africa and transform them. We must also decolonise the colonial mentality and purge it of the doses of imperialist propaganda. I am advocating the liberation of all our mass communications structures from foreign control. As long as this control remains, our people will continue to be brainwashed and they will continue to be manipulated by imperialists. The fight against foreign propaganda must be all-African and a collective effort if it must succeed. All Africa must engage in it, not one or two states. Once we achieve an all-African self-reliance and independence in our mass communications systems then we can provide a multi-lateral flow of social, cultural, political and economic information between OAU member states.⁶³

For media practitioners and planners, the implications of this were clear: from the government's point of view, moves should be made to link the country into communication lattices which leaned away from the traditional western-centred

structures dominating the field of global news and information flows, and towards issues and themes more congruent with the non-aligned, development-oriented -- and more specifically, Pan-African -- perspective officially sanctioned by Zanu. This was signalled most starkly by the government's commitment to the ideas circumscribed by the "New World Information and Communication Order" (Nwico), that broad perspective which since its emergence in international fora in 1980 called for the greater participation of developing countries in the setting of the "world agenda" of news produced by dominant western international news services. In due course, the government's pro-Nwico position was to be taken up wholeheartedly as a policy by the reconstituted public media in 1981. The practical implementation of -- and "gains" to be had from -- this policy, however, were to prove to be a more ambiguous matter, as the experience of Zimpapers and the Zimbabwe Inter-Africa News Agency [Ziana] demonstrated.⁶⁴

But while Zanu called for the opening up of new channels of co-operative communication, it also demanded the firm control of other flows of information with a view to countering their "destabilizing" impact on the country. In this regard, the MOI pointed to the South African "disinformation" campaign against Zimbabwe and the Frontline states, and the anti-socialist slant of "western imperialist media", as a means of establishing a legitimate "protective" role for the state on the terrain of the press.⁶⁵

The post-independence destabilization campaign launched by South Africa and exacerbated by the outbreak of political banditry in Matabeleland provided a major

catalyst for the deepening role of the state in the media, on the basis of national security interests. First, it had been demonstrated that South Africa made direct use of certain media for the express purpose of destabilizing the Zimbabwean government.⁶⁶ At the same time, it had drawn attention to the fact that the daily reportage flowing from southern Africa to the world was routed via, and often compiled directly by, South African agencies -- a situation which granted South African editors crucial control over the international image of the apartheid regime's neighbouring opponents.⁶⁷

In response, the MOI directed local journalists to combat foreign "information aggression" by being aggressively partisan in defending the principles of majority rule, socialism and the aims of the country's "friends" in the international community. It was a demand which government backed up by restructuring Zimbabwe's international telecommunications links,⁶⁸ training press attaches for embassies abroad⁶⁹ and -- more controversially -- by reintroducing RF-style vetting for foreign journalists working in Zimbabwe. The last measures, which characterised the cool relations between the MOI and foreign media to the end of the 1980s, found their most systematic expression in the Zimbabwe-inspired "Kadoma Declaration" of Frontline states in 1983.⁷⁰

The Matabeleland crisis and its coverage abroad was to demonstrate the power of the foreign media in the practice of political image-making. It was this context which formed the backdrop in Zimbabwe to the co-ordinated measures for management of foreign media resulting in the Declaration. In a briefing surrounding

the meeting of Ministers of Information of the Frontline States and Nigeria at Kadoma, Zimbabwe in July 1983, Zimbabwe's Director of Information in the MOI argued that the greatest challenge facing the Frontline States "...is the persistent information aggression from South Africa and the need to counter it".⁷¹ The answer was to come in the form of a joint resolution pledging increased co-operation and pooling of resources of media in the Frontline States (particularly among national news agencies), media support for the liberation movements of South Africa and Namibia, and most importantly, co-ordinated sanctioning action to be taken against foreign journalists based in South Africa and reporting on the Frontline States. Crucially, the idea underpinning the Kadoma meeting was that media coverage was within the ambit of national security. It was a theme which was also taken up with Zimbabwean journalists, as the intensifying destabilisation campaign (and specifically banditry) came to impose itself on the political agenda of daily life.⁷²

The Declaration (though difficult to enforce)⁷³ was to stand as a precursor to the type of state-press relations which Zanu envisioned for the future. The document concretely and openly introduced the state and ruling party as having a direct role in the "policing" of domestic news media according to the strictures of the government-defined criteria of "national interest" and "national security". But for many media professionals in Zimbabwe, the government's increasing concern in the 1980s with "national security" as a means of censoring media content was to clash with its other declared aim of introducing greater "popular democracy" in the pages of the public press, particularly as the boundaries of what constituted reasonable levels of security

controls on information were unilaterally expanded by Zanu.⁷⁴ Indeed, according to the MOI's policy sketch of what the new democratised media would entail, it appeared that a deep tension had taken root early on in the state's broad conceptualisation of a free-yet-responsible public press.

For the MOI, "democratisation" was seen to involve the reorientation of legal ownership, editorial content and patterns of distribution of print media within Zimbabwe in line with the political, social and cultural reality of majority rule. In narrow terms this entailed the removal of the South African presence from Zimpapers and Iana and the reorganisation of those structures. In a broader perspective it implied a realignment of the print media to support of the state's developing socialist programme while, importantly, making these media readily accessible to the hitherto neglected rural-based majority of the population.⁷⁵ By these means, the transformed media was to serve "as a vehicle of communicating the government policies to the people, and feeding back the reaction of the people to these programmes".⁷⁶

The primary means of implementing this approach was to expand the media in both high density urban communities and, especially, the severely neglected rural areas. New institutions and arrangements were to be created for the collection and distribution of news and information concerning the lives, ambitions, interests and challenges facing the majority African population, and the development programme and agenda of the ruling party. As the MOI saw it, the new public media would be democratised through the process of rendering them accessible to the majority population.⁷⁷

Yet, the costs of undertaking this expansion into what at the start almost certainly would be a losing financial proposition, implied a shift in operational norms at Zimpapers and the national news agency, Ziana. The MOI made known in no uncertain terms that the commercial underpinnings of the public print media would have to be reassessed in light of the political duty of the media in reaching out to the majority African population. If the profit motive and the social role of the print media were to come into conflict, the MOI declared, the former would be forced to give way in the name of national interest:

The papers should be run principally to inform, entertain, educate and mobilise the public, and not to make a profit, even at the expense of the national interests. [The new owners of Zimpapers] will have no profit motive in the operation, beyond making it economically viable. Their share of profits are to be ploughed back into the enterprise.⁷⁸

Thus the future expanded role of the national press was not to be just a matter of institutional extension beyond normal commercially viable limits, but also involved a significant social component relating to political education and mobilisation: the media as participant in, not just mirror of, society. In this light, calls were made for the media to participate in the creation of a new "national identity", uplifting the popular image of African culture, explaining and popularising the ideas of socialism and disabusing the national political culture of colonial and negative traditional ideas and practices.

The consequences of such appeals for political struggles in the 1980s is clear. Despite Zanu's claims that a "mobilisation" of the masses by the media would be non-partisan and undertaken solely in the greater national interest, the early tenor of

government pronouncements opened the way to other possibilities in the future. As Minister Shamuyarira remarked in 1981, "commitment to the country, to its ideology, and to its toiling masses should be the watchwords" of journalists in their capacity of social activists.⁷⁹

The question was, what would this "commitment" mean in the concrete? To whom would journalists and editors be held responsible in the short-term? By government policy, it was envisioned that the media would have a somewhat benign political function, serving as a primary organiser of the ideological programme contained within the overall transitional project of the state. According to this view, the media would be largely responsible for securing the conditions of a new consciousness centred on the question of nation, and would participate subsequently in the political and ideological constitution of the popular masses qua popular and progressive social forces. To safeguard the non-partisan position of this mobilising press, it was held, the media would have to be maintained in a capacity independent of the party, yet constrained by responsibility to the nation, its development, and the programme of "the people's government". The press would remain "free", but would be made "responsible" to national interests.

Yet actions by leading members of the ruling party in the early days of independence cast doubt on the feasibility of this grand conception, and foreshadowed undercurrents of future policy implementation. Even before the installation of new editorial and management staff at Zimpapers, the sensitivity of the government to media coverage was made apparent. In January 1981, the Rand Daily Mail and BBC

Africa Service correspondent, Tendai Dumbutshena, was detained outside of the national Press Club and questioned for seven hours by police, following his reporting of speculated changes in the expected Cabinet shuffle.⁸⁰ Commenting on the matter, then-Prime Minister Mugabe set the tone of government's retort by warning that those who attempted to "embarrass" the government by "refusing to take into consideration the requirements of the Government and the State" stood open to being "punished as enemies".⁸¹ In following days and years the looming presence of the state was reinforced by the MMT's concrete expression of precisely the same sentiments:

We will not interfere with the right of the Press to report the truth, but journalists will also have to remember they are citizens of the country and should be wary of issues that may discredit or embarrass the Government... You have to report on both local and international news and also give the people here the Government's direction on economic and other issues of national importance... The direction of the Press should be that of nation building, promoting unity and putting across a positive image of Zimbabwe.⁸²

For Zanu, these strictures were to be employed to chasten all manner of unflattering reportage. For example, in October 1981 the MOI Director of Information cited the press' direct criticism of the political leadership as being indicative of reactionary tendencies, and declared the press in need of further "decolonisation".⁸³ Two months later the Minister of National Construction and Housing (and powerful ranking party official), Eddison Zvobgo, publicly charged that the five newspapers of Zimpapers were suffering under "bourgeois domination", being run by "new pseudo-editorial professors who had not been in the war" who were allowing Zimpapers to be used to mobilise sections of the public against the

government's expressed interest in establishing a one-party state.⁸⁴ The Minister continued:

Just take a look at the editorials in The Herald and sometimes in The Sunday Mail and it becomes proper to ask, 'What did we buy from the Argus Company for \$4 million?... But the determination of the people of Zimbabwe and the party will ensure the complete defeat of all these reactionaries, counter-revolutionaries and some outright imperialist agents. We will rout them and get rid of them thoroughly. We must set up our own effective magazines and newspapers to ensure that the party's revolutionary line remains supreme.'⁸⁵

Although this attack was rebuked at the time by the Zanu hierarchy, which noted that Minister Zvobgo was speaking only his "personal thoughts" and not elaborating party policy,⁸⁶ an important point had been made: the ideological "space" available to editors in the public press could have dangerous consequences for the ruling party, and if "defiance" from some editors continued there were those within Zanu willing to force uncooperative journalists out. On the other hand, the attacks by Zvobgo and others were only a negative reflection of Zanu's increasingly positive appreciation of the potentially hegemonic function of the public sector media. In this latter regard, the print media and its workers were to be cast in the mould of committed "organic intellectuals".

Before any journalist picks up his or her pen to write, he or she should be committed to the ideology of liberating the masses and exposing the machinations of imperialism. Commitment is absolutely necessary, if not mandatory, if one's pen is to play a positive role in society... Journalists and writers should be in the forefront of the continuing struggle for total liberation.⁸⁷

In short time the practical political implications of this view were to become more readily apparent, with the gradual emergence of Zanu as the centre of the public

media's "national" programme. Referring less frequently to "society" and "national liberation", and more often of the ruling party, by 1984 the ruling party could demand that journalists

...be educated into the ideology of the ruling party... We will insist that the journalists who write for the media must themselves be committed to the new order and to the policy of social transformation (once the party's position on this is fully clarified).⁸⁸

However, the infiltration of Zanu's agenda into the heart of the public press was a slow process. At the time, the need to find a workable solution to the immediate crisis facing Zimpapers -- a solution which was forced to pay deference to the domestic politics of reconciliation and the international political economy of donor assistance -- pushed Zanu to erect a new set of media structures which the party would later spend considerable time trying to overwhelm, undermine and systematically circumvent.

It was in this ambiguous policy climate of "freedom and responsibility" that the Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust [MMT] was established in January 1981 as an autonomous public body, charged with overseeing the editorial renewal and infrastructural expansion of Zimpapers and Ziana, and the emplacement of a new national journalist training programme. It was the beginning of a unique experiment in press-state relations in Africa and perhaps, as the Zanu government argues, the world -- and one which, as many have subsequently argued, did not last for long. The key to the experiment was the much-heralded political and economic independence of the MMT: an independence taken to be founded on the self-perpetuating, self-

financing, non-commercial and professionally-managed modus operandi of the institution.

As the MOI saw it, the MMT would act as a buffer between the government (especially the MOI) and the publicly owned media, particularly Zimpapers and its editors. This structure was based upon and would be reinforced by a set of rules pertaining to the hiring and firing of media workers and making of policy decisions, and, ultimately, upon the constitutional freedom of expression and thought enshrined in the Zimbabwean Constitution. At the same time, it was expected that the MMT and the media and bodies under its jurisdiction would come to reflect the new political reality of majority rule by positively emphasizing issues and events of concern to the povo, in the context of plans for the socialist transition.

With the invention of the MMT the MOI thus committed the government to establishing an information order in line with the new state's formal political agenda of institutional and "mental" decolonisation, democratic "participation" by the masses in national debate and decision-making, self-defence against hostile (South African) manoeuvres of destabilisation and popular mobilisation towards the socialist transition. It is worthwhile noting that attached to these rather sweeping policy pronouncements, there soon grew a number of very tangible expectations of change among the povo which stemmed directly from such policy pronouncements about "reaching out to the rural masses", using technology to better rural information access and producing vernacular newspapers in the rural areas.

At the least these led to increased anticipation among the African majority of better information services in the rural areas through Growth Points and the like, wider distribution of -- and greater access to -- the national press, and more adequate coverage of issues which concerned Africans on a day-to-day basis. Like government initiatives on land resettlement and redistribution, rural development, co-operative assistance, education upgrading and other problems of interest to the majority, the Zanu government would come to be judged on the basis of what it enacted, and not simply what it said. In the case of the national print media, tasked with educating and mobilising the population in line with the political programme of the new state, this matter of being taken seriously was all that more important -- especially as there were other printed sources of informative "common sense" to be found in Zimbabwe, namely in the space of the private press. Given the attempts by Zanu to harness the national newspapers to its germinating hegemonic project, this question of expectations and their consequences for the persuasive capacity (and political leadership) of the ruling party and media alike loomed increasingly large over the course of the decade.⁸⁹

Expectations, Political Projects and the Road Ahead

If the RF mostly achieved its hegemonic ambitions within white society because of the underlying social consensus of white Rhodesia, Zanu's relations with

civil society and the private media were often marred by confrontation. Whereas the RF had been doubly advantaged in its successful pursuit of hegemony over white society by its unquestioned control of the state and its clear leadership of the (white) class compromise which defined UDI Rhodesia, Zanu was handicapped by the diversity of competing voices and social interests which independence had unleashed within Zimbabwe. If the surface appearance of (white) freedom of the press had served the RF's democratic pretensions without endangering white rule, the real practice of press freedom by the same institutions in the turbulent social environment of the 1980s posed the threat of undermining the political security of the ruling party. Even the old strong-arm tactics of the RF -- which in any case that regime was rarely forced to impose on a compliant white press -- no longer could be employed without considerable political cost, given Zanu's commitment to a press freedom.

For Zanu, continued white domination of the mass media and other important sectors of civil society was to serve as a crucial locale of potential counter-hegemonic organisation, especially given that most of the private media were owned and controlled by whites deeply opposed to Zanu's populist political programme. But when the consolidation of popular groups in civil society -- like trade unionists, collective co-operators, radical intellectuals and women's rights groups -- also came to be reflected directly and indirectly in the space of the media, the full weight of the impending challenge to the ruling party became more apparent. Thus was the terrain of the national press reconstituted as an important nodal point of social struggles

among fractions of civil society, much as it had been in the days before the RF's capture of state power.

It was when pressures on Zanu to impose itself more directly on the social consciousness mounted in the wake of intensifying social crisis and the party's inability to manufacture "consent" reliably and consistently, that the content of the new government's early media policy compromises was altered in practice. However, changes in policy were mediated significantly by the fact that they were confined to the space of the new public press, which alone remained easily accessible to the state and ruling party. In the sphere of the growing private press, the RF tactics of rhetorical bullying, official harassment and overt government censorship in the name of a beleaguered (white) nation were no longer effective. The problem was that the underlying, uncontested political morale on which the RF's strategy for controlling the white press rested, no longer applied in multi-racial, pluralist, authentically democratic Zimbabwe.

Unlike the old Rhodesia, the new Zimbabwe was characterised by a heterogeneous, mobilising array of social forces and political alliances, many of them freshly unleashed by the defeat of the RF's political repression of black society. Most of these newly articulated forces, however, were intent on maintaining a distance from the government's unfolding political programme, or at least vital parts of it. Having been allowed space to organise and consolidate, they had developed autonomous poles of political interests and discourse -- with their own view of what constituted a "national political consensus". At the heart of this process of civic

mobilisation was the new private press, whose unmolested growth was the direct result of Zanu's commitment to press freedom. In this regard, the most important of Zanu's media policies was its acknowledgement and benign implementation of a principle implicitly assigned to it by the Lancaster Constitution: the preservation and acceptance of freedom of the press. Indeed, for most of the 1980s Zanu's media policy was focused on developing strategies for the public press to counteract Zanu's initial, politically irreversible concession to the increasingly active realm of private society.

The following chapter begins the examination of this dynamic of construction and practical deconstruction of the new media order by Zanu, by investigating the planning and implementation of the MMT experiment. In this first step, attention will be focused on the MMT structure and the media responsibilities which were placed under its control, with a view to identifying the policy goals and objectives circumscribed by Zanu's wider public media project. Evidence of the MOI's creeping interference in the MMT prefaces later discussions of the ruling party's direct interventions inside Zimpapers and other public media, in violation of the original MMT concept. The various deconstructive repercussions of Zanu's actions -- not just for the MMT, Zimpapers and the whole of the envisioned "new media order", but for the party's own hegemonic programme involving the media -- serve as the recurrent theme of these discrete inquiries, which will culminate with an examination of the Zimbabwean private press.

References

1. Robert Mugabe, "New Year's Address" (1982), cited in Zimbabwe News, vol.13, no.1 (1982), p. 4.
2. Zanu(PF) Central Committee, Zanu(PF) 1980 Election Manifesto (Salisbury: The Committee, 1980), p. 13. Commitment to this freedom of expression was part of Zanu's undertaking to abide by the Declaration of Rights laid down in the Lancaster House Constitution. With regard to the media, the right to free speech was underlined by separate reference to the independence of the press, radio and state-supervised television. This stand was reiterated in the ruling party's Election Manifesto 1985 (Harare: Zanu(PF) Central Committee, 1985), alongside a call for government to use the mass media for "intensive mass mobilisation" and the "organisation of public debates and discussions of all important socio-economic and political issues before they are legislated" (p.7).
3. Zimbabwe, First Five-Year National Development Plan, *op. cit.* See in particular, Vol. I, p.36; and Vol. II, pp. 41-2. Where there is reference to the print media, specifically in the mention of state support for rural newspapers, there is an accompanying lack of discussion or explanation about what is intended.
4. The Ministry responsible for administering the tasks of information has undergone various jurisdictional and name changes over time. Throughout most of the Rhodesian era it was known as the Ministry of Information, Immigration and Tourism (underlining the propagandistic concerns of the Rhodesian Front and its policy of heightened white immigration). In the first years of majority rule it was retained as the Ministry of Information and Tourism, later becoming the Ministry of Information, Posts and Telecommunications, thereby denoting its responsibility for the important parastatals and institutions under its supervision. In this study all historical variants of the Ministry will be referred to by the acronym, MOI.
5. Zimbabwe, Policy Statement No.21 (Harare: GPO, 1988).
6. Interview with Justin Nyoka, Harare, 23 February 1987.
7. A weak, partial account of "change-in-society" matched by "change-in-the-press" from a liberal perspective, is offered by Graham Kinlock in, Flame or Lily? Rhodesian Values as Defined by the Rhodesian Press (Durban: Alpha Graphic, 1970); and, "Changing Intergroup Attitudes of Whites as Defined by the Press: The Process of Colonial Adaptation", Zambezia, vol.4, no.1 (December 1975), pp. 105-117. Kinlock focuses on newspaper editors and their readerships, arguing that the former represent "non-political commentators on contemporary social issues" (1975, p. 110),

who nascently mirror the needs and interests of whites in society, thereby promoting (white) social "integration". The analysis given in this dissertation differs, in that it considers not the (alleged) unity of classes and interests "white society", but the cleavages, dislocation and recomposition of articulated interests across a spectrum of social fractions; also it aims to discover how social interests, group identity and political debate is constructed by leading agents of political mobilisation -- including newspaper editors and journalists.

8. Shamuyarira left the post in January 1988, switching positions with Minister of Foreign Affairs, Witness Mangwende. Shamuyarira's promotion was considered by many observers to be the result of his loyalty to President Mugabe and his high-profile, uncompromising, professional performance as Zimbabwe's public relations chief during difficult periods of civil unrest and heightened regional tensions.

9. See Chapters 4, 5 and 8 for further discussion.

10. This was the opinion of most white veterans of the RPP days, as well of many foreign observers in the international news media. See Chapter 4 for further discussion.

11. Several accounts of the growth of and changes in the Press in Rhodesia from the days of settlement up to the era of UDI have not been addressed here. The most authoritative and comprehensive of these is W.D. Gale's The Rhodesian Press. The History of the Rhodesian Printing & Publishing Company Ltd. (Salisbury: RP&P, 1962), which charts the history of the Rhodesian Printing and Publishing Company Ltd. and its involvement with newspapers up to 1960. However there are other references which are essential in the filling in of details on the other newspapers and newspaper chains which at different times were of importance in Northern and Southern Rhodesia (today's Zambia and Zimbabwe), and of the political conflicts which often surrounded them. See, John Parker, Rhodesia: Little White Island (London: Pitman, 1972); Clyde Sanger, Central African Emergency (London: Heinemann, 1960); Eugene Wason, Banned: The Story of the African Daily News, Southern Rhodesia, 1964 (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1976).

12. W.D. Gale, op. cit., p. 2.

13. In 1926, three years after the decision taken by referendum to transfer the colony from BSAC to settler self-rule, the RPP was formally established as a Rhodesian subsidiary of the Argus company. Though the structure and corporate equity holdings of the RPP were to change over the years, the company's essential connection with the growing Argus publishing empire was to remain a feature of its existence up to 1980. At that later date the Argus corporation retained a controlling 43% share in the Rhodesia publishing chain.

14. Iana had offices in all three territories of the Federation, and was to remain in Nyasaland (independent Malawi) at least for some time after the achievement of that country's independence in 1964. It was incorporated as a local company in Southern Rhodesia in 1961. See T.M. Nyahunzvi, "Media Training in Zimbabwe: The First Six Years" (University of Wales, Cardiff: M.A. thesis, 1987).

15. In the mid-1970s there were over fifty monthly or weekly "private" periodicals produced of political, religious, professional and commercial nature; see section on "Information" in, O'Callaghan and Austin, *op. cit.*

16. This magazine and newssheet resurfaced as the weekly Bantu Mirror in 1936, having been bought out by African Newspapers Ltd., a company owned by the white-controlled Kachalola Group (primarily backed by tobacco and copper mining capital) which was to invest heavily in black publications during the Federation years. For details of the Bantu Mirror and other newspapers which were to follow from African Newspapers Ltd., see C.A.G. Paver, "The African Press", National Affairs, vol.1, no.11 (February 1951), p. 2; and Sanger's discussion in Central African Emergency, *op. cit.*

17. For a good example of the limited liberal project which flavoured these white-controlled publications, see B.G. Paver, His Own Oppressor (London: Peter Davies, 1958).

18. David Moore, The Problematic Construction..., *op. cit.*, pp. 156-7. See Moore's discussion of the City Youth League of 1950s Salisbury, and its use of the journal Chapupu to attack the liberalism and passivism of the Bantu Mirror in particular. A fuller account of this sort of intra-African press conflict can be found in the empirically rich but conceptually weak study of Sanger, *op. cit.*

19. For example, Shamuyarira, the future Minister of Information, was editor of The Daily News, while Musarurwa and Vambe had both served as editors of Parade in the 1950s.

20. The Daily News was banned in 1964 for reporting on disturbances in townships and describing police actions against nationalist unrest. For a full discussion of the emerging political tensions and censorship regulations of the RF, see Eugene Wason, *op. cit.*

21. See among other references: Judith Todd, An Act of Treason: Rhodesia 1965 (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1966); Peter Niesewand, In Camera: Secret Justice in Rhodesia (London: Weidenfield and Nicholson, 1973); Marion O'Callaghan and Reginald Austin, Southern Rhodesia: the effects of conquest society on education, culture and information (Paris: Unesco, 1977); Elaine Windrich, The Mass Media in the Struggle for Zimbabwe. Censorship and Propaganda Under Rhodesian Front Rule (Gwelo: Mambo Press, 1981); Julie Frederikse, None But Ourselves. Masses vs.

Media in the Making of Zimbabwe (Harare: ZPH, 1982); and, Committee to Protect Journalists, South Africa and Zimbabwe: The Freest Press in Africa? A Report (New York: The Committee, 1983).

22. See, E. Windrich, "Ministry of Information -- The Machinery and Techniques of Control", in The Mass Media..., *op. cit.*

23. See for example an account of the Rhodesian "free media" in, Sir Garfield Todd, Interview with Julie Frederikse, [1980?] (Transcript: File "MS 536/14/7", National Archives of Zimbabwe).

The media was tremendously important. We had the African Daily News which was banned. We had Moto, which was first class and which was well appreciated and grasped by the rural population whenever they could get a Moto, so eventually Moto was banned. Some of the men in the newspaper, editors and so on, did their best to strike some sort of balance but eventually, obviously, all the news they got from the military and from the political people... So from the point of view of finding a solution in this country I am afraid that the newspapers of the day... whether they were unwilling or not, were unable to really assist us because they only got the one lot of news, the one side.

24. See for example, Judith Todd, 1956, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-89.

25. Above all, the RF's presentation of masses of "information" material confirms that the party and regime understood well the significance of official information channels, at home and abroad; see for example, Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Rhodesia, Rhodesia: The Propaganda War (London: Catholic Institute for International Relations, 1977); and Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Rhodesia, Civil War in Rhodesia. Abduction, Torture and Death in the Counter-Insurgency Campaign (Salisbury: The Commission, August 1976). The RF's MOI and related information services in the foreign affairs department were prolific in the production of propaganda materials, including series of "fact-sheets", pamphlets, weekly information diaries, small monographs, local and foreign press release serials, and films.

For examples of the types of material regularly produced and made available at home and overseas free of charge, see the collection in Frederikse's None But Ourselves manuscript papers, National Archives of Zimbabwe (Accession number 3156, File MS 536/4). These publications are interesting to the extent that their themes reflect the changing nature of both the political crises facing the RF, and its propaganda response, during the 15 years of UDI (this is an observation which merits further investigation by researchers). The titles of the following representative publications give some indication of historical shifts in strategy between the mid 1960s and 1980: African Advancement in Rhodesia (Salisbury: Rhodesia Information Service, 1964), 11th November 1965: Rhodesia's Finest Hour (Salisbury: MOI,

1965), Anatomy of Terror (Salisbury: MOI, 1974), The ZANU concept of detente (Fact Paper 1975), Some facts about Rhodesia (Salisbury: MOI, 1975), Harvest of Fear. A diary of terrorist atrocities in Rhodesia (Salisbury: MOI, 1976), The Importance of White Rhodesians to the Rhodesian Economy (Fact Paper 2/1976), The Political and Economic Decline of Mozambique (Fact Paper 19 October 1976), Communist Support and Assistance to Nationalist Political Groups in Rhodesia (Fact Paper 10/1975), and, A Case for Zimbabwe-Rhodesia (Salisbury: MOI, 1979).

The author has also benefited from access to the archival files of David Martin and Phyllis Johnson (Harare), which include a substantial collection of Fact Papers, press releases and other publications from (among other sources) the Information Section of the Rhodesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1974-1976).

26. Ivor Benson, The Opinion Makers (Pretoria: Dolphin Press, 1967), *passim*.

27. Benson, *op. cit.*, p. 92. (emphasis in original)

28. The legal basis for this introduction of direct censorship lay in the "Emergency Powers (Censorship of Publications) Order", which was introduced on 11 November, 1965, and which made publication of any material dependent upon the consent of the Department of Information, whose power could be delegated to official censors attached to the Department.

29. Windrich cites the "benefits" (like access to facilities, press releases, contacts and "inside" information) to be accrued, and "punishments" (deportation, court proceedings and decertification) to be incurred by journalists and media institutions alike if they fell afoul of the RF's favour in the early days of 1963 and 1964. This system of carrot and stick was enforced quickly and dutifully by the state's employment of the police for the purposes of mail-opening, phone tapping, surveillance and news room searches. See Windrich, *op. cit.*, pp. 59-61. For a more detailed discussion of the same subject, see also Windrich's "Controlling the Media: Rhodesian Style", Journal of Southern African Affairs, vol.5, no.1 (January 1980), pp. 89-100.

30. Parker, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

31. Many senior journalists, including Malcolm Smith (editor, The Herald), Eileen Haddon (editor, Central African Examiner), Eugene Watson (editor, African Daily News) and Frank Clements were declared prohibited immigrants and deported by the regime in the late 1960s. See Windrich, 1981, *op. cit.*, p.72.

The "necessary" national allegiances of editorial and managerial staff at RPP, carried out "in the interests of our readers", were indicated by Chronicle editor Sandy Robertson years later:

(You) must remember that we were all being battered by sanctions.

There was something of a feeling that we were all in the same boat.

Certainly, as far as sanctions were concerned it was quite definitely not

in the interests of the newspapers that we should do anything which could frustrate people who were breaking sanctions and keeping the place alive. Sanctions-busters kept us going! Us included, I mean our bread and butter -- the 350 breadwinners in this newspapers building, apart from anything else. It was agreed that we would not do anything, consciously do anything, which would disturb the operations of those who were busting sanctions... It was in the interest of our readers as well -- mainly in the interest of our readers, economically. We couldn't offer any alternative, could we? (cited in Frederikse, None But Ourselves, op. cit., p. 28).

32. Herald, 08.04.1968

33. Moto was closed in 1974 after warnings and temporary bannings, while The Zimbabwe Times -- with a staff of 292 blacks out of a total number of 300 -- lasted only eighteen months before being suppressed in October, 1978. See, "Black newspaper banned by Rhodesia Government", International Herald Tribune, 03.10.1978; and, "Rhodesia transitional government bans 'Zimbabwe Times'", The Times [UK], 03.10.1978. As Windrich observed, if the RF had a case in claiming that the RPP was a monopoly company which ought to be controlled in the interests of the nation, it was the RF itself which had effectively created this condition by its banning of so many of the other publications which competed with the RPP.

34. Ironically the first such Rhodesian editor was Malcolm Smith who, having run into repeated confrontations with the RF after UDI, was eventually deported.

35. See Chapter 6.

36. See Chapter 7.

37. These included, notably, The African Times, whose name had been changed to The People under the Muzorewa regime in an unsuccessful attempt to wash off its negative image.

38. The price and availability of the three foreign journals have put them consistently beyond the reach of the ordinary Zimbabwean -- and thankfully, some might say. At the end of the 1980s these imports were joined on the local market by a growing number of "progressive" titles from Africa and the sub-region: notably and most regularly, The Weekly Mail and New Nation newspapers from South Africa; the Guardian of Botswana; various publications of the liberation movements of South Africa and Namibia; and The African Concord and The Guardian of Nigeria. In addition, there have been a number of magazines from the former East Bloc -- the Soviet Union, East Germany and North Korea in particular -- made available in bookshops and from street vendors. Because of low acquisition and resale costs, there continues to be a thriving market in back-dated, second-hand current affairs

magazines of remarkable variety, and titles ranging from Macleans to The Alberta Report are to be found on Harare street corners. Indeed the absence of international or western newspapers (or eastern, for that matter) is one of the striking differences between Harare and most other capitals in Africa: if Zimbabweans want these, they must order them by subscription and pay for this out of the small allocation of foreign exchange which is allowed annually --that is, for those who have surplus Zimbabwe dollars which can be exchanged. These international publications (for example, International Herald Tribune, The Times and Guardian of the UK) are not available for sale in Zimbabwe dollars.

39. As such, the lines of authority and decision-making at the ZBC were integrated easily into the policy and planning structures of the MOI. The mostly white, staunchly RF "journalists" who staffed the RBC were quickly replaced with black recruits with connections to the nationalist movements; particularly Zanu partisans who had worked on the party's popular Maputo-based "Voice of Zimbabwe" radio programmes during the war.

40. In the mid 1980s, the Zimbabwean advertising industry was represented by 350 personnel, several major agencies, production houses and research groups. This, according to one agency figure, indicates that there has been no significant structural or infrastructural change in the industry from the agency side since the pre-1980 period, although the spokesperson acknowledges that "the nature of the market" has changed importantly to include the rural areas after 1980. See, Michael Hogg, "Advertising in Zimbabwe -- past and present", Advertising in Zimbabwe (Harare: ZMMT & FNF, 1985), pp. 8-14.

41. See Chapter 6 for detailed discussion of the Zimpapers infrastructure in the 1980s.

42. See, Zimbabwe Board of Censors, Catalogue of Banned Books, Periodicals, etc. 1984 (Harare: GPO, 1984).

43. Nathan Shamuyarira, "The Mass Media and the New Order in Zimbabwe", Zimbabwe News, vol.15, no.2 (March 1984), p. 21.

44. Commonwealth Observer Group, Southern Rhodesia Elections. The Report of the Commonwealth Observer Group (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 1980), p.47. A similar conclusion was reached by the independent human rights monitoring group, the Catholic Institute for International Relations, in, Halfway to the Elections: Some notes on the present situation in Rhodesia (Salisbury, 1 February, 1980). The report noted that the privately owned national press and the Zimbabwe-Rhodesia Broadcasting Corporation

...still fail to provide a balanced picture of the realities of present-day Rhodesia... the view of the war and the ceasefire continues to be that of the Rhodesian administration and the security forces. (pp. 19-20)

The report observed that laws relating to media censorship remained in force, despite protest to Governor Soames from groups such as the Rhodesian Guild of Journalists: having extended State of Emergency for a further six months in January 1980, Soames had prolonged as well all emergency regulations controlling the press. In particular, the RF's war-time D-notices (heavily censoring military information) remained in effect. At the same time, the Rhodesian Department of Information continued to arrange information visits for journalists throughout the 1980 elections, taking the opportunity to distribute "anti-Patriotic Front" literature to British security troops. The CIIR report concluded, ominously,

Without high standards of objectivity in the media and the repeal of censorship legislation, there will be a danger that the incoming government will simply take over the present structures and repressive laws and use them for its own ends. (p. 22)

For a report on the 1979 "Internal Settlement" elections, which arrives at the same, if not stronger, conclusions, on persistent RF-inspired censorship in media content, see Claire Palley, The Rhodesian Election Campaign: on whether Elections were Fair and Free and whether Principles Required for Rhodesian Independence have been Satisfied. A report prepared for the Catholic Institute for International Relations (London: CIIR, April 1979).

45. See for example, "Forces kill five ZANLA terrorists in contacts", Herald, 29.01.1980; "ZANLA violates peace 18 times", Herald, 30.01.1980; "End to intimidation vital for future--Smith", Herald, 31.01.1980; "Thousands of ZANLA loose", Herald, 02.02.1980.

A review of similar "hostile" news bias in the overseas press in the pre- and post-independence period is found in Justin Nyoka, "Western Media Coverage of Zimbabwe During the Liberation Struggle and After Independence", seminar paper delivered in Gaborone, Botswana, 29 April 1983. In the same context, see Beverly G. Hawk, "Whose News is Fit to Print? U.S. Press Coverage of the War in Rhodesia. Part I: What They Were Telling Us, and, Part II: Explanations from the Journalists", a two-part paper presented to the 1980 Annual Meeting of the American African Studies Association. A political analysis of the "negative" foreign press coverage of post-independence Zimbabwe is found in Morris Ilyniak, "The 'Bad News' from Zimbabwe", seminar paper given in the School of Journalism, Carleton University, Ottawa, December 1984.

46. The Herald in particular offered remarkable coverage in January and February, 1980, of the release of "Zanu dissidents" incarcerated in Mozambique since 1977. A series of articles, focussing on both the ex-Zipa commanders and the group led by Rugare Gumbo alleged to have planned a coup against the Mugabe leadership in the late 1970s, supplied detailed accounts of the dissidents' period in confinement, their complaints against the Zanu leadership, and ultimately, news that many in the group intended to join parties apart from the PF alliance in the upcoming elections. The distinct impression created from these accounts was one of the power hunger and

duplicity on the part of the current Zanu leadership, as seen by the dissidents. It is indeed ironic that The Herald seized favourably upon the views of some -- especially Zipa leader Dzinashe Machingura -- who many observers considered to be the "true left in Zanu" (or "the real communists", perhaps, in Rhodesian parlance) in order to condemn the more moderate Zanu leadership in 1980. See for examples, "Big row on Maputo detainees", Herald 24.01.1980; "60 Maputo detainees fly home", Herald, 29.01.1980; "Mugabe accused of lust for power", Herald, 30.01.1980; "They held us in pits, says ex-detainee", Herald, 30.01.1980; "Ex-Detainees in search of 'formula for unity'", Herald, 30.01.1980; "2000 at Sithole Gutu meeting", Herald, 18.02.1980.

47. On 18 February, Mugabe accused the "Argus Press in Rhodesia" along with government-controlled Rhodesian radio and television of extreme bias, "abuse of freedom of the Press" and "dishonesty"; in this specific case, as a result of the reporting of sabotage bomb blasts of the week before at churches in Salisbury which had been carried out by two members of the elite, notorious Rhodesian commando squad, the Selous Scouts. Despite evidence to the contrary, and denials from the PF, the Rhodesian media had insisted that Zanu was directly implicated in these terrorist actions. See, "Mugabe's attack on Press, broadcasting", Herald, 19.02.1980.

48. See for example, "The Press in Zimbabwe", Chronicle, 14.04.1980.

49. See for example, "Press told to look North", Herald, 30.03.1980

50. Interview with "Comrade A", a senior Zimpapers manager who wishes to remain anonymous.

51. This view is widely held among many commentators, both within and outside the state. For an analysis of how the habits and practices of white management at Zimpapers impinged upon the chain's ability to adapt to the new order, see, Ruth Weiss, "Zimbabwe: Black Editors In", Index on Censorship, 3 (1981), pp. 27-31.

52. In the case of the United Nations event, the headline the following morning in the main national daily, The Herald, was dedicated to the local annual agricultural fair. Neither was the leader concerned with the United Nations ceremony. At the close of the seminar in question, the seminar committee was called on in a resolution to ask the Herald for a more serious approach to events of greater importance to the new government. For an account of the seminar from a participant, see Weiss, 1981, op. cit.

53. See for example, "Government 'can buy newspapers'--Shamuyarira"; Herald, 20.08.1980; "Zvobgo tells paper: Change or I'll ban you"; Chronicle, 15.09.1980; "Deputy accuses Herald"; Herald, 17.09.1980; "We aim to take over the Press -- Nkala"; Sunday Mail, 09.11.1980.

54. F.G. Capon, Managing Director of Zimbabwe Newspapers, in "Newspapers geared to new nation says Capon", Herald, 10.06.1980.
55. See further discussion in Chapter 5.
56. "Press told 'Look to North'", Herald, 30.03.1980.
57. N. Shamuyarira, "Press asked to reflect new reality", Herald, 12.04.1980.
58. Interview with Ruth Weiss, Harare, 13 November 1987.
59. Robert Cary and Diana Mitchell, African Nationalist Leaders in Zimbabwe. Who's Who 1980 (Salisbury: Diana Mitchell Publishers, 1980). See also the updated versions for biographical details on Nyoka and other officials at the MOI; especially, Diana Mitchell, Makers of History. Who's Who 1981-82, Nationalist Leaders in Zimbabwe (with updated 1982-83 supplement) (Salisbury: Diana Mitchell Publishers, 1983).
60. FES is the development agency of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD).
61. Weiss, op. cit.
62. Later, the same aggressive approach was personified in Ian Smith's deputy, one-time Information Minister and RF head of propaganda, P.K. van der Byl.
63. N. Shamuyarira, "Political Events in SA and Namibia to be Given More Coverage", Zimbabwe Press Statement 1189/82/SN, 7 December, 1981.
64. See Chapter 6.
65. N. Shamuyarira, 7 December, 1981, op. cit. This policy remained unchanged -- down to the exact wording of official MOI pronouncements -- to the end of the 1980; see The Democratization of the Media..., op. cit., for a 1988 repetition of Shamuyarira's 1981 statement.
66. "Radio Truth" was the most obvious example. The station directed its messages to Mataberland, calling for rebellion against the Mugabe government and the support of political banditry. Though the programme claimed to be based inside Zimbabwe, it was later proved conclusively to be operating from the South African Broadcast Corporation studios near Johannesburg. See, P. Johnson and D. Martin, "Zimbabwe: Apartheid's Dilemma" in P. Johnson and D. Martin, eds., Destructive Engagement. Southern Africa at War (Harare: ZPH/SARDC, 1986), pp. 63-4.
67. N. Shamuyarira, "We are Fighting Information Aggression", Herald, 20.12.1982.

68. Until the acquisition of the Mazowe satellite ground station in 1983, most telecommunications from Zimbabwe to the rest of the world were routed through South Africa.
69. "Make use of Press freedom --Minister", Herald, 03.03.1981.
70. Ministers of Information of the Frontline States and Nigeria, The Kadoma Declaration - Zimbabwe Policy Statement No.13 (Harare: MOI, 31 July 1983).
71. J. Nyoka, "New Strategy Sought to Fight Off SA", Herald, 29.07.1983.
72. For details see, Johnson and Martin, "Zimbabwe: Apartheid's Dilemma", op. cit.
73. Despite claims in Zimbabwe that measures to guard against the operation of South African-based journalists in the Frontline States was working, most journalists affected have indicated that the implementation of the ban had been mediated by poor co-ordination among states involved and uneven enforcement of the agreement. For both views see, "Kadoma Pact Working", Herald, 03.03.1984; and J. Adrian, "Kadoma Declaration baffles foreign journalists", Moto no.20, (February) 1984, pp. 10-1.
74. Interview with senior MMT official, "Comrade B", who wishes to remain anonymous on this point. The notion of "national security" as a means to censorship of information and political debate is examined more closely in Chapter 8.
75. See for example, N. Shamuyarira, 15 December, 1981, op. cit., and, "Help us to cut SA news links --Shamuyarira", Herald, 21.10.1981. See also J. Nyoka, "Newspapers need to be decolonized", Chronicle, 17.10.1981.
76. Nathan Shamuyarira, "Press Must Not Be Colonial", International Press Seminar on Press Responsibility, Konrad Adenauer Foundation, 15-18 December, 1981. See also Shamuyarira in "The Mass Media and the New Order...", op. cit., p. 22:
The mass media in Zimbabwe should serve as a link between the masses and the Government by effecting meaningful and effective dialogue of the two sides. The masses must know the activities of the Government and the Government must be informed of the needs of its people and their views so that its programmes are relevant. This two-way communication is essential if the nation is to develop.
77. N. Shamuyarira, "The Mass Media and the New Order...", op. cit., pp. 21-22.
78. N. Shamuyarira, December 15, 1981, op. cit.
79. N. Shamuyarira, in "Minister of Information Addresses Journalists", Zimbabwe Press Statement 502/81/RH, 04.07.1981. (emphasis added)

80. See for example, "PM warns Press: Behave", Sunday Mail, 11.01.1981. "It is believed", said the Sunday Mail, "that his [report] was substantially accurate". From the Prime Minister's comments on the affair, it seems that Dumbutshena's information had come from a highly-placed party source; and that the Zanu leadership was implicitly threatening punishment of "leaks" in the future.

81. Mugabe added:

You people are not privileged members of the community -- you have no prerogative to act as you wish. You are reporters for your newspapers first and foremost but you are also expected to report accurately and to take into account the requirements of the Government and State. (Sunday Mail, 11.01.1981)

82. R. Mandebvu (Executive Secretary MMT), in "Press urged to project a 'positive Zimbabwe image'", Herald, 15.01.1981.

83. J. Nyoka in, "Newspapers need to be decolonised", Chronicle, 17.10.1981.

84. E. Zvobgo, "Zanu must set up its own Press --Zvobgo", Sunday Mail, 13.12.1981. The Minister specifically attacked the editor of The Herald, Zanu member Farayi Munyuki. Munyuki, Zvobgo claimed, had cited a recent warning from the Finance Minister for the public to beware of conmen using Zanu's name to collect money illicitly, and had implied editorially that this spoke poorly for a possible future one-party society. Said Zvobgo,

The Herald... wrote an editorial saying opposition parties are likely -- or entitled -- to oppose the one-party state because of this type of situation. That was an opinion of the editor, who is opposed to the one-party state and invites others to join him under the cover of a statement by the Minister of Finance.

85. E. Zvobgo, Sunday Mail, 13.12.1981.

86. N. Shamuyarira, "Zvobgo's opinion 'is not policy'", Herald, 14.12.1981.

87. N. Shamuyarira, in "Minister of Information Addresses Journalists", Zimbabwe Press Statement 502/81/RH, 04.07.1981.

That the new politically committed journalist should play a central role in the reconstruction of a new hegemony under the state's direction was made clear in other statements from the Minister of Information. See for example, N. Shamuyarira in "Defend the Nation --Journalists Told", Zimbabwe Press Statement 88/82/NM, 30.01.1982:

Transformation involves the successful mobilisation of all available talent, skill and expertise for national development programmes. It also involves a massive re-education programme aimed at creating the correct kind of psychological, social, emotional and moral attitudes in

all sections of society for the enrichment of our lives. You, the new mass media workers, should actively project the New Zimbabwe in our papers and broadcasting services in order to instil a sense of unity of purpose and endeavour into all sections of our society. Also you must do this to create a sense of nation-hood, a sense of oneness based on the socialist principles and politics as pronounced by the peoples' government.

88. N. Shamuyarira, "The Press Unchained", Herald, 18.04.1984 (my emphasis).

89. See Chapter 6.

Chapter 4. The Mass Media Trust: The Ambiguous Results of a "Unique Experiment"

The relationship between various Governments and the media is a delicate and complex one. However, the Government's policy is to promote and uphold the integrity, independence and freedom of the mass media. In other words, the Government believes that there must be freedom for the newspaper and the broadcasting services. They should be allowed to report and review the activities of society and the Government without tearing apart the fabric of society. But freedom of the press is relevant to the country's social and political systems within which the media have to function.

Naomi Nhiwatiwa, Deputy Minister of Information, 1986¹

The Mass Media Trust has outlived its usefulness, and really, I don't think the Trustees appreciate the dynamism of our society these days, or the role the mass media play, and can now play, in our society. Once you over-control the media, you nurture a media culture of resistance. Eventually that culture bites back at its creator.

Elias Rusike, former CEO of Zimpapers, 1991²

A Controlled Experiment

The Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust was created by government in January 1981 against the background of the state's frustration with the South African controlled Zimpapers chain, and its plans for a new media order. The MMT stood as the first, comprehensive articulation of media policy in the 1980s. Whereas change made in the electronic media had left essential structures intact at the inherited parastatal of the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, the appearance of the Trust was meant to alter

not just staff and editorial policy, but to produce a whole transition in the management, planning and operation of the public print media. The latter media, it was emphasized by the government at the setting up of the Trust, were to become mass-oriented, nationally accessible and non-partisan in content -- what Zanu would label a "free press responsible only to the national interest".

But if the MMT was the primary embodiment of Zanu's aim of decolonising and democratising the media, the MMT's actual operational record was to call into suspicion the ruling party's long-term plans for the building of the "new order". As Zanu's project of hegemonic construction unfolded in the 1980s only to be confronted by a diverse, incohesive, emergent critical "opposition", the MMT and its component media became increasingly submerged in political struggles for leadership in state and civil society. In the event, the Trust's pretensions to being a neutral "buffer" between state and ruling party, and the public press, were undermined. Behind this gradual subversion stood the Trust's growing, structured dependence on the state for financial, planning and political support, and the parallel distancing of the media placed under its jurisdiction, from its real control.

By the same token, the effective subordination of the MMT to the state and ruling party was to lead to a popular reassessment of the body as a social institution, calling into question the utility of the MMT as an instrument in the ruling party's struggle for social leadership. By the turn of Zimbabwe's first decade, the popular perception was that the Trust (and particularly its main public face, Zimpapers) had

been effectively "annexed" by Zanu, another casualty of the ruling party's invasion of nominally "autonomous" public institutions.

How did this political penetration of the MMT happen so quickly, in spite of the safeguards which had been erected against such a possibility in 1981? What were the repercussions of the MMT's subordination to the MOI and Zanu, for the structured social role of the new public press? These are the questions which frame an examination of the MMT as a locus of political struggle in Zimbabwe in the 1980s.

The current chapter begins by addressing the first question, investigating the establishment of the Trust and the policy decisions which it represented, and identifying the new structure's inherent weaknesses. The MMT experiment is seen as one which was imperilled from the start, jeopardised by inherent economic, administrative and political weaknesses within the Trust infrastructure. These factors combined to undermine the potency of the Trust as an agent of decolonisation and democratisation in the print media, as the two terms had originally been conceived. In turn, the political integrity of the MMT in its roles of media owner, watchdog and national policy-maker was cast in doubt, as the MOI and ruling party came to play a more decisive role in the running and supervision of the MMT media. However, the chapter concludes, the government's domination of the public media, and its marginalisation of the MMT, had negative implications for the hegemonic utility of the MMT as a political structure in the long run. By the end of the 1980s, the liberal precepts underpinning the Trust's establishment were in danger of being captured and

radicalised through popular critical debate, as part of a wider process of social contestation of Zanu's rule by sections of civil society.

The current investigation of the Trust starts by looking at how those liberal principles were spelled out and implemented in 1981. Emphasis will be placed on the initial policy objectives which led to the Trust's creation, and how these were to become increasingly improbable in the context of the MMT's emergent financial and political insecurity. The aim will be to demonstrate how, relatively quickly, the Trust was functionally removed from the "autonomous" realm of civil society, only to be rooted in the sphere of public activity dominated by the Zanu state.

Creation and Operational Structure of the Trust

In January 1981 the 43.42% of Zimpapers stock held by South African investors was bought at a cost of ZWD \$2.7 million (US \$5 million), and placed by government under the new Trust's control.³ In the rush to solve the problem of the foreign owned newspaper monopoly, the Argus sale agreement seemed opportune for all parties concerned: that is, for the Zimbabweans, who gained immediate control of the only national newspaper chain, and for the South African shareholders, who appear to have been offered a better than expected business deal.⁴

With the buy-out of Argus the MMT was ushered into a business partnership with an array of other Zimbabwean investors, who together held a slim majority of

Zimpapers stock until 1986, when the Trust moved to establish outright control by obtaining a 51 % stake in the company.⁵ The identity of the latter illustrated the established commercial basis of the company, and the symbolic persistence in the realm of the media of certain fractions of domestic white capital which had figured as the commercial stalwarts of white Rhodesia. They included the Old Mutual insurance company (a major national financial institution, with a 20% share), white-dominated pension funds and several private businesses and individuals.⁶ In contrast, no significant investment in the company came from trusts, groups or individuals representing what might be referred to as "popular" organisations (such as the trade unions). Indeed these groups spurned the idea, preferring instead to invest limited funds in other media which could be more effectively, and more affordably, used as instruments of media activism.⁷ Given the government's plans for Zimpapers' restructuring under the Trust, this pattern of ownership foreshadowed tensions and contradictions in the future.

Announcing the formation of the Trust and the intended buy-out of the South African controlling interest in Zimpapers on 3 January, 1981, Dr. Shamuyarira indicated the immediate political motives behind the exercise of media "decolonisation":

This decisive step enables us to re-orientate the thinking of our people... [The media] can now make the people's concern its own. It will address itself to all the people of this country, and not to a tiny white minority. The pre-occupation of the daily papers in the past has been the interests of the white minority only.⁸

The initial policy dilemma for the MOI was in deciding how to replace the previous national press infrastructure. Should the new nationally held newspaper chain be privately-owned, state-run or exclusively in the hands of a political party? These three typologies of national Press ownership, respectively labelled by MOI officials as the "libertarian", "authoritarian" and "Soviet-style authoritarian" models, were held up as examples of routes which could be followed -- and then separately rejected on different accounts.⁹

The model based on the exclusively private ownership of the press was deemed unacceptable because it would leave in control of the media those white, essentially anti-socialist fractions of society -- the only private elements with sufficient capital to purchase the controlling interest of stock -- whose political and commercial pursuits would mitigate against the unfolding of a black-oriented, development-minded press. Moreover, Minister Shamuyarira affirmed, the government considered the prospect of a commercially-run newspaper chain undertaking costly and "unsensational" coverage of the rural areas and development issues most unlikely. As such, one aspect of the MOI's programme would be to remove the influence of "capricious business interests" from Zimpapers in order that the company would not be constrained by the necessity of turning a profit for its future owners.

The papers should be run principally to inform, entertain, educate and mobilise the public, and not to make a profit, even at the expense of the national interests. (The new owners of Zimpapers) will have no profit motive in the operation, beyond making it economically viable. Their share of profits are to be ploughed back into the enterprise.¹⁰

On the other hand, the option of intervening directly as party or state was rejected for reasons both open and hidden. Officially, the "state-run" model was spurned by government because its implementation elsewhere, notably in much of black Africa, had in most cases resulted in a slavishly partisan media which acted more as a wing of the propaganda police than a "linking device" connecting government and the "masses". In Zimbabwe, the MOI argued that a "government mouthpiece" media would assist little in the state's goal of exposing and correcting the problems faced by the masses in the devastated rural areas.

However, the more compelling, immediate reasons for the rejection of the state-run press undoubtedly had less to do with such explanations, and more to do with its probable unwelcome effects on the wider political front. More specifically, there was the question of white skills and capital, and the question of their sense of security in the new age of black majority rule and national reconciliation. Like in so many other social sectors, the print media faced a dramatic shortage of black skilled labour power and investment capital at independence, accentuated by the departure of whites in the wake of Rhodesia's passing. Expropriation leading to the setting up of a state press, the MOI correctly surmised, would frighten away a valuable section of the local skilled population, and leave the country with a newspaper chain staffed largely by low-skilled professionals and novice recruits.

By mid-1980 more politically palatable methods of indigenisation of the Argus press were being explored. It was not long before the MOI was suggesting publicly that the commercial take-over of the foreign-controlled chain was a viable alternative

to outright expropriation. In August 1980 the MOI noted that no legal barriers prevented the purchase of Argus stock by public interests, as a means of enabling the transfer of effective ownership and supervision of Zimpapers into local hands.¹¹ Within six months the acquisition of Argus's Zimpapers equity had been negotiated and closed.

The dilemma remained as to how to decolonise the foreign owned media while maintaining some "national" stake in them, without the direct intervention of the state: the media might be "indigenised", but which local interests should be allowed control over them? Zanu was wary of opening government up to the same charges of undue influence and intimidation which it had laid at the Argus empire's door. If the MOI or some other wing of the state were to appoint or recommend personnel to the senior positions in Zimpapers, this too could be construed as a form of partisan control, and could raise doubts about reconciliation and Zanu's commitment to traditional democratic freedoms. On the other hand, it was argued, if co-operation could not be evoked from the national newspapers and news agency, the role of media in national transformation would be forestalled.

The solution to the dilemma was the establishment of a structure both formally tied to the development aspirations of the government and committed to the "independence" of the press. The Mass Media Trust, with its constitutionally prescribed non-partisan Board of Trustees, and administrative and financial autonomy, was this solution's concrete expression. The Trust, Dr. Shamuyarira claimed, would be a "unique experiment" in the indigenisation of print media in developing countries,

a non-governmental, non-party, non-profit making Trust... The government will not interfere in the running and management of the Trust. Government remains committed to the Freedom of the Press, as stated in its election manifesto.¹²

The structure of the MMT, as both the Trust and government became fond of reiterating, is indeed unique in the world of the press in developing countries. The Trust is neither parastatal nor private enterprise. Rather, it falls somewhere between these two labels, as both a creation of the state which is duty bound to report to and liaise with government, and shareholder and investor in a private enterprise whose major decisions are made by an independent Board of Directors. That, at least, was how the organisation was designed under the personal supervision of Dr. Shamuyarira in the Notarial Deed of Donation and Trust of January 1981.¹³

By the Deed of Trust, the MMT was established as a public trust to "serve the welfare of the people of Zimbabwe as a whole"¹⁴ by facilitating "the transmission from and reception by Zimbabwe and the publication and distribution of news and general information and comment within Zimbabwe that is as far as possible accurate and free from bias in the interests of the people of Zimbabwe".¹⁵ To fulfil both these functions of media expansion and national responsibility, the MMT was empowered with a number of crucial media assets, legal jurisdiction over them being vested in an independent directorate, labelled the Board of Trustees. By its non-partisan status and substantial legal authority over the public print media, the latter embodied the key political, administrative and policy-making feature of the Trust.

Initially, the Trustees (a maximum of seven and minimum of three) were appointed by government; thereafter, the Board was designed to be self-perpetuating, naming by itself any new members to replace former members who ceased, because of resignation, death or other reasons, to sit on the Board. Regulations prohibited the inclusion of members of Parliament, the uniformed services or the Public Service on the Board. Trustees were meant to serve on a part-time basis, receiving honoraria and expenses but no salaries. Trustee meetings were to be convened regularly, although no precise stipulations were made to this effect.¹⁶ The Deed did indicate, however, that not all Trustees needed to be present in order for decisions to be debated and ratified.

Serving the Board was an administrative secretariat headed by an Executive Secretary, vested with responsibility for running the day to day affairs of the Trust, the preparation of accounts, reports and the co-ordination of any necessary research. But it was the Board of Trustees which held and managed the assets and responsibilities acquired, including the controlling interest in Zimpapers and Ziana, and legal jurisdiction over the journalist training school which opened in April 1981, the Zimbabwe Institute of Mass Communication [Zimco].

The Trust's jurisdiction over Zimpapers was marked by the appointment of Trustees to the Zimpapers Board of Directors. The Chairman of the Trust, as head of Zimpapers' largest shareholder, would also become Chairman of Zimpapers. At Ziana, which had become an MMT "subsidiary", supervision was exercised more directly through control of finances and administrative matters, via the Executive

Secretary. With Zimco, financial responsibility was allotted to the Trust, while management matters (including policy planning and implementation) were shared with a host of other interested parties, ranging from the MOI, to representatives of the school's anticipated end-users in the media, advertising and public relations industries, and in government service.

With the placement of these three institutions within the MMT's sphere of influence, the Trust came to be portrayed by the MOI as not only the primary incarnation of the new "democratised" public media, but also the agent by which practical press structures, from newspapers and news sourcing to training programmes, would be reorganised -- democratised -- in both form and content. According to the Deed, the MMT's tasks included, notably, the transformation of the newspapers into agents of progressive education and information, and the extension of their circulation and reportage into the rural areas, and more deeply into black urban townships (after 1980, the "high density" areas). Similarly the MMT was called on to strengthen the domestic focus and coverage of the new Ziana, and undertake extensive training of young blacks to fill vacant posts throughout the Zimbabwean media, and make sure that the needs of local media were adequately met by the curriculum of the training programme.

At the same time, it was implied (and explicitly reiterated publicly by government) that the Board of Trustees would play a central role in the generation and implementation any new media policy. As the Deed of Trust summed it up, the Trust was mandated to undertake

...all activity similar or related to the foregoing or any activity deemed by the Trustees to be conducive to furthering the media welfare of the people of Zimbabwe including the acquisition, control or participation in other organisations, associations or bodies.¹⁷

It was clear, however, that such activity would require liaison with other agencies with an interest and stake in media, primarily, the state. Thus, the Deed of Trust officially reintroduced government into the domain of the new media by specifying that the Trust would be required to furnish government with reports of its annual accounts and, "such further information, details of its operations, copies of accounts or documents relating to the Trust or concerning its affairs as may be required by the Prime Minister or such said [designated] Cabinet Minister from time to time".¹⁸ But it was also understood that such paper work would not define the boundaries of MMT-state co-operation.

The new responsibilities assumed by the Trust in 1981 may have inspired Trustees and media professionals for the challenge of media reconstruction,¹⁹ but they also required adequate financial, administrative and political resources in order for the organisation to fulfil its tasks. The MMT was soon to encounter problems on all these fronts, because of its internal financial and political weaknesses, and concomitantly, because of the growing presence of the MOI in the direct supervision and sustenance of the public media and the Trust itself.

In reality, what the 1980s demonstrated above all, was the swamping and marginalisation of the Trust in all realms of its activities by an increasingly confident and partisan state led by the MOI. In this regard, the MMT's early subordination to

the MOI and other external "supporting" agents, in tandem with the MMT's decreasing practical authority within the media under its nominal jurisdiction, were the historically-intertwined roots to the body's rapid political marginalisation.

The most important factor in the relegation of the Trust to an ancillary function in the public press was its financial insecurity, which at times bordered on severe crisis. From the start, the MMT experienced budgeting problems and deficits, while at the same time being forced to undertake various costly programmes of expansion and development. As different institutions falling under the Trust's control grew heavily dependent upon and became subject to the goodwill and assistance of government (whether through grants, loans, foreign exchange allocation approval or other means), or achieved a degree of financial and managerial autonomy through their own expansion, the MMT devoted its energies to its own financial survival. Both factors -- the existence of external sources of financial assistance, and the weakened state of the Trust's capital and administrative base -- contributed greatly to the undermining of the MMT's status as the print media's custodian in the 1980s.

The most important financial constraints on the Trust were structured into it from the start. These included a weak capital base, the commercial non-viability of many of its institutional charges (especially Zimco, which generated no revenue) and inadequate management and administrative resources within the MMT Secretariat. These factors were exacerbated by other developments, notably the severe drought and accompanying economic decline of the early 1980s, which contributed to persistent commercial losses in some of the Trust's key charges, most importantly,

Zimpapers. Together, these short and long term weaknesses overwhelmed the MMT's management, creating a space which the state and foreign donors -- both comparatively rich in financial and other desperately-needed resources -- were in a position to fill. Even with regard to less costly duties on the MMT's agenda, namely planning and supervising the public press, persistent financial crises also were corrosive. From the beginning, Trustees were obligated to devote most of their time to money management, and virtually none to acting as pro-active adjudicators over "their" media.

Part of the MMT's financial problems stemmed from an initial misperception by the government about possible foreign assistance for the MMT. When the Trust was set up, the MOI assumed that it would benefit considerably from international donors because of its autonomy from the state, its political neutrality, and its involvement in media training schemes. On its part, the government argued that the Trust was ineligible for regular assistance from local public resources, since it was not a parastatal. But the assumption that foreign donors would take at face value the MMT's and government's claim of the Trust's neutrality was largely mistaken.

As the financial and political linkages between the Trust and government developed, many potential donors came to see the organisation as a parastatal²⁰ -- and, therefore, precluded from a good deal of the assistance which might have been available. Indeed, this impression was nurtured by the MOI's close supervision of and participation in various MMT development projects in the 1980s, including the expansion of Ziana and the setting up of Zimco. As a result, much of the anticipated

external assistance was slow in coming. When assistance was extended, it was often arranged through the intercession of government, or at least with its explicit approval. This role of the MOI in arranging even the private, bilateral affairs of the MMT underscored the latter's wide-ranging administrative frailty.

Throughout much of the decade the MMT secretariat was characterised by chronic weaknesses in management and personnel resources. From its inception the MMT enjoyed the services of only one professional administrator, the Executive Secretary, in addition to clerical staff. Moreover, the post of Executive Secretary changed hands five times in the 1980s, an invidious situation which led to much confusion and fluctuation in the carrying out of day-to-day administration.

The situation was further complicated in the early years by poor accountability within the secretariat's management, exemplified by a 1984 corruption scandal involving the second Executive Secretary, M.A. Marere, who was dismissed and subsequently successfully prosecuted for fraud.²¹

Far from having the capacity to research and plan new projects for recommendation to the Trustees, the Trust secretariat instead found itself constantly struggling -- and often failing -- to manage day-to-day affairs.²² Consequently, frequent secondments of experts were necessary to bolster the institution's limited human resources. Some of this contracted labour was paid for by donors, typically NGOs. Other experts were compensated directly by the MMT, typically in foreign currency, although this second practice became less common as the financial health of the MMT wavered in the mid 1980s.

But the infirmity of the MMT Secretariat's human resources and "donor appeal" was only a reflection of deeper, more perilous weaknesses relating to financial and managerial dependency on the state. These latter flaws were built into the MMT at the time of its establishment. First, there was a problem with the original Nigerian donation of US\$5,000,000. (See Table 4.1, Table 4.2 and Table 4.3) This announced figure was budgeted for, but insiders speculate that the full amount was never received. Some estimate the shortfall amounted to nearly one million American dollars.²³ At any rate, the bulk of the original funds delivered was consumed in the purchase of Argus shares. An inadequate amount was left over to establish the Trust on a firm operational basis.

The next capital inflow came fully one year later when the Trust received a small dividend from Zimpapers. In the meantime, the MMT had made heavy initial investments in the setting up and equipping of Ziana and Zimco, without any substantial financial assistance from government. Along with a series of poor financial decisions, many of them undertaken at the urging of the MOI, these expenditures immediately provoked a budgetary crisis at the Trust. Both instances reflected the precarious nature of the MMT's finances, and the repercussions it held for the overall policy making potency of the body.

First, Zimco and Ziana revealed the unsustainability of some of the new media institutions imposed on the MMT Trustees without their consent in 1981.²⁴ In the case of Zimco, which the Trustees had only grudgingly accepted as one of their charges, the financial and managerial demands on the Trust were unmanageable from

Table 4.1*

**Mass Media Trust: Balance Sheet
1981-1986**

Source: Mass Media Trust Annual Reports.

* See Appendix F for a consolidated table of MMT finances.

Table 4.2
Mass Media Trust: Income
1981-1986

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Source: Mass Media Trust Annual Reports

Table 4.3
Mass Media Trust: Expenditure
1981-1986

Source: Mass Media Trust Annual Reports

the outset. The MMT had neither the funds nor the administrative expertise in the realm of journalist training to act as an effective agent in the creation of an entirely new programme of "development journalism" training. Therefore, despite the co-operation of the MOI and expatriate donor agencies, which identified and helped provide a collection of resources (including instruction materials, staff and some salaries), Zimco quickly became the subject of heated contention -- as the MMT sought to divest itself of a loss-making, cumbersome, unwanted proposition.

By the end of 1983, when the MOI approved the MMT's request for the amputation of Zimco from its parent body, the school had bled over \$200,000 from the Trust's dwindling accounts. In an effort to revive the Trust, jurisdiction for the school was transferred to the Ministry of Manpower Planning and Development, which gave it a new home at the Harare Polytechnic (a move which may have helped "save" the Trust, but which also undermined the prospects of journalist training in Zimbabwe).²⁵

But the lifting of responsibility for Zimco's mounting debts from the MMT's shoulders only provided temporary relief from an endemic problem. The growing debt of Ziana (over \$233,000 in 1983 alone), and the downturn in viability of Zimpapers, proved a constant strain on resources. The latter case of Zimpapers was particularly critical. Whereas it had been expected that the company would provide the MMT with substantial income through dividend remittances, Zimpapers' poor performance from 1983 to 1985 meant that no dividends were forthcoming.²⁶ At the same time, the Trust's recurrent expenditures spiralled upwards, powered by Ziana's growing debt

and, significantly, by a string of questionable financial and investment decisions. Many of the latter, according to a 1987 report of the Parliamentary Estimates Committee,²⁷ were undertaken at "the direction" of the MOI (although Trustees themselves prefer the terms "suggestion" or "recommendation").

The integral participation of the MOI in the MMT's financial management and decision-making process was evident from the outset, and it grew in magnitude as the MMT encountered budgetary difficulties. Indeed, it was the financial weakness of the Trust in 1981 which invited the participation of the MOI in what turned out to be a costly and debilitating series of management moves.

In 1982, the Trust (with the MOI's explicit encouragement) acquired two adjoining properties for the housing of the MMT, Ziana and Zimco, at an initial capital outlay of \$680,000.²⁸ The purchase was financed by a loan from Old Mutual on guarantee from the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development (a guarantee which implied the official support of the MOI). Later, a short-term loan from the Merchant Bank of Central Africa allowed the acquisition of the national book-selling and stationary chain, Kingstons Ltd., which was taken over at a reportedly inflated price of \$1.2 million by the MMT's wholly owned subsidiary set up in 1983, the Mass Media Trust Investments (Private) Limited.²⁹ Both investment decisions were to prove extremely costly in the long term.

In the case of the real estate, the transfer of Zimco to the Ministry of Labour marked the beginning of a long and expensive dispute over the ownership and disposition of Trust properties.³⁰ In the instance of Kingstons, bad management

soon led to decline, pre-empting the envisaged sale of certain company assets needed to pay off the initial high interest short term loan.³¹ The company's losses and interest payments mounted, so that by 1986 MMT Investments alone was indicating an annual loss of \$132,665 (with an accumulated loss of \$272,602).³² In the meantime, annual interest payments on the loans to Old Mutual (\$100,300) and the Merchant Bank (\$185,929) surfaced as a new and crucial drain on Trust funds.

The Trust's worsening financial health had severe implications for not only the scope of the body's participation in media projects, but also for its functional status as a financial body independent from government and other political bodies. In this regard, the creeping importance of the MOI as a key player in the fiscal resuscitation of the MMT was particularly germane.

The insinuation of the MOI into the heart of the MMT financial decision-making process took two main forms. On the one hand, the Trust's launching of an emergency programme of deficit financing -- a programme which emphasized short and long term borrowing from the private sector³³ -- depended for its success on the goodwill and more concrete, sponsoring guarantees of the MOI. On the other, the increasing flow of sustaining donations and grants from the state to the public print media, notably Ziana, was almost entirely reliant on the MOI's active endorsement.

By the mid 1980s this pattern of fiscal and administrative sustenance was evident in the accounts of the Trust. In 1985 over 75% of the Trust's total income of \$1,198,163 came from "Donations and Grants", most of it from the Zimbabwean government, but also including two donations from the Lonrho corporation totalling

\$500,000.³⁴ In 1986, the proportion of grants and donations increased to nearly 80% of MMT revenue, or approximately \$1.25 million out of a total income of just over \$1.6 million.

Still, rising recurrent expenditure coupled with new outlays meant that the Trust continued to make losses. The result was an even greater dependence on the Zimbabwean state for injections of capital. One striking symptom of this dependence materialised in 1984, when the MMT (with MOI backing) requested a definitive, once-and-for-all financial "bail-out" of one million dollars from the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development. The Ministry replied with an offer of \$2.7m. However, limitations on government expenditure and the effects of bureaucratic red tape combined to reduce and slow down the implementation of the generous offer. In the end, less than half of the promised \$2.7m was forthcoming, over the two financial years 1984/85 and 1985/86. Too little had come too late, and with the accumulation of further debts and large interest payments, the "final" bail-out of the Trust proved insufficient in the meeting of new needs.³⁵ Additional privately-financed debt servicing -- implying larger future interest payments -- was, therefore, once again necessary.

The financial health of the Trust took a turn for the worse after the 1987 departure of the late Dr. Matthews from the post of Executive Secretary. The Trust was left without a permanent full-time manager for over two years, a fact which contributed to considerable managerial confusion within the organisation -- particularly in light of the continuing budgetary crisis.³⁶ According to one senior

official in the MMT, by the end of 1988 the financial affairs of the Trust had already "degenerated into complete chaos", necessitating an external audit with a view to re-charting the administrative path of the organisation.³⁷ Although annual statements of the Trust have not been publicly available since 1987, one high-ranking official noted in 1990 that the organisation's finances continued to "fluctuate dramatically".³⁸

With or without partisan interventions by the state in the policy process at the MMT, the impact of this continuing fiscal crisis on the integrity of the Trust was clear by the mid 1980s. In 1987, Dr. Matthews underlined the fact of the erosion of the Trust's professional and political functions by pointing directly to the effects of the fiscal crisis.

There is always the perennial problem of where does the money come from and what fresh loans to enter into. The Board has therefore tended to lose sight of its main purpose, which was to assess media policy and give its direction to overall media policy. As it has been struggling for its survival, it tends to have devoted more time to looking at bank interest rates and that sort of thing, than actually engaging in any broad policy debate... and so I do not think there has been any really serious debate at all on issues like media policy within the Trust... The effective presence of the Trust has withered to the extent that it really has only "residual influence" on the whole policy making process, rather something like the conscience of the newspaper industry -- but really little more than that.³⁹

If the fiscal crisis at the Trust had impinged upon the Trustees' capacity to tackle the tasks they had been assigned by the Deed of Trust in 1981, it also empowered the MOI and more generally, the state, as the primary decision-making force within the broader process of planning at the Trust. The effects of this economic

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empowerment of the MOI, however, were not limited to the narrow realm of the MMT's policy formulation and implementation. While Matthews argued that the Trust retained a "residual", vaguely "moral" presence within the public media, this too was called into question, not only by the financial undermining of the MMT, but also -- and just as importantly -- by the restricted nature of its political constituency in civil society.

The Board of Trustees: Professionals without a Powerbase

The impact of the MOI's economic and bureaucratic influence within the MMT was greatly exacerbated by the absence of a substantial, organised political constituency in civil society to which the MMT could appeal for support. Within the MMT, this weakness was magnified by a debilitating lack of experienced media professionals. Such variables gave new meaning to Shamuyarira's prescription in 1981 that the MMT should create a new, free press on its own.

An independent firm of solicitors has drawn up a trust deed that gives the directors and the trustees of the Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust complete independence. The directors will report to and be completely answerable to the trustees, and the board of trustees does not have to report to anybody. They will not be paid by the Government and they will not be required to report to us, or do anything with any relationship to what we may suggest or want. So there is no way in which the Government can influence or dictate its terms to the trust. If the directors and trustees fail to exercise the independence which is given them it will be their fault and not mine. We

have given journalists more freedom than they have ever had before -- it is up to them to use it.⁴⁰

This assessment may have been accurate while the MMT existed on paper only, but was soon rendered obsolete when the Trustees were appointed and the organisation opened its doors. Challenged with formulating new policies, supervising complex media institutions and building new ones, the Board of Trustees nevertheless lacked any recognised media professionals to help guide these tasks -- or representatives of community organisations to offer moral support in the course of these policies' implementation.

The political weakness of the Board of Trustees, therefore, had nothing to do with the personal commitment and integrity of the Trustees, but rather with the manner in which their social and administrative role was structured as political agents. It is clear that at the time of the MMT's creation, most of the Trustees were sincere, enthusiastic supporters of the official role which had been drawn out for them, and were unhesitant in declaring their "national" responsibility from a personal viewpoint. As one of the new Trustees observed,

I have been impressed by the manner in which the Government has distanced itself from the Trust and from the Press and by the sensitivity on this matter shown by my fellow Trustees... We shall continue to guard and preserve the freedom and independence of the Press, subject always to the faithful reporting and reflecting of our country and our people.⁴¹

However, the important point was not whether the individual Trustees were personally committed to the preservation of press freedom, but whether the composition of the Board was democratically structured in content, and practically

able to uphold the "autonomy" granted it by the Trust's constitution. In both cases there appeared to be a problem.

The fundamental political weakness of the Trust stemmed from the fact that the whole structure, and the Trustees in particular, did not directly represent any autonomous "popular consensus" or "mass-popular" power base in civil society to which the MMT's independence of operation and perspective could be referred -- and from which might come moral and political support in the face of political pressure from the state. A contributing factor here was the "undeveloped" nature of Zimbabwean civil society itself in the early 1980s, a fact underlined by the absence of cohesive, autonomous organisations representing major social fractions -- like unionised labour, women and collective co-operators -- in the public space. Another was the absence of media professionals on the MMT Board who would have afforded the body a real capacity to generate and implement policy independently of government. In sum, the impact of these elements was to present Zanu with an opportunity to attempt the orchestration of Trust planning and decision making on the party's own terms, under its decisive tutelage.

The original Trustees of the MMT were nominated by the government on the personal recommendation of the Minister of Information and in accordance with the guidelines laid down in the Deed of Trust.⁴² The latter explicitly stated that the Board would be comprised of citizens "known for their independence of view, high personal integrity and social commitment". More significantly, it was stated at the outset that part-time Trustees would serve "only in their personal capacity", and not

represent "any particular political or commercial interest".⁴³ On both counts, the structured membership of the Board was revealing: on the one hand, because the Trustees themselves were the incarnation of what Zanu understood politically by the terms "personal integrity" and "social commitment"; and on the other, because they exposed the limitations of Zanu's conception of representative, popular democratic participation in the new media.

What would best be described as a body of middle class professionals was hand-picked by Dr. Shamuyarira to form the MMT directorship. Included on the board were a physician, lawyer, industrialist and a collection of middle-level civil servants, a configuration which remains intact up to time of writing.⁴⁴ Nowhere to be found were representatives of various other groups and organisations outside of the "professional" class, for example, trade unionists, collective co-operators, civil rights activists or freedom fighters from the recently concluded war.

The exclusion of representatives from the latter two groups, in particular, was a remarkable one. Throughout the UDI period, the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace had played a key role in chronicling and mobilising against the RF regime's systematic violation of press freedom, a role it has continued to play in independent Zimbabwe. On the other hand, the 30,000 or more ex-combatants of the liberation movements represented an important fraction of the conscience which had fuelled and prosecuted the war and which, after 1980, was to serve as a well-spring of creative activity aimed at constructing the mass-oriented society of the new Zimbabwe. Furthermore, these two groups were distinguished from the trade unions

and collective co-operators in the early 1980s by their existing organisational structures, reflected in their relatively heightened social profile.

For a party which at the time of the 1981 MMT appointments was exuberantly espousing the view that the "new order" would be characterised by the prioritisation of the needs of the masses and, more specifically, the participation of workers' and peasants' representatives in the development of new social institutions, the selection of the Board of Trustees seemed distinctly incongruous.⁴⁵

The irony was not lost on Zanu's coalition government partners in Zapu, no doubt partly because only one clearly identifiable member of Zapu was placed on the Board, and only two people (including the Zapu cardholder) from the entire southern and south-western region of the country.⁴⁶ For Zapu, this selection -- or rather, the deselection of potential critics and representatives of popular organisations -- pointed to the essential undemocratic nature of both the Board of Trustees and indeed, the whole formation of the MMT as a social agency. The Trust, Zapu argued, had been "delivered" to the masses,

...without having openly discussed the issue and without the Government having formulated a coherent national policy on the role of the media. The involvement of the people through trade unions, co-operatives, youth and womens' organizations, religious groups, political and other organizations in the media would have opened the way to democratise the media... Instead, the government proposes a state sponsored body of bureaucrats, which will be as isolated from the people as the Argus company was.⁴⁷

The "nationalisation" of the main press, Zapu claimed, was less a result of Government media policy -- enveloping themes like rural development through the

expansion of media access -- than a Zanu decision to enhance the rather more sectional propagandistic intentions of the ruling party.

Experience has shown that the Ministry [of Information] uses news media as Zanu propaganda tools rather than as channels for national development, unity, reconciliation and entertainment...the decision to buy the newspapers had nothing to do with the Cabinet of which I am a member: it was probably a Zanu Central Committee affair.⁴⁸

Zanu was to deny Nkomo's claims (albeit on the rather technical grounds of Cabinet consensus), and argue that the Zapu President was simply trying to score debating points in public by pandering to extreme right-wing sentiments.⁴⁹

Zapu's attack on the MMT as a partisan body was supported with a similar critique of the state-run ZBC, where, in the first two years of independence, there was a widely recognized bias towards Zanu in television and radio programming -- a bias which sometimes was to serve as the catalyst for vitriolic attacks from both Zapu and sections of the white community on the corporation. When the MMT's formation was announced, Nkomo had initially responded with what was to become a popular refrain among conservative white leaders, "I would have thought that radio and television were enough as propaganda tools".⁵⁰

For many observers, Zapu's charges of bias were concretely validated by the political loyalties of some of the key MMT personnel the MOI had selected to staff the new body in 1981. The first MMT Executive Secretary, Robert Mandebvu, had been a Zanu representative in Sweden during the liberation war; and the Chairman of

the Trustees, Dr. Davison Sadza, was known to be close to the ruling party leadership and the then Minister of Information, Dr. Shamuyarira.⁵¹

In an attempt to maintain the political space which Zapu perceived to be closing under the manoeuvring of government policy makers, Joshua Nkomo called on the Minister of Information to convene a conference of various national community, political and professional organisations to discuss the future of the national media and the form of their direct participation in and relation to them.⁵²

The underlying theme of Nkomo's attack was Zanu's partisan incursion on the national press via its hand-picked MMT and, more broadly, Zanu's backtracking on 1980 election promises relating to democratic freedoms and the participation of the masses in government decision-making.⁵³

The Zapu critique immediately found a sympathetic ear in the ranks of Zimpapers' white editors (and various overseas watchdogs of "press freedom"), who were to launch a short-lived campaign for "freedom of the Press" before their replacement by blacks in February 1981. In a collection of editorial comments in January and February, Zimpapers advanced this issue, expressing doubts about the MMT's ability and inclination to resist the temptation to censor news items critical of government and Zanu policy.⁵⁴ Ultimately, it was argued, this self-censorship would lead to Zimpapers' and Ziana's slippage into the role of unofficial government Press, following the course of action already taken at ZBC. In a bitter comment, the editor of the largest circulation paper in the group bemoaned the nationalist justifications for the setting up of the Trust.

It would be easy to say now let's wait and see how it works but the path is too predictable for a "head in the sand" approach. Sooner rather than later these papers will be vehicles reflecting Government and national policy. Anyone who doubts it need only switch on a radio or a television set.⁵⁵

Other editors echoed, albeit less acrimoniously, the same criticism of government monopolization of information networks, and cited this as part and parcel of future manoeuvres to eliminate the "democratic process" in general.⁵⁶ Tellingly, it was a position which implicitly accepted the previous white minority monopoly of the RPP -- conveniently ignoring the RPP's own record of open self-censorship.⁵⁷ It was, after all, the unambiguously white, minority-oriented character of the Argus-controlled RPP which mandated that remedial action be taken after independence.

When it came to the apparent exclusion of the majority interests in society from representation in the MMT, quite an opposite set of factors prevailed. These had to do with lack of an independent institutional presence in the new political space. In 1981, the complaint that "the masses" and their organisations should have been consulted in the creation of the MMT was contradicted by the then relative disorganisation of popular civil institutions. When the Trust was set up and the Trustees appointed, neither the ZCTU nor OCCZIM had been formed. Similarly, the youth and women's organisations to which Zapu referred were primarily those of the two main partners in the government coalition, Zanu and Zapu. Indeed (and ironically), the best organised civil groups at the time were probably those white-dominated ones representing agricultural and commercial interests, carried over from the Rhodesian era.

In the absence of strong popular non-white organisations in civil society, the government had employed the authority of the state to fill this vacuum with "independent-minded and patriotic" voices which could adjudicate the interests of civil society in the public press.⁵⁸ The fact that these voices were primarily those of middle class professionals should not have come as a surprise, particularly in the context of Zanu's emerging overall development programme. From the beginning, Zanu's social planning was characterised by a distinct non-antagonism to the country's dominant economic forces, a non-antagonism reflected in the accommodating tones of Growth with Equity and later development Plans. On the political plane, both the MMT structure and the composition of the Board of Trustees (with whites and blacks, Zanu and Zapu, industrialists and socialists represented) reflected this programme of "realism" while standing as a primary example of the new policy of "reconciliation". In contrast, the ruling party's relations with various popular groups, including trade unionists, co-operators and ex-combatants, was from the outset much more ambiguous and often, in practice, much more hostile.

The important point, however, is that the fluidity of social forces in Zimbabwe in 1981, at that time allowed the ruling party considerable room for manoeuvre in its efforts to recreate the "private space" of civil society in a new image. Moreover, as the social formation changed in the 1980s with deep economic and political tensions coalescing around interest-group organisations and critical popular debates, Zanu's capacity for such manipulation -- as well as the social authority of the institutions it had singlehandedly created early on in the decade -- was severely diminished. In this

regard, the MMT stood as an example of such tactical "nation building" which eventually would be confronted by deeply rooted skepticism from the very "nation" it sought to help build.

There were to be other, different problems arising from the composition of the Board of Trustees and secretariat. If the Trust was destined to be politically weak because of its increasingly apparent lack of representatives of various popular social fractions, the absence of media professionals in either the secretariat, or on the Board of Trustees, also was to diminish the prospects for independence from the MOI. Remarkably, not one of the Trustees had experience in the media profession.⁵⁹ The problem was worsened by the state of affairs at the small, underfunded secretariat, which was meant to have been the main independent source of professional advice to the Board.

Thus, the MMT Board was crucially vulnerable to outside assistance, especially from the MOI which, with its own agenda, found itself in the effective position of regular counsel to the Trustees and the Trust secretariat. From the early 1980s, consultations and co-ordinating actions between the Trust and government took place regularly, and openly, typically through the personal mediation of the Trust's Zanu-partisan Chairman, Dr. Sadza.⁶⁰ On their part, the Trustees assumed from the beginning that the state would have to be a partner in the development and implementation of any media projects.⁶¹

Initially, MMT-MOI consultations were carried out in a "cordial, open and supportive" fashion.⁶² It was only later that some Trustees came to view such

arrangements as being against the spirit of the Deed of Trust's pronouncements on MMT-government "consultation", and corrosive of the political status and role of the Trust itself. By then, the MMT had become prisoner to not only the consultative advice, but also the administrative and fiscal whims, of its MOI "partner".

The precise nature of the consultative process by which the MMT was first drawn into the MOI's sphere of influence remains largely hidden from view, in the closed records of the Trustees' deliberations. However, glimpses of its trajectory are possible, and are seen in the parallel elaboration of policy preferences by the government and ruling party, on the one hand, and implementation of decisions by the MMT, on the other. It would be inaccurate to argue that this process was one of "cause and effect", determined by the MOI. Rather, the correspondence of the MMT's actions with the MOI's stated aims often was more the result of the former's need to make do with an inherited, unwanted situation in the most expedient way possible, than of a voluntary "obedient" adherence to the latter. In this regard, the MMT's jettisoning of Zimco in 1983, and the "re-financing" of Ziana in the mid 1980s, were exemplary.

If the logic of the Trustees' decisions was frequently the same as the MOI's, it was because both the terrain of problems, and their possible option-answers, were shaped and manipulated by the MOI itself. By controlling the environment of the MMT's operations, and the institution's capacity to respond to that environment, the MOI armed itself with an effective "silent veto" over decisions "autonomously" handed down by the independent professionals on the MMT Board. Until the late

1980s, this veto was employed openly only once, when the MOI refused to accept plans to print the generally more critical Bulawayo daily newspaper, The Chronicle, in Harare for wider national distribution.⁶³ The limited number of such incidents of open vetoing by the MOI, of course, bespoke more the MOI's comprehensive sway within the MMT, and less its fear that its ultra vires vetoes would be rejected by the Trustees.

In sum, if there was to be popular democratic input into the new national press, it was not to be structured primarily via the Trust. Without a constituency of different organised social forces behind them or an independent, in-house base of media professionals which could be relied on for advice, planning and administrative purposes, the Trustees found themselves convincingly sidelined (through no fault of their own) from the decision-making role for which they had been chosen. While the Trust had been constructed on the foundations of traditional liberal principles of individual rational actors and civil freedoms, it was undermined by the harsher reality of concrete, if less principled, struggles for political power, over which a handful of well-intentioned individuals would have little influence. As Dr. Matthews observed in 1987,

Even though we have relatively powerful institutions that are not directly part of the government, really government is much too powerful to expect the Trust to function independently from it on the basis of a few established professionals. Things don't actually work that way... The Trust does not actually have the political clout to determine what media policy will be. It has on occasion stood up to government, but the main thrust of media policy is not actually coming from the Trust...

This has little to do with the tough-mindedness of the individual [Trustees]; it is a structural problem.⁶⁴

The reality of the Trust's financial, political and professional dependence on the state became more coherently and intensely felt throughout the 1980s. As the MMT grew more dependent on the MOI for fiscal survival, the MOI's quiet assumption of administrative powers surrounding the MMT intensified the dynamic of the latter's political marginalisation. Importantly, this usurpation of MMT powers was not confined to the realm of "internal" Trust's activities, like the financing of the organisation's activities and the planning of new media initiatives. Rather, it also included direct and mounting interventions by the MOI and, secondarily, other external donors, within the media organs ostensibly placed under the MMT's protective custody. In this regard, the cases of Zimpapers and the MMT's rural newspapers project are exemplary, and demonstrate the degree of the Trust's structured political and administrative marginalisation by the end of the 1980s.

Zimpapers: Locked Outside Without a Key

After the creation of the MMT, a tripartite decision-making apparatus emerged at Zimpapers which encompassed the Trust, MOI and senior Zimpapers management, under the juridical authority of the Trust as the company's dominant shareholder. It was understood at the time that the MOI and Zimpapers management would be consulted by the Trustees on a regular basis, contributing mostly in the field of policy

formulation and adjustment. But it was also made clear -- and more explicitly -- that the MMT would be the leading partner in this arrangement, and that there would be a smooth chain of command, flowing from the MMT Board of Trustees, through its representatives on the Zimpapers Board of Directors, into the decision-making process within the newspaper chain.

Yet soon after the new media order was established, it became apparent that the locus of decision-making would rest not within the MMT and its Board of Trustees, but within the MOI and secondarily, within the company itself. This seeming shift in power had to do not only with the internal weaknesses of the Trust, but also with changes in the internal management of the newspaper chain. In this regard, the leading role of the MOI in infiltrating Zanu-allied personnel into Zimpapers management proved decisive in Zanu's politicisation of the public press.

The change of control over Zimpapers from Argus' hands into those of the MMT brought with it alterations in the internal structure of the company whose political ramifications would become evident only some years later. In the days before the MMT take-over, the Argus empire and local white resources had readily supplied all of the RPP's management personnel requirements. After 1980 and particularly after the 1981 company buy-out, a good number of these highly skilled whites fled to posts in the Argus network in South Africa. Zimpapers was left with an acute skills "deficit" which few if any blacks were immediately qualified to fill.

The domination of senior management ranks by whites remained the case for at least three years, during which time black trainees and "under-studies" were

recruited, typically on the direct recommendation of the MOI. In this period (1981-1984) few structural-administrative alterations were made in the management side of Zimpapers. At the same time, the white-dominated management was often kept under close watch by a government which feared that some form of media "sabotage" was being hatched.⁶⁵ These suspicions were partly provoked by the realisation of the new power relations within the company which came with its indigenisation.

The falling away of the Argus empire's management and advisory structures, and the growing supervision and control of the company's daily operations by senior management, lifted the new Zimpapers head office management to a position of unprecedented advisory and practical power within the company relatively quickly. This change in the balance of power within the organisation helped relegate both the decision-making ability of the Zimpapers Board of Directors, and the MMT's jurisdiction over the newspaper chain's operations.

For both the MMT and the Zimpapers Board, the negative aspects of this shift in power were greatly exacerbated by the series of structural alterations undertaken by black management recruits, who were slotted into senior management positions beginning in 1983, and whose arrival on the scene was heralded by the appointment of Elias Rusike as Zimpapers Managing Director in 1984.

The modifications in management included the introduction of a group editorial board, and the reining-in of corporate control through the regular instigation of inter-divisional and divisional meetings.⁶⁶ The changes were introduced with the intention of reworking and tightening financial controls at group, branch and branch-divisional

level. In this light, boards and management meetings were convened on a semi-regular schedule (initially monthly, later less frequently), under the supervision and responsibility of the Board of Managers, chaired by the Chief Executive and General Manager, Elias Rusike.

The immediate outcome of these moves was the centralisation and co-ordination of practical decision-making in the structures immediately surrounding the Chief Executive and General Manager in a manner which had not previously been the case under Argus management. But in reality, these powers soon came to be wielded by the new Zimpapers management on behalf of the MOI, in the wake of the consolidation of tight linkages between management, the MOI and ruling party. These bonds were cemented by means of personal connection, but also, and more intricately, by different forms of structural dependence on the state for financial and planning support.⁶⁷

Zanu's MOI-leveraged penetration of Zimpapers in the early 1980s was most directly executed, however, by the placement of its political deputies directly within the company -- a move which allowed Zanu a double-edged authority, because it opened access to both the practical decision-making powers of managers, and the senior ranks of editors and sub-editors (both directly, and indirectly, via management).

In fact, it was the appointment of new black management, beginning in 1983 and led by future CEO Elias Rusike, which marked the start of Zanu's concerted, quiet assault on the MMT's protective custody of Zimpapers. In this regard, it should

be seen as no small coincidence that the recruitment and placement of new management staff occurred in a period broadly characterised by Zanu's more aggressive claims to the mantle of Zimbabwe's undisputed national moral and political leadership -- claims which implied the ruling party's deepening insinuation into the institutional interstices of organised civil society.

Neither should it be overlooked, that the senior staff recruited to Zimpapers management were steadfastly and narrowly obedient to the practice of consulting with the MOI and implementing its preferred line of policy; or indeed, that such professed loyalty was often a pre-requisite for appointment to senior posts in the first place. In both regards, the personage of Elias Rusike is portentous, as a concrete representative of the convergence of ruling party politics and conservative managerialism on the terrain of the press -- as Rusike himself was to testify in his mea culpa of 1991.⁶⁸

On his own admission, Rusike was made Zimpapers Chief Executive Officer on the personal recommendation of Minister of Information Shamuyarira, and instructed to act as the hand-picked political crow bar of the ruling party within the newspaper chain. A former journalist and long-time member of Zanu who had been head of the party's broadcast operations on Radio Tanzania in the late 1960s, Rusike was taken on as an under-study manager at Zimpapers in the early 1980s, with the ruling party's and MOI's clear intention of grooming him for the top administrative post at the company.⁶⁹

Rusike's quick rise at Zimpapers had little to do with previous research experience in media political economy, and more with the fact of his closeness to the

Zanu political hierarchy.⁷⁰ In his own words, Rusike became Zanu's point of entry into Zimpapers because he acknowledged and accepted the demand that he go about his duties at Zimpapers as a "team player" -- on the side of the ruling party.⁷¹

Beginning with the dismissal of the Sunday Mail's Willie Musarurwa in 1985, it was common for observers to "blame" the intensifying partisan slant and abiding censorship at Zimpapers on the person of Elias Rusike, and, by implication, on his superiors in the MOI and ruling party. Yet the wider political structuring of Zimpapers' management by the government and ruling party -- not the "isolated" activities of particular individuals within this institutional set-up -- was the primary factor in the "politicisation" of the company's infrastructure of newspaper production.⁷² Similarly, if the authority of the MMT at Zimpapers was eroded by a few key individuals, namely Rusike (and, by default, Dr. Sadza), working in tandem with officials in the MOI, it was the structured terrain on which these individuals performed their politicised tasks which was decisive -- not their "personal ambitions" and personages. Indeed, to argue otherwise is to deny the importance of Zanu's coordinated efforts to both undermine the MMT from within, and diminish its authority from without.

It is more instructive to underline the MMT's and Zimpapers Directorate's distancing from Zimpapers management at an early stage.⁷³ The point was made bluntly by Rusike in 1987.

We have received nothing as a guideline for media policy from the Mass Media Trust... however we are aware of statements such as the Five-Year Development Plan -- that is a government document. But we are not aware of

any similar document produced by the Trust. In fact, we have little if any relationship with the Trust at all, when it comes to running our affairs and planning for the future. We usually operate by ourselves, on their behalf as company shareholders.⁷⁴

After his departure from the company, Rusike was even more frank in his assessment of the new Zimpapers status quo -- and of the personal power politics of the Trust itself.

In practice, what really happened was that the Board of Zimpapers and the Mass Media Trust's Board of Trustees were both bypassed -- with the Ministry of Information giving its orders directly to editors and journalists through myself and Dr. Sadza. The two Boards, in fact, were never consulted on any important political decisions -- the Mass Media Trust Trustees particularly so. Furthermore, both Boards knew there was really nothing they could do about this state of affairs.⁷⁵

By the late 1980s the almost complete assumption of control over management by the MOI and, in turn, management's assumption of responsibility for overtly political decisions, like the hiring and firing of editors, was an accepted fact at both the MMT and Zimpapers. One unavoidable outcome was the thwarting of the political buffer role allotted the MMT in 1981. Of the four outstanding incidents of senior editorial dismissals or reappointments which punctuated the political life of Zimpapers between 1983 and 1989, not one involved the participation of the MMT as custodian of press neutrality.⁷⁶

If the MMT had all but abandoned its responsibilities on the important terrain of the daily and weekly press, largely because it had been prevented by its own inadequacies, and by the MOI's and Zanu's own ambitions, from doing so, it also

faced similar problems of imposing its authority on a ground much closer to its sphere of influence. In the case of the Trust's rural newspapers project, other difficulties were to impinge upon the organisation's important self-assumed aim of launching and managing a veritably rural, "grassroots", national and popular newspaper press. Once again, the Trust would find itself dependent upon the financial and logistical co-operation of external agencies.

Dependent Development: The MMT and the New Rural Press

Although the MMT's original brief included reference to the opening up of the rural areas by promoting the establishment of locally-based media in the countryside, it was not a goal which could be realised by the Trust itself, given its shortage of capital and personnel, and nearly complete lack of experience in the field of rural newspaper production. Thus, while the MMT repeatedly committed itself to the idea of creating a rural press -- a commitment which, significantly, went hand-in-hand with government's own proclamations that the rural areas be opened up by community-based information officers and media⁷⁷ -- its concrete engagement of the task was to depend largely on the assistance of external agencies, including government and the donor community.⁷⁸ Indeed, initial efforts aimed at setting up local newspapers were made first, by government, through the MOI and the Ministry of Local Government.⁷⁹

When the MMT began its own programme of rural newspaper development, with the launch in May 1983 of The Murewa News (a fortnightly with a print run of 4,000 and estimated readership of 20,000), it was thanks to the financial assistance of a foreign donor, the Canadian International Development Agency, which helped pay for materials and a duplicating machine. On its part, the Trust covered the cost of the editor and other recurrent expenses, and co-operated some months later in the setting up of The Mutoko News, a similarly-style newssheet partly financed by the Mutoko Rural Council.⁸⁰ At the time, the MMT stated its objective of expanding to 36 the number of district newspapers in the country, while echoing government policy on what the role of that emergent press should be.

The Mutoko rural press must be able to convey to the government and people of Zimbabwe the views of Mutoko on national issues and issues that affect Mutoko. The press in any developing society has a major role to play in national development... The press has the duty to inform the people of what the government is doing and to tell the government what the people want. Let Mutoko News do this for people in Mutoko. We are sure you will want to read this paper because it relates to you and your environment. This press should be used by the people of Mutoko, for the people of Mutoko.⁸¹

Despite ambitious plans and the initial injection of capital from the outside, the MMT's two affiliated papers encountered serious problems from the start which pre-empted the newspapers' anticipated replication in other districts. For the Trust, these problems were centred on the question of financial viability -- an issue which would remain a priority in the MMT's plans for rural newspaper operations throughout the decade. Although the MMT agreed to subsidize the production of the Murewa News

pilot project for at least one year (entailing expenditure of not more than a few thousand dollars) it made clear its intention that the roughly designed and duplicated newsheet become a self-sufficient commercial operation as quickly as possible. But there was little likelihood of the News attaining commercial viability, as long as its production quality and management were maintained at subsistence level, and its low cover price held down to keep the paper affordable.⁸² The advertising support which the paper did attract came irregularly, and in insufficient quantities to finance the paper. Inevitably, when the MMT withdrew its financial support in 1986, the Murewa News ceased publication -- long preceeded in collapse by its sister paper in Mutoko (which folded in 1984).⁸³

But by that time a new, more grandiose scheme for the development of a rural press was already in the planning stage, with help from the MOI, but with the leading participation of prospective foreign donors.⁸⁴ In 1985 the MOI and MMT announced plans for a series of eight provincial rural newspapers, to be put in place by the end of the following year, and set about preparing for the new project by undertaking a feasibility study.⁸⁵ The conclusion of that study, which formed the basis for the plans which were eventually implemented beginning in 1988, was that the viability of any rural print media was measurable primarily by its capacity for commercial self-sufficiency. In this regard, it was argued that the hesitant experiments in publishing district newspapers failed because the economies of scale -- of advertising, production and readership -- were too small to permit a sustainable (that is, marginally profitable) operation.

The solution, the MMT suggested, was to increase the economies of scale, by producing provincial rather than district papers, and rendering more professional their content and production. However, this was not a task which the Trust could accomplish on the basis of its own depleted resources. Thus began a protracted series of negotiations with international donor agencies, resulting in a string of aid packages (including funds for consultancies, printing and publishing equipment, vehicles and allowances for local staff salaries).⁸⁶ This assistance started to materialise in 1988, the year the first three provincial papers -- the Chaminuka News, Nehanda Guardian and Indonsakusa -- were launched. (Table 4.4)

The papers which emerged bore little resemblance to their failed predecessors. In place of the chatty cyclostyled sheets, came typeset tabloids with photographs and limited colour printing capacity. The change in format was the result of the injection of new technology, in the form of desktop publishing units (MacIntosh computers) supplied by donors.⁸⁷ At the same time, a new production infrastructure was built up around this equipment. Full-time editors (each with one full-time reporter), offices, production mater. ls and motor vehicles were included in the various aid packages negotiated by the Trust (which itself was committed to paying the salaries and office expenses of the head office in Harare).⁸⁸ Significantly, however, none of the first three papers set up in 1988 managed to turn a profit, despite the heavy subsidisation, and apparent popularity in their respective communities.⁸⁹

Table 4.4

Mass Media Trust: Provincial Newspapers

<u>Title</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Circ./Frequency</u>	<u>Date Est'd.</u>
Chaminuka News	Marondera-MashEast	6000 bi-monthly	1988
Nehanda Guardian	Bindura-MashCentral	6000 bi-monthly	1988
Indonsakusa	Hwange-MatNorth	6000 monthly	1988
The Times	Gweru-Midlands	6000 weekly	1989*
Ilanga	Gwanda-MatSouth	6000 monthly	1990
Masvingo Star	Masvingo-Masvingo	6000 weekly	1991*

* Indicates the year in which paper joined the Group.

Source: Mass Media Trust, Community Newspapers Group, 1991.

Nonetheless, with the backing of donors the MMT continued to expand the provincial newspapers scheme, by the creation or acquisition of new papers in Matabeleland South, Midlands and Masvingo provinces, and the further, more intensive capitalisation of production. In 1989, the long-running privately-owned regional paper, The Gweru Times, was bought out (along with its subsidiary printing company, A.S. Publications) and "converted" into a MMT provincial newspaper, and the following year the monthly Ilanga was established from scratch in Gwanda. In 1991 the Masvingo Provincial Star was purchased. These three publications were the only ones in the renamed "Community Newspapers Group" destined to realise a profit, but for exceptional reasons: the two acquired papers were taken over as viable commercial entities, while Ilanga enjoyed an atypical market advantage, by the fact that it had no market competitor.⁹⁰

In 1991, one independent observer noted that the new provincial newspapers were still cast in the mould of the old district newssheets: without heavy donor support, neither were financially or operationally tenable.⁹¹ In recognition -- and perhaps, proof -- of this perspective, part of the rural newspapers project's donor-assisted development plan involved a programme of capitalisation, aimed not only at centralising and rationalising the printing of all the group's papers; but also at establishing new sources of revenue unrelated to the business of producing provincial periodicals. In this respect, a high capacity, colour-capable printing press donated by the Swiss was commissioned in Gweru,⁹² where it was integrated into the production

of the group's papers, and into the commercial printing operations acquired at the time of the Gweru Times take-over.

With these investments the entrepreneurial focus of the group was distinctly altered. By 1991 the Community Newspapers Group comprised three separate divisions (only one of them involved in newspaper production), a fact which reflected the heightened concern with attaining commercial self-sufficiency --if not through the publishing of newspapers, then by other means.⁹³ While the Group had come to stand on its own feet, albeit propped up on both sides by donors and high technology in yet another experiment in "African media development", the scale and evolving focus of its operations seemed far removed from the vision of self-reliant "grassroots" newspapers enunciated by the MMT and MOI in the early 1980s.

Declining Responsibility and Questions of Utility

Restricted by a growing dependence on the government and handicapped by the weakened state of the organisations under its control, and antagonisms among them, the MMT media conglomerate did not develop as envisaged. With the possible exception of the rural newspapers established in the late 1980s, this disparaging observation holds for the range of tasks assigned to the Trust in 1981; namely, the elaboration of a national print media network sensitive to the new political order, the

creation of a journalist training programme in support of this network, and the promulgation of a comprehensive media policy for the public press.

Instead, by various means, these tasks came to fall on the shoulders of the state and its representatives placed within the public media infrastructure. The MMT became more of an observer while the implementation of MOI policy was carried out by the state, and by the media organs originally placed under the MMT's jurisdiction. At Zimpapers, some later speculated about the practical political impact of this distortion of the MMT's initial goals, and asked whether there could have been any other outcome to the dilemma for which the Trust had once been seen as a solution. Elias Rusike himself openly posed these questions in 1987, at a time when he was Zimpapers' CEO.

Although the sceptics will say that our experiment is no experiment at all, but is Government control of the Press by a fancy name, let me assure you that Government itself is sometimes nervous of the extent to which our editors can exercise their independence... It is true that in the Third World governments or ruling parties are totally obsessed with the control of the mass media... Where there is no history of such control... the alternative is probably Rupert Murdoch.⁹⁴

Three years later, Rusike extended the argument to its logical conclusion, and suggested that government take direct control of the MMT media and end the political charade.⁹⁵ But was Elias Rusike overstating the case?

Throughout the 1980s, episodic confrontations between Zimpapers management and the MOI, on the one hand, and Zimpapers editors on the other, demonstrated that no all-embracing "control" of the MMT media by the state

materialised -- despite the efforts of the former. Nor would the Trust come to play the role of collective, homegrown press "baron" -- the role which many had felt it was designed to fulfil. In the first instance, direct determination of the press was substituted by a more imperfect form of supervision, one centred on the ruling party's and MOI's intervention in the management and editorial structures of the public media organs. This system was not, however, foolproof.

In the second case, the deepening financial, administrative and political insecurity of the Trust precluded the MMT's practical assumption of a coherent, leading, "baron" role in the public press.

The combination of these two parallel tendencies within the same MMT environment produced an ambiguous hybrid which would wreak havoc on both the Trust's integrity, and the ruling party's emerging programme of media manipulation. These tendencies were reflected concretely in the absence of vibrant, structured communication between the Board of Trustees and the Zimpapers Board of Directors, where Dr. Sadza's performance, in particular, was likened by one fellow Trustee sitting on the Zimpapers Board to that of a "passive observer".⁹⁶ More concerned with bank rates than media policy, and enjoying no commanding participatory role in Zimpapers, the MMT Board of Trustees had been largely marginalised from -- if not swamped by the perilous political undercurrents of -- the public print media sector by the late 1980s.

Paradoxically, two apparently "successful" efforts by the Board of Trustees to defend and expand the integrity of the Trust near the end of the decade only

confirmed the organisation's debased political status. The first involved the MMT's substantial commercial investment in non-media enterprises. The second concerned the Trust's struggle to defend what little remaining formal autonomy it had, particularly in the face of more direct attacks on its political and administrative powers by the MOI in the wake of the "Willowgate" scandal.⁹⁷ Both contributed to a mounting confusion among Trustees over the MMT's own sense of purpose.

After a protracted period of financial vulnerability due to its unstable investment in Zimpapers, the MMT -- again with the encouragement and co-operation of the MOI -- launched a programme of commercial portfolio investment. The centre-piece of this move was the acquisition of the dominant shareholding in the Hunyani Paper and Packaging Company, Zimbabwe's largest packaging manufacturer, at a substantial but undisclosed price.⁹⁸ At the same time the better performance of existing commercial assets, namely Zimpapers (which by then also had ventured into a non-media corporate investment programme) and the restructured Kingstons book merchant chain, contributed to the short term financial revitalisation of the Trust.

This renewed financial buoyancy at the end of the 1980s reinforced the already-modified perspective of some Trustees: if the Trust was defeated by the MOI in the competition to control the MMT media, there were always other games at which the losing side might excel. In 1990, Dr. Sadza's own reworked vision of the MMT's role underscored the impact of recent experience.

Somewhere along the line, we should have had the role of the Mass Media Trust reviewed to a point where its role in giving direction to media would be separated from its other business involvements. A point has been

reached where some operations of the Trust have become totally and financially independent, instead of depending on loans and grants from government -- like, for example, Ziana. We need to review now which aspects it is worthwhile the Trust maintaining a control over, and whether there is any need or purpose for us in over-looking media operations at all.⁹⁹

When the argument was carried to its full extent -- as it was by MMT Chairman Sadza -- the new realism's most profound implications for the future political role of the Trust were laid bare: the political function of the MMT in the public media was defined out of existence. As Dr. Sadza painstakingly argued, the "solving" of difficult national issues like white racism, tribal conflict, political banditry and press censorship in the 1980s meant that the "leading" role of the MMT required reassessment. Having helped create an environment of democracy and freedom of speech, Sadza concluded, the Trust had in some ways rendered its original tasks obsolete.¹⁰⁰

For the MMT Chairman, it seemed, the organisation was created as a means of fulfilling certain temporary tasks, rather than as part of a new, self-sustaining social infrastructure existing organically as a component of the new social order. From this perspective, the Trust takes on the guise of a fundamentally reactive, rather than active, social agency.

While the Chairman of the Trust may have ascribed personally to such a viewpoint -- and indeed, contributed personally to its realisation by his own docile performance in office -- it was not a view shared by all Trustees, nor by many media observers in the 1980s who took the function of the MMT seriously at the outset.¹⁰¹

Nevertheless, Sadza's leading role in the MMT meant that his more deferential perspective on relations with the MOI and the political hierarchy at Zimpapers, was an important factor in the ongoing revamping of the Trust's political role and status. In light of a series of confrontations in the late 1980s by which the "residual", juridical and moral authority of the Trust was challenged directly, the ambiguous performance of Dr. Sadza stood as a tell-tale sign of the MMT's own uncertain, undermined political standing. The incidents in question were significant because they reflected open acknowledgement by the MMT and MOI alike, that the MMT was a thoroughly politicised social institution, more or less directly accountable to the ruling group within the state.

The first and most significant clash between the MOI and MMT was prompted by the Willowgate scandal, which had been uncovered initially by The Chronicle, Zimpapers' daily Bulawayo paper. Frustrated by the revelations of wrong-doing, and by the MOI's inability to cap without delay the outflow of information on the affair from the Bulawayo journal, Minister of Information Mangwende returned to an old theme -- the "free yet responsible" press -- as a means of threatening the state's overt domination of the public media infrastructure.

In December 1988 and January 1989 Mangwende launched an attack on "sensationalist investigative journalism", threatening that if reporters were not reined in soon by their editors (and in turn, editors by their political overseers in the MMT), the government would consider a dramatic rethink of the whole structure and function of the MMT. Despite the vindication of the alleged "sensationalism" of The Chronicle

by the later findings of the Sandura Commission of Inquiry into Willowgate, the threat was never withdrawn by Mangwende -- and never effectively countered by the Trust itself.

Rather, and significantly, it was left to a broad spectrum of government critics in Parliament and the ruling party, the private media and civil organisations, to rise in defence of the idea of the Trust as a politically neutral guarantor of editorial freedom of speech. But if the public outcry led to the state's withdrawal from further engagement of the debate over press freedom, it also led to more hidden moves to curtail the remaining powers of the MMT.

The Willowgate fiasco apparently convinced some senior Zanu officials that some "structural adjustments" to the Trust were in order. In mid 1989 without prior consultation of the Trust, the MOI made a unilateral attempt to revamp the Deed of Trust with the aim of structurally undermining the MMT's financial and political autonomy.¹⁰² In correspondence and meetings between the MOI and MMT Trustees, the former demanded that clauses in the Deed of Trust relating to the self-perpetuating status of the Board of Trustees, and financial and managerial autonomy of the organisation, be replaced with conditions allowing the MOI a veto over such matters.¹⁰³ Heated argument ensued when the Trustees, holding on to one last toe-hold of de jure authority, refused to approve the MOI's tabled amendments.

Eventually the Trust submitted the proposed changes to the Attorney-General's office, for advice on whether they constituted an illegal modification of the Deed. At the same time, sustained public criticism of the MOI's encroachment on the Trust and

renewed debate within senior Zanu ranks, in addition to the upcoming March 1990 general election, pressured government into relaxing its attack on the MMT. By the time officials at the Attorney-General's office decided the amendments were legally unacceptable, Zanu's talk of implementing them had been silenced and a new, less combative Minister of Information, Victoria Chitepo, had replaced Mangwende.

However, the perception which remained in the popular imagination was that the MOI could engage in attacks on the sanctity of the Trust idea, without significant rebuke from the government or ruling party.

Two later incidents were to reinforce popular perception that the MMT was both politically insecure and nascently structured as a partisan agency. First, in the run-up to the March 1990 general elections, the MMT Secretariat made a donation of \$25,000 to Zanu for its campaign and for its indebted new party headquarters.¹⁰⁴ Ironically, the contribution came at a time when the Trust and Ziana were locked in a longstanding and bitter wage dispute with Ziana employees, with the MMT claiming that impending bankruptcy prevented the pay-out of previously agreed wage packets.¹⁰⁵

More serious for the long-term development of Trust structures, however, was the placement of representatives of the state and ruling party on the Directorate of Zimpapers. In mid 1990, MOI Permanent Secretary Sarah Kachingwe, Zanu Senator David Zamchiya and Zanu Central Committee member Don Muvuti were together "recommended" to the Zimpapers Board of Directors by Trust Chairman Sadza. For some MMT Trustees and for many political observers, the move marked a further

deterioration of the officially-held "independent" status of the Trust. The only discernible linkage among the nominees and the company was a common political affiliation to the ruling party. Remarkably, none of Dr. Sadza's nominees held stock in the company they sought to direct, or had professional expertise in the media. They were state and ruling party functionaries (facts which ultimately led to the nominees' disqualification on a technical basis, and the surprise appointment in their stead of liberal minority shareholder Judith Todd).¹⁰⁶

As a political event and as an object of public debate, the (temporarily) failed manoeuvre of the MOI and Zanu to gain direct official access to the most senior structure within Zimpapers, stood as cold confirmation of the "fact" of the Trust's already compromised status. In this regard, the episode contributed to a further erosion of the Trust's dubious political and social authority, both as proprietor of certain print media, and as an autonomous adjudicator of national media politics. For insiders like Elias Rusike, the debacle was the final straw in the diminution of the symbolic and practical role of the MMT within the Zimbabwean public press and a landmark in Zanu's parallel rise to paramount authority within the same domain.

This move [to place Zanu representatives on the Zimpapers Board] will put Dr. Davison Sadza, Chairman of the Mass Media Trust and Zimpapers in an invidious situation. This can only undermine his authority... The Mass Media Trust has been ineffective and Zimpapers has now come under the direct control of the Ministry of Information. Any pretence that Zimpapers and the Mass Media Trust are not controlled by government can no longer be sustained... It would appear to me that government should now formalise the control of newspapers under the Ministry of Information.¹⁰⁷

If the popularly perceived neutrality of the MMT was a necessary component for the organisation to function as a subtle instrument in the implementation of Zanu's hegemonic programme, the steady political decline of the Trust throughout the 1980s implied a slip in the body's credibility and hegemonic utility to the ruling group. Unable to aspire to a limited presence within the narrower realm of the press, the MMT was precluded from serving as a more amorphous point of disguised, non-partisan, "consensual" intervention for Zanu in the civil space in general. Indeed, it would seem that the failure of the much-lauded MMT project -- due in large part, particularly in the late 1980s, to the hostile and direct interventions of Zanu and the MOI -- provided a nodal point of counter-hegemonic mobilisation, on the part of those who had witnessed and lamented the collapse of a promising experiment in media democratisation.

At the outset, that experiment had been a hopeful and ambitious one; perhaps, as some Trustees later observed, far too ambitious in the context of limited human and capital resources and the swelling political tensions of the early 1980s.¹⁰⁸ Yet, even as the liberal pretensions of the MMT idea faded the original vision of the MMT remained as a critical point of comparison with the harsher reality of media politics engaged in by Zanu. Like so much of Zanu's disfigured "popular programme" in practice in the 1980s, the moderate aims of the party's initial platform concerning the media were to be employed later on in the decade, in a critical, more vibrant popular-democratic fashion, by the social forces for whom the MMT infrastructure had ostensibly been created.

Inevitably, the resurgence of popular struggles over the determination of Zanu's social, political and economic programme in the latter half of the 1980s came to include debates about the status and practices of the public media. While the actual (as opposed to envisaged) role of the MMT was one locus of emergent critical debate about the media, another was provided by the unfolding of a new order of self-censorship and partisan policing within Zimpapers and Ziana. If the MMT represented a lost opportunity for an array of individuals and social fractions lying outside the confines of the state and ruling party, the actual practices of editorial politics and management at Zimpapers symbolised the opportunism and aggression of the ruling party in the elaboration of a new regime of information production.

The next chapter examines the form and content of this aggression, by focusing on the unfolding relationship between the main MMT media organs, led by Zimpapers, and the ruling party. This relationship of mounting domination on the part of Zanu is seen to be engineered primarily via the intervention of the MOI, in various ways. It is argued that, despite Zanu's success in consolidating control over Zimpapers management and editors, such domination proved problematic for the hegemonic utility of the newspaper chain in the long run, particularly given the structural limitations of the newspaper chain¹⁰⁹ and the existence of other poles of social discourse in the national press.¹¹⁰

References

1. Naomi Nhiwatiwa, "Communication Systems to Serve National Interests", Zimbabwe News, vol.17, no.12 (December 1986), p. 16.
2. E. Rusike, "Of hatchets and hacks" (Interview), Moto, no. 102 (July 1991), p. 6.
3. The importance of Zimpapers to the MMT experiment was demonstrated by the fact that the lion's share of the capital used to set up the MMT went to Argus in this buy-out. At independence, 43.32% of Zimpapers shares were owned by South African interests: 40% by Argus and 3.42% (85,000 shares) by 35 private individuals in South Africa. Following the Argus purchase, the full quota of shares held privately in South Africa were also bought out. (see "Minister Announces Press Takeover", Zimbabwe Press Statement 6/81/IM, 05.01.1981; and, "Government takes control of Press", Sunday Mail, 04.01.1981)
4. It had been public knowledge in Zimbabwe that Argus had been looking to unload its control of Zimpapers for several months before the final sale in January 1981; and indications made on several occasions that the Government was considering moving against the Press could only have encouraged this (see "We aim to take over the Press --Nkala", Sunday Mail, 09.11.1980). Local business people and consortiums, however, had found the market price of the stock too high and the expected rate of return unattractive. Dr. Shamuyarira claimed that the Government itself tried to find local businesses interested in buying out Argus, to no avail; the only willing candidates were associated with the UK-based Lonrho multinational, and it was felt that such a transaction would do little to solve the question of national responsibility and commitment which had already been posed (see "Shamuyarira explains policy: 'Free Press to be created'", Herald, 10.01.1981).
Late in 1980 discussions began in earnest between Argus and Zimbabwe and the price of \$2.50 per share (total price: \$2.4m) was agreed upon. This was considered a gain for Argus, as the shares were currently standing at \$1.90, and the net asset value of \$3.20 (making \$2.50 appear as a middle price) was seen by many observers as being significantly inflated (see "Takeover explodes 51pc myth", Herald, 08.01.1980).
5. The MMT's 43% holding enabled it to control the company, given the diversity of smaller portfolio investments in Zimpapers. A 1986 market acquisition of additional locally-held shares by the Trust raised its holding to 1,226,046 shares, or 51.09% of total company stock.

6. Interview with E.T. Rusike, Harare, 23 February 1987. Stock market interest in Zimpapers was not greatly diminished in the long term by the MMT takeover. One of the notable post-takeover private shareholders was former Southern Rhodesia Prime Minister Sir Garfield Todd. The drought of 1982-1984 having forced a large sell-off of his cattle, Sir Garfield invested in Zimpapers stock, eventually becoming the company's fourth largest stock holder overall, with 10% of the shares. At the end of the 1980s Zimpapers stock was to skyrocket in value, with the development of a broader corporate base through the acquisition of controlling interest in a number of larger enterprises (see discussion below).

7. There is evidence that this lack of interest on the part of popular organisations in participation in Zimpapers may not persist. In 1990 Sir Garfield Todd was known to be approaching various individuals and offering some of his shares for sale. At the same time, Todd had been quietly lobbying the MMT to forfeit its majority stake in Zimpapers, making some of its shares available on the market to company employees and other individuals (including former Chronicle editor Geoff Nyarota and former Zanu MP and lawyer, Byron Hove). In 1991 Judith Todd, Sir Garfield's daughter and fellow director of the family's Hokunui holding company, confirmed that the ZCTU had been informally approached concerning future private sector investment in Zimpapers stock. (Interview with Judith Todd, Harare, 28 February 1991)

8. N. Shamuyarira, "Minister Announces Press Take-over", Zimbabwe Press Statement 6/81/IM, 5 January, 1981.

9. "Nhiwatiwa defines role of media in transformation", Zimbabwe Press Statement 514/84/MA/EM, 24 July, 1984.

10. N. Shamuyarira, "Press must not be colonial --Shamuyarira", Zimbabwe Press Statement 1086/81/NM, 15 December, 1981. See also N. Nhiwatiwa, "Nhiwatiwa defines role...", *op. cit.*:

Removal of private ownership of our major newspapers has... erased the private profit motive, which in many countries has driven the press into excessive emphasis on sensational stories.

11. "Government 'can buy newspapers'--Shamuyarira", Herald, 20.08.1980.

12. N. Shamuyarira, 5 January, 1981, *op. cit.*

13. Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust, "Notarial Deed of Donation and Trust", 29 January 1981. It is widely acknowledged by those associated with the MMT that the form and content of the organisation was the direct offspring of the Minister's own initiatives.

14. "The Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust" [information brochure], 1986.

15. Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust, Deed of Donation..., *op. cit.*, p. 3.

16. For the first several years, meetings took place fairly regularly on a monthly basis. By the mid 1980s, the Board came to sit less frequently.

17. Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust, Deed of Donation..., *op. cit.*, p. 3.

18. Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust, Deed of Donation..., *op. cit.*, pp. 7-8.

19. It is clear from interviews conducted that the initial impression of Trustees, journalists and media observers was that the MMT represented a legitimate, hands-off attempt by the MOI to bring about a new, democratic, participatory media order. For example, Dr. Grace Todd, one of those first appointed to the Board of Trustees in 1981, recounted that she received assurances from the most senior levels of the MOI (including Minister Shamuyarira) that the Trust would be given a free hand in the implementation of its future programmes of development for the media. One occasion at which such guarantees were given was a meeting attended by prospective Trustees and MOI officials in early 1981. (Interview with Grace Todd, Bulawayo, 26 October 1990)

20. It should be noted that this impression was not limited to foreigners. In several conversations with different media professionals in Zimbabwe, the Trust was referred to unhesitatingly as a parastatal, or held as being directly responsible to the MOI. As late as September 1990, on the occasion of a seminar for senior Zimbabwean media personnel, the MMT was publicly referred to as a "government parastatal", without challenge from other seminar participants. ("Media and Communication Studies Workshop", University of Zimbabwe, Faculty of Arts, 25 August 1990; including presentations by T. McLoughlin, G. Nyarota and W. Bango, and contributions from the floor; notes of proceedings in author's possession).

21. Mr. Marere was charged and convicted of defrauding the Trust of \$22,000. See, "Mass Media Trust man in court over fraud allegations", *Herald*, 29.02.1984; "State outlines theft charge against former Media Trust Secretary", *Herald*, 18.12.1984; "Marere found guilty of \$22,000 fraud", *Herald*, 17.01.1985.

22. Interviews with John Mayowe, Harare, 4 August 1988; Matthews, *op. cit.*; and Dr. G.T.Z. Chada, Harare, 12 October 1990.

23. Mayowe, interview, *op. cit.*

24. See Chapter 6 below for a more detailed account of Ziana. The current discussion of Zimco's financial and management problems during and after the MMT's involvement in the institute, represents a very abbreviated summary of research undertaken on Zimbabwean journalist training by the author. That research, focused primarily on Zimco, was based on a collection of studies, reports and official documents, the most important of which include: Friedrich Naumann Foundation, "Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust, Zimbabwe Institute of Mass Communication", (Bonn,

March 1982); Francis P. Kasoma, "Journalism Training in SADCC Countries: An Assessment of the Present State, Potentialities and Trends", Paper presented at the Nordic/Sadcc Media Seminar, Harare, 16-19 September, 1988; Stefan Melnik, Print Media Training in Zimbabwe. An Analysis of Friedrich Naumann Foundation Co-operation with the Division of Mass Communication, Harare Polytechnic (Report prepared for the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, January 1985); Gunther Noack, Hugh Lewin, Molefi Asante and Tim Nyahunzvi, Media Training Needs in Zimbabwe. A Report prepared by the Friedrich Naumann Foundation in conjunction with the Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust (Harare, March 1982); Timothy Mutero Nyahunzvi, "Media Training in Zimbabwe: The First Six Years", M.A. Thesis (Education), University of Wales, 1987; Unesco, Zimbabwe Broadcast Training Project, Project Document: Establishment of Broadcasting Training Department at Zimbabwe Institute of Mass Communication (Harare, revised October 1983) and various related Unesco documents (1980-1986) concerning the Zimco training project; Ruth Weiss, Reports and Memoranda to the Mass Media Trust and Ziana (various, 1983-1986, in author's possession); and, Zimbabwe Institute of Mass Communication, (E.C. Makunike, Director), Annual Report 1982 (Harare, 1982), "Zimbabwe Institute of Mass Communication" (brochure, 1982?), and "Information Sheet" (Harare, 1986).

25. For an account of the negative implications of Zimco's subsumption into the public service, see Nyahunzvi, op. cit.

26. Zimbabwe Newspapers (1980) Limited, Financial Report, 1982/83--1984-85.

27. Parliament of Zimbabwe, House of Assembly. "Second Report of the Estimates Committee on the Ministry of Information, Posts and Telecommunications (Vote No.23, 1986-1987), presented to the House of Assembly 10 November, 1987, pp. 10-11.

28. Parliament of Zimbabwe, House of Assembly, 1987, op. cit., p. 10. Renovations required to transform the former apartment building into Ziana's headquarters and MMT offices were to add substantially to this initial expenditure, consuming another \$130,000 by 1984 (p. 11).

29. The buy-out of Kingstons marked the return of the company to local, media related ownership -- Kingstons had at one time been controlled by the RPP, and had been sold out to South African based C&A. According to some, Kingstons required extensive capital investment and restructuring of management to make it a smoothly functioning company, and these facts did not justify the premium price paid for the company by the MMT. (Matthews, interview, op. cit.)

30. The transfer of Zimco and its assets to the Ministry of Labour had included one of the two buildings purchased in 1982, Palm Court. Initially, the Ministry failed to compensate the Trust for this asset, and protracted negotiations lasting two years (while the Trust continued to absorb payments on the building) ended with

government refusing (initially) to allow the sale of the property to a higher, private bidder who had already been approved by the Trust. Substantial legal and other fees were thereby incurred by the Trust, on top of its outlay on the original purchase and subsequent interest payments.

31. Parliament of Zimbabwe, House of Assembly, 1987, op. cit., p. 10.

32. Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust, Annual Report 1986. The situation at Kingstons improved only after the appointment of new management, a move which led to an upturn in viability in 1987.

33. The 1986 Annual Report of the Trust notes the existence of three major loans from the private sector: Merchant Bank of C.A.L. (\$763,666, payable in two installments due on 31 August, 1984 and 31 August, 1985; with interest pegged at 15%); Syfrets Merchant Bank Ltd. (\$1,000,000, payable in five installments starting September 1986, with 14.5% interest); and S.A. Old Mutual Life Assurance Co. (\$680,000, payable in ten installments starting 1988, with interest at 1.75% above prime). Together, these combined to provide for an outstanding loan debt of \$2,443,636 in 1986 (1985: \$1,905,997); of the \$1,239,559 due by the time of the 1986 Report, only \$600,000 had actually been repaid due to financial constraints at the Trust.

34. Parliament of Zimbabwe, House of Assembly, 1987, op. cit., p. 11.

35. Matthews, interview, op. cit.

36. Dr. Matthews left the post for health reasons, and was succeeded in their temporary capacities by Farayi Munyuki and later, Wilf Mbanga. In late 1989 Dr. G.T.Z. Chada was confirmed as the MMT's new full-time Executive Secretary. According to most MMT observers interviewed, Chada is considered to have close political links to Dr. Shamuyarira.

37. Interview with a senior member of the MMT Secretariat, "Comrade C", who wishes to remain anonymous, Harare, 1989.

38. Chada, interview, op. cit. Dr. Chada confirmed that annual accounts were drawn up for 1987-1990, while adding that the Trust's financial health is a strictly private concern which cannot be divulged for reasons of financial and investment propriety. More specifically, he noted that substantial movements of capital within and among the holdings of the Trust, undertaken in an effort to stabilise the institution's financial operations, were not and should not be open to public scrutiny. "Comrade D", on the other hand, claimed that the Trust accounts were not open to outside observers primarily because they were in a state of serious chaos and disorder.

39. Matthews, interview, op. cit.

40. Dr. Shamuyarira, "Freedom of Speech?" (Interview), Commerce (March 1981), p. 4.
41. Grace Todd, Herald, 09.07.1981.
42. That the Trustees were chosen on the personal discretion of the Minister of Information has long been acknowledged by MMT insiders, including many Trustees themselves. (Interview with G. Todd, op. cit., Dr. Sadza, 1988, op. cit., and M. Ndubiwa, Bulawayo, 26 October 1990)
43. "The Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust", op. cit.
44. The board was originally comprised of seven members: Dr. D. Sadza (Chairman), physician and member of professional and other state regulatory boards such as the State Lotteries Board of Trustees; Mr. J. Hillis (Vice-Chairman), "leading Harare businessman and industrialist" and former Head of Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries; Prof. W. Kamba, principal of University of Zimbabwe, member of other state boards and panels including ZBC Board of Governors; Mr. H. Mkushi, a "leading Harare lawyer"; Miss E. Mapondera, social worker in Harare and member of Commission of Inquiry on Incomes, Prices and Conditions of Services; Mr. M. Ndubiwa, Bulawayo's Deputy Town Clerk and trustee of Whitsun Foundation; Dr. G. Todd, retired schoolteacher and wife of Sir Garfield Todd, former Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia. Dr. Todd was to resign from the Board in 1985 due to ill health. See "Mass Media Trust", Zimbabwe Press Statement 72/81/SFS, 30 January 1981; "Trustees Men and Women of Distinction", Herald, 31.01.1981; "Trust Members Meet President", Herald, 31.01.1981.
45. Some observers have argued that the selection for the Board of Trustees represented "less of a decolonization exercise than an in-house shift of power relations among the various fractions of the ruling elite", while noting that none of the Trustees came from the ranks of the urban poor, peasantry or trade unions. Rather, the argument goes, they represented the same "elite" from which came most of the senior staffers of the media under the MMT's control: the higher-salaried, urban-based, better educated sections of society. Although empirically correct, this line of argumentation fails to go beyond the limits of "elite analysis" to examine the structured limitations which this elite might be confronted with in any attempt to impose its "social perspective" on the differentiated class fractions which consume the products of the new public media. See for example, Stanford Mukasa, "The Role of the Media in a Post-Colonial State: An Analysis of the First Decade of Zimbabwe's Independence 1980-1990", Paper presented at Zimbabwe's First Decade of Political Independence: Lessons for Namibia and South Africa, Harare, 30 August - 2 September, 1990, p. 32.

46. M. Ndubiwa is a longstanding Zapu member. Dr. Todd is similarly closely associated with the politics and concerns of the southern region circumscribed by Matabeleland and Masvingo province, and has links with Zapu.

47. "National discussion on Press vital --PF", Herald, 06.01.1981.

48. "I wasn't told of takeover --Nkomo", Herald, 08.01.1981.

Zanu was to deny Nkomo's claims (albeit on the rather technical grounds of Cabinet consensus), and argue that the Zapu President was simply trying to score debating points in public. See, "Ministry attacks Nkomo's 'callous and shameful act'", Herald, 06.01.1981, in which the MOI criticizes Nkomo of "pandering to extreme right-wing sentiments" by denying he knew of the Cabinet decision to buy out Argus shares and establish the MMT; and for calling into question the Nigerian Government's donation "to Zanu" (citing Nkomo) for the purpose of "propaganda-mongering".

Zapu's attack on the MMT as a partisan body was supported with a similar critique of the state-run ZBC, where, in the first two years of independence, there was a widely recognized bias towards Zanu in television and radio programming -- a bias which sometimes was to serve as the catalyst for vitriolic attacks from both Zapu and sections of the white community on the corporation. When the MMT's formation was announced, Nkomo had initially responded with what was to become a popular refrain among conservative white leaders, "I would have thought that radio and television were enough as propaganda tools" ("Press grab is tragic --Nkomo", Herald, 05.01.1981).

49. "Ministry attacks Nkomo's 'callous and shameful act'", Herald, 06.01.1981.

50. "Press grab is tragic --Nkomo", Herald, 05.01.1981.

51. Interview with Dr. Timothy Matthews, Harare, 25 March 1987. The Board of Trustees included another notable Zanu loyalist, University of Zimbabwe Pro-Vice Chancellor, Professor Walter Kamba. Dr. Kamba was soon to become the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the ZBC, while maintaining his position on the MMT Board and several other public bodies.

52. "Put papers in hands of the people plea from ZAPU", Herald, 14.01.1981.

53. More specifically, Nkomo linked the case of the MMT to the larger issues of land hunger and resettlement, arguing that in both instances Zanu had turned its back on its black constituency by failing to involve the masses in the elaboration of new social programmes undertaken for their benefit. See for example, "ZAPU Officials Accuse Media", Zimbabwe Press Statement ZIS/312/82/BJ/CS, 22 March, 1982, and "Media 'bias' lashed", Herald, 05.04.1982.

54. See for example, "Dramatic turn in Zimbabwe Press (Comment)", Sunday Mail, 04.01.1981; "Trust's duty (Comment)", Herald, 05.01.1981; "Change not for the

better (Comment)", Chronicle, 05.01.1981; "Takeover a 'colossal blunder'", Herald, 07.01.1981; "Press: He who pays the piper...", Chronicle, 26.01.1981.

55. "Dramatic turn in Zimbabwe Press", op. cit.

56. See for example, "Change not for the better", op. cit.

57. See for example, "Trust's duty (Comment)", Herald, 05.01.1981; "Zimbabwe Take-Over Criticized", IPI Report, vol.29, no.7 (January 1981), p. 4.; and The Christian Science Monitor (reproduced in "A shadow over free enterprise", Herald, 09.01.1981).

58. The view that mass-popular representation could best be achieved via the selection of members of the "professional class", even after the consolidation of mass-popular organisations in civil society in the late 1980s, is still subscribed to by the Trustees and many other media workers consulted. (M. Ndubiwa, Interview, op. cit.) This speaks as much for the acquired political role of the Zimbabwean petty bourgeoisie, as for the failure of such popular institutions to impose themselves on the "official" structures of civil society condoned by and reliant upon the state.

59. Some Trustees identify the absence of media professionals on the Board as having been debilitating in the long run, and suggest that one means of revitalising the Trust in the future is to appoint such individuals to the body. (Interview with Todd, op. cit., and Ndubiwa, op. cit.)

60. According to insiders, Dr. Sadza's affiliation with Zanu dates back many years to the time of the liberation struggle. He is known to have strong personal connections with Dr. Shamuyarira and other leading members of the ruling party's inner circle. The current (1991) Executive Secretary of the MMT, Dr. G.T.Z. Chada, confirmed Dr. Sadza's continuing role as the primary linkage between the Trust and the state in late 1990. (Chada, Interview, op. cit.) This view was supported by Elias Rusike, Moto, July 1991, op. cit., pp. 5-6; and in his Politics of the Mass Media. A Personal Experience (Harare: Roblaw, 1990).

61. See for example, Interview with Dr. Davison Sadza, Harare, 5 May 1988 and 21 November 1990.

The Mass Media Trust and the Trustees have always accepted the principle and practice that the Trust would consult the Ministry of Information on matters of decision making and policy, but that the Trust was not prepared to take orders from the Ministry, and would refuse to put itself in a position where it would be forced to do so. (Interview of 21 November 1990)

62. Ndubiwa, interview, op. cit.

63. G. Todd, interview, op. cit.

64. Matthews, interview, op. cit.

65. See interviews with G. Capon, Harare, 12 May 1989; Willie Musarurwa, Harare, 24 February 1987; E.T. Rusike, Harare, 23 February 1987; B. Gamble, Harare, 13 September 1989; Alwyn Francis, Harare, 27 February 1991. Francis noted that after 1980 and before the placement of blacks in senior Zimpapers management posts, government or party officials regularly examined the business papers of (white) senior management on company premises, in search of "hidden" instructions contained in the correspondence of South African and other expatriate associates.

66. Rusike, Interview, 1987, op. cit.

67. See Chapter 6 for further discussi...

68. Rusike, The Politics..., op. cit.

69. Rusike had also served as the diplomatic representative of Zanu in Malawi in 1968, and had pursued university studies in political science and mass communications in Britain throughout most of the 1970s. See, "PSC Man Moves to Papers", Herald, 22.07.1983.

70. Musarurwa, Interview, op. cit. After his return to Zimbabwe in the late 1970s, Rusike was involved in minor academic research in communication studies at the University, before moving on to become a bureaucrat at the Public Service Commission following independence.

71. Interview with Elias Rusike, Harare, 23 April 1991.

72. To focus on one or a few individuals, without bringing into focus the roles they play as representative of social interests and forces, is to describe little, explain less and offer no policy-grounded solutions to perceived problems. It is a point with which Rusike implicitly agreed, when he argued in 1991 that structural renewal of the MMT and Zimpapers Boards was the key to a reinvigorated "free" public press in Zimbabwe. (Interview, 1991, op. cit.)

73. Moreover, it should be noted that this remodelling of the political chain of command within the newspaper company was only reinforced by the distortion of the "personalised" connections which were forged between the MMT and company management, namely through MMT Chairman Sadza. Rusike and others confirmed that Sadza's personal consultations with the MOI were aimed to exclude, not invite the participation of, the two Boards in the decision-making process.

74. Rusike, Interview, 1987, *op. cit.* This view was unanimously held by Zimpapers' senior managerial and editorial staff. The unique dissenting voice confronting such an interpretation was that of the Chairman of the Trust and the Zimpapers Board of Directors, Dr. Davidson Sadza. In 1988, Dr. Sadza maintained the pre-eminence of the Trust in the publicly-owned print media, and insisted upon the practical effects of the formal controls enjoyed by the MMT over Zimpapers' management and editors. At the same time, he also insisted on the political independence of the media under the MMT's control -- a position from which he later withdrew, implicitly if not explicitly. (Sadza, Interviews 1988 and 1990, *op. cit.*)

75. Rusike, "Of hatchets and hacks", *Moto*, no.102 (July 1991), p. 5.

76. See Chapter 5.

77. Aside from references to government statements cited above, and below in Chapter 5, see also: "Media expert calls for a rural Press -- Nyoka", and "Africa in drive for a positive press -- Nyoka", both in *Herald*, 23.03.1981; "News for the people", *Moto*, vol.1, no.3 (July 1982), p. 8.; "Newspapers our closest neighbours", *Herald*, 09.08.1982, "Two Government Officials to Study Rural Press in Kenya", Press Statement ZIS/1556/82/TM/SK, 26 November, 1982; "Dr. Shamuyarira outlines how establishment of 51 District Newspapers will aid in development of rural areas", *Herald*, 17.09.1983.

78. See Appendix G for a compendium of relevant historical documents.

79. For a brief account of these early attempts at rural newspaper production see Appendix H.

80. The second paper was produced by the same editor, and in the same offices, as the *Murewa News*. Murewa and Mutoko are neighbouring growth points in the northeast of the country.

81. M.A. Marere, "A Message from Cde. M.A. Marere, Executive Secretary of Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust" [insert], *Mutoko News*, no.1, 12 July, 1983. *The Herald* reported some months later that the government and MMT had plans to establish a full complement of 51 district papers: that is, one for each district of the country. ("District papers planned for 51 areas", *Herald*, 17.09.1983).

82. Printed on poor quality newsprint, and without facilities for the reproduction of photographs or polished graphics, the *News* held little appeal for the advertisers on whom the MMT said the paper should depend. A 1985 account noted that the paper was widely read in its district, but that its production was being hampered by shortage of the most basic inputs, like paper, ink and transport. (For example, the editor was forced to distribute the copy by means of a bicycle, donated by the West German

Friedrich Naumann Foundation). See the misleadingly titled, "'People's Newspaper' is making giant strides", Herald, 29.04.1985.

83. "Murewa News in lone fight for survival", Sunday Mail, 01.07.1984.

84. See for example, correspondence between T. Matthews (MMT Executive Secretary) and the Trust's Chairman, Dr. Sadza, which notes that Dutch, German and Swiss donors, along with Unesco, are anxious to proceed with the provincial papers plan; and that it is of utmost "urgency" that the MMT recruit a Zimbabwean project officer to liaise with donors around the terms of an "approved project document" (most likely a reference to the document submitted to the IPDC-Unesco by the Government of Zimbabwe -- see Appendix G). The failure to act soon in response to donors, Matthews warned, "may lead to considerable embarrassment". (Timothy Matthews, Letter From Executive Secretary to Chairman, Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust, Harare, 10 November, 1987.)

85. "Media Trust plans to launch eight provincial papers", Herald, 27.11.1985. The study resulted in Mamutse's report of January 1986. The participation of the MOI in this new venture was made clear by the ministry's simultaneous plans to scrap its People's Weekly to "make space" for the anticipated rural papers (see "Rural papers plan to replace 'Weekly'", Herald, 15.12.1985).

86. Donors have included Dutch, German, Swiss NGOs, and Unesco.

87. By 1991 six such units were given (one for each of paper), with four coming from Unesco and the remaining two from the Netherlands-based Graphic Media Development Centre. The problematic execution of some donations was emblematic of the financial vulnerability of the MMT: the commissioning of the first desktop publishing machines was delayed because the Trust was not in a position to pay what it felt were erroneously-levied customs duties on the imported equipment. See: Zimbabwe, Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, Letter from M.S. Sibanda (Secretary) to Rural Press Project Coordinator, (ref: D/15/82) 25 February, 1988.

88. In newly-established papers like Indonsakusa (supported by the Friedrich Naumann Foundation), donors agreed to cover the salaries and expenses of staff. With substantial aid from the Swiss, each newspaper was supplied with one four-wheel drive vehicle and two motorcycles. By 1991, head office staff included five full-time employees, all of whose salaries were paid directly by the MMT.

89. The MMT claims that the papers in Mashonaland East and Central, and Matabeleland North, have regularly sold-out since their establishment. A readership survey commissioned by the provincial newspapers in 1990 indicated that the local papers were second only to the national dailies in popularity, in places where the dailies were easily available for purchase. See, Probe Market Research, "Detailed

Tables of Survey of Rural Newspapers for Rural Newspapers Project, Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust", Harare, 1990; and, Interview with Wilf Mbanga, Harare, 12 September 1991.

90. According to Mbanga, Interview, 1991, *op. cit.*, Ilanga was unchallenged in Matabeleland South owing to the poor distribution of The Chronicle in that province.

91. B.K. Chakaodza, "Evaluative Research into the Operations, Relevance and Contribution of Rural Newspapers to the Development Process: The Case of Zimbabwe", unpublished project proposal, Zimbabwe Institute of Development Studies, Harare, July 1991, p. 4.

92. The Swiss donation amounted to approximately 40,000 pounds-sterling worth of printing machinery (counting a second press currently being installed at time of writing), and other printing materials and equipment -- notably, a reproduction camera, and platemaker -- with a value of more than 10,000 pounds-sterling.

93. The three divisions included A.S. Publications (which was retained in its inherited form), Superprint (a printing division started in April 1991, borne of the extra capacity of the new printing works), and the provincial newspapers division.

94. E. Rusike, "Rusike on Free Press", Herald, 29.04.1987 (emphasis added).

95. E. Rusike, The Politics..., *op. cit.*, p. 76.

96. Todd, Interview, *op. cit.* Todd and others, including management officials at Zimpapers, underlined the lack of regular communication between the two Boards and the consequent absence of the MMT from decision-making processes at the newspaper chain.

97. See Chapter 5 and Chapter 8 below for more detailed discussion of the unfolding and consequences of the Willowgate saga.

98. The Trust's investment in Hunyani cost approximately \$7.5 million, most of which must have been financed with further loans. A 1988 stock market survey shows that the MMT controlled 9,241,622 (37.45%) of Hunyani's shares, a number and percentage which by had decreased to 6,279,967 (or 25.45% of all stock) by 1990. The sale of shares in the interim must have yielded a considerable income -- perhaps as much as \$8,880,000. See, Sagit Stockbrokers Private Limited, Statistical Information and Share Analysis of Top Shareholders on the Zimbabwe Stock Exchange. Year Ended 31st December 1988, confidential report, 1989; and *idem.*, Statistical Information on Companies on the Zimbabwe Stock Exchange, confidential report, 1990.

99. Sadza, Interview, 21 November 1990, *op. cit.*

100. Sadza, Interview, November 1990, *op. cit.*

101. Only very rarely was the institution's structural integrity aggressively defended in public by its leading official, or for that matter, by others associated with the organisation. This is a view supported widely by officials inside of the MMT, "Comrades B, D, E and F", who wish to remain anonymous on this point. The primary reason for this perceived passivity on the part of the Trust Chairman was unanimously identified as his close personal and professional relations with leading members of government and the ruling party.

102. The move came at a time when rumours were circulating high in media circles that the Board of Trustees was about to be dismissed by government; and that its Chairman, in particular, had been targeted for dismissal owing to his "disloyalty" for failing to respond quickly and punitively to The Chronicle's Willowgate revelations. (Interview with Comrade "G", a senior MMT official who wishes to remain anonymous on this point.)

103. The following account of the behind-the-scenes struggle between the MOI and MMT is based on accounts given in interviews by Comrades "D" and "G", Trustees and senior officials of the Trust, who wish to remain anonymous on this matter.

104. The contribution was noted without critical comment in the MMT media. Zanu's "building fund", in support of its \$19 million party headquarters completed in Harare in 1990, receives regular contributions from party members (\$5 million by early 1991) and non-party civic organisations alike (\$800,000). Additionally, workers in the public service were requested to tithe "voluntarily" a small portion their monthly wage packet to the fund for twelve months in 1990 (this scheme yielded \$1.8 million). However, popular support for the fund has been virtually non-existent. In mid 1991, the party still owes over \$10 million to creditors of its building project. See, "Zanu(PF) still owes \$10 million for party HQ", Financial Gazette, 28.03.1991.

105. The dispute was solved some months later by a court order forcing the Trust to honour its commitment to new wage increments. The Ziana journalists had forced the issue by obtaining a court injunction authorising the sale of the news agency's mainframe computer, in order to raise funds to cover their promised wage hikes.

106. Dr Sadza's "recommendation" was not confirmed by the Zimpapers 1991 Annual General Meeting of shareholders, after interventions by representatives of minority shareholders struck down the nominations, having cited the illegality of the appointments: Zimbabwean corporate law mandates that company directors be shareholders in the enterprises they direct. At time of writing, most Zimbabwean observers are of the opinion that the 1992 Zimpapers Annual General Meeting will be marked by yet another attempt at placing Kachingwe and other MOI and ruling party officials on the Zimpapers Board. For a fuller account of the Board of Directors debacle, see "Panic and blushing in Zimpapers boardroom", Moto, no. 103 (August

1991), p. 19; and, Africa South July 1991. See also, Interview with Judith Todd, Harare, 28 February 1991.

107. Rusike, The Politics..., op. cit., p. 76.

108. G. Todd, Interview, op. cit.

109. See Chapter 6.

110. See Chapter 7.

Chapter 5. The State Steps In: The Politics of Policing at Zimpapers

If government wanted to change the nature of the newspapers, it was by the personalities that were brought into the leadership positions... We all know that a paper has its editor's character.

William Saidi, former editor, The Sunday Mail¹

Introduction: The Price of Success

The prospects for the development of a free and responsible public press at Zimpapers were severely eroded beginning in the early 1980s. This reality was the direct outcome, on the one hand, of government's shifting commitment to the maintenance of an open political space in the public media; and on the other, of the growing determination of Zimpapers' internal developmental trajectory by the MOI. These two dynamics were not unrelated. Both were facilitated by the accumulation of political momentum and professional experience within Zanu and the state just after independence, by the departure of white skills, and domination by Zanu of the terrain of national politics in the early 1980s.

This chapter begins by examining the social inheritance of the Zimpapers chain as it stood in 1981. As the dominant print media institution in Zimbabwe, Zimpapers was crippled nevertheless by a lack of expertise and -- like the MMT -- by the lack of an independent political base, and programme. The combination of these elements presented the opportunity for intervention by Zanu, using the MOI and in

circumvention of the whole structure of the MMT. At the outset this participation of the MOI in the internal affairs of Zimpapers was necessary, and indeed, welcomed, by a wide range of opinion. However, in the long run, as the ruling party and state grew closer in the aim of winning Zanu's partisan political consolidation throughout civil society, Zanu's privileged access to (and domination of) senior management and editorial staff became an object of criticism, contention and eventually, popular hostility.

It is argued here that one of the primary instrumental means adopted by Zanu to shape the political tenor of Zimpapers -- the direct selection and manipulation of senior editorial staff -- was an effective short term solution to the question of political control which, in the long run, would prove unable to sustain the Zanu government's domination of national political discourse in the media. Episodic breakdowns in this hidden system of political policing at Zimpapers (often due to the fact that some journalists took the formal authority of the MMT seriously), and the gradual focusing of social debate on the contentious political role of the public media, called into question the government's thinly-veiled interference in the "free" media. Having provoked doubts about the political neutrality -- and, therefore, the hegemonic utility - of the MMT media, the ruling party's strategy of domination and consensual leadership within Zimpapers was bound to fail in its larger task, precisely because it had succeeded in its more immediate one.

An Ambiguous Inheritance

Zimpapers was unquestionably the most important of the three media institutions which initially came under the jurisdiction of the MMT. The company's overwhelming penetration of the daily and weekly press market can be seen in the fact that since 1981 Zimpapers has been the sole public print media to which most Zimbabweans have been exposed on a regular basis. But it is also borne out by the rapid "politicisation" of the "media issue" in 1980, nurtured by the widespread debates and deliberations just after independence about the role of the mass media -- and about the RPP newspaper chain in particular -- in the building of the new Zimbabwe. It was these debates and deliberations, of course, which presaged the setting up of the MMT.

Zimpapers was seen by most as the principal component of the experiment; not only because of the relatively large corporate size of the company, but also because of the possibilities it presented for visible, immediate, progressive change in a high-profile, racial social infrastructure. Whereas many other sectors of the social institutional base (including larger commercial agricultural and industrial enterprises) would remain substantially unchanged for many years to come, tightly secured in private (white) hands, Zimpapers offered a fresh case of what could be accomplished by combining the tools of the old regime, with the will of the new. Under these circumstances, Zimpapers soon emerged as the primary public face and voice of the MMT experiment -- and as the object of intense political contention.

In 1981 the Zimpapers chain consisted of five newspapers, including two national dailies, Harare's The Herald and Bulawayo's The Chronicle; two national weeklies, The Sunday Mail and The Sunday News, published respectively in the same two cities; and the weekly Umtali Post (later Manica Post) operating from the eastern city of Umtali (later Mutare) and serving the eastern region roughly defined by the Province of Manicaland. In 1985, the weekly vernacular papers Kwayedza (Shona) and Umthunywa (Sindebele) were added to the company stables; soon they merged to become the single, national tabloid weekly, Kwayedza/Umthunywa. The Harare and Bulawayo papers were taken over as broadsheets in 1981, but, within a short time, all but the two publications located in Harare were to continue operation as tabloids.

Together, these newspapers enjoyed a large regular readership (total circulation July-December 1981: 288,648), which was to expand dramatically in coming years alongside higher printing capacity and print runs, and initial efforts undertaken to extend distribution. (Table 5.1) By 1987 the total circulation of the chain's papers surpassed 500,000. Of the company's six newspapers the Sunday Mail consistently enjoyed the widest circulation, followed by the Herald, Chronicle, Sunday News, Kwayedza-Umthunywa and Manica Post. These figures reflect a pattern of regional and political affiliation among the most important newspapers, with the Harare-based daily and weekly sharing a much larger, Shona-speaking constituency than that regional one catered to by the Bulawayo (and to a lesser extent, by the Mutare-based) journals. This fact, according to many, would stand behind the MOI's greater sensitivity to the content of The Sunday Mail and Herald; and

Table 5.1
Zimpapers: Circulation
1979-1990

Source: Zimpapers Annual Reports

alternately, greater tolerance of criticism and debate in The Chronicle, Sunday News and Manica Post. Although the MOI produced The Peoples' Weekly, a free fortnightly paper with a claimed circulation of 500,000, the Zimpapers chain dominated newspaper circulation and readership throughout the 1980s.² Indeed, the company controlled the market almost by default: the only other newspaper distributed on a national scale, and with a readership extending beyond small regional boundaries, was the privately-owned business weekly, The Financial Gazette.³ The buy-out of the dominant share holding in Zimpapers therefore gave the MMT control over what was a very broad administratively centralised swathe of the national press.

But while the take-over of the chain by the Trust enacted a formal transition from foreign to domestic ownership, it left the company functioning in its former capacity: that is, staffed by whites (especially at senior levels), directed at urban society, and managed as a commercial, profit-oriented private company. In this regard, there were parallels between the relationship of the new Zimpapers to its inherited structures, and that of the new government to the "received" national political economy. The similarity extended to the level of the rhetorical and long-term practical responses of both administrations to their newly-acquired terrain; or to be more precise, to their opting for the "practicality" of using old structures and means, for the achievement of redefined (popular) ends.

The problem for both, however, was that the inherited structures contained deeply ingrained features which would not be easily disentangled from the bulk of the inherited baggage. Furthermore -- and this was particularly the case with Zimpapers -

- the functional content of those inherited structures might have appeared to have been inherited intact, but in reality it had been practically altered as a result of majority rule: notably, through the exodus of skilled whites, beginning in the late 1970s.

In both the editorial and management divisions of Zimpapers, the effects of this exodus -- and of the previous racial regime of management -- were immediate and severe, and had a profound impact on efforts to reshape the company following the take-over. Although a significant cadre of African journalists had emerged over many decades within and later outside of the country, there were few black Zimbabweans immediately qualified to take over senior editorial positions. More vitally, at the second rung of editorial decision-making -- that of the assistant editors and sub-editors, responsible for the selection, remodelling and page-placement of raw news -- the scarcity of black Zimbabwean labour power was even more pronounced. This shortfall of skilled black professionals was to result in the retention and promotion of skilled whites from RPP, and, as an indication of the urgency of the situation the "emergency" contract importation of black and white journalists from abroad.⁴

In the area of management, too, the effects of the previous racial hierarchy were potent and long-lasting. For the first years after the take-over, Zimpapers' managerial structures were to remain very much the same, in form, functional content and personnel. A large consideration in this circumstance -- and one maintained by Zimpapers' inherited white management⁵ -- was the fact that there were few blacks with adequate management skills and training to take over at the company, and

therefore no realistic, commercially viable alternative but to maintain the status quo into the near future. At the same time, government suspicions of impending white-conceived sabotage within the newspaper chain meant that there was little pressure from the state to proceed with substantial plans for Zimpapers' renewal and expansion, at least as long as blacks were still being recruited and trained for senior management posts in the company.⁶

While Zimpapers was handicapped internally by skills shortages, and by the uncertainty of company policy on a range of political, editorial and operational questions, an alternate power centre for the company emerged at the heart of the MOI. This power drew its strength from both the political momentum and popularity of the new government and its programme, and the practical planning and administrative capacity of the MOI bureaucracy. On both accounts, the MOI soon filled much of the space in management and planning at Zimpapers created by the departure of white staff, and by the de-linking of local structures from the research and advisory resources of the company's former Argus parent.

While the new Zimpapers and the MMT failed (or had been unable) to invest in management and planning resources quickly, the MOI was intent not only on recommending a general trajectory for print media development, but in assisting (and often leading) in the planning of new media initiatives. Its power was soon enhanced within Zimpapers, by the placement of MOI-selected personnel like Elias Rusike within company management structures -- a practice which allowed the state a double edged power base, in the sense that internal, seemingly "independent" company

management could be used as a foil by the MOI, even when the publicly-assumed advisory capacity of the MOI took on diminished importance.

With the MOI's ever-deepening ventriloquist presence at the heart of Zimpapers, of course, came the government's (and Zanu's) ever-greater access to the wider political decision-making process, including editorial management, within the newspaper chain. Throughout this process, the MOI provided the tools of political leverage, while the ruling party and its senior personnel (notably Dr. Shamuyarira) supplied the political direction and guidance for their use. In the most important cases, the two functions were indistinguishable with regard to the individuals involved.⁷ But this is not to say (as do some ex-Argus employees⁸) that various personnel and development policy changes made in the early 1980s were simply and unilaterally imposed on Zimpapers by the state on behalf of the ruling party, with purely partisan intentions from the outset. Such a view misses the wider political context of the initial post-independence period, and the urgent necessity at the time of remodelling existing structures in a context of skills shortages.

The "conspiratorial" perspective does not acknowledge the widespread popularity and political necessity of the MOI's initial direct and indirect interventions at Zimpapers, a popularity engendered by the clearly anachronistic features of the old, white RPP chain in the context of independent Zimbabwe; and by the nationalist political momentum retained from the recent achievement of independence. Initially at least, and particularly as long as the white employees inherited from the Argus days continued to occupy senior management posts, the MOI's intervention was not a

matter of unmediated state determination of policy, or "press control". Rather, there was need for both policy and infrastructural assistance from the new government, for Zimpapers.

In the first instance particularly, there was need for concrete indications from government, about what it expected of its own creation, the MMT, and the latter's main instrument, Zimpapers. If there was to be a mass-oriented remodelling of the Zimpapers infrastructure, it would have to be a project entailing the co-operation and assistance of social and political structures outside of the company. Such imperatives were only exacerbated by the feeble pared-down management structures left at Zimpapers in the wake of the Argus buy-out; structures which were still dominated by whites who, for the most part, were vastly out of touch with the political sensibility and component concrete demands of the national democratic revolution.

The fact that the MOI later expanded its access to Zimpapers management to facilitate the running of the chain in a more partisan fashion, does not negate the necessity of the state's initial guiding interventions at the company. The alternative to intervention from the state, in any case, was the prolongation of the previous, unacceptable status quo: that is, a "national" press operated by, oriented to and made available to, a small minority of whites and middle class blacks. With this reality still in place in 1981, the first measures undertaken in the remodelling of the new Zimpapers were designed to strike directly at the most visible (and most vulnerable) component of white power at the chain: that is, the company's collection of five newspaper editors, all of whom were white. But in the event, this surgical attack set a

precedent for later MOI intimidation at the very heart of the editorial process, while inflicting only superficial damage on the bigger infrastructure of information collection and distribution in the public media.

Maintaining an Image? Political Policing at Zimpapers

By recruitment, censure, dismissal, threats of dismissal and sharing of information access, Zanu and its state-approved functionaries within the MMT media laboured concertedly in the 1980s to impose political order inside the public print media. The fertile ground for the party's interference inside Zimpapers was laid at the very outset, with the MOI's direct and dominant participation in the selection of new (black) editors for the chain's newspapers. Later, these efforts were nurtured by the MOI's penetration of all sectors of company activities, including senior levels of Zimpapers' management and editorial divisions.

By these moves, much of the Zimpapers hierarchy was rendered a surrogate to the aims and plans of the MOI and its political superior, the Zanu leadership. So much was openly acknowledged -- and accepted -- by many senior Zimpapers staff throughout the 1980s.⁹ One month after the Trust's buy-out of the Argus share holding in 1981, new editors for three of the most influential of Zimpapers' publications were announced by the Zimpapers Board of Directors. Although officially made at the instigation of the MMT -- itself created barely one month

earlier, by the MOI -- the editorial appointments were entirely the result of the MOI's own initiative, aimed at a rapid replacement of "hostile" white Argus journalists. Little was said or done at the time to conceal the current power-centre of the new public press.

Revealing the direct role of the government in establishing the ground rules for the public press, the MOI's Dr. Shamuyarira had specified, at the time of the MMT's own creation, that the new and future editors within Zimpapers would have to be Africans, with a commitment to majority rule. In the event, the Minister's criteria were met by the three new editors whom he personally selected, and who were immediately approved by the new MMT Trustees: two were Zanu members, while the third was the former Secretary for Information and Publicity of Zapu, who reportedly had assured government officials that he had retired from party politics.¹⁰

For many senior Zimpapers personnel, the chain's white editors had been fired by a starkly partisan state, a fact which provoked harshly critical comment within and outside the Zimpapers media, at least until the emplacement of new black editorial staff.¹¹ In a swan-song critique of government -- one which displayed, ironically, the extent to which Zimpapers' editors had failed to keep abreast of the changing political and social order -- the whole policy of rectification of past colour bar policy was indirectly challenged on the doorstep of the press itself. The attack took the form of a short-lived campaign in the pages of the press, centred on the linked themes of "press" and "democratic" freedoms. The gist of the argument was that the appointment of black senior editors by a Trust which itself was hand-picked by the

state, indicated the insincerity of the government's commitment to racial reconciliation, freedom of opposition and the neutrality of the public press.

Mixed in with this bitter brew were allegations that "naked racism" would be the bench mark of appointments to the media in the future¹² -- as if this had not been more clearly the case in the past. Indeed, the tenacity of the dominant "liberal" opinion in white society on this point indicated the serious challenge at the outset to Zanu's project of "reconciliation". In the immediate wake of Rhodesia's passing, conservative white society's perception of "racism" in every government appointment was a theme to be oft-repeated.¹³ The case of the Trust take-over and the appearance of new black faces in editors' chairs was no exception.

For many whites accustomed to racially-demarcated privileges, including those in the "reformed" RF of Ian Smith,¹⁴ the editors' charges of "racism" at the workplace struck a sympathetic note. Inevitably, these accusations included elements of argumentation which betrayed their political origins: the previously "open" and "western-style" press and society, some editors lamented, would soon be disappearing from the country, as it had "in the rest of black Africa".¹⁵

Of course, both of these observations -- about the state of the media in Rhodesia, and in the "rest of black Africa" -- had their origins not in historical fact, but rather in the familiar historical reconstructions of RF propaganda. Their falsity did not mean, however, that such accusations did not have to be taken seriously and countered gently by the new editors, out of deference to "reconciliation", and the critical shortage of skills in the early 1980s.¹⁶

Yet beyond the issue of the replacement of whites by blacks chosen by the MOI stood the more ominous fact, that the first major decisions made at Zimpapers after the MMT buy-out were taken without input from the Trust itself. Instead, the MOI's choice of new editors was presented to the Trustees -- and indeed, to the Zimpapers Board of Directors -- as a fait accompli.¹⁷

In the politically charged atmosphere of the time, and in light of the newborn institution of the Trust, it was of small consequence to many observers that the transition to black personnel was arranged through the direct intervention of government.¹⁸ The Trust, many thought, would prevent such intervention from becoming chronic in the future; and in any case, at that time there was no other agency which could effect such a change as swiftly and coherently as the state.¹⁹

Initially, the vitality of commentary and coverage in most of the "new" Zimpapers seemed to confirm the hopes of those who claimed that the omnipresence of the MOI at the outset of the MMT experiment was necessary -- and temporary. This was not simply a case of the MOI amicably "allowing" such activity within the press. Although the importance of making reconciliation appear to work -- in the eyes of local whites and potential international donors -- was a factor in the establishment of a "free" public press, the main stumbling bloc to Zanu's direct supervision of the public media was the concrete effects of government's own rhetoric. In other words, some Zimpapers editors actually took their de jure political independence seriously -- and even went on to spiritedly defend their autonomy in the pages of their newspapers, claiming a populist-nationalist, moral high ground.

We have said it before and we feel constrained to say it again: A puppet Press that specialises in flattering ministers and tells them lies is worse than no Press. It is the arch-enemy of both the Government and the people. We perform our duties on sound moral principles. We are motivated by what is best for our country and by considerations of national interests. Nobody monopolises these.²⁰

Such principled stands rooted in concern for the national interest attempted to flip the government's logic of the "committed press" on its head: that is, the committed press was best exemplified in the critical press. While the domain of civil society remained contained under Zanu's widely-popular leadership, such efforts to carve out an independent space for all media appeared to succeed; so much so that even editors who had been subjected to attack from government leaders, joined the ruling party in proclaiming the relative independence of the print media throughout 1981.

Given our historical and political circumstances in the country, our press enjoys a large measure of freedom. No Minister of this Government reads the news before it is published. At no time has it been made legal or otherwise -- or has legal power to stop anything from being published. Everything that is in the national interest, and is truthful, is published.²¹

But it was not long before a changing social and political climate, characterised by economic decline and the outbreak of sustained and serious political banditry in Matabeleland, created new responsibilities which would encourage the ruling group in the government to apply pressure to the public press. While the "national interest" remained an uncontentious issue, there was no urgent need for the ruling group to define and delimit its precise political meaning, and ensure that usage in press coverage and debate. However, when critical debates and reportage --

including items aired in the public press -- presented the possibility of contributing to the deconstruction of Zanu's early popular, consensual leadership, the ruling party undertook to rein-in political control of the public media systematically. Indeed, throughout most of the 1980s, Zanu adopted the contradictory position of proclaiming the independence of the MMT media, while threatening (and sometimes undertaking) retaliation for "transgressions" against the national interest.²²

In the new circumstances of economic and social crisis, the implications of the MOI's first interventions for the MMT's and Zimpapers' autonomy would become apparent, as the state employed a variety of mechanisms to instil discipline within the public media. These mechanisms included insertion of a policing element directly into the press, via management and occasionally, senior editors; and the nurturing of powerful, direct "consultative" linkages between officials of the MOI and ruling party information hierarchy on the one hand, and Zimpapers editors and managers, on the other. Through these intertwined developments, the MOI's initial domination of the new public media infrastructure set the precedent for the state's and ruling party's creeping control of the "free" public media.

The use of MOI "consultations" with senior editorial staff for the purposes of mediating the content of reportage was symptomatic of the state's growing direct links with Zimpapers editors and managers. At Zimpapers the regular communication between editors, managers and the MOI was a recognized and accepted fact of life after 1981.²³ Indeed, it was explicitly provided for at the outset, when it was held that future relations between the "people's government" and the national press should

be non-antagonistic, and co-ordinated in the interests of development and national unity -- the function of the press being that of "educator of the nation and link between government and the masses". It was an image-role maintained by the company throughout its first decade, but one whose content was to change markedly, as Elias Rusike hinted in 1987.

There is a special relationship between the Minister of Information and the newspapers, with the editors being able to consult with him more or less on a daily basis... quite often they will seek his advice on ticklish and sensitive stories, especially those to do with national security.²⁴

Over the 1980s the access of the state to senior journalists, editorial content and management decisions grew dramatically, in tandem with the slotting into the company's senior management positions of officials sympathetic to the ruling party (if not members of it). As the MOI gained direct access to management and editorial bodies, and established itself as an unquantifiable de facto power within the workplace, the "consultation" of government and ruling party officials by media workers took on new meaning.

The effects of this emerging system of supervision were to be seen most clearly in the series of politically motivated editorial hirings and firings which punctuated the development of Zimpapers throughout the decade. They were also evident in the blanket of self-censorship in the same media, a fact which was not unrelated to the simultaneous attacks on Zimpapers' more outspoken editors, but which was more systematically put in place through the building of a partisan management regime, overseen by Zimpapers CEO Rusike.

Imposing a New Order

As it happened, the veiled warnings and threats from the Director of Information and Minister Zvobgo (among others) in 1981 to critical Zimpapers editors would stand as precursors to government's later actions, aimed at punishing and silencing independent-minded editors, eliminating "negative" reportage, and restructuring political commentary and news coverage in the image of the ruling party. In this regard, the premature departures of the editors of The Umtali Post, The Herald and The Sunday Mail in the early and mid 1980s were exemplary.

The first limitations imposed directly upon Zimpapers journalists for overtly political reasons came in August 1981 when the editor of The Umtali Post, Mrs. Jean Maitland-Stuart, wrote an editorial questioning the government's decision to bring in North Korean instructors to train the army's Fifth Brigade. According to The Herald, Maitland-Stuart was summoned to the capital to explain her actions before the Prime Minister and Minister of Information, who both wondered at her motives in adopting "the South African line" on Zimbabwe's co-operation with friendly socialist countries.²⁵ Within one month the editor was relieved of her post by Zimpapers management on the advice of the Trust.

Although Minister Shamuyarira insisted that the government had not "ordered" her dismissal, he did acknowledge that the government was "gratified by the Mass Media Trust's decision" to replace the editor.²⁶ But given that Maitland-Stuart was a holdover from the old RPP order (who in any case was destined to retire in the near

future), her dismissal represented less a generalised, frontal attack on the editorial authority of Zimpapers' new journalists, and more a warning about the sensitivity of the state to challenge on political-military affairs. More important for the Zimbabwean press were later moves made against the black editors of The Herald and The Sunday Mail.

In many ways The Herald was an unlikely target of ruling party supporters in the early 1980s, for although it offered coverage of the political opposition of Zapu and the RF, it is without question that the paper adopted an editorial line broadly sympathetic to the new government. Such "loyalty" was underlined by the editor himself in his public commitment to support the government in principle while offering constructive criticism.²⁷ On specific issues like the "one-party state", it is indeed difficult to conceive how the paper could have been more in line with Zanu thinking despite Minister Zvobgo's and others' objections²⁸. Even on disputes within the ruling party, the paper stood by the political leadership, often doing its dirty work in public: when Zanu Secretary-General Edgar Tekere was dismissed from his post, The Herald zealously joined the criticism of the former Minister -- and in the event was later sued and convicted of libel for what editor Munyuki claimed was the carrying out of his "duty".²⁹

However, the relatively free rein for this type of coverage which The Herald enjoyed by favour of the MMT and government did not apply to other issues. In the middle of the Matabeleland crisis in February 1983, The Herald had reported dutifully the Zimbabwe government's allegations that Zapu was intimately connected to the

organised banditry which had necessitated the army's presence in Matabeleland.³⁰

However the paper had overstepped the bounds of acceptable criticism by naming not only Zapu but also the government of Botswana as being guilty of complicity in the dissident menace. By harbouring known Zipra bandits, Munyuki editorialised, Botswana had shown bad faith in its dealings with Zimbabwe.³¹

It was an incident which shaped public perception of the government-press relationship. Indeed, it was precisely The Herald's popularly-perceived yet unofficial linkage to the state which was both the source of Zimbabwean diplomatic embarrassment in the first instance, and the means by which this was resolved in the last instance. The Herald's allegations resulted in a diplomatic protest to the Zimbabwe government from Botswana, which cited unfair, unjustified and "unneighbourly" criticism in what it took to be the Zimbabweans' public mouthpiece. This, in turn, led (according to many) to intense pressure from the state, exercised through the MOI, on the MMT to reprimand the "offending" parties. The outcome was the resignation of Munyuki and his movement to Ziana, where he became editor-in-chief. In that new position, Munyuki was denied direct access to the pages of the national newspapers; particularly given the structured and personal enmity between Ziana and its head on the one hand, and Zimpapers and Munyuki's replacement at The Herald, Zanu partisan Tommy Sithole, on the other.³²

This change of personnel was to mark the beginning of Zimpapers flagship's decline into government-inspired self-censorship. In this respect, the first round of editorial changes at The Herald was a sign of things to come throughout the chain. By

the end of the 1980s, only Tommy Sithole remained in place among the first set of black Zimpapers editors appointed following the MMT's establishment.³³ After the departure of Munyuki from The Herald, along with many other less easily discernible instances of politically-determined manipulation of senior and junior journalists alike, there were three overtly political dismissals.

Most portentous of these was the dismissal of Sunday Mail editor Willie Musarurwa, in July 1985. It was an action which concretely announced both Zanu's decision to transgress the borders of "press freedom" protected by the MMT openly and irrevocably, and the arrival on the media scene of the governing party's head political policeman at Zimpapers, Elias Rusike. As with later dismissals of editors and reprimands of journalists, Musarurwa's firing was ordered directly by the MOI via personal communication with Rusike and MMT Chairman Dr. Sadza, and executed in the "normal" course of management.³⁴ What made the editor's firing most remarkable was the fact that it came about because of the ruling party's refusal to tolerate debate and even-handed criticism (for which Musarurwa's paper was regularly lauded, and for which the editor campaigned openly from 1981 to 1985, and after), and not because of any real or imagined professional inability or errors on Musarurwa's part. Indeed, the editor's professional abilities were never called into question by those who precipitated his downfall.

Rather, Musarurwa was forced out after a quiet campaign by government against his "negative" critical perspective and continued pursuit of editorial independence.³⁵ From the time of taking over as editor of the country's largest

circulation newspaper, Musarurwa defended the right of the press to offer critical comment of government and leaders in civil society within the boundaries formed by the law and "national interest". The exercising of this right, he argued, both enabled the press to serve as a flexible link between the people and their government,³⁶ and, more broadly speaking, helped empower "the masses" in their inalienable right to good government. When the state questioned the newspapers' role Musarurwa appealed traditional liberal democratic principles. In a typical reply to such attacks from then Director of Information Justin Nyoka, Musarurwa invoked the "national right" to good government.

Mr. Nyoka says the Press should not criticise political leaders. He assumes that political leaders are infallible and that they are all motivated by and sensitive to national interest in what they do or say. And yet experience both here and elsewhere proves this to be palpably wrong. No country in this world has been able to produce perfect and infallible leaders who always act in the national interest, and Zimbabwe would be the first to achieve the feat.³⁷

It was the determination with which Musarurwa's Sunday Mail pursued a policy of non-partisan reportage which placed the paper and its editor in the path of the ruling party, particularly as cases of corruption, complaints of mismanagement and the difficulties surrounding the implementation of Zanu's vaguely socialist platform provided talking points for the national press. While Zanu set about trying to weld national and partisan political principles together, wide-ranging debates such as those which characterised the Mail went a long way towards demystifying the "national" aura that the ruling party sought to cloak itself in.

Because of its steady stream of challenges concerning government's daily administrative activities³⁸ and broader social criticisms, The Sunday Mail soon came to be viewed by Zanu as an "opposition" organ (an assessment further bolstered for some by Musarurwa's Zapu past). However, it was especially the untamed and disobedient ideological flavour of this main national weekly (and Zimpapers' largest selling publication) which disturbed the ruling party's sense of political security.

With its larger pagination, weekly production schedule and early adherence to a broad liberal notion of open debate, it was not long before the Mail came to act as an important national forum for discussion and criticism on issues for which Zanu itself had aimed to establish the national agenda. Embarrassing instances of tribalism and public corruption, both linked to Zanu's actual administrative performance, received considerable attention.³⁹ Musarurwa decried "sloganeering" and the press' acquiescent "speech journalism" response to government demands for publicity access -- a tendency he ruled out for his own publication.⁴⁰ The free-for-all approach applied even to coverage of the "sacred cow" of "friendly" nationalist liberation movements.⁴¹ But most importantly, the air of open debate and criticism soon pervaded editorial treatment of the theme of socialism and the Zimbabwean socialist transition in particular.

Under Musarurwa, the paper's editorial stance came to be rooted in a gradualist, "social democratic" -- rather than Marxist-Leninist -- political economy.⁴² In this regard Musarurwa, who unabashedly proclaimed his liberal-democratic leanings and his suspicions of (then) real-existing socialism and nascent socialist

projects (including, by implication, that of Zanu), posed a direct threat to the intellectual and political programme of government. Already in 1981, The Sunday Mail was giving sympathetic coverage to those who expressed reservations about the pace and unfolding form of the "revolution".⁴³ At the same time the paper suggested that some major planks of the state's transition plan required re-thinking, or at least careful elaboration.⁴⁴

This type of critique was tolerated as long as its political constituency in civil society remained relatively disorganised and Zanu's command of national political debate stood intact. However, increasing political demands on Zanu provoked by economic decline, intensifying antagonisms between Zanu and Zapu, government's revision of its ambitious mass-oriented programme and a general waning of "independence euphoria" led Zanu to adopt a less passive attitude towards its public critics.

For The Sunday Mail, the turning point in relations with the state was reached in August 1984, when Zanu's Second National Congress adopted a new political programme in anticipation of the general elections of 1985. The package included government's commitment to "scientific socialism" and the one-party state. When Musarurwa's paper continued to question the viability of these government policies, it was decided by the ruling party leadership that the luxury of such criticism -- especially in the run-up to the national ballot -- could not be afforded much longer. In the end, it was the somewhat more even-handed coverage of the 1985 election campaign offered by The Sunday Mail (in comparison with Zimpapers' other

publications) which prompted the Zanu-inspired restructuring of the paper's senior editorial staff.

In July 1985 The Sunday Mail was singled out for punishment, to serve as a warning against future transgressions of "acceptable" political commentary. According to Musarurwa, his involuntary departure from The Sunday Mail and Zimpapers was merely the culmination of an exercise in "political house cleaning", aimed at reasserting the overall social authority of the ruling party in the space of public communication.⁴⁵ The editor's dismissal was preceded by several warnings and threats from company management and the Chairman of the MMT alike, which together emphasized the "antagonistic" tone of the weekly.

In the end, Musarurwa was ostensibly fired for a compendium of minor alleged infractions⁴⁶ and, more broadly, his violation of (heretofore unwritten) "company editorial policy and guidelines".⁴⁷ However, a more compelling explanation was contained in the actual letter of dismissal to Musarurwa, from Zimpapers CEO Rusike.

It has been decided by the Minister of Information, Posts and Telecommunications, in consultation with Dr. Sadza and myself, that we can no longer have you as editor of The Sunday Mail... [We have concluded] that maybe there are fundamental political differences between you on the one hand and the major shareholder, which is the government (on the other).⁴⁸

At the time, Rusike unashamedly underlined the essential point of the affair in a BBC interview.

This newspaper is owned by people who put in capital. You either toe the line with people who own the newspapers, or you get out.⁴⁹

Five years later, after his own departure from Zimpapers, Rusike was even more candid in his explanation of the Musarurwa affair.

Unfortunately for me as chief executive of Zimpapers, I had to do the dirty work on behalf of the Ministry of Information. I had to write letters of dismissal to Willie Musarurwa... I was the hatchet man of the Ministry of Information... Musarurwa was sacked on instructions from the Ministry of Information, through the Mass Media Trust. They have controlling shares in Zimpapers and, therefore, are in a position to tell the Zimpapers board and management to sack, employ, and promote anyone who is either considered not sympathetic to the views of certain ministers, as perceived from Linquenda House [the Harare office building housing the MOI headquarters], or to reward those who are seen as following the 'correct line', again as interpreted from the Ministry of Information.⁵⁰

Rationalised Control and its Consequences

For editors, the reshaping of company management by Zanu was to foreshadow attempts at the management-driven standardization of editorial policy on an ad-hoc basis. As Rusike himself later acknowledged, one of the primary tasks he accepted at the time of his MOI-instigated appointment to Zimpapers' top management post was to act as Zanu's "political policeman" at the chain.⁵¹ So much was already known in 1984, at least by staffers at The Sunday Mail, after Rusike underscored the connection between his own recent accession to the position of Managing Director, and the political function which the ruling party expected of him.

It is common knowledge in political circles that The Sunday Mail is regarded as an opposition newspaper which is not fully

in line with the thinking of government. This issue was raised with me when I joined Zimbabwe Newspapers in July, 1983. I was specifically asked by the relevant authorities to ensure that The Sunday Mail falls in line with the broad government approach to political and international issues.⁵²

Although clearly the Mail was the main target of political attack, Rusike's political brief extended to all of the chain's publications. In the latter respect, Rusike was encouraged by the MOI to systematise editorial supervision from above by setting up structures for that express purpose. The most notable example of such politically-inspired restructuring was the Zimpapers "Group Editorial Board", set up in 1984. The Board, which met every two to three months (initially monthly) under the Managing Director's chairmanship, assembled all newspaper editors (as well as the editor of the Group Features Department created in January 1984) for wide-ranging discussions relating to the editorial policy of the chain. The Board was also designed as a forum in which "renegade" editors and journalists could be called privately to account, and pressured to accept the political line preferred by company management -- on the advice of the MOI officials. By a process of later branch editorial meetings, it was understood that the decisions and opinions expressed in the Group Editorial Board's meetings would be passed on to other senior, middle and junior editorial staff, throughout the company. In this manner, it was thought, coherence of editorial policy at the company would be instilled.

In its stead, the direct authority of CEO Rusike came to serve as the most common means of coordinating the censure of editorial decision-making, as well as the political activities of editors outside of the pages of their newspapers.⁵³ At times

this involved the manipulative practice of using some papers and editors in attacks on other, less cooperative company journalists, such as Musarurwa.⁵⁴ More often it meant the direct reprimand and censure of editors and journalists from Rusike himself, on the orders of the MOI, and without reference to the Board of Directors or the MMT.⁵⁵

Although systematic schemes like this did not become established practice, they did underline the overarching editorial presence which management assumed by the mid 1980s. This ominous presence was enhanced by additional direct interventions by management in the late 1980s, including most notably the removal of two editors from their posts. Both cases confirmed the political motive underlying Zimpapers management practices, and tied the "independent and autonomous" company ever more closely to the ruling party.

In the first case, Musarurwa's successor at The Sunday Mail, Henry Muradzikwa, was abruptly fired in April 1987 after publishing an account of difficulties experienced by Zimbabweans studying abroad.⁵⁶ The story dealt with students in Cuba and Bulgaria who had been prematurely sent home, for unspecified "medical" reasons. The implication was that Aids was a primary factor in the foreign authorities' actions, and the Cubans and Bulgarians were said to have handled Zimbabweans in some cases as "criminals".⁵⁷ For the Zimbabwean government, however, the most embarrassing fact of all was that the item was published on the day the Cuban Foreign Minister Isidoro Malmierca arrived in Harare.

In a face-saving exercise, then-Prime Minister Mugabe appeared on national television the next week and, apologising directly to the Cuban Minister for the oversight, promised to "get the holder of that (editorial) pen and deal with him personally".⁵⁸ He continued, ominously, that The Sunday Mail appeared to have been

...infiltrated by the (capitalist) enemy and is proving to be quite reactionary... We cannot have a reactionary Press in this country especially one which seeks to destroy the friendship between us and those countries which extended their hand of assistance to us.⁵⁹

No more hints were needed. Rusike summarily removed Muradzikwa without consulting either Zimpapers Board of Directors or the MOI. The editor was sent on "compulsory leave" on April 22, guilty as implicated of going against "Zimbabwe's policies towards the socialist countries" and more generally, of attacking "the friends of Zimbabwe".⁶⁰ Underlining the political significance of the editor's dismissal, Minister of Information Shamuyarira warned other domestic journalists of the boundaries of acceptable comment. Zimpapers' editors could differ with certain speeches or acts of government, but they would have to support the broad policy objectives of the ruling party in order to remain in charge of their respective newspapers.⁶¹

It only later became apparent that Muradzikwa's firing had been an over-reaction on the part of a Chief Executive too eager to please his political superiors. Many insiders noted that privately, Mugabe had only wished to mend political sores by his statement, and that he had not doubted the substance of the story, nor wished

to punish so severely the editor who had vetted it.⁶² But by then the damage had been done to both the unfortunate editor and, more importantly, to the public perception of his newspaper chain as being non-partisan and independent of government influence. A popular saying among journalists at the time was that Muradzikwa had been "Musarurwa'd".

With the dismissal of Muradzikwa, it appeared that the definition of "broad policy objectives" -- or "national interest" -- had become synonymous with the rather narrower concerns of day to day government and ruling party management. As the editor of The Financial Gazette summarized the political conundrum which had blown up,

The original story may have caused some temporary upset in relations between Zimbabwe and Cuba, but what has transpired since then can be interpreted as a curtailment of press freedom, and a confirmation that ultimately, the government has considerable influence in the affairs of the mass media.⁶³

Indeed, by that point the process of "political consultation" by which the ruling party and government guided editors through the hand of management had become normalised to the extent that directives demanding the censoring of sensitive stories and the adoption of specified angles on others were coming not only from senior officials, but functionaries within the state bureaucracy as well. Under this regime, editorial control was exercised ever more directly by the state itself, often with confusing consequences for Zimpapers's management and editors. As Rusike recalled in 1990,

in practice I was being summoned to the Ministry of Information to explain why that story was published and why the

President's story did not go on the front page. People at the ministry did not seem to know the function of the managing director and those of an editor. Junior civil servants were sending directives to us in the name of the minister or permanent secretary.⁶⁴

Such forms of discipline engineered through the MOI were incapable of guaranteeing either the compliance of Zimpapers editors and journalists, or the newspapers' popular credibility. Even if strong-arm tactics facilitated close supervision of news coverage, there were occasions when such control could be circumvented from within -- as the "Willowgate" affair of 1988-1989 would demonstrate.⁶⁵

But beyond the question of the internal breakdown of "discipline" at Zimpapers, was the issue of the popularly-perceived credibility of the newspaper chain. An important consequence of repeated and deepening interference by the MOI in Zimpapers was the undermining of the chain's avowed political "neutrality". Having abandoned any substantial claim to an independent-critical position, Zimpapers also forfeited a large degree of its popular credibility -- particularly in the late 1980s, as the reorganisation of civil society from below, and the growth of an independent and popular press, led to challenges to the Zanu-led public sector. Whereas the RF had been able to use similar forms of state-centred arm-twisting to shape the content of the main media in Rhodesia, the social consensus within the embattled white society which made the RF's tactics a success no longer applied in Zanu's Zimbabwe. Attempts to maintain this old strategy through new, more elaborate bureaucratic

channels (including the MMT) only demonstrated the partisan, insecure position of the public press in the face of government and its state apparatus.

As a result, Zimpapers' political utility to Zanu as an instrument of popular mobilisation was greatly diminished. Indeed, many would argue, Zimpapers' pattern of severely blinkered coverage became a distinct hindrance to the hegemonic project of the governing party. In this regard, "democratic activists" in the media and outside of the MMT utilised the Trust concept of the neutral public press, in defense of broader rights to freedom of speech and information access in the media.

Paradoxically, the grounds for this attack had been set by the MOI's and Zanu's repeated promises in the early 1980s, that the formal autonomy of the public print media would be upheld as a key component of the emerging new political order.

For the rest of the decade, supporters of an independent political perspective could refer back to the tenets of the "responsible free press" which enveloped the MMT experiment. Just as trade unionists and collective co-operators were to use the socialist rhetoric of Zanu to attack the ruling party's political programme in the late 1980s, journalists and others critical of Zanu's attempt at information "closure" increasingly appropriated the liberal principles underlying the Trust, and used them for their own ends. The focus of attack was, unavoidably, the actual power structure within the public press, led by the MOI with the assistance of openly partisan functionaries scattered throughout the ranks of the MMT media.

Below this level of contestation with the ruling party and its state-supervised public media, another strain of criticism inevitably came to focus on the performance

of the new media infrastructure in meeting the tasks publicly assigned at the time of the MMT's creation. This tendency, which emerged slowly out of the frustrated expectations of ordinary Zimbabweans (particularly those in the rural areas), took the form of mounting popular grievances against Zimpapers and in turn, the state, in response to their failure to transform the public press into a mass-oriented, mass-accessible medium. For a number of different reasons these grievances -- and the stagnant media infrastructure which provoked them -- were to have deeply negative political repercussions for the governing party which demanded the transformation of the media in the first place.

References

1. Interview, Harare, 12 February 1987.
2. The most widely-held view among local media observers is that the Weekly was rarely used as reading material; instead, given that it was free and available in quantity, it appears that it was often used for rather more mundane tasks such as wrapping fruits and vegetables at market. A contributing factor to the problem of the paper's credibility lay in the Weekly's origins: its previous incarnations, also published by the MOI --but in the days of the Smith and Muzorewa regimes-- were the African Times and later The People. Others argued that the paper's worth was in providing regular, current reading material for the growing group of newly-literate in the rural areas. (Interview with Justin Nyoka, Harare, 23 February 1987)
3. See Chapter 7 for more detailed discussion.
4. Interview with Alwyn Francis, Harare, 27 February 1991.
5. Interview with G. Capon, Harare, 12 May 1989.
6. Interview with Alwyn Francis, Harare, 27 February 1991. Francis noted that after 1980 and before the placement of blacks in senior Zimpapers management posts, government or party officials regularly examined the business papers of (white) senior managers on company premises, in search of "hidden" instructions contained in the correspondence of South African and other expatriate associates.
7. For further discussion, see Chapters 6 and 8.
8. Interview with senior former Zimpapers official who wishes to remain anonymous.
9. Interview with the author, Harare, 12 February 1987. Editor of The Sunday Mail from 1985 to early 1987, Muradzikwa was dismissed some weeks after the interview, on the grounds of political impropriety (see discussion in this section).
10. Farayi Munyuki and Tommy Sithole, both of Zanu, were to replace respectively R. Drew (Herald) and S. Robertson (Chronicle), while Willie Musarurwa of Zapu succeeded E. Richmond at the Sunday Mail. While the placement of Musarurwa in control of the largest circulation newspaper in the group might seem to indicate an openness of the Ministry of Information to non-ruling party elements, some senior management personnel at Zimpapers have since observed privately that Musarurwa had signalled his dissociation from opposition party politics prior to, and as an

"understood" condition of, his appointment as editor. Later the editorial positions at the two remaining Zimpapers publications were likewise filled by blacks sympathetic with nationalist causes: Geoff Nyarota joined the Mutare Post in September 1981, and veteran journalist William Saidi became editor of the Sunday News in February 1982. Both men replaced white editors. See, "Editors named for 3 papers", Herald, 12.02.1981; and "Sunday News Editor", Sunday Mail, 21.02.1982.

11. Capon, Interview, op. cit.

12. See for example, "Press must be free" (Letter by Fred B. Rea), Herald, 09.01.1981.

13. This is a perspective which often portrays as "racist" the elevation to senior posts of qualified Africans, in a country where over 95% of the population is black and in which whites are, due to past practices of a truly naked, constitutional racism, disproportionately in control of such positions themselves.

14. After 1980, "RF" was retained as an acronym for Smith's renamed, if not remodelled, Republican Front.

15. "Dramatic Turn in Zimbabwe Press (Comment)", Sunday Mail, 04.01.1981; and "Trust's duty" (Comment), Herald, 05.01.1981:

...it will be a tragedy if the change in ownership impedes the free access to the news that the newspapers must have if the people of Zimbabwe are not to be denied the right to know what is going on here and abroad. The Trust has the responsibility to see that this does not happen.

See also editorials underlining the "chaos" and related distresses of life in Zimbabwe, in "Personal Liberty", Sunday Mail, 18.01.1981; and "Living in hell", Sunday Mail, 25.01.1981.

16. See for example, Farayi Munyuki in, "Herald to 'meet aims of people'", Herald, 21.02.1981.

17. This observation was shared by some of the Trustees interviewed, "Comrade D" and "Comrade E", who wish to remain anonymous.

18. Interview with Ruth Weiss, Harare, 13 November 1987.

19. This perception of the situation in 1981 is held by a wide range of observers, media professionals and MMT officials interviewed by the author, who both acknowledged the positive interventionist role of the state and envisaged its curtailment in the space of the media with the Trust's establishment.

20. W. Musarurwa, "Nyoka's criticism" (Comment), Sunday Mail, 18.10.1981.

21. N. Shamuyarira in House of Assembly, Debates, vol.5, no.19 (15 July, 1982), pp. 760-1. On many occasions in this period editors were to make similar observations. See for example, W. Musarurwa, "Press has role in building nation", Sunday Mail, 08.03.1981; and again, "Advertisers threaten Free Press," Sunday Mail, 16.10.1983:

Nobody tells editors what to publish and what not to publish. No Government Minister, managing director or manager tells us what to publish... We set out to give as much reportage as possible of progress and development in industry and commerce... We report negative news as accurately as possible but we do not give it prominence.

The reaction from international observers was no less optimistic, and many foreign media experts were quick to declare the MMT experiment a success from the point of view of press freedom and responsibility; see for example, Helmut Osang, "Kommunikationspolitik im Übergang von der Kolonialen zur Nach-Kolonialen Gesellschaft Eine Untersuchung am Beispiel, Simbabwe 1980-1982" (Universität Salzburg: Ph.D. thesis, 1984).

22. See Chapter 8.

23. This observation was unanimously held by the editors and senior Zimpapers journalists interviewed.

24. E.T. Rusike, "Rusike on Free Press", Herald, 29.04.1987.

25. "Umtali Post Editor is dismissed", Herald, 16.09.1981.

26. "Heated debate over sacked editor", Herald, 18.09.1981.

27. See for example, F. Munyuki in, "Herald to meet aims of people", Herald, 21.01.1981.

28. Take, for example, the editorial comment of 4 April, 1981 ("The One Party"):

In Africa today, more countries have opted for the one-party system than those which have clung to the multi-party system bequeathed to them by their former colonial masters. On the basis that the one-party system effectively eliminates the principle of "opposition for opposition's sake", it certainly has its attractions. Parliament, far from being a "rubber stamp" of the ruling party, would preoccupy itself with the job of giving the people what they really want -- more schools, more clinics and hospitals, more jobs and better living standards... Contrary to general belief, there can still be opposition within a one-party system, not strident or uselessly obstinate, but opposition nevertheless. For Zimbabwe, where the priority has to be economic development at a speedy rate, the one-party system surely has an edge

over the multi-party model. The crucial issue is whether it can be bought by all our politicians.

29. In articles on August 11 and 13, 1981, Munyuki had implied that Tekere was "lazy" and "irresponsible", and had alleged that leaders of his kind who engaged in excessive drinking, womanizing and reckless behaviour were to be justifiably weeded out of government. In 1986, Zimpapers and Munyuki were brought to court, convicted of libel, and made to pay \$20,000 plus court costs in compensation. See, "Edgar Zivanai Tekere v Zimbabwe Newspapers (1980) Limited and Farayi Albert Munyuki, Action for Damages of Defamation", HC-H-289-86: HC 1878/81, High Court of Zimbabwe, Sandura J.P., (Harare, July 7, 8, 9, and 16, 1986).

30. See for example, "MPs attack Nkomo on dissidents", Herald, 03.02.1983; "2 Zapu MPs named as leaders of war council", "Dissidents carrying out Zapu's master plan" and "Ban Zapu" (Comment), Herald, 04.02.1983.

31. "Zipra exiles in training in SA --Dukwe refugees", Herald, 14.01.1983.

32. Sithole had previously been editor of The Chronicle, and many attributed the declining circulation and popularity of the paper during his period of editorship to its uncompromisingly supportive coverage of the ruling party and, likewise, its sometimes hostile relationship with Zapu, the dominant party in that region. In 1989, Sithole was promoted into the new overseeing editorial position of Zimpapers editor-in chief, in deference to his unshakeable loyalty to the ruling party and his reputation for heavy-handed treatment of sensitive political subjects. See Rusike, The Politics..., op. cit., passim; and Sadza, Interview 1988, op. cit.: "Tommy Sithole has grown to rely on the friendship of some highly placed friends, [to the extent that] he is no longer easily able to criticize them".

33. Following Munyuki's departure in 1983 came the removal of Willie Musarurwa of The Sunday Mail (1985), Bill Saidi of The Sunday News (1986), and Geoff Nyarota of The Chronicle (Nyarota had been transferred from The Manica Post to The Chronicle in the early 1980s, from where he was pushed in 1989).

34. Interview with Elias Rusike, Harare, 23 April, 1991. See also, Rusike, The Politics..., op. cit., passim.

35. For a cogent summary of the events surrounding Musarurwa's firing, see Kelly McParland, "'Toe the line or get out'", Index on Censorship 5 (1986), pp. 28-29.

36. See W. Musarurwa, "Press role" (Comment), Sunday Mail, 16.08.1981: Herein lies the role of the Press. It must accurately reflect the people to the government and the government to the people. The government constantly needs feedback on its policies and how they are being

accepted by the people. It is the duty of the Press to mirror the fears and feeling of the people without fear or favour.

37. W. Musarurwa, "Nyoka's criticism" (Comment), Sunday Mail, 18.10.1981. In the wake of Willowgate and other ensuing investigations into public corruption, Nyoka was forced out of government service for wrongdoing in 1989.

38. Consider for example Musarurwa's condemnation of partisan actions by the state in his 1981 response to allegations by the Minister of Labour and Social Services, Mr. Kumbirai Kangai, that members of "minority parties" in the civil service were engaging in "economic sabotage", and should be replaced by loyal Zanu members ("Economic saboteurs", Sunday Mail, 22.11.1981):

This is an unfortunate statement because it assumes that all Zanu members are loyal to the country and those belonging to 'minority parties' are not loyal. Experience shows that there are loyal and dis-loyal people in all parties. In fact many conmen, opportunists and professional chancers rush to join the winning party just to put themselves on the safe side as far as patronage, perquisites and favours are concerned. Such people (who are the property of any winner) are inherently incapable of being 'loyal either to the country or to Zanu itself.

39. For example, "Just hearsay these thefts from Africa" (Zingizi's Gossip), Sunday Mail, 22.01.1984; and, "Like leeches they cling together" (No Holds Barred by Gono Goto), Sunday Mail, 12.02.1984. Both of these columns had Musarurwa as their usual, pseudonymous author.

40. See, "No Easy Walk for an Independent Editor", Moto, (June 1983), pp. 7-8; and, "The Press in Zimbabwe. Trying to find a New Voice", Moto, (May 1984), pp. 7-8.

41. In one well-known column of 1984 Musarurwa (under the pseudonym 'Gono Goto') chipped away at the Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania [PAC], one of the two main movements leading the South African struggle and the one favoured by Zanu, for having dwelt too long and heavily on internal organisational conflicts. The PAC, he alleged, had slowly become "paralysis personified." The remark prompted a stinging counter-attack from PAC representatives in the pages of Musarurwa's paper, and widespread unofficial reproach from members of Zanu and the government. But more concretely, the attack on the PAC precipitated the immediate cancellation of the 'Gono Goto' column, by order of Minister Shamuyarira communicated to Musarurwa through Rusike. (See, 'Chibhoyi', "Auto suggestions," Moto, no.28 (October 1984), p. 32; "Announcement", Sunday Mail, 02.09.1984; McParland, *op. cit.*, p. 29)

The enmity this episode helped nurture between the editor and the ruling party was no doubt exacerbated by the fact of past political allegiances: Musarurwa's old party, Zapu, was a long-standing political partner of South Africa's African National

Congress [ANC], while Zanu had parallel linkages to the PAC. The animosity between the two leading Zimbabwean liberation organisations was mirrored in relations between the ANC and PAC.

42. See for example Musarurwa's response to the Prime Minister's announcement that there would be no immediate takeover of industries because there were insufficient numbers of experienced civil servants to manage them.

[It is not simply a matter of capable managers, but]... rather a question of imbibing the culture, morality, public spirit and integrity that go with the efficient running of industries. No one who is not inculcated with socialist ethics and morality can implement socialist policies. ("Comment", Sunday Mail, 15.01.1984)

43. See "Tekere loses top Zanu post", Sunday Mail, 09.08.1981; in which Tekere is quoted as saying that some Ministers have become "masters of the people" (rather than their "servants"), the "revolution has been decaying", and tribalism and corruption "have become the watchwords of many in the government".

44. See, "You get nothing for nothing" (No Holds Barred by 'Gono Goto' [Musarurwa]), Sunday Mail, 19.08.1981. Here it is suggested that opportunism and leeching of public resources has been encouraged by the implementation of free primary schooling and access to health services. See also, "One-party state" (Comment), Sunday Mail, 01.11.1981, in which it is stressed that the idea of the one-party state is acceptable for Zimbabwe, but that the essential modalities of its installation must be worked out with reference to the needs of the "grassroots" and not merely (it is implied) the limited interests of those responsible for its imposition.

45. Willie Musarurwa, Interview with Patrik Eklof and An Lindstrom, Harare, 30 April 1987.

46. McParland, op. cit., p. 29. Musarurwa's letter of dismissal cited eight specific reasons outside of his criticisms of government policy; including conflicts with other personnel at Zimpapers, failure to clear sensitive stories with company management or government and a complaint from the local PLO representative on lack of progressive news coverage of the organisation.

47. Musarurwa, Interview with Eklof and Lindstrom, op. cit. In numerous interviews with journalists at Zimpapers, reporters and editors alike noted they were unaware of any written "company policy" or document relating to the newspaper chain's editorial guidelines, aside from specific mentions of terminology and sub-editing style.

48. Cited in McParland, op. cit., p. 29.

49. Cited in McParland, op. cit., p. 29.

50. Rusike, The Politics..., op. cit., pp. 86-88.

51. Rusike, Interview (1991), op. cit.

52. Letter (1984) to Musarurwa, cited in McParland, op. cit., p. 29.

53. For example, after a 1984 appearance by Musarurwa on Zimbabwe's most popular current affairs television programme, "The Nation", in which he discussed the issue of self-censorship, a meeting of the Zimpapers Board of Directors was called to reprimand the editor and forbid him from participating in such exercises in the future. This incident was recounted by Musarurwa's Zimpapers colleague Michael Overmeyer, whose own regular appearance on "The Nation" was cancelled by ZBC at the request of Zimpapers management, for similar reasons. (Interview with M. Overmeyer, Harare, 31 July 1987)

54. In the latter's case, it is apparent that the editorial space of Tommy Sithole's Herald was partly employed to push the attack already set in motion by MOI, MMT and Zimpapers management figures. Following a Musarurwa column discussing auto-censorship at Zimpapers, and one month after the 1984 attack on the PAC, it was announced that Musarurwa's by-lines ("Zingizi's Gossip" and "Gono Goto") had been "sent on vacation". In the meantime, The Herald had launched various editorial salvos at The Sunday Mail, referring to the latter as "our patronising sister paper". It is difficult to imagine how The Herald's editor could have undertaken such a tack without the tacit approval or encouragement of Zimpapers' senior management. For comment on these events of mid-1984, see 'Chibhoyi', "Auto suggestions," Moto, no.28 (October 1984), p. 32.

55. A company circular from Rusike in 1987 demanded that all editorial leaders be submitted to the Chief Executive before their publication. The timetable of editorial production and copy preparation for the company's two dailies, and particularly the one printed in Bulawayo, rendered the request inoperative from the outset. (Interview with Rachel Stewart, Harare, 20 April 1989). Rusike himself confirmed that such actions were the result of "orders" from the MOI. (Interview, 1991, op. cit.).

56. "Cuba deports another 15 students", Sunday Mail, 12.04.1987.

57. In fact, it seems that some of the students had been deported for having protested against their poor living conditions overseas. There were rumours in Harare at the time that the Cuban-based students had gone so far as to stage a public demonstration protesting their plight; some had it that students had requested financial and educational assistance from the United States and other foreign government representatives in Havana.

58. Cited in, "Premier apologises to Cuba over newspaper article", Herald, 21.04.1987.

59. Cited in Herald, 21.04.1987.
60. N. Shamuyarira, "Why Editor had to go --Minister", Chronicle, 08.06.1987.
61. N. Shamuyarira, Chronicle, 08.06.1987.
62. Interview with Henry Muradzikwa, Harare, 27 April 1989. See also, Musarurwa, Interview with Eklof and Lindstrom, op. cit. Within a few months of his dismissal from the editor's chair, Muradzikwa was brought back into active employment at senior level in the company with Mugabe's blessing. In mid 1987 Muradzikwa was made Manager of Special Projects, a position for which, on his own admission, he was unqualified (Muradzikwa later became editor-in-chief of Ziana, in 1991). In Rusike's own words, such editorial shuffles ordered by the MOI meant finding harmless "busywork" for former journalists:
I was asked [by the MOI] to find them 'something to do'. But for editors who did not have managerial training and/or experience there were no vacancies in all other divisions [of Zimpapers] and the result is that they were sitting in Zimpapers head office being paid for doing nothing. (The Politics..., op. cit., p. 87)
63. "Freedom of press again in question", Financial Gazette, 24.04.1987.
64. Rusike, The Politics..., op. cit., p. 79.
65. See Chapter 8.

Chapter 6. Rebuilding Zimpapers? The New Order and the New Press

The media has an immense social role to play: a role that is so critical that it would hardly be an exaggeration to say that the future of democratic institutions in Africa depends very largely upon it. The ideal democratic press in Africa is one which is oriented to serving the information needs of the majority of the people -- in most cases of the ordinary peasant producer. It should be a press that is soundly based upon the aspirations, perceptions and perspectives of the rural masses in a progressive and democratic context.

Timothy Matthews, Mass Media Trust¹

It is sad to note that the local newspapers, radio and television are turning into profitable enterprises, while at the same time losing their functions as national services.

Naomi Nhiwatiwa, Deputy Minister of Information²

Introduction

While the involvement of the state and ruling party in the editorial politics of Zimpapers and related public media was becoming a point of popular political contention by the mid 1980s, deeper developments within those media which affected their performance as national sources of news and information also came to pose obstacles to the Zanu government's plans for the hegemonic utilisation of the public media. This time, it was the failure of the print media to make substantial gains in re-orienting their editorial focus and patterns of national distribution away from urban-

centred, minority interests, and towards those of the black, mainly rural majority, which was the source of popular frustration and criticism.

In the early 1980s the Zanu government and state proclaimed that, in a correction of the Rhodesian past, the national press would be delivered to the information-hungry and long-neglected African masses. For the government, the media were meant to become the connecting link between "the masses and their government", a process which also opened the way for Zanu to employ the public press to have its own partisan perspective spread nationally. The fact that persistent and growing shortcomings of the public media were to prevent them from meeting these tasks undermined both the instrumental hegemonic utility of the media to the ruling party, and the stature of the ruling party and state which initially had committed themselves to media development. Thus, the frustrated expectations of most ordinary Zimbabweans in the rural areas meant that the notion of press expansion would stand as point of criticism and activism against the state and ruling party, and not as a node of popular mobilisation for them.

Again it was to be shown that a media management system which worked well for the RF was ill-suited to Zanu. While the RF had been able to manipulate its political base via the RPP precisely because the newspaper chain targeted that white, urban-centred constituency, the same minority structures of news collection and dissemination were of little use to Zanu as tools of grassroots political consolidation. In the face of this inheritance the new government ambitiously proclaimed that a new public media, restructured to orient news content and newspaper distribution to the

African communities and the rural areas in particular, was the principal aim of the state's press policy. In this regard, it was projected optimistically in 1981 that a mass-oriented, non-profit, "public service" newspaper chain could be established within the confines of the commercial, minority-centred company taken over from Argus.

But such remodelling at Zimpapers required favourable operating conditions and financial, managerial and political support from the MOI and the upper echelons of the company. As it happened, none of these ingredients were forthcoming in a sustained and integrated fashion. On the one hand, Zimpapers' energies for much of the decade were primarily devoted to ensuring the company's commercial survival; on the other, the disjointed, ad-hoc nature of media policy implementation by the MOI and its Zimpapers surrogate rendered the task of building the new press infrastructure, a chaotic one. In both respects, the absence of a coherent set of directives focusing on the restructuring of the public press underlined the lack of direction coming from either the MOI or the Zimpapers Directorate.

For the current study, the obstacles to structural expansion and development at Zimpapers were important, because they mediated the shape and political efficacy of the public press in the 1980s -- a press of which much was expected by ordinary Zimbabweans. If a new editorial focus for the public newspapers was promised but not delivered, what were the consequences for the popularly-perceived newsworthiness and political credibility of those newspapers? Similarly, if pledges to expand mass-access to newspapers into the rural areas did not materialise, what were

the repercussions for the utility of those media as channels of national political consolidation?

These sorts of questions speak directly to the structured limitations to the ruling group's hegemonic project involving the public press in Zanu's first decade in power. To answer them, it is first necessary to examine the actual performance of Zimpapers, in its efforts to transform the minority-urban bias of its newspapers' editorial content and distribution patterns. Such an investigation entails consideration of the character of the infrastructure inherited, the changing nature of its components and its operational environment, and the form taken by devised "solutions" to problems encountered. It will be argued here that all three contributed to the undermining of Zanu's plans for Zimpapers in the 1980s.

Old Structures and New Dilemmas

It is telling that the formal wording of Zimpapers' constitutional "Articles of Association," which set out the fundamental aims of the company, remained unchanged from the days of RPP ownership.³ As well as serving to "inform, educate and entertain" the nation, one of the primary stated aims of the company after 1981 continued to be the maintenance and enhancement of its financial viability.⁴ The profound social implications of this commercial motive would become apparent in the years to come, as broad changes in the national economy and operational problems

more specific to the press industry itself, forced Zimpapers' management to choose between a mass-oriented expansion programme and commercial viability.

The first set of shocks to Zimpapers came in the form of the economic recession which accompanied the drought of 1982-1984. They were followed by a series of more chronic difficulties arising out of demographic changes, new government price control regulations and, most importantly, skyrocketing costs of production within the publishing industry. While both sets of traumas helped shape the course of Zimpapers' development in the 1980s, it was the latter web of variables which would be especially powerful in its impact on any plans which might have been held for the rural-centred expansion of the chain's reportage and distribution.

In 1980 Zimpapers had been a viable though somewhat sluggish commercial entity, with a turnover of \$12,438,660, yielding a before-tax profit of 10.7%, or \$1,334,301. (Table 6.1) Although the after-tax profit was reduced by 2% from the previous year to \$572,244, at the time this was considered a good performance in light of the 44% increase in newsprint costs and an 18% hike in wages over the same period. With its substantial accumulated capital base of \$6,156,512 in 1981,⁵ Zimpapers was by far the largest publishing operation in Zimbabwe, whose commercial prospects appeared bright in the context of anticipated long-term expansion in the national economy.

Those prospects, however, were soon reassessed in light of the drought of 1982-1984, which spawned a dramatic shrinkage in the national economy.⁶ The main impact of the drought for the newspaper company was the drying up of advertising

Table 6.1
Zimpapers: Corporate Balance Sheet, 1980-1990

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(In ZWD Thousands)	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Capital Employed											
Share capital	4800	4800	4800	4800	4800	4800	4800	4800	4800	4800	4800
Reserves	1070	1356	1344	2348	2393	2795	7276	15507	18737	16268	20751
Deferred Tax	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	817	6615	10931
Tax Account	--	--	505	856	850	850	1300	5300	2482	--	--
Long term Loans	--	--	--	3595	3458	3997	4031	4124	5667	5850	7297
Capital Employment											
Fixed Assets	2986	3031	3367	10352	10364	11229	11598	22434	24971	26866	41286
Investments	715	782	754	710	706	772	264	551	571	625	1155
Associated Company	--	--	--	--	--	--	4735	254	190	90	128
Net Current Assets	2169	2342	2527	537	430	441	810	4492	6773	6900	948
Total Capital	5870	6156	6648	11599	11501	12443	17407	27730	32504	34542	43779
Operating Results											
Trading Operations	1178	1198	1001	720	354	627	982	5642	5166	8759	12905
Investment Income	156	270	498	257	-308	-220	-428	-643	-919	-912	-1351
Share of Assoc. Co.	--	--	--	--	--	--	1058	247	88	99	104
Gross Income	1334	1468	1499	977	46	407	1612	5246	4336	7947	11658
Net Income	572	766	943	585	45	403	1056	5398	2797	3739	5923
Funds Management											
Funds: Total Source	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	931	1972	4119	7305	10021	13245	20107
Funds: Application	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	991	1826	2679	13166	9522	13827	25252
Funds: +/- Balance	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-59	146	1439	-5861	499	-581	-5185
Represented by:											
- Short term Deposits	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	50	-47	3	-956	957	-316	-96
+ Bank Balances	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-14	159	487	-980	231	-176	1489
+ Bank Overdraft	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-96	34	949	-3925	-688	-90	-6581
Movements in Net Liquid Funds	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-59	146	1439	-5861	499	-581	-5185

Source: Zimpapers Annual Reports.

4

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Table 6.2

Zimpapers: Current and Real Profit
Newspaper Division, 1980-1990

Source: Zimpapers Annual Reports.

Table 6.3

Zimpapers: Rate of Profit
Newspaper Division, 1980-1990

Source: Zimpapers Annual Reports

budgets within the commercial sector -- the result of sharp decreases in consumers' disposable income. Although remedial increases in advertising tariffs and cover prices helped offset the decline in business volume, rising production costs, substantial losses at Zimpapers' Bulawayo branch "due to the special conditions pertaining in Matabeleland",⁷ and the investment of roughly seven million dollars in a new high-capacity Goss Metroliner press for the Harare branch,⁸ severely undermined the company's viability. In 1983 Zimpapers' pre-tax profits plunged 35%. (Table 6.2 and Table 6.3) At the same time, the Goss Metroliner purchase -- signed before the drought hit, and paid for afterwards -- exhausted cash reserves, as the previous year's balance of \$1,733,564 was converted to an overdraft of \$722,147 through heavy spending and borrowing.⁹

By 1983-1984¹⁰ the recession produced sharp falls in consolidated income (from \$977,336 to \$46,324), the decline representing a 50% fall in trading profit to \$354,827, and an increase in interest payable on loans of nearly \$500,000. The losses were exacerbated by increases in materials costs, with a 12.6% rise in the price of newsprint alone adding \$500,000 to Zimpapers' expenditures. It was a downward trend which only slightly improved in the course of the following financial year of 1984-1985, when newspaper operations made a small profit of \$374,000 (yielding a profit rate of 1.7%), compared to figures of \$290,000 and 1.4% (respectively) for 1983-1984. Seen in the light of inflationary pressures on the Zimbabwe dollar which were nearing 20% per annum at the time,¹¹ the real decline of the company in the period of 1982-1985 was all the more apparent.

Management response to the growing commercial crisis was already in evidence in 1983, when a "rationalisation programme" focused on production cutbacks, staff retrenchment and conservation of raw materials stocks was put in place.¹² Such measures helped the chain to survive the recession, but they also provided the backdrop for the future paring-down of Zimpapers' capacity for sustained, mass-oriented expansion. Meanwhile, as the country emerged from the recession, it became clear that a new collection of factors structured into the Zimbabwean media industry imposed severe restrictions on the pace and form of Zimpapers' own recovery; in the process, steering the company further away from the development path envisioned in 1981. Production bottlenecks, changing socio-economic demographics, increased media competition and government price control policies, undermined the stability of Zimpapers' production and planning mechanisms by pushing up costs and restricting revenue generation. Ultimately these factors contributed to the gradual imposition of "crisis management", with all of its ramifications for the implementation of a media policy.

It was the way in which these industrial obstacles to production at Zimpapers were structured from outside of the company, however, which undermined the mass-oriented development plans which had been alluded to by MOI officials starting in 1981. Although supply bottlenecks and rising costs did not endanger the survival of the periodicals which focused on an urban, middle-income consumer market -- as Zimpapers had been up to 1981 -- these obstacles severely undercut the viability of more ambitious, nationally-oriented media, and distorted their implementation.

The most serious operational bottleneck at Zimpapers involved the shortage and mounting price of raw newsprint. Like other Zimbabwean publishing concerns, the chain was dependent on domestically produced newsprint for its main supply of stock. However, after independence this supply was increasingly unable to meet growing demand.¹³ At the same time, the cost of local newsprint rose consistently in a steep spiral of price increases, which by 1991 rendered local newsprint more expensive than the higher-quality product available for foreign exchange on the regional and world market.¹⁴ Zimpapers was unable to recoup these cost increases through the traditional means of cover price and advertising rate hikes, because of government regulation in these spheres. (Table 6.4)

From 1986 the problem of newsprint supply and pricing became exceptionally acute, and Zimpapers regularly was forced to import from South Africa. However, this option proved costly, as a 1988 breakdown in domestic production demonstrated. The shutdown mandated the importation of six emergency shipments of newsprint at a premium price, and the scaling back of print runs (and therefore, advertising appeal) in an effort to conserve stocks. These moves led directly to a 93% decline in profits by the year-end.¹⁵

In the 1980s input factor costs rose by approximately 10% per annum, if not considerably more. Led by increases in raw newsprint, they also included rising expenditures on Metroliner interest payments, and imported spares, film, plates and ink -- all of which were adversely affected by the steady decline of the Zimbabwe

Table 6.4

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**Zimpapers: Expenses
Newspaper Division, 1980-1987**

Source: Zimpapers Annual Reports.
Expenses Breakdown ceases after 1987.

Table 6.5
Zimpapers: Revenue
Newspaper Division, 1980-1986

Source: Zimpapers Annual Reports.
Revenue Breakdown ceases after 1986

dollar against hard currencies.¹⁶ This trend towards higher spending on raw materials marked a departure from the previous RPP regime.

Up to 1980, raw materials accounted for well under 20% of production costs, with salaries, wages and staff benefits making up the bulk of the remainder. Immediately after independence, the shift towards higher materials expenditures was indicated by a 44% escalation in newsprint charges (which was matched by an 18% hike in salaries). Later factor price increases exhibited similar tendencies, particularly in an accelerated series of newsprint and ink price hikes in 1984-1986. Nearing the end of the decade, raw materials accounted for 27% of company expenditure -- amounting to a 5% increase in raw materials' share of total expenditure in 1980, and a 134% increase in real dollars spent (from \$2.4 million in 1980, to \$3.2 million in 1987). Combined with changes in the chain's main sources of revenue -- advertising and circulation retail -- these altered features of production expenditure were to plunge Zimpapers into long term financial uncertainty, while effecting important, more immediate changes in the size, content and reach of the company's papers.

The slip in Zimpapers' advertising market was crucial in this regard. In the pre-independence days of Argus ownership, Zimpapers had maintained a viable economic footing, relying -- like most commercial periodicals -- on abundant advertising support. In Rhodesia, that support came from the white-dominated commercial and private non-commercial sectors, whose economic buoyancy for much of the fifteen years of UDI was reflected in many successive years of advertising-led profitability at the RPP.¹⁷ In this context, the departure of half of the white

population between the mid 1970s and the early 1980s -- an exodus which quickened dramatically in pace as independence approached, and left approximately 100,000 whites in the country by the mid 1980s -- severely undercut the commercial foundations of the newspaper chain. The exodus of a large part of the most affluent section of society meant the evaporation of much of the advertising market's audience, as well as the private capital which fuelled the advertising industry.

While advertising continued to serve as the mainstay of Zimpapers newspapers operations throughout the 1980s, providing roughly two-thirds of revenues, the advertising habits of the papers' growing black readership and business clients alike severely limited income growth. (Table 6.5) For the most part, Zimpapers and advertising industry managers were to discover, black individuals, businesspeople and businesses were unfamiliar and uncomfortable with the regular use of newspaper advertising space.¹⁸ Their relative shunning of the advertising potential of Zimpapers, coupled with the fact that 80% of the newspaper chain's readership by the mid 1980s was comprised of mainly lower-income, lower-spending blacks,¹⁹ was a significant factor standing behind advertising's slipping performance, and decreasing proportional contribution to total company income.

This situation of declining, reliable support by blacks was aggravated by periodic slumps in the economy, which led to belt-tightening measures whose first targets were inevitably advertising budgets. But it was also compounded by changes in the nature of the advertising industry, and shifts in government's micro-economic policy for the mass media.

In the first instance, the shrinking volume of the national advertising market and growth in operating costs led to the redoubling of competition among the media for the commercial advertising dollar, a fact underlined by the company's 1983 launch of a major market survey and public relations campaign aimed at advertising clients, SAM.²⁰ Zimpapers, with the largest slice of the national advertising pie, had the most to lose from a rising wave of media competition.²¹

The extension and betterment of services and national coverage offered by Zimpapers' principal competitor, radio and television under the ZBC, was a key factor in this emerging challenge to the chain's domination of the market.²² Another was the "invasion" by private advertising production houses, of the large commercial "display" sector in the press. Throughout the 1980s, local agencies increasingly displaced Zimpapers in the company's previously unchallenged one-on-one handling of local business clients, coming to serve as advertising intermediaries between client-consumers and the media. Their intervention implied substantial losses for Zimpapers. Besides the 16.5% commission they were allowed,²³ the agencies hived off additional potential revenues and infrastructural development, in the form of publicity campaign management, origination work and research skills.

Further revenue losses came as the result of government price control regulations, which had the effect of holding down advertising tariffs and cover prices. In the first case, advertising rates for all media were brought under the general regulatory regime of the Ministry of Trade and Commerce; in the second, Zimpapers alone -- as a mass-oriented mass media -- was subjected to rigid cover price controls

administered by the state. Together, these mechanisms undermined the commercial viability of the company, while helping to reshape the editorial form and content of its publications.

In a period of quickly rising production costs, these restrictions forced Zimpapers to absorb mounting losses; losses which occurred despite occasional increases in the volume of advertising attracted, and hikes in the print run of the chain's papers.²⁴ Over the period 1980-1986, for example, the total real income of the company actually declined by four percent, largely because of the restrictions on advertising tariffs coupled with the slipping value of the Zimbabwe dollar.²⁵ Relaxation of advertising price controls in 1988 and 1989 revived profitability dramatically.²⁶ However, observers argued that the recuperation was short-term, and based on exceptional rate increases which Zimpapers would be unable to repeat successfully in the future.²⁷

While poor financial performance throughout much of the 1980s limited the company's ability to plan and implement any option of mass-oriented expansion requiring injections of substantial capital, the specific structure of newspaper advertising had more immediate implications for the chain's publications, as they stood. The shift away from premium "classified" advertising by individuals and businesses after 1980, towards contracted, less lucrative "display" advertising, meant that greater amounts of editorial space were sacrificed to "discounted" advertising. As classifieds' contribution to the volume and value of advertising decreased from 25% and 28% (respectively) in 1980, to 20% and 22% by 1988, the negative impact of

display advertising's growth would be seen in the changing ratio of the newspapers' advertising-to-editorial content.²⁸ In 1981, the chain had maintained this ratio at approximately 60/40 (that is, 60% advertising and 40% editorial). By the late 1980s, the difference had widened to 70/30 and, on occasion, to as much as 80/20. (Table 6.6)

For readers who preferred news to commercial spots, the situation was exacerbated by the government's restriction on Zimpapers' cover prices. While low cover prices made chain newspapers affordable for the consumer -- in the process, creating a conduit of communication directed (but not bankrolled) by the state and aimed at "the masses" -- they inflicted high costs on Zimpapers. This was particularly the case as print runs rose alongside the price of raw materials, in an equation which boosted the production cost per copy in both relative and absolute terms.

When cover price increases were allowed by the state, with few exceptions they proved to be too little, too late. For example, price hikes at The Herald over the nine-year period commencing in 1980 totalled only eight cents (from a starting price of ten cents). Aside from an increase of nearly two hundred percent in the national consumer price index over the same time, most experts agreed that the paper's retail value was excessively low for a national daily with a circulation of 130,000.²⁹ Indeed, compared to other national print media, all of Zimpapers publications were strikingly undervalued throughout the 1980s,³⁰ a fact which helped ensure that Zimpapers were sold, but which also helped alter the content and reach of those papers published.

Table 6.6
News and Editorial Content in The Herald and The Chronicle
1988-1989

Content	<u>The Herald</u>		<u>The Chronicle</u>	
	cm/col	%	cm/col	%
1988*				
Advertising	5139**	72.8	3760	69.9
Editorial	1916	27.2	1615	30.1
1989+				
Advertising	4918	70.5	--	--
Editorial	2057	29.5	--	--

* Source: H.M.R. Farinya, "The Herald and The Chronicle in 1988", report prepared for Ministry of Information, 1989.

** All figures represent daily averages calculated from regular assessment of the papers involved.

+ Source: H.M.R. Farinya, [untitled], report prepared for Ministry of Information, 1989. The Chronicle was not included in this second survey.

In the context of uncertain advertising support and rising materials costs, cover price restraint would necessitate the scaling back of newspaper pagination and, near the end of the decade, the cutting of print runs.³¹ Such moves helped conserve stocks of newsprint and other materials, and maintained the newspaper division as a marginally viable operation. However, they also applied increased pressure for the paring-back of any mass-oriented editorial programme, and the constriction of copy distribution nation-wide.

New Obstacles to Solving News Bias

In the quest to remodel the content of Zimpapers' journals, it is clear that economic considerations related to advertising tariffs, newsprint costs and dwindling company viability played a large part in pre-empting the institutionalisation of a rural editorial focus in the national papers. The squeeze on editorial space applied by the combination of the first two factors forced editors to work with drastically reduced shares of the printed pie (in both proportional and absolute terms); while the flagging financial resources of the company prevented any meaningful investment in the physical infrastructure (including vehicles, offices, support staff, telexes and computers) destined for use in non-urban areas.

In the first instance of reduced editorial space, the situation for editors was exacerbated by the fact that certain news components -- for example sports, financial

information and weather -- were considered mandatory space-consuming inclusions. As a result, at Zimpapers the general rule was that local features and other lengthy pieces would be kept to a minimum, while the "necessary news" including commentary, precis of world news, national political reporting, sports and entertainment would be allotted priority status.³² This regime led to complaints from editorial staff and editors, and fuelled "popular discontent" among the public concerning the size, thin news content and limited supply of the national dailies.

One of the more directly "technical" ramifications of the shrinkage in editorial space was the consequent "inefficiency" of the editorial section, stemming from the structured "overproduction" of editorial staff. Although no survey was undertaken at Zimpapers, observers cited a substantial under-employment of labour power at the chain. Aside from covering the essential items of Presidential and other government announcements, state visits, sports, entertainment and a minimum of domestic news, there was little space for local features, in-depth research and wide-ranging debate.³³ The sustained, imposed neglect of these areas contributed to the deterioration of journalistic and research skills, and an overall decline in the amount of copy produced, published or not. More ominously, and silently, tighter competition among reporters and writers for publishing space served as a persuasive device in the institutionalisation of political self-censorship among journalists.³⁴

If there were to have been changes in the early 1980s leading to the inclusion of more information on rural Zimbabwe and black society in general, they would have been the result of personal interventions by the new black editors, inspired -- but

not directed (or particularly assisted) -- by official MOI policy.³⁵ Though it provided no concrete solutions about how to get there, that policy did make prescient suggestions about what the new press should look like in the end. Minister of Information Mangwende summarised one of its dominant themes in 1988:

An observable deficiency in our national press is the obvious absence of adequate coverage of developmental news, especially the news from the rural areas... Since 80 percent of that society lives in the rural areas, one would rightly expect news in our newspapers to mirror the activities and development taking place in the rural areas...³⁶

At the outset, the prescriptions for this popular rebuilding of the press highlighted the need to extend the papers' distributional reach to the rural areas and towns, far beyond the country's main urban centres; and to alter the editorial focus of news coverage and reportage in order to take account of the interests of the majority of the population. For some senior journalists -- who echoed the MOI's official line -- the refocusing of news content provided an important mechanism linking the concerns and interests of the povo, with the plans and goals of government.³⁷ Others speculated that the reoriented urban-based media could help break down the information and cultural distance between town and country, with rural news that was "saleable" in an urban context.³⁸

While one veteran African editor at Zimpapers claimed that "the policy of the (post-1981) papers was rural-oriented at heart",³⁹ most disagree. If the emplacement of a handful of black editors was a rather easily-accomplished task which appeared to pay immediate benefits, the more radical alteration of Zimpapers' established

commercial structures of information collection and newspaper distribution posed a more daunting challenge.

For Zimpapers and the MOI, the question of extending news coverage to the rural areas implied significant capital outlay in the building, staffing and co-ordination of new structures⁴⁰ -- financial and human resources which were never available, at least within the context of a profit-making enterprise. Up to 1990, Zimpapers argued that it was incapable of sustaining a national reporting network. In lieu of more grandiose schemes, the chain instead came to rely on its branch offices in Harare, Bulawayo and Mutare, as regional bases for reporting forays into surrounding rural districts.

When the rural news option was considered by management (as opposed to more receptive editorial staff), it was only through the arm-twisting of the MOI that the idea was accepted even in principle, if not, in the long term, in practice. The strategy required substantial expenditure by external agencies and little capital investment by Zimpapers itself. When Zimpapers did attempt to undertake some editorial restructuring with the aim of the black mass market, the results -- a Group Features Department and a vernacular national weekly, Kwayedza-Umthunywa -- underlined the company's lack of adequate resources and the pressures of commercial production on editorial content. More ambitious and sustained initiatives were to come from the state, although these, too, carried their own problems related to information production and political interference. In this regard, the MOI's primary solution to

news editorial focus was to use Ziana and Zis, the news services operating under the MMT and MOI (respectively), as "feeder" agencies for Zimpapers.

Crossed Wires: Ziana, Zis and Zimpapers

At the outset it had been planned that Ziana and Zis, among other tasks, would act as national information collection pools, supplying local media with substantial amounts of hard news and features from around the country.⁴¹ For Ziana, news features and specialist reporting (including Parliamentary affairs, diplomatic visits and political economic analyses) were seen as the main vehicles for delivering unique national coverage. At Zis, an in-house information service within the MOI, the focus would be on daily "news shorts" directly from the rural areas of the country, provided free of charge. In both instances it had been assumed that the national newspaper chain would be a primary end-user of copy produced.

The two services differed in the volume and quality of both their staff and news copy. However, they shared a common obstacle in the hostility of Zimpapers to the utilisation of agency copy on domestic affairs. Under-staffing, insufficient infrastructure and chronic financial losses increasingly confined Ziana reporters to the same urban and national-political news reportage covered by Zimpapers' own journalists. With no specific directives to the contrary coming from the MOI, MMT or the senior management of the new Ziana and Zimpapers, it was not long before the

old rigid edges separating Ziana's predecessor, Iana and the RPP papers in the 1960s and 1970s were reconfirmed and hardened.⁴²

At the level of ordinary journalists this enmity was reflected in the generally better wage scales and working conditions enjoyed by Ziana employees. It was aggravated by Ziana's claim to greater prestige, as the editing desk of all foreign wire copy entering the country, the primary supplier of copy about Zimbabwe to the outside world and the designated domestic news source on parliamentary affairs and other (mainly governmental) news "spots" regularly covered in the national media.

But the rivalry extended to higher levels of management too, where it became entwined with political struggles related to party loyalty. It was no secret in Zimbabwean media circles that a substantial personal and political rivalry developed in the 1980s between Farayi Munyuki, who left The Herald with some bitterness in 1983 to become the first permanent editor-in-chief at Ziana, and his successor at Zimpapers, Tommy Sithole. The latter's particularly close relations with senior party officials and elements in the security apparatus had undoubtedly paid handsomely, as from time to time The Herald has scooped stories which could only have been based on information leaked directly from party and security connections.⁴³ Such openly displayed favouritism towards selected senior Zimpapers staff incited bitterness among editors and journalists at Ziana, who conjectured that the agency was being quietly "penalised" for being less slavishly partisan in its coverage than Tommy Sithole's Herald.⁴⁴

This sort of personal antagonism was amplified by the structured differences between Ziana and Zimpapers, in the style of their respective coverage. Ziana, with its international clients and its "protective buffer" from public access (its stories were subjected first to others' selection and editing, before their mass publication), generally had a freer hand in dealing with politically sensitive subjects. The more liberal editorial atmosphere at Ziana presented the opportunity for more critical engagement of debate and political critique.

However, as it became clear that less restrained reportage did not easily find its way into publicly owned newspapers, this opportunity typically turned out to be hollow. During periods of rising political tensions, as in the Matabeleland crisis in 1982-1983 and the run-up to the 1985 elections, the deselection of Ziana copy by Zimpapers editors was widespread. For Ziana this rejection was bitterly ironic, given that the agency's copy was said by independent observers to have been far more comprehensive and accurate than that of Zimpapers' own reporters, writing under the watchful eye of Sithole and his more partisan colleagues.⁴⁵

Although the MOI used its consultative liaisons with Zimpapers management and editors in an effort to persuade the company to print more Ziana copy and to co-operate more closely to avoid duplication of tasks, such efforts were largely unsuccessful. Instead, there were frequent public attacks on Ziana from Zimpapers' editors and senior management, who complained that the news agency was failing to fulfil its role in supplying a regular quotient of features and rural news. The solution demanded by Zimpapers (and echoed by the ZBC) was that Ziana abandon its largely

urban-centered coverage and move more decisively into the domain of rural and national reporting. By implication, Zimpapers would be left to cover the urban areas, and communities along the main trunk lines of transport and communication; that is, those regions which could be covered with greatest cost efficiency.⁴⁶

For Ziana, however, Zimpapers' demands -- which were quietly tolerated, if not encouraged, by the MOI -- indicated a desire to dismember the news agency's already feeble organisational structures. At the same time, there was no guarantee that the "rural" copy of a reconstructed Ziana would find its way into the domestic media. Neither was there mention of how much investment Ziana's expansion required, or the source of the capital involved. Indeed, the experience of Ziana's counterpart news service, Zis, provided compelling evidence that a strictly rural-based news agency would be at pains to attain the necessary financial and practical support of either government or the national media. If longstanding and structured competition between Ziana and Zimpapers partly accounted for Ziana's shunning by the newspaper chain, Zis demonstrated that even if Ziana had supplied a steady flow of fresh, rural news, Zimpapers would have been unreceptive to its use. For Zis, Zimpapers' rejection of domestic news agency copy was the outcome of broader decisions to maintain a more traditional urban-enclave editorial focus, which had little use for authentically rural news.

Even though Zis survived on a minimal budget, with low-skilled staff and a makeshift news collection and editing infrastructure, the free service was the source of a remarkable flow of information from the rural areas throughout most of the

decade.⁴⁷ Yet for much of the 1980s Zis' unparalleled access to the rural areas was untapped by Zimpapers, whose editors claimed the agency's copy quality was sub-standard -- an assertion maintained even after rationalisation of Zis' editorial management in the mid 1980s obviated the charge. Only MOI arm-twisting provided sufficient incentive for Zimpapers to print Zis' fresh copy.

In 1984, under pressure from government, Zimpapers concluded a "gentleman's agreement" with Zis to provide two pages of editorial space a week for copy about the rural areas, most of which would come from Zis.⁴⁸ At The Herald this agreement worked well, not so much because of the willingness of the Zimpapers' management and daily's editor to take on Zis copy; but rather, because the chief sub-editor at the paper had a personal liking for the "genuine bits of local information" contained in Zis' daily copy.⁴⁹ Following the chief sub-editor's resignation in 1986, the agreement between Zimpapers, The Herald and Zis effectively lapsed, and the news service was left with its old regimen of regular clients: ZBC and smaller non-national newspapers and newssheets.⁵⁰ For the most part, Zis reverted to playing the role of an uncredited "tip-off" service for Zimpapers' reporters, at best.⁵¹ In the meantime, Zimpapers had undertaken its own in-house efforts to provide support for a shift in editorial content.

Experiments in Editorial Expansion at Zimpapers

Within Zimpapers, efforts to reorient structures of news collation and presentation towards a black, national readership were to be frustrated by a

combination of financial weakness and political intrigue. Both the 1984 establishment of the Group Features Department, and the launching one year later of the national vernacular weekly, Kwayedza, demonstrated the improbability of a structured space for "popular" information within the company; and indeed, the state's ultimate acceptance of this reality.

On the face of it, Zimpapers' Group Features department was established to redress the imbalance in urban and rural news by providing a pool of mainly rural feature stories for company publications. At the insistence of the MOI, Zimpapers "untypically forgot about the expense" and proceeded to assign a pool of three reporters under the supervision of former Sunday Mail editor Bill Saidi.⁵²

The task of the department, according to Saidi, was to get directly in touch with the rural povo and their local leaders by sending reporters from Harare to undertake investigations into rural living conditions, events and issues.⁵³ But after only a brief period in operation, during which the it produced weekly features, the department was shut down and its reporters reassigned to regular duty on The Herald. Unsustainable support costs were cited as the reason for the department's early demise.

In reality, the rise and fall of Saidi's department was a much different affair. As revealed by former Zimpapers Managing Director, E.T. Rusike, the short-lived project was an MOI-inspired plan to move a politically unacceptable senior journalist

out of harm's way.⁵⁴ According to Rusike, prior to the creation of Group Features, Zimpapers management had recommended Saidi to the post of Herald managing editor -- a move which Minister of Information Shamuyarira refused on the basis of Saidi's alleged political disagreements with senior members of the ruling party. The outcome was that another position had to be found for the former Sunday News editor. In the end it was created for him, in the form of the new Group Features section. However, it was only a temporary, half-hearted solution, and one which was doomed by the political rivalry between Saidi and Zanu's pre-eminent apologist at Zimpapers, Herald editor Tommy Sithole. As Rusike explained,

before long the department was abolished because the editor of The Herald, Tommy Sithole, refused to have anything to do with [Saidi]. In fact, Saidi was not even allowed to edit or vet the features for publication. Saidi's title was then changed to that of the group foreign editor, with responsibility for foreign stories and features. Again, the editor of The Herald refused to have anything to do with him with the support of the Minister of Information. By the time I resigned from Zimpapers, Saidi was among those senior editors with a car and a fat salary and was being paid, while writing his own novels.⁵⁵

A more enduring example of the failure to create a press for the rural povo was provided by Kwayedza.⁵⁶ Although Zimpapers management, the MMT and the MOI all claim to have been the creative force behind the establishment of the country's first national vernacular newspaper (Kwayedza is written in Shona, with an Ndebele insert),⁵⁷ it is clear that the momentum to set up the venture came from the MOI. The fact that Kwayedza's appearance was matched by the MOI's closure of its own People's Weekly -- indeed, the Weekly's editor transferred to Zimpapers to edit

the new Kwayedza -- only underlined the role of the state in Zimpapers' in-house venture.

Despite the MMT's and Zimpapers' official commitment to the development of a national, black-oriented, vernacular newspaper, deep reservations were held by the proprietors of Kwayedza about the feasibility of the project; at least, as long as it's authentic goals were to instil a national, rural-oriented paper. The then-General Manager of the company indicated the crux of the issue in 1987.

Zimpapers is not a philanthropic company. All evidence is that rural newspapers will not turn a profit or break even in the near future, although they do offer increasing opportunity for the expansion of the advertising market into the vast rural market. But that expansion costs money, and the benefits of such capital outlay must be calculated closely.⁵⁸

According to some observers, the ending of the MOI's paper and the "forced" creation of Zimpapers' new one amounted to the MOI's shifting of financial and managerial responsibility for a loss-making entity, onto the shoulders of others.⁵⁹ As it happened, the form and content of the paper were altered in the short term to suit the entrepreneurial needs of Zimpapers -- even if the paper's officially stated aims remained unchanged. Launched in June 1985 with a large print run of 70,000 and an untested market, it was not long before the paper was on the verge of financial collapse. Initial sales were 18,000 copies weekly, dropping to as low as 12,000-15,000 weekly within a few months. At the same time, advertisers were wary of supporting this unknown media quantity, particularly as an alternative to the more widely distributed and up-market dailies and weeklies in the Zimpapers chain.

But there were other problems as well, related both to the paper's distribution and its content. In the first instance, the company had not invested in any new mechanisms for getting the paper out to its prospective market, the rural areas. In the second, observers noted that the weekly was less an alternative source of rural and community centred news, and more a compendium of vernacular translations of the Herald.⁶⁰ The resulting disastrous initial performance led to the drastic scaling back of the print run, to under 20,000 copies weekly -- and to management's pondering about how to make the "imposed" project work.

A reconceptualisation and remodelling of Kwayedza was undertaken by management, under the tacit direction of the MOI. The result was a paper which began, by 1987, to enjoy greater commercial success, but at the expense of the original goal of providing rural, community and development-oriented news to the non-urban majority. In the case of the paper's content, Zimpapers' CEO proudly identified what he saw as the key to the paper's new commercial strategy:

A principal reason for the rapid growth [in circulation] was that Kwayedza now had a reputation for printing gossipy and human interest stories to which the man in the street could relate and identify, plus articles on farming, housekeeping and health...⁶¹

According to Kwayedza's editor, the new-look paper was at pains to avoid issues of politics, economics and development -- in favour of more popular, "cultural" and "community" news (most of which came to be supplied by a nationwide network of stringers, rather than conventional news sources like Ziana and Zis).⁶² Others were less enthusiastic in their descriptions of the reformulated paper's "popular" content. Kwayedza, opined one Zimbabwean academic working on the rural media,

...in some ways resembles the American National Enquirer in terms of its emphasis on township gossip, rumour mongering and other unconventional stories -- all of them bursting at the seams with idiomatic and slang expressions usually reserved for spoken rather than written communication. The story-line, capitalizing on unmitigated exaggerations characteristic of the yellow journalism of 1920s America and evident in the majority of the paper's articles, defies logic and normality... [T]he majority of its readers tend to see it as an entertainment medium.⁶³

If the reworking of Kwayedza's content was one reason for its commercial success (at least as a gossip sheet), another was the decision by Zimpapers management to be less ambitiously "national" when it came to distributing the tabloid. Although the company claimed that the paper found its way deep into the rural areas, Kwayedza clearly took on the guise of an urban and semi-urban weekly, based in Mashonaland. While Zimpapers' distribution statistics aimed to demonstrate to politicians and advertisers alike that the majority of readers and copies of Kwayedza were in the rural areas, it is unlikely that the rural reach of the paper was as wide as claimed. (see below)

This observation about Kwayedza's limited distribution pattern does not discount the fact of the paper's resurgence from 1987 until the end of the decade -- a recovery which was reflected in higher print runs, readership, and correspondingly, advertising appeal.⁶⁴ What it means to underscore, rather, is the transfiguration of Zimpapers' development policy, and the effects of that shift on the social role of the chain. In the case of Kwayedza, what is seen is the abandonment of the original goals underlying the only media created anew by Zimpapers in the 1980s.

The logic behind this change of plans was the same one which increasingly determined the direction of the company in general: the prioritisation of commercial "solvency", decided by Zimpapers' management with the MOI's encouragement, and the relegation of popular political debate and reportage.⁶⁵ As the MOI's Director of Information noted with approval in 1987,

We must play it by ear... Zimpapers is a commercial enterprise, run by Rusike as a business concern. There are contradictions, to be sure, in this approach to running the media when we are trying to transform the social and economic basis of this country. But we have to balance things out, unfortunately, according to the bank book. We are achieving the results of transformation that we want, but the process is going to be gradual. One cannot change society overnight.⁶⁶

While it had quickly become evident that neither the information order, nor the social and economic basis of the country, were going to be transformed "overnight", it also would become increasingly clear over the 1980s that the slowness of the pace of change held repercussions for the political credibility of Zanu's media policy -- and ultimately, for the MOI and ruling party itself.

The real failure of the new public print media infrastructure to redress the central problem of Zimpapers' largely urban focus and constituency stood as a point of public criticism and debate by the mid 1980s.⁶⁷ There was plenty of evidence to demonstrate that Zimpapers and the state had fallen far short of the MOI's announced policy aims of establishing a rural and black-directed, nationally-relevant press. One content analysis of The Herald and The Chronicle carried out in September 1986 revealed both these newspapers' urban bias, and their "unprogressive" editorial slant.⁶⁸ N.G.C. Mathema's survey (Table 6.7), conducted over the space of one

**Domestic News Content in The Herald and The Chronicle
by Story Origin
8-13 September, 1986**

Story Type/Origin	<u>The Herald</u> Number	<u>The Chronicle</u> Number
Local	287	244
Foreign	303	287
<u>Local Topics:*</u>		
5-Year Plan	1	0
Socialism	0	0
Working Class	3	5
Peasantry	2	5
Economy	63	45
Pol. Economy	0	0
Co-ops	2	0
Women	1	1
State	0	0
Unity	0	0
<u>Local Origin:**</u>		
Mash. East	235	90
Mash. West	-	6
Mash. Centre	-	5
Mat. North	-	106
Mat. South	-	27
Midlands	-	26
Manicaland	-	6
Masvingo	-	8

Source: N.G.C. Mathema, "Zimbabwean Newspapers Six Years After Independence", unpublished paper, June 1987.

***** Sports and court reporting (statistics not supplied) most popular.

****** Statistics not provided for The Herald.

Table 6.8

**Foreign News Content in The Herald and The Chronicle
Agency Sources and Story Origin
8-13 September, 1986**

<u>Story Type/Origin</u>	<u>The Herald Number or Percentage</u>	<u>The Chronicle Number or Percentage</u>
<u>Local Source:</u>		
Zimpapers	259	189
Ziana	22	49
Zis	6	6
<u>Foreign Story Origin:</u>		
Africa	89	94
Asia	56	60
Latin America	18	10
East Bloc	16	16
W. Europe	99	88
North America	34	33
<u>Foreign Source:</u>		
Total Cited	14 Agencies	12 Agencies
Reuters	74 (54%)	102 (72%)
AP	27 (20%)	18 (13%)
SAPA*	12 (9%)	- -
PANA	8 (5%)	6 (4%)
ZANA	4 (2%)	5 (3%)
Others	9 (9%)	8 (8%)

Source: N.G.C. Mathema, "Zimbabwean Newspapers Six Years After Independence", unpublished paper, June 1987.

* The Chronicle does not subscribe to SAPA.

Table 6.9

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**Domestic News Content in The Herald and The Chronicle
1988**

Story Type/Origin	<u>The Herald</u>		<u>The Chronicle</u>	
	Space cm/col	Percentage	Space cm/col	Percentage
Local	1066	56	1082	67
Foreign	850	44	533	33
<u>Local Topics:</u>				
Sensational	241	22.6	115	10.6
Social	535	50.2	563	52.6
Financial	146	13.7	110	10.2
Political	53	5.0	127	11.7
Development	61	5.7	148	13.7
Rural	30	2.8	19	1.2
Total	1066	100.0	1082	100.0

Source: H.M.R. Farinya, "The Herald and The Chronicle in 1988", report prepared for Ministry of Information, 1989.

Table 6.10

**News Content in The Herald
News Agency Sources**

July 1987-December 1988*

Date	Reuters	AP	Sapa	Pana	SADCC	Xinhua	Other
07/08-1987	275**	219	90	44	30	0	120
11/12-1987	358	226	56	41	28	30	31
03/04-1988	238	214	55	39	15	116	84
07/08-1988	227	108	53	31	5	78	53
11/12-1988	317	150	51	30	26	74	36
Total	1415	917	305	185	104	298	324
Average	283	183	61	37	20	59	65
Percentage	40	26	9	5	3	8	9

* Source: H.M.R. Farinya, [untitled], report prepared for Ministry of Information, 1989.

** Figures represent monthly average of number of stories published.

week, found that of the 287 local stories (or 49% of the total) in The Herald and The Sunday Mail, only 52 (18%) came from outside of Harare's Mashonaland East Province. Moreover, of the stories from that province, very few came from outside the immediate vicinity of Harare-city.

The survey also analysed local stories thematically, in terms of various "story subjects" in light of official policies on national development and socialist transformation. It was found that most local news items had little "socially progressive" content, ignoring discussion of, for example, the First Five-Year National Development Plan (0.3% of all stories), the "working class and peasants" (1%) and co-operatives (0.3%). Furthermore, the domestic news sourcing agencies did not figure importantly in the supply of local stories: Ziana contributed only 8% of all local news items, and Zis only 2% (or, 6 stories -- despite the fact that during the survey Zis had published 29 stories). (Table 6.8) In the domain of foreign news, 43% of the 303 news items concerned either Europe or North America (Africa was the main news subject only 29% of the time), while the sourcing of this news was dominated by the large western agencies Reuters (54% of foreign stories) and Associated Press (20%), followed by the South African-based SAPA (9%).

The same pattern of news bias was indicated in another print media survey two years later. A confidential MOI content analysis of The Herald and The Chronicle noted that while the proportion of local to foreign news had increased, only 8.5% and 14.9% (respectively) of the former was of a "rural" or "developmental" focus, while 22.6% and 10.6% was of "sensational" value. (Table 6.9) Moreover, the survey

underlined the predominance of "hostile" western news services in the supply of printed foreign news, with 73% of such stories being provided by only three agencies: Reuters, The Associated Press and Sapa. (Table 6.10) It was a situation which would persist up to the end of the decade.

What these surveys seemed to indicate -- and what was reflected in the debate on the media's content and role -- was that the government's mass-oriented agenda for the media had been thrown off track. In the view of Mathema and others, a new, conservative, elitist agenda -- not a populist or socialist one -- was increasingly evident in the realm of media coverage. However, this critique failed to carry the media debate beyond that first step, of pointing out that what had been promised by the government and the MMT in 1981 had not been delivered.

The more vital political repercussions of Zanu's emerging media programme revolved around the negative impact of such unfulfilled expectations in the socio-political space of civil society. In the event, developments in Zimpapers' halting efforts to expand its distribution network nation-wide into the rural areas highlighted and focused popular disgruntlement, precisely at a time when alternative media with alternative politics were becoming more accessible to a large section of the population.

A New Readership? Limits to Growth

If the shifting of news content in the public media towards a more nationally-oriented, vaguely "progressive" tenor proved impossible because of the lack of

resources and firm managerial commitment, the creation of a more equitable pattern of newspaper distribution encompassing non-urban areas represented a goal which many saw as being more easily within the reach of Zimpapers. Yet the implementation of this government supported ambition, too, was rendered problematic by the scale of the task and the frailty of the commercial resource base expected to undertake it.

In 1981, well over 80% of all the chain's papers were sold in urban areas, where under 25% of the population resided.⁶⁹ While the greater number of reader-per-copy in the under-serviced rural areas meant that Zimpapers' estimated readership was proportionately slightly higher in the countryside than these sales figures would indicate, figures for 1983 show that severe discrepancies in newspaper access prevailed. Of the total estimated regular readership of 881,000 for all Zimpapers, 63% (553,000) were to be found in the urban areas.

The imbalances in this pattern of distribution (in terms of popular access to the media) were underlined by the fact that nearly 65% of urban dwellers were regular consumers of Zimpapers products. In the rural areas, on the other hand, just under 13% of the population enjoyed similar access to the national newspapers -- a statistic borne out by many observers,⁷⁰ and at least one published survey of communication practices in a typical rural growth centre.⁷¹ When the concentration of the white population in the urban centres is taken into account, it is apparent that the

distribution of Zimpapers' readership remained overwhelmingly skewed towards white Zimbabweans well into the 1980s.

Zimpapers' response to this situation of unequal access -- a response which was officially encouraged by the MMT and MOI -- was to expand newspaper distribution first into the high density black urban areas, and secondarily, into the countryside. In reality, this plan became the central plank in the strategy to "popularise" the public print media -- "popularization" coming to be equated with commodity "accessibility".

But pressures imposed by commercial viability stood in the way of any wholehearted attempt to implement this policy comprehensively. Important factors in this regard turned on questions linked to ease of circulation, the advertising market and profitability. As with most other newspaper operations world-wide, urban distribution of Zimpapers' copy proved easier and by far the more profitable method of circulation: easier, because the in-house network for urban circulation was already standing and simple to expand; more profitable, on account of ready consumer markets, cheaper displacement of copy, and the larger "pull" of the urban consumer population in terms of advertising support drawn by the media.⁷²

Any real intent to extend distribution to urban and rural black readers was mediated by these crucial commercial considerations. Therefore, when new print stocks, cover prices and hence potential circulation outputs were restricted, or when economic recession compressed the revenue haul from the advertising sector, the policy imperative of "reaching out to the rural masses" was sidelined. The outlying

semi-urban, and rural areas, were typically the first regions to have their share of diminished print runs down-scaled. At the same time the demand for print media in these same non-urban sectors increased throughout the 1980s. In the late 1980s it was uncommon to find current copies of The Herald, especially, in the rural areas. Instead, radio served as the form of mass media to which most people had regular or semi-regular access -- a situation underpinned by the fact that two of the four radio channels operated by the ZBC, Radio Two and Radio Four, were broadcast in vernacular languages (and in the case of Radio Two at least, accessible throughout most of the countryside). The same could not be said of the national dailies and weeklies operated by Zimpapers.⁷³

This is not to say that no expansion of distribution was attempted. It is to argue, however, that distribution was unsystematic, and that it received no steady outlay of capital and infrastructural planning in support.⁷⁴ Between 1986 and 1990, the Fawcett Security company was hired as a courier to deliver small packets of paper in outlying towns and growth points at the same time as Zimpapers engaged a small number of rural vendors. However, both schemes were abandoned as uneconomic. In the first case, Fawcett repeatedly revised its prices upwards; in the second, up to 95% of rural vendors soon fell into arrears on payment for deliveries, and the company was unable to sustain credit schemes agreeable to them.⁷⁵

For the most part, throughout the 1980s Zimpapers relied on informal distribution networks, including individual urban commuters, bus drivers, truck and haulage companies, teachers and health workers, to get its papers into the rural areas.

In all of these instances, the company was able to avoid the creation and carrying costs of an expanded, permanent distribution infrastructure. But this more passive, ad-hoc approach to copy circulation met with mixed results.

Statistics on rural-urban newspaper distribution and readership patterns from the 1980s indicate, in most cases, improvement in the distribution of newspapers in urban black communities, but only a slight betterment in the accessibility of most rural dwellers to the national press. (Table 6.11) Even then, much of the progress made in reaching rural areas only appeared as such, because of the complete lack of structured rural distribution schemes up to the time of independence. In 1980, a tiny proportion of the newspapers published in Harare, Bulawayo and Mutare were sold beyond their immediate vicinity. When they were, it was typically in other urban and semi-urban regional centres, like Gweru, Masvingo and Kadoma. At the most, only 19% of any one of the chain's papers was distributed in non-urban regions in 1981, with the group-average penetration of the rural population being lower at 15%.

Despite assertions to the contrary from Zimpapers, the situation did not improve substantially in following years. In 1983, nearly 65% of the adult urban community had access to one or more of Zimpapers' publications, while 12% of the rural population enjoyed the same (and then, only because each copy in the rural areas had multiple readers). (Table 6.12) Over the next five years it appeared, at first glance, that progress had been made in reaching rural folk. In 1988, a study commissioned by Zimpapers claimed that readership in rural areas had more than doubled for all its papers, and in some cases, tripled. However, a closer look at the

Table 6.11*

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**Zimpapers: Urban-Rural Distribution
1981-1988**

Table 6.12*

**Zimpapers: Urban-Rural Readership
1983-1988**

* See Appendices K and I for more detailed figures.

Table 6.13

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Zimpapers: Total Circulation and Population Growth, 1979-1990

Source: Zimpapers Annual Reports.
Population estimates are based
on 1982 Census.

Table 6.14

Zimpapers: Rate of Change in Circulation and Population Growth, 1980-1990

Source: Zimpapers Annual Reports.
Population estimates are based
on 1982 Census.

figures, particularly in light of rural population growth in the 1980s, indicates otherwise.

There is reason to argue that the access of the rural population to the national newspapers "improved" much less than Zimpapers claimed in 1988. If the manner in which readership and distribution statistics were compiled is taken into account, along with national population growth over the 1980s, a different picture of the success of rural distribution emerges. First, the "rural" category in distribution surveys included figures from areas more urban or semi-urban, than rural; for example, towns, regional centres and "Growth Points" (many of which were located close to the urban centres of Harare, Bulawayo and Mutare). A large number of these so-called "rural distribution points" were in fact the Zimbabwean equivalent of bedroom communities or urban centres in their own right. More importantly, they constituted only a small fraction of the rural population. In the core of rural society -- the Communal Areas (home to at least 5.5 million by 1990) and commercial farm compounds (with at least 1.2 million) -- regular access to daily or weekly newspapers was rare.⁷⁶

When rural population growth is considered, it becomes apparent that the access of rural people to Zimpapers' publications actually declined in per capita terms in the 1980s.⁷⁷ Rural circulation, which grew from one-fifth of Zimpapers' output to (at most) one-third in 1988, nevertheless was overwhelmed by the expansion of population in non-urban regions. Small shifts in the pattern of newspaper distribution and readership aside, the urban community therefore remained the primary target audience of Zimpapers, and underwent a much higher degree of media penetration

(typically six times as much as rural communities).⁷⁸ In the late 1980s, urban areas accounted for well over 60% of newspaper copies sold and for more than 60% of the total readership of the four main newspapers produced in Harare and Bulawayo.

Moreover, two studies in 1988 and 1990 indicated a regional fracturing of this total readership, meaning that the readership "catchment" of any given newspaper was primarily limited to its region of origin.⁷⁹ It was a fact which stood in the way of any one paper dominating the national newspaper market and, particularly in light of the differing style among the periodicals, serving as a central, unchallenged point of political and discursive consolidation in the media.

In sum, while Zimpapers underwent a sustained period of circulation expansion in the early and mid 1980s, this growth did not lead to a systematic, geographical expansion of distribution and access, beyond the large towns and major trunk routes connecting them.⁸⁰ If there were benefits to be had from increased print runs in the 1980s, they were felt most directly by urban residents of high-density, township and "location" communities, who previously had been denied adequate access to RPP papers. Whereas Zimpapers' own statistics had been used to argue that higher print runs and higher ratios of "papers per capita" were the hallmarks of its successful development, its "nationally-averaged" figures did not take account of structured circulation anomalies: namely, the bias towards distribution in urban areas.⁸¹ In the final assessment, it is highly unlikely there was noticeable improvement in the access of most Zimbabweans living outside of larger towns and cities, to Zimpapers' expanded print runs.

In the long term, Zimbabwe's steady population growth over the decade put Zimpapers under increasing pressure to keep up with swelling market demand. (Table 6.13 and Table 6.14) Already in 1988, the rate of population growth started to outstrip that of print run expansion; a situation imposed, fundamentally and inescapably, by Zimpapers' limited supplies of raw materials (especially newsprint) and advertising support. In hindsight, therefore, the early and mid 1980s marked the pinnacle of most Zimbabweans' access to Zimpapers' journals, even if it was far from apparent at the time. The question was: what would the wider consequences be, when this hindsight observation was acknowledged by frustrated and disappointed rural folk?

Priorities, Politics and the People's Press

It was the inherited economic and financial infrastructure which really put the government policy people and the ruling party off the track; because it seems to me that everything was really put aside, when they started adding up the costs. Besides the Argus take-over, nothing was really done to change the basic set-up... At the beginning there was a real thrust to change everything, but then a small voice apparently called to them: 'Look, do you have the money for all this?'

William Saidi, former editor -- The Sunday News⁸²

Despite all of the seminars convened, declarations promulgated and speeches delivered, the actual practice of print media transformation at Zimpapers fell far short of expectations in terms of the national expansion of information coverage, popular

input and distribution. Instead, the company spent much of the 1980s struggling to regain a sound commercial footing. Towards the end of the decade this commercial initiative met with some success, but at the expense of substantial investment in other more popularly-oriented options related to developing the newspaper infrastructure. Meanwhile, the gradual extension of reach of the private print media nation-wide, and the growing appeal of their critical editorial content, raised a broader political challenge to the emerging social role of the newspaper chain.

The structures inherited in 1981 by the new operators of Zimpapers were not geared to yielding effective national coverage, either editorially or in terms of distribution and readership. Yet because of an uncertain economic climate and an unwillingness on the part of the state to subsidize the new, "autonomous" MMT media, these structures were maintained, if not reinforced. Although the Trust experiment marked a policy departure from previous press relations, it was clear at the end of the 1980s that no sustained policy confrontation with the existing mode of newspaper production was attempted at Zimpapers. Instead, the company was handled in 1981 like so many of the parastatals over which government assumed control at independence. It was assigned a different social task, but left dependent on the same instrumental tools. In short, at Zimpapers this was to mean that the new national press was to serve, primarily, a multi-racial minority in the urban areas.⁸³ In this sense, there was a clear retreat from the notions of "democratisation" and "decolonisation" as had been elaborated in 1980-1981.

The driving development momentum of the new Zimpapers, guided by the new black Zanu-approved senior management which started taking control of the company in 1984, was characterised by commercial prudence. This new modus operandi at Zimpapers, moreover, was put in place with the approval of the MOI, the agency which initially had emphasized the social utility of a revitalised Zimpapers, as opposed to its commercial performance.⁸⁴ Its hallmarks were the substantial diversion of investment capital away from what became the newspaper division of the company, and towards the larger commercial printing and publishing operations which Zimpapers began acquiring in the mid 1980s. This shift of energy and capital into a corporate expansion plan indicated that Zimpapers was unwilling to consider its newspapers operations -- for the medium term at least -- as the "recaptured" centre of the Group's commercial activity.⁸⁵ Although it had been speculated that successful commercial diversification would be important to the commercial viability of the newspaper company as a whole, and might allow expansion of media services in the future, in fact the corporate programme was to pay only short-term financial dividends -- and these were not contributed to newspaper division expansion.

In the second half of the decade, Zimpapers' corporate expansion saw the company become a major player in the realm of commercial printing and packaging. As an investment proposition, Zimpapers had already owned minority shares of other enterprises in some way connected to the printing industry. From the mid 1980s Zimpapers moved to invest more heavily in these and new ventures, in a bid to corner the domestic large scale printing market.⁸⁶ The first moves towards diversification

involved the acquisition of majority shareholdings in Bradby's printers (renamed Boldads) and Natprint.⁸⁷ Both deals were undertaken with the approval and co-operation of the MMT and MOI. The second take-over in particular marked a departure for Zimpapers: at the time of the \$3.6 million buy-out, Mardons was a larger and more profitable company than its prospective purchaser. Mardon's acquisition therefore required outside financing, in the form of a loan from the Merchant Bank of Central Africa.⁸⁸

Already in 1986, these "external" enterprises controlled by Zimpapers comprised the dominant fraction of the company's commercial activity, and contributed the major portion of the company's overall profits. Zimpapers' management explained all of these take-overs as allowing greater profit-generation and flexibility in printing business operations. As the company's CEO explained, diversification would enable the company to offset losses in its newspaper division.⁸⁹

In the following years Zimpapers continued to collect subsidiaries (numbering twelve by 1989), while entering into partnership with other publishers in the country's only colour-separation outfit, Colourscan. The profits from these external operations quickly overshadowed those of the newspaper company itself, a fact reflected in the consolidation of the subsidiaries' accounts into Zimpapers' annual statements in 1986.⁹⁰ In that same year Natprint earned a profit of \$2.8 million, and in the following year Bold Ads added another \$800,000 to company revenue. In 1987 the importance of subsidiaries in the expanded Zimpapers family was reflected in the expansion of the Zimpapers Board of Directors to include three representatives (or

33% of the Board membership) from Natprint and Typocrafters.⁹¹ The following year, subsidiaries (now grouped together as Zimpapers' "Commercial Printing Division") contributed 97% of Group profits or \$4,385,796 while the newspaper division profits plummeted 93% to a mere \$150,823.

Significantly, the 18% decline in overall Group profits in 1988 was wholly attributable to the newspaper branch of the company.⁹² Even then, in 1988 Zimpapers recorded the highest annual percentage increase of net earnings (392%) among Zimbabwean companies listed on the Harare Stock Exchange, on the basis of its subsidiary activity.⁹³ A pattern had been established. While Zimpapers' newspaper operations struggled to break even, its associated companies and subsidiaries not only contributed profits but mounting real profits -- a balance sheet category which had previously been in decline at the company. (Table 6.15 and Table 6.16) The chain's corporate investments also appeared to contribute substantially to a buoyancy in the company's profit rate curve. (Table 6.17) Still, extreme fluctuations in this relative measurement of changes in the profit rate over successive years (Table 6.18) underlined the variable economic performance of the company, and the problems faced when it came to substantial, capital-intensive, long-term planning. A setback in the operations of the associated companies in 1990,⁹⁴ along with a short-term recuperation of Zimpapers newspaper operations,⁹⁵ was unlikely to alter this pattern in the long term.

If Zimpapers Group's balance sheet reports were generally positive at the end of the 1980s, the implications for the development of the newspapers themselves were

Table 6.15

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**Zimpapers: Current Profit
Newspaper and Commercial Divisions
1980-1990**

Source: Zimpapers Annual Reports.

Table 6.16

**Zimpapers: Real Profit
Newspaper and Commercial Divisions
1980-1990**

Source: Zimpapers Annual Reports

Table 6.17

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**Zimpapers: Profit Rate
Newspaper and Commercial Divisions
1980-1990**

Source: Zimpapers Annual Reports.

**Table 6.18
Zimpapers: Change in Profit Rate
Newspaper and Commercial Divisions
1981-1990**

Source: Zimpapers Annual Reports

much more ambiguous. Capital gains hived off from Group operations may have been used to subsidise the company's newspapers, but they were not employed to substantially expand or remodel them. The latter was not only a matter of building a new personnel and capital infrastructure to reach nation-wide in every sense, it also implied the servicing of company assets in order to improve existing media outputs.

One powerful reflection of infrastructural depreciation was the longstanding failure to invest in a new printing works for the obsolete one in Bulawayo.⁹⁶ By the end of the 1980s The Chronicle newspaper had become literally unreadable, not for its content, but rather for its extremely poor printed quality. Some observers speculated that the delayed decision to instal a new printing works for the paper in Bulawayo was not unrelated to the fact that The Chronicle and The Sunday News were known for their generally more critical assessment of government and social issues -- a viewpoint reflected in the former's breaking of the Willowgate scandal. Interestingly, it was only after the effective emasculation in 1989 of The Chronicle editorial team (following its Willowgate revelations in December 1988) that talk of replacing the paper's printing press was revived at senior levels within Zimpapers. The main point, however, is that the sole daily newspaper available to readers in much of the southern, western and central regions of the country remained illegible, while millions of dollars were invested by Zimpapers head office in companies printing commercial directories and greeting cards.

However, the decision to preserve the financial well-being of the company in the face of popular demands for (and earlier promises of) an expanded national

newspaper chain, was not without its own negative political implications for the group which controlled it. For the historico-political role of Zimpapers as a social institution since 1981 was mediated not only by direct intercessions from the state and ruling party, but also by the changing nature of the constellation of social forces and interests in society which the company's media sought to inform and help guide.

In the particular realm of media development, the expectations which had been raised by the prospect of a nonpartisan, nationally-oriented "people's press" at the time of the MMT's creation posed the standards against which the concrete performance of the new Zimpapers would be popularly measured -- in much the same way that Zanu's early pronouncements on the socialist transition (for example), were employed by trade unionists to attack government's increasingly conservative economic programme. Over the 1980s, in the course of that practical assessment by ordinary Zimbabweans in the Communal Areas, commercial farm compounds, mines, outlying villages and townships, the real content of the public media experiment (like that of Zanu socialism) most certainly was found to be disappointing.

For most Zimbabweans, it had become apparent that a new minority had replaced the old white Rhodesian one of the pre-independence RPP status quo. At Zimpapers the new privileged "minority" included white and black urban and semi-urban residents, in favour of whom the ration of news included in the national papers was disproportionately weighted, and towards whom the bulk of print orders were directed. But while these trends in content and distribution alienated large sections of the population who were denied regular access to Zimpapers -- and who found solace

in fractions of the private press -- they did not guarantee Zimpapers, the MOI and Zanu an unchallenged voice in urban and semi-urban communities, either.

It was in the urban areas where the widest variety of print and other media were available for consumption, for the same reasons of economy of production and circulation which appealed to Zimpapers. Although the newspaper chain dominated urban print media sales owing to its daily production output, the vast array of other publications, mostly focused on Harare and (secondarily) Bulawayo, collectively catered more directly and differently to a range of interest groups and class fractions in civil society. Moreover, other print media which competed on the urban terrain, namely local papers and monthly magazines like Parade and Moto, probably reached a larger audience overall nation-wide.⁹⁷

But there was another disadvantage Zimpapers suffered in its bid to present itself as the "national-popular" media voice in the urban space. While Zimpapers typically targeted urban readers in general, the different parts of the private media were free to target narrower constituencies in society, and speak more directly to and on behalf of them. The variety of social forces in the urban and semi-urban areas, and the awareness on the part of publishers of the diverse terrain of the media consumer market, meant that the different private media as a whole were better suited to reach deeply into civil society as organic nodes of popular information and debate.

In short, the class fragmentation of society allowed space for the splintering of media constituencies as well, and the "capturing" of certain groups, from trade unionists to businesspeople and commercial farmers, by sets of publications outside of

the public press. This dynamic was under way at the same time as Zanu's deepening infiltration of Zimpapers' editorial sphere was transforming the latter into a partisan press, which leading Zimbabwean journalists openly characterised as tediously censored and lacking in hard news content.⁹⁸

If the public press had been called on in 1981 to reflect the new Zimbabwean society as it emerged, what it illustrated instead was the distorted image of the new order as seen by its embattled architects in the state and ruling party. The "mirror" which revealed the shortcomings of these images was that of the private press and its growing constituency, comprised of numerous social fractions in civil society. In search of an answer to the question of the limits of Zanu's hegemonic project on the terrain of the media, therefore, the discussion continues with an examination of the internal dynamics of the Zimbabwean private press in the 1980s.

References

1. Timothy Matthews, "Rural Press in Africa: The Zimbabwean Initiative", Lecture prepared for Workshop on "Rural Newspaper Development in Africa", International Institute of Journalism, Berlin (GDR), March, 1987.
2. "Communication Systems to Serve National Interests," Zimbabwe News vol.17, no.12 (December 1986), p. 16.
3. "Memorandum of Association of The Rhodesian Printing and Publishing Company, Limited (As amended by Special Resolution passed the 23rd April, 1948 and 12th May, 1955)". Examination of what the author understands to be the most recent updated version of Zimpapers' company constitution, gives no evidence of any alterations (aside from the company name) since 1980 (or indeed, since 1955). According to Judith Todd, these existing constitutional articles are currently in the process of being amended or rewritten by company lawyers; a procedure whose product will require the later approval of the company's Annual General Meeting. (Correspondence from Judith Todd to Richard Saunders, dated Bulawayo, 29 August 1991).
4. This theme which runs throughout much of the company's constitution, was confirmed as the practical modus vivendi of the company as well, by Elias Rusike (Interview, Harare, 23 February 1987).
5. Zimbabwe Newspapers (1980) Ltd., 1982 Annual Report.
6. Colin Stoneman, "The Economy: Recognising... ," op. cit., pp. 47-48, estimates that the economy shrank from a stunning 27 per cent growth in GDP in the first two years of independence, to zero growth in 1983 and a contraction of over 3 per cent the following year. A modest recovery began in 1984, and continued in 1985, only to be followed by two more years of decline and contraction in growth.
7. In 1982-1983 alone, the Bulawayo branch incurred a deficit of \$350,000. 1983 Annual Report, op. cit.
8. See "Zimbabwe Newspapers buys a new press ", Herald, 22.04.1982.
9. 1983 Annual Report, op. cit. According to Fothergill, Mirror Over Rhodesia, op. cit., p. 165, the acquisition of the large capacity press (which replaced three separate printing works at the Harare branch) was the culmination of the development plan laid out by the newspaper chain's previous Argus management.

10. All figures: Zimbabwe Newspapers (1980) Ltd., Chairman's Statement, 1984 Annual Report.

11. Central Statistical Office, Quarterly Digest of Statistics, December 1986 (Harare: Government Printer, 1987), p. 8.

12. For example, in mid-1984 seventy employees were given six month's notice in strict enforcement of the company's retirement policy which, management announced, would be maintained as a means to costs reduction in the future. It was noted that no replacement staff would be taken on to fill the lost positions "unless absolutely necessary". See, "Zimpapers Ask 70 to Retire", Herald, 19.07.1984; and, Zimpapers Annual Report 1983.

13. Zimbabwe's unique domestic producer of newsprint is the Mutare Board and Paper Limited (a Nedlaw subsidiary since 1988), which operates from an antiquated mill prone to breakdowns. Throughout the 1980s the mill was under-capitalised and severely over-worked. Insufficient capacity meant the plant was unable to keep up with vastly augmented demand for newsprint, stemming from the expansion of education, and growth in the commercial printing and publishing industry. In 1989, domestic market demand for newsprint amounted to 30,000 tonnes; Mutare Board and Paper's maximum capacity was only 18,000 tonnes. See, Interview with Mr. D. Matthews, Mutare, 24 May 1990; and, "Paper mill cannot meet demand", Herald, 20.07.1989. Matthews is the Managing Director of Mutare Board and Paper.

14. See, "Shock rise in cost of newsprint", Herald, 20.03.1991.

15. Chairman's Statement, Zimbabwe Newspapers (1980) Limited, 1988 Annual Report. By March 1989, the company had developed a new strategy which would enable it to maintain imports of newsprint from South Africa, yet still pass on the increased costs to consumers in spite of the price controls on the newspaper operations. The plan involves Zimpapers' trading of its stocks of imported newsprint for equivalent amounts from the locally produced stocks of the Group's main commercial printing subsidiary, Natprint --a company whose pricing mechanisms are more flexible than Zimpapers. In this way the costs of importing newsprint will be passed on to consumers through commercial printing operations. (Gamble, Interview, op. cit.)

16. Over the 1987-1988 alone, the decline of the dollar against the pound sterling amounted to a 43% increase in net interest paid by Zimpapers to finance the printing press, from ZWD\$ 643,375 to \$918,893. See, 1988 Annual Report, op. cit.

17. Rowland Fothergill, Mirror..., op. cit. The strength of the advertising market was generally maintained through to 1980 despite shifts in its concentrations, as losses in one area were made up for by gains in another. For example, the move away from display luxury consumables advertising in the late 1970s was matched by business

flowing in the direction of casuals, such as domestic notices, miscellaneous and property sales. The latter tendency was the result of the war and its related effects, including the beginnings of the white exodus as the end to the conflict drew nearer.

18. The situation was particularly acute with regard to African businesspeople. According to advertising industry professionals interviewed, the typical petty bourgeois African entrepreneur shunned advertising in general (and classifieds in particular) as an unnecessary, added expense. The collapse of the "automobiles" and "real estate" classifieds market after 1980 were cited as examples.

19. The readership figures represented an exact reverse of the situation ten years earlier, when only 20% of Zimpapers' readership was black. See, Zimbabwe Newspapers (1980) Limited, Survey All Media. Full Survey Report on First Twelve Months (Prepared by Probe Market Research, issued September 1984); and A.W. Thomson, Interview, *op. cit.*

20. The Survey All Media report was the first of its kind since the mid-1970s, and was undertaken with the intention of supplying statistics to support the drive for increased newspaper advertising tariffs. The well-known Michael Hogg agency was commissioned to develop a campaign around SAM itself, proclaiming that the newspaper chain "owned the eyes and ears of Zimbabwe". Zimpapers was forced to abandon this media campaign shortly after it was started, however, on complaints from the MOI that it was unfair to make negative comparisons with the company's "sister organisation", the parastatal ZBC. (Gamble, Interview, *op. cit.*)

21. According the Advertising Media Association of Zimbabwe, and "Adspend" documents of the advertising agency, Lintas:Zimbabwe, the newspaper sector maintained approximately a 50% market share of advertising throughout the 1980s, followed by television (roughly 20%), magazines (12%) and radio (12%). The share of Zimpapers in this "newspaper" category was thought to have declined moderately, although no breakdown of spending on specific titles is provided in industry statistics. In any case, all observers -- within and without Zimpapers -- agree that the company's share of the advertising market declined, and moreover, failed to take advantage of the opportunities for expansion, particularly in the late 1980s. See, Lintas:Zimbabwe, "Adspend Figures", 1985-1989; and Interviews with Brian Gamble (Harare, 28 April 1989), Ivy Hartmann (Harare, 12 May 1989), David Mair (Harare, 18 May 1989).

22. Particularly notable in this case was the introduction of colour television and its subsequent wider dissemination through the qualitative improvement and geographical extension of the broadcast signal. ZBC would counter SAM with its own media survey and publicity campaign, culminating in what became known as DART. See, Probe Market Research (Pvt) Ltd., Research Report, ZBC/TV Listenership/Viewership Survey I. [DART] (Harare: Probe, 25 March 1987).

23. The rate and terms of commission forfeitable by the print and broadcast media to advertising agencies is set by the Advertising Media Association [ADMA], the body which groups together all major media, advertisers and agencies in Zimbabwe. The commission system works in a rather cumbersome manner. Zimpapers, for example, bills the relevant advertising agency directly for the full cost of placing an advertisement in its papers, after which the agency invoices its client for the same amount. But it is the agency which actually pays the Zimpapers bill. It is when the agency settles its Zimpapers account that the newspaper company "allows" the agency a 16.5% reduction in its payment, as the agency's commission. Importantly, the rate of commission allowed by Zimpapers (and other media) declines if the agency delays in settling accounts, and if a bill is not paid within 75 days, no commission is allowed at all. (Brian Gamble, Interview, op. cit.)

24. In 1988-1989, for example, government awarded Zimpapers an advertising tariff increment of 10% after a delay of nearly a year and a half; over the same period, production costs had risen by over 15%. In mid 1988, tariffs were under-priced to the extent that larger display advertisements did not cover their own cost of publication. Gamble, Interview, 1991, op. cit.

25. As a result of stagnant tariffs, advertising's share of Zimpapers' revenues fell from 63% in 1980, to 57% in 1986. In real terms, the absolute value of total advertising revenue dropped over the same period, from \$7.727 million to \$6.891 million (or \$15.367 million 1986 dollars). See Zimpapers Annual Reports.

26. The first substantial round of increases occurred in 1988. Advertising rates went up sharply again in March 1990, with less dramatic increases coming in June, 1991.

27. This is the consensus from a number of senior advertising officials consulted, Comrades "H", "I" and "J", who prefer to remain anonymous on this point.

28. Interview with Brian Gamble, Harare, 13 September 1989. Gamble is the long-time Advertising Manager of Zimpapers.

29. Zimpapers' Gamble suggested that "reasonable" cover prices would have been as follows (stated in cents):

Herald	25
Sunday Mail	30
Chronicle	20
Sunday News	25
Manica Post	20
Kwayedza	20

In the event, applications for cover price increases in the late 1980s did meet with limited success. After a new round of increases announced on 1 April 1991, the newspapers new street prices were:

Herald	35
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Sunday Mail	40
Chronicle	35
Sunday News	40
Manica Post	40
Kwayedza	40

According to Gamble, however, these elevated cover prices remained "sub-economic". indeed, Zimbabwean newspapers were (and remain up to time of writing) among the cheapest in southern Africa, while wages, transport costs and other input costs are consistently among the highest.

30. The Financial Gazette, for example, sold for sixty cents in the mid 1980s, before rising to one dollar in 1989. By 1991, the Gazette's cover price had risen to \$1.95.

31. "Pagination" refers to the number of pages contained in any single edition of a newspaper. In 1987 and 1988, the reduced newsprint available often confined the size of The Herald to a mere eight pages, and at times resulted in the leader's unprecedented appearance on page two of the newspaper.

32. H.M.R. Farinya, "Content Analysis of The Herald, July 1987-December 1988" (January 1989), and, "The Herald and The Chronicle in 1988" (January 1989). Farinya's look at The Herald in 1988 revealed that 85% of local news content dealt with "sensational", "social-entertainment" or "financial" matters; leaving only 5% for "political", 5.7% for developmental and 2.8% of editorial space for rural news. The Chronicle was found to have twice as much political and developmental news relative to the rest of the news content in the newspaper, as The Herald.

33. Interviews with James Roberts, Harare, 8 May 1988; William Saidi, *op. cit.* The problem of under-utilisation is further addressed in the discussion of Ziana in Chapter 5.

34. Not surprisingly, most local journalists also pointed to a tangible lowering of morale amongst those employed in the national public press, whose copy seldom made its way into print. The observation about the likely consequences of limited editorial space on censorship was shared unanimously by journalists interviewed.

35. One survey published in 1982 claimed that previous editorial practices had been reversed at Zimpapers, with 85-90% of the company's news content in 1981 having a local focus, the remainder being international. Noack et al., *op. cit.*, p.23 indicated the following reversal of the situation after only one year of MMT ownership of the chain.

Zimpapers: News Content, 1981		
<u>News/Editorial Content</u>		
<u>Publication</u>	<u>Domestic</u>	<u>International</u>

Herald	85 %	15 %
Sunday Mail	90	10
Chronicle	85	15
Sunday News	85	15
Umtali Post	90	10

Later surveys (see text in this section, below) suggested that much of this so-called rural content was in fact coverage of black urban and semi-urban activities, most of them based in Harare and Bulawayo.

36. Witness Mangwende (Minister of Information), "Press is the Mirror of Society", Zimbabwe Press Statement 25/88/RC/ME/SG, 20 January, 1988.

37. See Herald editor Farayi Munyuki, Herald, 21.02.1981.

38. See Saidi, Interview, *op. cit.*:

[Zimpapers] feel that even people in the urban areas can appreciate and be interested in rural area news, and the government is trying to change the attitude of 'indifference' of the urban to the rural areas. This has a cultural component which must be changed as well. In modern Shona culture, if someone is said to come from the rural areas, he is straightaway looked down upon. You think he is dense. Somehow, if we can uplift the rural areas, we can perhaps defeat this conception.

39. Interview with Charles Chikerema, Harare, 18 February 1987.

40. The list of expenses in any substantial programme would have been enormous, particularly given that so little infrastructure existed on the ground to begin with. A comprehensive coverage of rural Zimbabwe meant, for example: the opening of regional branches and smaller offices around the country; massive expenditures on support communication facilities and other more basic infrastructure, such as housing and vehicles; the development of a large pool of skilled labour power capable of running the new infrastructure; and the creation of an entirely new system of newspaper distribution, mostly in areas where little regular transport functioned reliably.

41. The most important sources informing this discussion include: Interviews with Charles Chikerema, Alwyn Francis, Menard Masvingise, Tim Matthews, Farayi Munyuki, Peter Mwara, Michael Overmeyer, D.T. Rwafa, and Ruth Weiss; M.A. Amr, "Report on the Recent Performance of Ziana", Harare, 17 October 1984; Hugh Lewin, "Report on Ziana Training Sessions", Friedrich Naumann Foundation, Harare, April 1986; Webb McKinley, "Report on Consultancy with Ziana", Harare 1984; Farayi Munyuki, "Computerisation of Ziana", Paper presented at Pana Southern News Pool Meeting, Gaborone, Botswana, 24-28 November, 1986; Parliament of Zimbabwe, Second and Third Reports of the Estimates Committee on the Ministry of Information and Tourism" (Vote No.286, 1981-1982 and Vote No.23, 1986-1987),

presented to the House of Assembly on 19 January 1982 and 10 November 1987; and, Ruth Weiss, Notes and Memoranda on Ziana and the Mass Media Trust (various, in author's possession).

42. Ruth Weiss, Interview, *op. cit.* According to Weiss,

The tendency is always there to quarrel between a newspaper and a news agency... In a country such as this one where you have so few good people and resources are so thin on the ground, it would be better to avoid duplication by (pooling tasks). That realisation is probably there, but has been stopped above all by the structures that were first put in place by the Rhodesians... Perhaps there was an opportunity lost out of the circumstances of the situation of the day.

43. There are many examples, the most remarkable of recent note being the series of allegations levelled in 1990 against the opposition Zim of Edgar Tekere, concerning the financing and membership of the infant political party. See The Herald, February-March 1990.

44. Interview with Comrade "K", a senior Ziana journalist who wishes to remain anonymous on this issue.

45. Interview with Alwyn Francis, Harare, 27 February 1991. Francis was chief sub-editor at The Herald during both the Matabeleland crisis and the 1985 elections. He underscores the role Sithole personally played in assuring that Ziana copy was rejected in favour of Zimpapers reports, despite the comparatively poor quality of the latter.

46. See for example, E.T. Rusike, "The Media View of News Agencies", Paper presented at Pana southern pool seminar on Developing Regional News Agencies, Harare, 3-7 September, 1984. The argument was reiterated throughout the 1980s by many others. Rusike maintained this position in Rusike, The Politics..., *op. cit.*

47. In the mid and late 1980s, the flood of stories from MOI information officers around the country -- who acted as Zis' part-time "reporters" -- averaged one hundred per week, with an average of two hundred words per story. Zis copy is delivered in carbon copy format to subscribers, including Zimpapers and the ZBC. Interview with Menard Masvingise, Harare, 6 December 1990.

48. See for example, Naomi Nhiwatiwa, "Communication Systems to Serve National Interests", Zimbabwe News, vol.17, no. 12 (December 1986), p. 15. Significantly, Nhiwatiwa (then Deputy Minister of Information) noted that the agreement to take Zis copy was made "between the government and the Herald". Rural copy was designated to appear on Thursdays and Fridays, the editions which typically carried the largest volume of pages. However, it was not these, but the Sunday weeklies, which were most likely to find their way into the rural areas themselves.

49. Alwyn Francis, Interview, *op. cit.*

50. Indeed, the most regular end-users of Zis copy in the print media were not the national components of the MMT press, but rather the smaller private regional papers, like the Masvingo Provincial Star, and later, the provincial rural newspapers set up at the end of the 1980s by the MMT. Importantly, the one national newspaper which held the most potential for Zis, Kwayedza, spurned the idea of taking Zis feed. As its editor Paul Chidyausika explained, the use of Zis news by Kwayedza's regional newspaper competitors mitigated against the "repetitive" running of Zis stories in the national weekly tabloid. (Interviews with Mbanga, 1991; Hill, 1988; and, Chidyausika, 1990, *op. cit.*)

51. The ZBC, with its four radio channels and ample air-time for news shorts and "regional round-ups", turned out to be the primary consumer of Zis copy.

52. Interview with William Saidi, Harare, 11 February 1987.

53. For Saidi the populist-rural content of the features to be produced was understood by all involved, Interview, *op. cit.*

54. Rusike, The Politics..., *op. cit.*, pp. 77-78. Saidi had been based in Lusaka during the liberation war, and had links to Zapu.

55. Rusike, The Politics..., *loc. cit.*

56. Interviews with the following form the basis for most of this discussion of Kwayedza: Paul Chidyausika, Harare, 13 February 1987 and 29 November 1990; Brian Gamble, Harare, 28 April and 13 September 1989; Justin Nyoka, Harare, 23 February 1987; Elias Rusike, Harare, 23 February 1987; Davison Sadza, Harare, 5 May 1988; William Saidi, Harare, 11 February 1987; A.W. Thomson, Harare, 9 February 1987; and, Ruth Weiss, Harare, 13 November 1987. Documents consulted include: Chen Chimutengwende, Feasibility Study on the Establishment of Viable Provincial Newspapers in Midlands, Masvingo, and Matabeleland North, Project Document, Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust, Harare, 1988; Stanford Mukasa, "The Role of the Media in a Post-Colonial State: An Analysis of the First Decade of Zimbabwe's Independence 1980-1990", Paper presented at seminar on Zimbabwe's First Decade of Political Independence: Lessons for Namibia and South Africa, Harare, 30 August to 2 September, 1990; and various Zimpapers brochures and commissioned Probe Market Research surveys related to the national print media readership market. See also the following articles in the popular press: "Shona newspaper goes down well", Herald, 15.06.1985; "Weeklies merging today", Herald, 08.11.1985; "Kwayedza sales boom", Herald, 21.05.1987; "Success story for vernacular paper", Herald, 25.11.1987; "Kwayedza newspaper huge success with readers", Herald, 16.04.1988.

57. At the outset two weekly papers were established by Zimpapers: Kwayedza and Umthunywa, the former written entirely in Shona, the latter in Ndebele (both titles mean "dawn" in their respective languages). After a few months of publication, however, it was found that the economies of scale would not support two separate production lines -- the Bulawayo-based Umthunywa, in particular, was losing large sums of money -- and the papers were merged to form Kwayedza-Umthunywa (referred to here as Kwayedza).

58. A.W. Thomson, Interview, 1987, *op. cit.*

59. Interview with "Comrade L", a senior Zimpapers manager who wishes to remain anonymous on this point.

60. See Rusike in The Herald, 25.11.1987, *op. cit.*

61. Rusike, Herald, 25.11.1987, *op. cit.*

62. Chidyausika, Interview, 1990, *op. cit.* The editor noted that roughly 50% of the paper's news copy was regularly supplied via post or telephone by stringers around the country, who included secondary school pupils, teachers, and other literate or semi-literate members of the rural community. In 1990 Kwayedza had a full-time staff of five, comprised of an editor, one assistant editor, one sub-editor and two reporters, all based in Harare.

63. Mukasa, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

64. In 1988-1989 Kwayedza surpassed The Chronicle and The Sunday News in circulation and readership. At the same time, it attracted substantially increased advertising, especially after a market survey-fuelled campaign led by Zimpapers' advertising management in 1988. The "ZIMS" survey of 1988 found Kwayedza to be the widest-read of any Zimpapers publication, with a circulation of around 90,000, and an average readership of 11 per copy. Zimpapers Advertising Manager Brian Gamble noted that the advertising pull of the tabloid, particularly among the white-dominated commercial advertising agencies, increased dramatically after the release of the survey. By 1989, approximately 50% of Kwayedza's advertising was coming from these agencies (support had been negligible before), including 65% of the more profitable colour publicity spots. (See, Probe Market Research, Research Report, Press Media Survey. Survey No.58/1087 (Harare, 1 July 1988); Gamble, 1989, *op. cit.*)

65. An observation implicitly made by Zimpapers's CEO (1984-1989), Elias Rusike. See Rusike, The Politics..., *op. cit.*, pp. 57-58.

66. Interview with Justin Nyoka, Harare, 23 February 1987.

67. See discussion in the case study of public debates, including those focused on the role of the media, in Chapter 8.

68. N.G.C. Mathema, "Whose interests is our press serving?," Moto, nos.56 & 57 (June & August 1987), pp. 16-17 (no.56), 23 (no.57). See also the original, expanded version in Mathema, "The Zimbabwean Press Six Years After Independence", unpublished paper, 1987.

69. A.W. Thomson, Interview, op. cit.

70. This was the consensus of interview subjects encountered during visits over the period 1987-1990 to Binga (Matabeleland North), Masvingo (Masvingo) and Mutorashanga (Mashonaland West), who included (respectively) District school headmasters and local government officials, provincial information officers and commercial farmers and their workers.

See for example, interviews with L. Tavaya (MOI - Harare), 28 April 1987; T. Muti (Ministry of Local Government - Harare) 1 February 1988; Binga District Headmasters, 19 June 1988; A. Mushaike (Binga District Official), 20 June 1988; D.T. Rwafa (Provincial Information Officer - Masvingo), 13 June 1988; K. Pepler and farm labourers (Longfield Estate tobacco farm), July 1990.

71. Tapiwa C. Kamuruko, Mutoko. A Study in Rural Communication (Harare: Division of Mass Communication Harare Polytechnic and Friedrich Naumann Foundation, 1987).

72. Mair, Interview, op. cit.

73. It was (and still is) the case that a fresh copy of The Herald or The Chronicle is a much cherished possession rural Zimbabwe, and one which can facilitate quick passage through roadblocks and police checks dotting the countryside -- a true mark if there ever was one of the scarcity and desirability of a commodity. For anecdotal discussion of the media hunger, see, for example, S. Mukasa, op. cit., pp. 25-28; and T. Kamaruko, op. cit., passim.

74. Interview with Melusi Moyo, Harare, 15 November 1990. Moyo, a senior official in the accounts department of Zimpapers' Head Office in Harare, could not identify any consistent, earmarked expenditure on a new expanded distribution network. Repeated attempts over a period of three years to gather concrete details from Zimpapers on this question of distribution system expenditure proved fruitless.

75. Gamble, Interview, 1991.

76. For visitors to the rural areas of Zimbabwe, and to the compounds of the expansive white commercial farms, the poverty of the public "information" network, like that of the social infrastructure as a whole, is striking. How does one document

the depth of that poverty? One could cite another statistic, in yet another study. But perhaps it is more enlightening to recall, in this space, the 50 year-old tobacco picker from Mashonaland West who, though keen for printed news, never in his life bought a newspaper for his own; or the school headmaster in Binga who regularly walks 15 kilometres over rough country to "steal" a listen from a relative's radio (when there are batteries) -- and who never once held a copy of the local District newspaper in his hands; or the family from East Gutu communal lands, Masvingo, who ululate in gratitude when the occasional visitor remembers to bring a copy of "the paper" -- no matter the title, nor date of publication. These are people the author has come to know between 1986 and 1991; theirs is a situation which no statistic can adequately describe.

77. On the basis of the 1982 National Census, it is commonly accepted that the population of Zimbabwe increased from about seven and a half million at independence, to just under 10 million by 1990. At the turn of the decade, most government officials and observers speculated that approximately 75% of this total was resident in the rural areas, a 5% proportional decrease from 80% of ten years earlier reflecting the growing overcrowding of rural Communal Areas, increasing unemployment and underemployment (particularly in outlying areas), expansion of education and consequent job-hunting in urban areas by graduates and other factors in the pattern of rapid "urbanisation". See Zimbabwe, Central Statistical Office, Statistical Yearbook 1987 (Harare: CSO, 1987).

78. See Appendix I.

79. See, Probe Market Research, Research Report. Press Media Survey, Survey No. 58/1087 (1 July 1988), pp. 24-26; and idem., Research Report for Community Newspapers Group (November 1990). The regionalisation of readership was especially evident in the lower-income cross-sections examined by both surveys, which showed urban high-density areas as being fiercely "local" in their consumption of print media.

80. For confirmation of this view by Rusike, see The Politics..., op. cit., p. 56.

81. The count of "papers per capita" rose from 0.038 (or 26.3 people per copy) in 1980, to a peak of 0.058 (or 17.2 people per copy) in 1987.

82. Interview with William Saidi, Harare, 11 February 1987.

83. As Rusike sees it, the main national newspapers still target the urban, English-speaking enclave, and "therefore reach a tiny fraction of the educated few. The newspapers are still serving an elite compared to the mass of the rural population who cannot read English." (Rusike, The Politics..., op. cit., p. 57)

84. See Rusike in, "The Politics and Economics of the Mass Media", 1984, op. cit.

85. Interview with "Comrade J".

86. See Appendix J.

87. For details of these acquisitions, see Rusike, The Politics..., *op. cit.*, pp. 89-92.

88. Rusike, The Politics..., *op. cit.*, p. 91. In 1986 Zimpapers took out a 65% stake in Natprint. The following year it acquired all remaining shares in the printing company. Natprint controls two other companies, and is Zimbabwe's leading private printing firm. Among its customers are many of Zimpapers' media "competitors", including The Financial Gazette and Parade magazine.

89. Rusike, The Politics..., *op. cit.*, p. 89.

90. Zimbabwe Newspapers (1980) Ltd., 1986 Annual Report.

91. In April 1987, it was announced that the General Manager (P. Capel) and Secretary for Financial Control (F. Zingani) of Mardon Printers, along with the Head of Typocrafters (D. Rae) and the Secretary of Zimpapers (D. Midzi), had been named to the Board of Directors. "New Structure as Zimpapers Expand", Herald, 30.04.1987.

92. Zimbabwe Newspapers (1980) Ltd., 1988 Annual Report.

93. See Financial Gazette, 16.09.1988.

94. Most attribute the decline in the associated companies to poor management, brought on to a large extent by their incorporation into a badly-managed Zimpapers.

95. The newspaper division's better performance in 1990 reflected primarily the exceptional increases in advertising tariffs, a feat which Zimpapers management speculated could not be repeated with success in the near future.

96. The new Bulawayo press was finally commissioned in May 1991. See Zimbabwe Newspapers (1980) Ltd., "Chairman's Statement," 1988 Annual Report; and "New Chronicle press to roll", Herald 23.05.1991.

97. See Chapter 7. These two publications in particular aimed at a more evenly-balanced national distribution than Zimpapers. Given their longer "shelf life" as monthlies focused more on features and less on "hot" news, Parade and Moto enjoyed a larger potential readership under the current national patterns of distribution.

98. See for example, editor Willie Musarurwa's comments on Zimbabwean "speech journalism" in, "An African journalist on Africa's 'sunshine syndrome'", The Weekly Mail (South Africa), December 18-23, 1987.

Chapter 7. Tremors and Shifts: The Changing Terrain of The Private Press

Is political action (in the strict sense) necessary, for one to be able to speak of a "political party"? It is observable that in the modern world, in many countries, the organic and fundamental parties have been compelled by the exigencies of the struggle or for other reasons split into fractions -- each one of which calls itself a "party" and even an independent party... a newspaper too (or group of newspapers), a review (or group of reviews), is a "party" or "fraction of a party" or "a function of a particular party"...

Antonio Gramsci¹

Contested Ground

If the terrain of the press was identified by Zanu in the early 1980s as an important "space" in which it would seek to consolidate its consensual authority in both state and civil society, it was also one to be targeted by an array of social forces and interest groups which, from different perspectives, emerged to challenge Zanu's leadership claims. While the government's experiment in the public press foundered politically -- the result of open editorial policing by the state, and the failure of those media to meet the expectations of the majority population -- the sphere of the private press² was to grow in popularity and influence in the 1980s. Indeed, the greater success of the private media in meeting the needs and interests of a range of social groups was the most poignant demonstration of the shortcomings of both the MMT media, and the hegemonic ambitions of the ruling party surrounding them. If a new

social order was faithfully reflected in and addressed by the private press in the first decade of independence, it was not the same one which the Zanu leadership had publicly envisaged -- and claimed the mantle of -- in 1980.

Left mostly untouched by the state and ruling party in terms of political censorship and supervision, the diverse array of publications in the private press were permitted to deal with sensitive issues of debate not covered in the MMT media. Indeed, the absence of a legally structured government penetration of the private press established the minimum necessary conditions for the genesis of a press politically distinct from the public media infrastructure in the 1980s.³ The historical building of a concrete edifice of "press freedoms", however, was only erected gradually. In the background, the growth and consolidation of civic organisations within civil society -- from white commercial farmers and businesspeople, to trade unionists, collective co-operators and radical intellectuals -- provided new and revitalised issues of national debate, consumer demand for critical media addressing these issues and ultimately, institutional points of entry for social forces onto the terrain of the press.

In the 1980s this growing presence of different social fractions in the private print media fostered the re-emergence of a popular democratic "sensibility", if not activism, beyond the confines of the ruling party and the state. Although there were enormous differences among many of these media on all range of political and economic issues -- differences which of course reflected the diverse views of different social fractions -- the "common programme" which formed among them involved a commitment to participatory democracy and political openness on the part of the state

and governing party. By the end of the decade this unofficial, unwritten programme and the political sensibility which it engendered had come to play a leading role in the deconstruction of Zanu's hegemonic aspirations in general, and the social authority of the public media in particular.⁴

Concretely, the political intervention of different social fractions in the private media sector took a variety of forms. (Table 7.1 and Table 7.2) On the one hand, the press in the 1980s remained numerically dominated by titles inherited from white Rhodesia and created after independence in the same image. On the other hand, an entirely new sub-sector emerged in the early years of the decade, in a wave of media interventions reminiscent of the expansion of the black press in the 1940s and 1950s.

The "progressive" print media founded in the 1980s were broadly characterised by their articulation of a mass-based political programme, their nominal appeal to the development and mobilisation of a popular civil space and their pursuit of these goals in a non-commercial format which implied sustained financial support from progressive expatriate donors. These publications had their common origins in the growing sense that popular issues required popular articulation outside of the new national public media. In some cases new, more "activist" publications were established with the intention of articulating the views of specific community groups; in others, existing media were used indirectly as a platform for social critique and interest group advocacy. In both instances, use of the media for critical social commentary became an essential component in mass-mobilisation strategy. By these

Large Commercial Publications and Publishers

Publication/Publisher/Place	Circulation/Frequency		Type*	Est'd.**
(i) Thomson Publications - Harare (1989)				
Commerce	2,400	monthly	T	1970
Computer & Telecom News	2,200	monthly	T	1985
CZI Industrial Review	2,000	monthly	T	1960
CZI Zimbabwe Export Directory	2,100	annual	T	1984
CZI Register and Buyer's Guide	1,700	annual	T	1980
Engineers Year Book	2,250	annual	T	1949
Insurance Review	250	monthly	T	1955
Mining and Engineering	1,850	monthly	T	1963
Mining in Zimbabwe	1,400	annual	T	1965
Motor Trader and Fleet Operator	700	monthly	T	1956
Parade and Foto-Action	110,000	monthly	I	1953
The Zimbabwe Stationer	2,500	bi-annual	T	1984?
Tobacco Today	3,400	monthly	T	1973
Zimbabwe A Tourist Paradise	3,700	bi-monthly	C	1981
Zimbabwe A Field for Investment	15,000	annual	T	1979
Zimbabwe Quarterly	1,850	quarterly	T	1986
ZNCC Directory	1,600	annual	T	1983
ZTA Tobacco Planning Diary	2,200	annual	T	1981
(ii) Modus Publications/Argosy Press - Harare (1990)				
Africa Calls	5,000	quarterly	C	1979
Chamber of Mines Journal	1,000	monthly	T	1959
Construction and Engineering	4,200	bi-monthly	T	1989
Executive	4,300	quarterly	T	1977
Financial Gazette	20,000	weekly	A	1969
Home, Pool and Outdoor	2,000	bi-annual	C	1989
Hotel and Catering Gazette	1,400	monthly	T	1986
Just For Me	2,000	quarterly	C	1990
Marketing Images	2,000	quarterly	C	1988
Sales Talk	1,000	quarterly	T	1990
Wheels	35,000	quarterly	T	1987
Zimbabwe Wildlife	4,300	quarterly	C	1979
(iii) Munn Publishing - Harare (1990)				
Look and Listen	20,000	fortnightly	C	1966
Mahogany	34,000	bi-monthly	C	1968
Northern Suburbs News	15,000	monthly	I	1988
Prize	55,000	bi-monthly	I	1973

* See keycodes next page. "Type" indicates the principal classification of the publication, and does not exclude other activities (for example, Parade is typed as a source of "independent information", though it is also a consumer-entertainment magazine).

** Year of establishment signifies starting date for current title or its immediate predecessor (for example, Illustrated Life Rhodesia, Mahogany's forerunner, commenced in 1968; only the title changed at independence). Historical tracking based on National Archives of Zimbabwe periodicals index.

Source: Respective publishing companies; National Archives of Zimbabwe.

Leading Small Commercial and Non-Profit Publications and Publishers

Publication/Publisher/Place	Circulation/Frequency		Type	Est'd.
(i) National Magazines and Journals - 1990				
Commercial Agriculture (MFP Trust-Harare)	3,000	annual	T	1985
The Farmer (MFP Trust-Harare)	5,500	weekly	T	1947
Farming World (Cattle World-Harare)	15,500	monthly	T	1975
Moto (Mambo Press-Gweru)	23,000	monthly	I	1959
Read On (TADG-Harare)	15,000	quarterly	A	1983
SAPEM (SAPE Trust-Harare)	6,000	monthly*	A	1987
Social Change (Independent-Harare)	4,000	quarterly	A	1981
Speak Out (WAG-Harare)	7,000	quarterly	A	1984
Zimbabwe News (Zanu-Harare)	2,000	monthly	A	1960s
(ii) Provincial, Community and Organisational Newspapers				
The Bulletin (Mat'land-Byo-Masv-Midlds)	10,000	monthly	I	1984
Cheziya Gokwe Post (Kwekwe-Gokwe)	1,300	monthly	I	1987
Coalfields Courier (Mat.North-Hwange)	500	weekly	I	1984
Gweru Times (Gweru-Midlands)	5,000	weekly	I	1894
The Insider (Bulawayo)	10,000	monthly	I	1990
Makonde Star (Kwekwe-Midlands)	1,000	weekly	I	1989
Masvingo Provincial Star (Masvingo)	4,000	weekly	I	1959
Midlands Observer (Midlands-Kwekwe)	2,500	weekly	I	1952
North Midlands Gazette (Mash.-Kadoma)	1,400	weekly	I	1982
The People's Voice (Zanu-Harare)	10,000	weekly	A	1990
Vanguard (OCCZIM-Harare)	5,000	irregular	A	1982
The Worker (ZCTU-Harare)	5,000	irregular	A	1987
(iii) International Publications based in Zimbabwe - (1990)				
Africa South (A.S. Publications-Harare)	15,000	monthly**	I	1989
Southern Africa Economist (Trust-Bots.)	10,000	bi-monthly#	I	1988

* of which 2,000 distributed in Zimbabwe.

** of which 3,500 distributed in Zimbabwe.

of which 4,000 distributed in Zimbabwe.

Keywords for Typology

A = activist C = consumer/entertainment T = trade
I = indirectly activist or independent source of information

Source: Regional newspapers: Mass Media Trust, "Survey of Current Provincial Newspapers", mimeo, 1988. All other publications: respective publishers; National Archives of Zimbabwe periodicals index.

means the private media came to serve as a key catalyst in the accelerated growth of civil society's own social structures.

At the same time, these media reflected broader structures of political economic power, namely the continued comparative wealth and organising capacity of the white-dominated private sector and civil society, and the growing (but unsteady) institutional basis of the leading popular social fractions. However, they also indicated the former sector's mostly limited popular appeal and national influence, and in contrast, the latter's corresponding potential. In the event, both sectors produced publications which came to serve, albeit differently, as powerful organic nodes of social critique. On the large terrain of the commercial, white-oriented press, The Financial Gazette emerged as an effective articulation of Zimbabwean capital-in-general by combining a rich mixture of cross-sectoral business news, fresh reportage and political analysis. In the "black" press sector, two monthly magazines, Moto and Parade, were distinguished by their critical content, national reach and popular political influence, where other more sector-specific attempts at media intervention by popular institutions and associations had failed.

What these leading examples from the minority and majority sectors of the private press indicated above all, was the importance of building and maintaining co-operative linkages of communication between the larger private media on the one hand, and a variety of groups in private society, on the other. By the end of the 1980s, the publications with the largest base of popular appeal and the most political influence were those which had managed to establish their "relative autonomy" in

relation to their heterogeneous social constituency. At the same time, these media were to prove the most threatening to Zanu's hegemonic ambitions, for the simple fact that they epitomised the "arrival" on the national political terrain of powerful counter-hegemonic historical blocs of social forces which had coalesced since independence. It is the aim of this chapter to examine how these blocs materialised within the private sector media, and what implications this development held for Zanu's struggles in the state and civil society for social and political leadership. The starting point for this investigation is an examination of the inherited, predominantly white "minority" private press, the size of which remained unmatched by new media throughout the 1980s.

Business as Usual? The "White" Press Adjusts

The private print media inherited in 1980 after 15 years of RF censorship and control were dominated by three Harare-based companies, Thomson Publications, Modus Publications and Munn Publishing,⁵ which together accounted for thirty-three registered publications at the end of the 1980s. Their products were primarily geared to minority white society, and they included a number of established "national" publications (notably the business weekly, The Financial Gazette), a handful of mass-circulation "liberal" current affairs and entertainment magazines and a large number of trade journals. These media were mostly non-antagonistic to the economic (if not

the racial political) mores of the previous white-ruled social regime. They were supplemented by a small coterie of independent publications, typically produced by, or on behalf of, sections of the commercial farming sector.

In the new era of majority rule, under the leadership of a governing party rhetorically committed, at least, to the advancement of "black society" and mass constituencies within it, this white press could not endure without modification from within. Well ahead of Zimpapers and its surviving white editors, the leading sections of the white private press understood from the outset, the benefits of implementing "reconciliation" in the press, from an initial position of relative strength.

We mustn't be seen to be attacking the ruling party and government -- where does that get you, if that's all you do? But then there are sections and people within government we must, and do, criticize. And we criticize policies constructively, when we think they are wrong. But this does not mean we are anti-government. We write positive as well as critical things about the government much of the time. We sympathize with many of their problems. Many of our magazines are critical -- of necessity -- but they cannot be accused of offering vindictive criticism.⁶

In the mainstay of the white commercial press, the trade and consumer publications, a sense of compromise was reflected in movement towards more nuanced editorial criticisms of the new "socialist" order. But there was little change where it really mattered, in the pattern of these media's distribution. While the number of titles and average print runs both increased dramatically in the 1980s alongside a revitalised and reorganised commercial sector, the target of the vast majority of these media remained the white-dominated, high-spending urban sector.⁷ This was due partly to the better organisational and capital resources of this sector

(especially with regard to trade publications), and partly to its lucrative "white consumer" advertising pull, the lifeblood of the trade and consumer periodicals industry.⁸

For the most part, the traditional production divisions within the white commercial sector -- namely, commercial agriculture, manufacturing, mining and commerce -- marked the readership boundaries of these trade and consumer periodicals. Indeed, in a majority of cases, distribution and readership did not extend substantially beyond the membership of the specific "publishing" organisation concerned.⁹ The narrow social basis of these journals were reflected in their editorial concerns, which rarely wandered beyond sector-specific, unco-ordinated responses to government policy. When it came to covering developments in black society, attention was focused typically on minority fractions in that community as well: for example, coverage was given to the "emergent African businesspeople".

From this vantage point, the mass-popular, hegemonic potential of these different media was structurally limited. Although they stood as the primary means of internal organic mobilisation and interpretation for each of their sectors, their broader capacity to organise the wider space of civil society, particularly the white fractions of it, was undermined by their narrowed corporate -- as opposed to their broader national-popular -- appeal.¹⁰

The single, substantial exception to this rule of corporate-oriented mobilisation in the white private press was The Financial Gazette, a weekly "business" newspaper which had once been closely aligned to the RF, and whose political prominence on

the Zimbabwean media landscape after independence was to grow steadily.¹¹ Given the apparently diminishing constituency of the paper, the rise of the Gazette in the 1980s might at first appear to be an anomaly within the emerging new order of Zanu's Zimbabwe-in-transition. However, given the persistent domination of economic planning and development by the commercial private sector, the paper's sustained, perhaps even augmented, importance as a national forum for debate and political mobilisation "fits" closely into place.

The commercial and political growth of The Financial Gazette in the 1980s both personified and enkindled the renewal and rationalisation of the inherited, minority-dominated political economy. If any print media played, or attempted to play, the role of organic intellectual on behalf of the ruling class fractions of the national political economy in the 1980s, the only one which decisively undertook this task -- and with any noticeable degree of success -- was the Gazette. In this regard, the paper's loose structured links with different fractions of the commercial private sector, its more widespread "national" distribution and periodic injections of fresh capital and human resources, were key in the building of its more popular public presence in civil society.

At the outset of independence, the Gazette was a small circulation weekly published by Modus Publications, with a print run of about 4,000 and a readership comprised largely of subscribers in the white business community.¹² This situation had remained relatively unchanged from the late 1970s, when the paper was taken over by local white investors with views more "liberal" and distanced from the RF

than the weekly's previous proprietors.¹³ Initially, Modus, headed by local white media entrepreneur and businessman Clive Murphy, did not stake out a high public profile for the paper. In the early 1980s, the paper maintained a relatively small readership, largely confined to the white commercial sector and specifically, the low-density suburbs of northern Harare.¹⁴ For the first few years the publication's commercial viability and news content was left to run down slowly, with little new capital being invested.¹⁵

But in 1982, the paper's owners embarked on a programme of investment and production rationalisation, with the twin aim of turning the Gazette into the definitive Zimbabwean business publication, and expanding the scope of its appeal. In that year, Murphy and his main partners in Modus, leading local businessmen Nigel and Rhett Butler, began upgrading staff and equipment. Clive Wilson, a capable, veteran journalist of conservative political inclination, was hired as the Gazette's editor, and an expanded production infrastructure was built under him.¹⁶ The investment was mirrored in the quick and steady growth of the paper throughout the 1980s: from 1981 to 1986, the average print run increased by roughly 2,000 copies annually, until it stabilised at around 20,000 per week near the end of the decade -- a number limited only by the scarcity of newsprint. This overall pattern of growth was accompanied by an increase in the average size, or pagination, of the paper, as new specialised sections -- such as ones on farming and real estate -- were included.¹⁷

Increases in the print run and pagination were accompanied by a more aggressive marketing strategy. The effects on the cross-sectoral "popularity" of the

paper were soon seen. As the number of copies printed was boosted, the share of sales going to subscribers diminished to well under 50%, while regular commercial circulation via national booksellers and Modus' own structures grew in importance.¹⁸ According to the paper's management, and to a survey carried out in 1990 by an independent market research company, the aim of expanding the distribution and readership both geographically, and in terms of social categories, had met with considerable success by the late 1980s.¹⁹ Of particular note was the upsurge in sales to black readers: in a reversal of the situation in the early 1980s, Modus estimated that 80-85% of the Gazette's readership in 1990 was black. Up to 10% of high-density homes received the paper regularly, alongside 50% of homes in the low-density suburbs of Harare, Bulawayo and smaller centres, like Mutare, Gweru and Masvingo.²⁰ In view of increasing demand and the added on costs of contracted commercial distribution, Modus established its marketing company, Nationwide Newsagents, in 1989. The Gazette became one of its leading clients.²¹

But the rise in prominence of the paper was due not only to its enlarged print run and distribution mechanisms. It was also the result of efforts by editorial staff to broaden the scope and appeal of the weekly's content. Already by the mid 1980s, the Gazette had moved beyond the coverage of purely financial and business matters, to include items on national and international political and social affairs. In this regard, the Gazette's op-ed page was transformed into a forum for political debate and commentary, typically focusing on criticisms of government and senior party officials. Indeed, by the end of the 1980s political affairs had become so popular with the

paper's readership, and had come to occupy so much editorial space, that an entirely new tabloid -- The Weekend Gazette -- was established by Modus to carry these sorts of less business-oriented stories.

However, Modus management was not alone in acknowledging the popularity of the Gazette's critical political and social content. Officials in the state and ruling party also took note of the popular appeal of the nominally "financial" publication. By the mid 1980s, the paper's growing popularity was seen by Zanu insiders as a mounting threat to the party's social authority, and attacks on the Gazette -- construed, by Zanu and MOI officials alike, as an instrument of a "white" opposition in need of "patriotic" self-discipline²² -- were not infrequent. At the same time, they bemoaned the impact of the paper's rising mass appeal on other more "loyal" components of the national press. In 1989, a confidential MOI report observed that,

Government officials, politicians and many a patriotic Zimbabwean have expressed concern about the persistent negative attitude of The Financial Gazette against their government... in the cities, and particularly Harare, it has become a popular publication and its influence on certain sectors cannot be dismissed as inconsequential. Long queues of supporters can be noticed early on Friday morning trying to secure their copies. The Financial Gazette has boasted about having more supporters that "vote" for it than the Minister of Information had in his constituency...²³

The report went on to recommend that the Gazette and its publishers (along with editors and managers at Thomson Publications and Munn Publications) be "scrutinized to assess where their alliances are", adding that one solution for government might be to force the paper to remove or change its editorial staff, curb its flow of "negative information", or buy out the publication altogether. Still, the report argued, such

actions would not prevent the re-emergence of a reformed, re-titled paper, and would therefore prove ineffective in the long run. The main problem, it poignantly concluded, was that the Gazette's emergence as an authoritative voice in the media was a natural outcome of the evolving nature of Zimbabwean society in the 1980s and that, as such, little could be done directly by government to countervail the paper's perceived negative effects.

The Financial Gazette is one of those sociological phenomena that emerged from the fertile soil of economic and political maladies inherited from colonial domination... The Financial Gazette is a product of capitalist society as much as corruption is. [I]t appears that the danger of the Financial Gazette is not that it attacks the government of Zimbabwe. The danger lies in the persistent exposure and glorification of the very system that has caused so much ruin and misery to the people of this country under colonial rule... It is more important to examine the effects of its propaganda rather than to pay too much attention to the publication itself. Other sources of negative propaganda exist, even within the national media, and there would be little purpose in trying to defeat them.²⁴

But while the report correctly identified the "source of the problem" in the underlying dynamics of Zimbabwe's changing civil society, it failed to appreciate both the strength of the core factions supporting the paper, and the privileged role it assumed as these fractions' coherent articulator and organiser. For some, the broader acceptability of the paper by the end of the 1980s had more to do with the official restructuring of the terms of the Zimbabwean "social contract" by the government and ruling party, than with any modification or dilution of the Gazette's critical editorial tenets.²⁵ By the late 1980s the irony of the situation had become strikingly apparent: as Zanu officially changed course and "came clean" by publicly opting for a

Structural Adjustment Programme, the Financial Gazette surfaced as its leading intellectual supporter in the private press on the question of economic management. The paper could play this role not only because of its augmented mass-appeal and its sympathetic coverage of government's economic programme; but also, and importantly, because of its unique "distanced" relationship with the commercial private sector.

The Gazette was distinguished from other publications based in the commercial sector, by its relative autonomy from the various component parts of its core constituency. This autonomy was primarily dependent upon the paper's viability as a "normal" commercial publishing enterprise -- "normal" to the extent that editorial production, copy distribution and revenue generation were carried out as a business proposition, with the commercial marketability of the paper in mind.²⁶ Without institutionalised linkages to any one sector of private sector enterprise, the Gazette was in a good position to serve as forum for Zimbabwean capital-in-general. Indeed, this is the role the paper increasingly came to play, "standing above" narrow sectoral demands and interests of competing capital fractions, and mediating them from a position rooted in the overarching perspective of white-dominated private society. It was a role which was undiminished -- but rather, renewed -- when ownership of Modus Publications was taken over by a consortia of three black businessmen in September 1989, headed by former Zimpapers CEO Elias Rusike.²⁷

Statements by editors and journalists at The Financial Gazette underlined their implicit recognition of the paper's hegemonic function, as a leading mouthpiece of the

dominant fractions of commercial enterprise in Zimbabwe. As a former senior editor of the paper, Rachel Stewart, argued, the Gazette's capital-oriented editorial perspective both facilitated the paper's domination of private sector political economic opinion, and left the door open to an even more widespread readership in other sectors of civil society.

The paper speaks for many different sectors, including local small and medium size businesses, and privately owned businesses (like the newspaper itself), and even multinational corporations in this country.... But there is an underlying cohesion: the Gazette is the living printed existence of "white Zimbabwe". We are the only newspaper that has the potential of reaching out to whites, and explaining to them the way things are here. In a way, we are an adjudicator of political economic issues for the white-led private sector -- one which is also listened to by opinion-making blacks in government, business and elsewhere.²⁸

Zanu leaders had reached a similar conclusion. For them, the growing popularity and authority of the Gazette posed a serious political challenge, even after government decided to embark on its new programme of conservative economic management. The primary problem lay in the fact that the paper's liberal political-social critique of government and the ruling party was to remain diametrically opposed to the unimpeded development of the party as the unique political and social authority in the nation.

More concretely, in the late 1980s the Gazette was to stand as the single most vocal opponent of Zanu's one-party state ambitions, and of all party activities aimed at (or resulting from) the entrenchment of Zanu as the dominant national-popular political authority. In this regard, the Gazette gained considerable stature in 1988 and

1989, for its ironic and vociferous defence of those groups in civil society leading the struggle against authoritarian party manipulation of the grassroots -- ironic, because typically these groups were of a "leftist" disposition, including trade unionists and Marxist-Leninist university students campaigning against government corruption and the disintegration of Zanu's socialist programme. Such principled liberal support for the "progressive" cause only enhanced the popular appeal of the "capitalist" weekly, despite its rigid adherence to free market precepts.²⁹

For Zanu government leaders, the Gazette's defence of the local left was construed as a cynical attempt to undermine their social authority. As long as the white-owned Gazette continued such attacks, government resorted to name-calling, with abundant reference to the lingering influence of "Rhodesians" in the media. But after the buy-out of Modus by black businessmen in 1989, the appointment of Willowgate hero Geoff Nyarota as editor of the Gazette early in 1990, and the continuation (if not intensification) thereafter of stinging assaults on government incompetence and Zanu maladministration, Zanu's leverage for counter-attack on these grounds was effectively removed. The paradoxical result of the take over by blacks, therefore, was that the Gazette became an even more powerful weapon against ruling party hegemony-building, working on behalf (if no longer placed in the white hands) of white-dominated commercial society.³⁰

Still, there was a limit to the reaches of minority influence through the Gazette on the broader terrain of civil society. First, the paper was inaccessible to the vast majority of Zimbabweans because of its restricted print run and distribution network.

(Table 7.3) At the end of the decade, roughly 60% of the copies sold through distributors went to the Harare region, from where came an even larger percentage of subscriptions. Although the pattern of distribution had shifted away from subscriptions towards street and book shop sales since the early 1980s, the Gazette remained an exclusive consumer item for urban dwellers.³¹

The paper's pattern of distribution pointed to a second obstacle in the way of its mass appeal: namely, that the Gazette's underlying political and economic principles were inimical to a large section of the grassroots of civil society. In this regard, The Financial Gazette was restricted in its popular appeal and media activism to the urban, "professional sector". While the question of distribution and market access posed a severe (but not, theoretically at least, insurmountable) challenge to the white private press, the second issue of elaborating a consensual political platform amenable to the needs and interests of most Zimbabweans was another matter. Just as the "popular-democratic sensibility" which emerged gradually in Zimbabwean civil society in the late 1980s did not at the same time dissolve the boundaries of antagonisms between different class fractions and their competing programmes, the liberal precepts of many "white" publications (The Financial Gazette included) only opened the possibility of loose media alliance of sorts among a variety of social fractions disillusioned with or opposed to Zanu's governmental programme.

However, the same liberal principles, seen in the full light of their implied social and economic platforms, did not permit the complete "capture" of the popular political imagination. Other players had surfaced in the private media to minister

Table 7.3

The Financial Gazette Circulation and Distribution^a

	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
I. Distributors^b										
Modus	768	874	885	1,040	1,010	1,153	1,323	1,715	2,152	3,360
Kingstons	1,390	1,640	3,000	4,200	5,500	7,742	10,488	10,270	--	2,170
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	10,470	8,110
Total	2,158	2,514	3,885	5,240	6,510	8,895	11,811	11,985	12,622	13,640
II. Subscriptions										
Domestic	1,735	2,340	2,910	4,581	5,465	5,976	6,351	6,752	6,930	7,602
Foreign	187	211	345	219	722	460	544	638	963	680
Total	1,922	2,551	3,255	4,800	6,187	6,436	6,895	7,390	7,893	8,282
Total Circulation	4,080	5,066	7,140	10,040	12,700	15,330	18,700	19,375	20,500	21,000
Pagination	18	16	28	36	38	40	44	50	54	56

Nationwide Marketing Distribution Pattern for The Financial Gazette, 1989-1990^c

(%)	Harare City Centre	Harare Suburbs	Bulawayo	Rest of Country
1989	38	20	20	22
1988	31	23	23	23

- a Source: Financial Gazette Production Registers, Modus Publications, Harare. All figures represent averages from bi-weekly surveys of circulation statistics.
- b In 1989 distribution arrangements were changed with the establishment of Nationwide Marketing, which would take over the bulk of Kingstons' print order of the Gazette.
- c Detailed figures on the geographical distribution of the Gazette only became available in 1989, and only for those copies distributed by Nationwide. The percentages in this table indicate proportion of all copies distributed by Nationwide only (not including subscriptions and copies distributed by other agents, notably Modus and Kingstons).

more directly -- and successfully -- to the variety of social interests and organisations within the realm of "black" civil society. Together with much of the white minority press -- especially those media which focused intently on the target of black Zimbabwe, namely Parade and Moto -- these media further eroded any hegemonic leadership which Zanu hoped to build in the interstices of social life.

Mass Organisations in the Mass Media

If white civil society had proved capable of maintaining and expanding its social infrastructure of the press in the 1980s, the popular sectors of black society were to be less successful in their use of the same direct means. Handicapped by shortages of capital, skills, infrastructural support and occasional political infighting, large organisations like the ZCTU and OCCZIM, and smaller ones, such as women's rights committees and groups of radical intellectuals, were unable for the most part to establish a lasting presence on the national media terrain. When their magazines and papers did survive, it was due typically to the injection of capital from expatriate donors -- a dependency which created other forms of insecurity. Despite setbacks, however, lessons were learnt from the problems encountered by many of these fledgling popular papers which were to lead organisations like the ZCTU (in particular) to more rewarding approaches to media management, permitting a greater presence in the national media space. If direct media activism proved too problematic

to implement, it was to be discovered, the utilisation of existing national media structures for new ends was a more promising option.

In the early 1980s, the dearth of direct popular representation in the press was the direct outcome of the disorganised nature of popular civil society, a Rhodesian inheritance which allowed Zanu to maintain institutional control of the majority "grassroots" for the first few years of independence. During this period there were no publications speaking directly to and on behalf of social sectors identified by Zanu as "allies" in civil society, especially the peasantry, collective co-operative movement (largely comprised of former freedom fighters), trade unions and radical intellectuals. The absence of popular points of reference in the media gradually led to the recognition by leaders of these groups that independent action would have to be taken if they were to have a voice in the national political space.

The two most important attempts on the part of popular organisations to break into the national media were made by OCCZIM and the ZCTU, through their respective newspapers, The Vanguard and The Worker. The reason for both interventions was identical. As a former editor of the Vanguard said,

The problem was that there was no structured representation of co-operators and other progressive groups, like the ZCTU, in the national media -- for example, on the Boards of Zimpapers, the ZBC or the Mass Media Trust... The system worked against us and our sympathizers inside the media. We did not, and do not, exercise decisive influence within the national media -- or within the ruling party, for that matter.³²

In this context, the initial aims of The Vanguard (established 1982) and The Worker (1987) were to provide the systematic means of articulating the views of each

group to its constituent membership, in order to counteract and complement the dominant views of an increasingly anti-popular government portrayed in the national media. It was hoped that later, with the establishment of a firmer basis of financial and operational support within their respective organisations, these papers could appeal to a wider readership outside of the unions and co-operative movement. But that first stage of consolidation within these organisations was never secured.

The essential problem for both groups rested in establishing entirely new media structures with few financial resources and no experienced full-time staff, in the context of marked differences of opinion as to the political role of and editorial control over the new media organs. For OCCZIM and the ZCTU, these obstacles proved insurmountable from the outset. Both The Vanguard and The Worker were characterised by chronic financial crisis, high staff turnover, non-co-operation (and often hostility) from different factions of their respective organisations and, as a result, unpredictable production schedules and uneven quality.³³ The outcome was that these media were "popular" in name only. Although Vanguard (with larger injections of donor funds) was distributed to OCCZIM's membership when it appeared (albeit irregularly),³⁴ The Worker in most cases failed to reach even its shop-floor target readership, because of factional disputes led by more conservative unions over the paper's "radical workerist" content.³⁵ With diminished political enthusiasm because of internal political bickering, no secure funding and rising production costs, both papers faded from view by the late 1980s.³⁶ For their

duration, they had existed in a vacuum, as narrow, fledgling nodal points of political mobilisation in search of an accessible, organised constituency.

Yet the collapse of these media did not represent the defeat of their respective organisations' efforts at mass-popular mobilisation via the media. The ZCTU, in particular, recognised that a change in tactics was needed if the labour centre was to play a role in national political debate.³⁷ This new strategy focused more intently on the mass-mobilisation of workers and their allies in civil society, using the existing mass media.³⁸ For trade union leaders like Morgan Tsvangirai, such nurturing of increased access to these media were to become a vital part of ZCTU efforts to democratise the structures and processes of public planning and management.³⁹

Thus, while the prominence of The Worker and its narrower project of workerist, in-house mobilisation faded within the ZCTU, the organisation nonetheless expanded and deepened its agenda of political mobilisation and conscientisation overall. The practical disintegration of The Worker at the hands of the ZCTU therefore marked not the eradication of the labour movement's embryonic hegemonic programme -- but rather, its rationalisation and renewal. One element in this process of widening the media reach of the ZCTU and other popular organisations was the establishment in the early and mid 1980s of a coterie of broadly supportive publications, produced independently by a variety of avowedly progressive organisations and groups. But more importantly, it also involved a second, related effort to spread the views of these bodies with the co-operation of certain existing mass-circulation media.

In the first case, the founding of publications such as Social Change, SAPEM, Speak Out and Read On symbolised concerted, alternate attempts "from the outside" at nurturing an organic, popular press. However, these radical-progressive publications were limited by the same types of problems which afflicted The Vanguard and The Worker, and did not offer access to a substantial readership beyond the national network of progressive grassroots organisations. Most of these journals were narrowly focused on addressing the concerns specific social community organisations, and made little attempt to become national-popular in either content, or by their pattern of distribution.⁴⁰ In this, they were limited by their overwhelming dependence on donor support, stemming from their non-commercial production.⁴¹ Aid-dependence meant, in turn, that substantial investments in print run, pagination and distribution network expansion were the prerogative of donors -- none of whom had plans for turning these media into "national" publications. As a result, the independent-activist progressive media were confined to only a limited, supporting role in the drive by the ZCTU and other groups to mobilise civil society around a new popular politics.

The more promising avenue to the political mobilisation of popular social fractions lay in the remodelling and growth of existing journals within the mainstream national press. Indeed, it was certain of these media which in the 1980s provided community organisations with a new point of intervention in civil society, in the process renewing their own popularity as "national" publications.

A National-Popular Space? The Remaking of Moto and Parade

Of all the privately controlled publications in Zimbabwe, Moto, Parade and Prize represented the greatest potential for a popularly-oriented, critical political intervention.⁴² In the case of Parade and Prize, this potential was a function not only of their relatively large, nationally-distributed print run, but also of their domestic orientation. With Moto, the sympathetic coverage the newspaper had given the nationalist movement during the liberation war (until a banning order in 1974) lent it a certain air of political credibility when it re-emerged in 1980. Such factors placed the three monthly magazines in an advantageous position, when it came to consolidating and expanding a constituency around an independent and critical airing of debates on issues ranging from national security and economic policy, to party politics and press freedom. This is not to say that the magazines in question responded in uniform fashion to the opportunity presented; or that they were entirely successful in establishing themselves as opinion-makers in the new Zimbabwe. But the expansion of this specific section of the private print media offered a new and important political space for emerging social interest groups and organisations -- from liberal intellectuals and opposition political parties to trade unionists and disgruntled ex-combatants -- which was unparalleled in scope, and in the size and variety of its constituent readership.

In fact, the varying experiences of the two leading publications, Moto and Parade, were exemplary of the problems faced in developing a revamped, critical,

independent popular press in the 1980s, for different reasons.⁴³ In the former case, the primary difficulty involved making a transition from its openly antagonistic, campaigning stance adopted in the days of UDI, to a supportively-critical yet independent voice in the era of majority rule. In the case of Parade, the challenge was to stake out a new, more serious editorial line without undermining its popular-entertainment appeal. Moto, with its smaller core readership of the black petty bourgeoisie, and church and human rights activists, had an important constituency which served a useful role as a filter for ideas and information into the wider national community. In contrast, Parade's larger readership provided direct access to a wide range of black Zimbabwean society. However, the question in 1980 was: could either publication identify, occupy and retain the ground of popular independent commentary which so quickly was abandoned by the national public press after 1980?

Both Moto and Parade dated back to the 1950s when the growth of black "industrial" civil society was accompanied by the germination of a whole range of new social institutions, from magazines and newspapers, to art and theatre groups, and nationalist political movements.⁴⁴ Parade was founded in 1953 as a tabloid-size magazine focused on black society, written -- as the magazine proclaimed in its early years -- "for Africans and by Africans", even if it was not owned by them.⁴⁵ Moto was established six years later by the liberal Catholic Diocese of Gweru, initially as a monthly tabloid paper edited and written by Africans, and aimed at voicing the views of the emerging literate black society.⁴⁶ Their respective demeanours -- the former a popular-entertainment leisure magazine, the latter a more considered, "serious-cum-

intellectual" newspaper -- already established in the 1950s, were to endure into the 1980s. In the meantime, both publications had undergone dramatic changes in the years of RF censorship and control. Moto, as the paper which led the domestic media campaign against RF racial rule, was to bear the harsher treatment.

In 1974, after a long period of harassment, Moto was banned by the RF for spreading "fear and despondency" through its frank reporting of national political affairs.⁴⁷ It was only just prior to the 1980 elections that the ban was lifted and the publication reappeared. On its part, Parade survived into the 1980s without having been shut down by the state. But in the interim the magazine had incurred its own scars during UDI. Most notably, the magazine's former nationalist-aligned journalists and editors (including veteran activists Lawrence Vambe, Willie Musarurwa and Nathan Shamuyarira) had been arrested or forced into exile in the early 1960s, an event which was reflected in its sterile editorial coverage of nationalist politics. After 1970, Parade's hold over its black readership slipped further, as its sole (white) editor and reporter came to rely heavily on imported syndicated material, which bore scant relevance to the turbulent life of black Zimbabweans in the war-torn 1970s.⁴⁸ Thus, although Parade survived into the 1980s without interruption as the largest "black" publication, its public image had changed from that of a vibrant, populist and politically-minded mass-appeal magazine, to that of a tired and trashy colour pin-up monthly.

In the case of both magazines, the lifting of enforced restrictions on the local media and the new spirit of more open public debate which accompanied

independence immediately created a considerable space for the type of popular political reportage and commentary which characterised Parade and Moto in the 1950s. It was a space which Moto, the prime exponent of nationalist views in the popular press in the 1970s, would be first to occupy; and which Parade, locked in the format of a purely entertainment magazine, would venture into only after its sale to the Thomson Publications in 1984, and the hiring of new editorial staff.

From the outset the new Moto proved a vibrant exponent of political debate and news coverage, despite serious obstacles. Reopened in February 1980, just prior to the independence elections, the paper was immediately subjected to one last, devastating blow from the dying old order, when its Mambo printing press in Gweru was destroyed by saboteurs' explosives.⁴⁹ Although the attack made publication of the journal more complicated in the short term, it did not deter production, and the new staff of three blacks hired by Mambo were soon back in operation. In an effort to bolster the paper, a fourth staff member, journalist and former South African political prisoner Hugh Lewin, was contracted as a trainer in June 1981, paid for by the German Friedrich Naumann Foundation.

The new Moto resumed from where the old left off as a Church-funded forum for educated black opinion, built around a target readership comprised largely of the same black petty bourgeoisie as before. Its stories, the vast majority of them in English, were comprised of a lively mixture of politics, news from different towns and communal areas around the country, music, sports and other light entertainment.⁵⁰ By the end of 1980 there were indications that despite the long break

in publication, the paper had retained its appeal and, indeed, was making its presence felt in the national political community at large. One sign of this was consumer hunger for the weekly's moderate print run of 22,000-25,000 and the slow but increasing attraction of advertising support -- despite the fact that no sustained campaign was launched to solicit advertising clients. (Table 7.4) Another, more telling indication was given by the new government leadership itself.

In July 1981, the Minister of Health, Herbert Ushewokunze, used an exclusive interview with Moto to attack the promotional system employed by the Public Service Commission, which he claimed was helping to maintain a colonial, RF-designed public infrastructure in the face of moves aimed at opening up the public service to "masses-oriented" employees.⁵¹ Even more striking was the response. The Prime Minister summoned the editor of Moto (who had conducted the Ushewokunze interview), and in another exclusive interview, denied the charges and issued a public warning to the Minister for his "unjustified" and "irresponsible" accusations.⁵² According to Hugh Lewin, the most remarkable feature of the affair -- one which underlined the high public profile of Moto, at least as perceived by senior Zanu leaders -- was the manner in which "Cabinet business had been conducted in public through the exclusive use of Moto's news pages."⁵³ But while this incident underscored the importance of the newspaper, it also highlighted the sensitive position into which Moto was slotted after independence.

Whereas Moto's editorial politics in the 1970s had been clear cut given the nature of RF oppression, the relationship between the paper and the "people's

Table 7.4
Moto Magazine Circulation and Distribution^a

Location	1987	1988	1989	1990
I. Distributors				
National Marketing				
Harare	3,138	3,171	3,055	1,950
Gweru	161	129	94	50
Kingstons Limited^b				
Harare	1,400	1,400	--	--
Bulawayo	300	300	--	--
Gweru	130	130	--	--
Kwekwe	120	120	--	--
Mambo Bookshops				
Harare	300	450	1,160	2,000
Gweru	50	50	105	375
Masvingo	20	20	50	50
Total Distributors	5,619	5,770	4,464	4,425
II. Agents and Street Sales				
Harare	--	150	1,390	7,200
Bulawayo	1,000	2,400	1,160	1,100
Other Town or Urban	1,250	1,400	2,035	3,400
Non-urban	1,200	1,690	2,415	3,780
Total Agents	3,450	5,640	7,000	15,480
III. Subscriptions				
Domestic	915	990	1,315	1,983
Foreign	290	300	330	415
Total Subscriptions	1,205	1,290	1,645	2,398
Total Circulation				
	10,000	11,760	13,350	22,685
Harare (%)	48	44	42	49
Any Urban (%)	77	81	67	71
Non-urban (%)	23	19	33	29

a Source: Mambo Press Distribution Sheets for Moto, 1987-1990, Gweru. These figures represent averages for the (incomplete) records retrieved for each year, and do not include miscellaneous, complimentary and spoiled copies.

b In 1989 bulk distribution orders were shifted away from Kingstons, and split between Mambo's own bookstore chain and a growing network of small, regional vendors.

government" was much more difficult to define, particularly as issues from land redistribution to social spending began to frame themes of popular debate. From the outset in 1980, Moto's cautious and uncertain staking out of new political ground encountered difficulties, with the paper's attempt to be, on the one hand, constructively supportive of the fragile new order; and on the other, independently and objectively critical of government and ruling party policies and officials. It was a problematic role to fill, not only because its rules and procedures had to be created with no other current media experiences to follow, but also because of the amorphous and unpredictable nature of power relations in Zimbabwean civil society. Moto's Catholic proprietors, like the public print media, were subject to those changing structures of power.

By 1981, Moto's slow penetration of national political life through its critical commentary had already reached a point which its owners found difficult to sustain.⁵⁴ Despite the paper's growing influence and a commitment from organisations like the Friedrich Naumann Foundation to assist in its development, the political implications of supporting a vibrant public platform distanced from the government and ruling party proved too sensitive and weighty for the Catholic Diocese of Gweru to bear. In a sudden change of heart, Bishop T.W. Chiginya wrote to Moto's managing Executive Council at the end of November 1981, and informed the publication that it would cease publication one month later because of "very heavy financial losses incurred by the Gwelo Diocese" through the production of Moto.⁵⁵ While the paper was making losses (which Mambo management did little to alleviate

by, for example, the establishment of an advertising management branch of the weekly), most observers, including the newspaper's staff, felt the real reason for the unexpected closure was the perception by the Bishop and his advisers that the journal was cause for constant embarrassment to the government.⁵⁶

In a move to continue publication by removing the paper from Mambo's grasp, newspaper staff hurriedly solicited assistance from potential donors and supporters for financial and moral aid; but the short notice given by the Diocese, and Mambo's unwillingness to relinquish control of the paper's title, proved insurmountable obstacles. By January 1982, the paper's sole surviving staff member, trainer Hugh Lewin, set out on a new tack to revive the publication, this time in the form of a monthly magazine. This less costly option was approved by Mambo, and Moto reappeared in May of that year, written and produced by a pared-down staff of two, and with a smaller circulation of approximately 10,000.⁵⁷ For the rest of the decade the publication retained this format, although the problem of financial and political insecurity, owing to persistent dependence on Mambo and the Diocese, was to remain. In the meantime, the magazine was to pursue a mildly critical editorial line which, in the context of a tension-ridden social formation, was to make it a leading challenger to the state and ruling party.

The turning point in Moto's relations with the state was marked by the Matabeleland crisis in 1982-1983 and the events related to the increasing persecution of Zapu. Although the Zimbabwean security forces' carnage in Matabeleland received wide publicity in the foreign press (earning detentions and deportations for certain

locally-based correspondents), by 1982 the new editorial order had been imposed in the MMT media to such an extent that the dissident crisis in the southwestern regions of the country was unmentioned in the national dailies and weeklies. In addition, there was no significant commentary on the simultaneous prosecution for treason of leading Zapu war-time commanders, including Lieutenant-General Lookout Masuku and former Zapu Chief of Intelligence and Secretary of the Zapu War Council, Dumiso Dabengwa.⁵⁸

It was in this context that Moto's modest and carefully-worded reportage on the Matabeleland disturbances and the Zapu treason trial, first offered in its issue of March 1983, represented a significant break with the rest of the Zimbabwean media, and sent shock waves through the upper echelons of the ruling party.⁵⁹ Although no direct actions were taken by the government against the magazine, there were unconfirmed reports that Cabinet had discussed the possibility of banning the publication.⁶⁰ For Moto, the incident confirmed its uneasy relationship with the ruling party and the state. Although the magazine was not to be subjected to the forms of harassment and intimidation experienced by other progressive publications like Read On and Speak Out, the silent messages of official displeasure with the magazine's coverage of domestic news and debates left an uneasy space of manoeuvre for it in succeeding years. As one Moto editor observed,

For a long time now, each one of our issues has been a risk. One never knows when one is overstepping the line of "acceptable" criticism, in this ongoing political instability of ours. Given the changing behaviour of the government, the ruling party and President Mugabe, no response to criticism is predictable.⁶¹

If Moto's liberal reportage was indeed a risk, it also renewed the magazine's public standing for independent critical commentary. In this regard the 1980s witnessed the expansion of Moto's national-popular role -- a role which was underlined by the scarcity of current issues in book shops, and the flood of response from readers in the form of letters to the editor.⁶²

While the diversity and scope of readership opinion featured in the magazine's celebrated letters pages indicated popular interest, it is unlikely that the publication secured a readership whose numerical size matched the periodical's political influence. In the way of Moto's popularisation stood its persistently "high-brow" format and, just as importantly, the structural restrictions imposed on any project of mass-popularisation by the continued dependence on Mambo. In the first case, the magazine's rather colourless presentation, lack of light entertainment news and sombre, "intellectual" pitch, pre-empted widespread popular interest in -- and intellectual access to -- the magazine's contents.⁶³

In the second, Mambo's ambivalence towards the revitalised Moto was to undercut any sustained project aimed at increasing the magazine's viability as an autonomous, national institution. Entirely dependent on the goodwill and facilities of its Mambo parent for the duration of the 1980s, Moto was left openly vulnerable to the "external" decisions of Mambo management, headed by Mambo's long-time Director, Father Arthur Plangger. Indeed, if there was a sustained threat to the popularisation -- and very existence -- of Moto, it came as a result of this vulnerability.

As a non-profit operation and without substantial advertising support, Moto survived thanks to substantial subsidies from Mambo and the Gweru Diocese.⁶⁴ These took direct and indirect forms, from injections of cash and materials, and the provision of labour and printing facilities, to the use of the Mambo chain's distribution network and office infrastructure. But when printing and distribution costs rose in the 1980s, and Father Plangger developed an interest in expanding Mambo's commercial publishing operations, the priority of Moto as a publication outside of the narrow ambit of Church activities was questioned from within. One effect was seen in Plangger's reported insistence on greater personal editorial control over the magazine, evidenced by his demand that the magazine recognise more overtly its Catholic origins, specifically, by including more religious content in its pages (a demand which helped contribute to high staff turnover in the mid 1980s);⁶⁵ and by the editorial restructuring of 1987, which included the movement of the magazine's offices from Harare, to Gweru.⁶⁶

Another negative effect was the form of growth limitations imposed on Moto's editorial production capacity, print run and pagination volume. With only two full-time staff and the barest of facilities (and allowances from Mambo), the investigative and research capacities of the magazine were severely handicapped.⁶⁷ At the same time, a limited financial commitment from Mambo undercut the little leeway which editorial staff had been accorded: with negligible advertising support, higher print runs and pagination implied greater production costs, which Mambo was mindful of avoiding. By the end of the 1980s, all of these factors -- editorial and financial

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pressures from Mambo, the reduced capacity of the magazine's editorial department and, in the background, the simmering suspicions of a government hostile to investigative journalism and public criticism -- impinged upon Moto's potential as a commanding "voice of the people".

What is more likely the case, is that the magazine retained its core middle class readership, while exercising residual "popular" influence through that core group of opinion-makers; and through the community-based "intelligentsia" of professionals and semi-professionals scattered throughout the small towns and rural areas of the nation. Thus, while Moto may have survived intact as an independent publication of national importance, claims that it had become national and popular in the 1980s would appear to be unsubstantiated. One of the primary pieces of evidence in support of this view was the differing experience of another leading independent monthly, Parade, which emerged in the late 1980s as a more forthright pole of popular, national opinion.

The rebirth of Parade as Zimbabwe's largest and most widely-read publication was the direct result of the magazine's takeover by the Thomson group in 1984 and the introduction of a new editorial modus vivendi by a journalist with a commitment to revamping its agenda. For Thomson, Parade represented a strong commercial potential, as a reworked mass circulation monthly aimed at the huge low-income consumer market -- and at the commercial advertising clients wanting to reach that market.⁶⁸ For Andrew Moyse, the British journalist appointed editor in 1984 who had previously worked as a sub-editor at The Herald, the magazine presented an

opportunity to reach ordinary Zimbabweans nation-wide, with the news and views he had so often been forced to "spike" while employed at Zimpapers.⁶⁹ In short time this mixture of motivations produced dramatic results.

In 1984, Moyse set about restructuring Parade as a domestically-focused entertainment and news and current affairs journal, with a guarantee of free editorial rein from the Thomson management. Moyse's new emphasis on local content through a mix of hard and soft news was underlined by the cancellation of Parade's subscriptions to foreign syndicated news services, and the hiring of a small team of local reporters in their stead. In place of colour pin-up pictures and pop music gossip, Parade's content soon came to be characterised by a blend of hard-hitting investigative features on the one hand, and lighter material on music, sports and entertainment, on the other. According to Moyse, this alteration of the monthly's format was a means of "bringing Parade back to Zimbabwe"; more specifically, to the changing, frustrated and disillusioned Zimbabwean povo of the 1980s.⁷⁰

The surge in circulation and commercial viability of the magazine in the late 1980s proved that such a mass-market existed. (Table 7.5) By 1986, the 1984 print run of 21,000 had increased over four-fold to 90,000, peaking three years later, in 1989, at 110,000 per month -- making Parade Zimbabwe's largest circulation publication outside of the Herald and Sunday Mail.⁷¹ Just as impressive were estimations of the total readership of the magazine.⁷² According to external auditors, Parade's average of 17 to 18 readers per copy rendered a national readership of just under two million, or roughly half of the adult literate population.⁷³ Importantly, the

Table 7.5

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Parade Magazine Circulation and Distribution, 1985-1990^a

Point of Distribution	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
I. Urban						
Harare (Shops)	13,338	12,100	9,750	9,540	7,023	6,583
Harare (Vendors) ^b	5,429	5,734	5,259	6,742	29,510	29,664
Bulawayo	2,783	5,777	8,233	9,367	11,150	10,670
Gweru	4,141	4,208	4,237	4,523	4,600	4,940
Mutare	5,645	6,473	5,585	5,880	6,435	6,100
Masvingo	2,708	2,193	2,153	2,368	2,543	3,400
Total Harare	18,767	17,834	15,009	16,282	36,533	36,247
Total Non-Harare	15,277	18,651	20,208	22,138	24,728	25,110
Total All Urban	34,044	36,485	35,217	38,420	61,261	61,357
II. Regional^c						
North	4,270	6,366	7,201	6,979	7,683	7,289
South	5,030	5,333	5,343	6,331	6,940	6,783
East	12,292	13,782	12,777	12,762	13,654	12,856
West	20,851	27,095	25,235	26,596	29,505	27,985
Total Regional	42,443	52,576	50,556	52,668	57,782	54,913
Subscriptions	456	351	410	400	460	591
Miscellaneous	--	217	169	226	268	338
Total Sales	61,666	86,649	84,742	91,005	103,251	100,785

Proportion of Sales (%)						
Harare	30	21	18	18	35	36
All Urban	55	42	42	42	59	61
All Regional	69	61	60	58	56	54

- a Source: Parade Circulation and Distribution Registers, 1985-1990, Thomson Publications, Harare. Figures indicate annual averages, on the basis of twelve issues per year.
- b In 1989 bulk distribution was shifted from Kingstons to a Harare-based network of vendors and agents. This network reaches numerous non-urban points in the central Mashonaland region.
- c These five regions (including Harare and environs) are taken from the Registers. The figures for Bulawayo, Gweru, Mutare and Masvingo have not been included in the respective regional totals.

bulk of this readership (approximately 60% of the copies distributed) was to be found in those areas largely untouched by the more mainstream national media: that is, the small towns, villages, communal areas mines, commercial farms, plantation estates and resettlement schemes dotted across the Zimbabwean countryside. This shift in focus was the result of efforts involving Thomson's large network of affiliated distributors, to get the publication out to its target readership of ordinary black Zimbabweans.

At the time of the magazine's takeover in 1984, Parade's modest circulation was handled mostly by the Kingston Wholesalers company based in Harare, which meant that distribution was primarily focused on the capital city and a handful of other urban centres, namely Bulawayo, Gweru, Masvingo and Mutare. Soon after its incorporation into the Thomson group, however, Parade acquired a new, steadily expanding network of small and larger distributing agents, and vendors, which were to overshadow Kingstons (retained as one distribution outlet until 1988) in importance. The impact on the national pattern of circulation of the journal was immediate and profound. Already in 1985, over half of Parade's copies were sent to what could be classed non-urban communities.⁷⁴ With the increase in the magazine's print run, this trend was to deepen in absolute terms.

By mid 1987, 67% (or 50,567 copies) of Parade's circulation was destined for rural outlets.⁷⁵ It was only the surge in urban population at the end of the decade, which signified increased urban demand (particularly in Harare and its environs), which led to the heightened importance of the urban areas as a market for the

journal -- but by then, this urban market also included increased "takes" by the larger urban centres outside of Harare. In absolute terms, the circulation of Parade in the rural areas maintained its established high levels, with increased distribution there limited primarily by the availability of newsprint stocks. At the same time, the pattern of urban distribution had also been altered, with a much greater proportion of copies in Harare making its way to readers via the use of street vendors and "popular" urban outlets, like bottle stores, tuck shops and small hair salons serving township residents. Relying on the community infrastructure of daily social life of most Zimbabweans, Parade had been transformed from an urban-based pop magazine aimed at youth, into a readily accessible, popular instrument of information diffusion; an instrument whose reach, as editor Moyse noted above, extended across all sections of the Zimbabwean "masses". It was an example unparalleled by other publications in the private press which sought to nationalise their distribution, and which demonstrated the comparable failure of Zimpapers to extend information accessibility to the majority population.

Zimbabwean advertisers made the same positive assessment as Moyse, judging from the growing flow of substantial "national" advertising clients to the publication. This attraction of increased advertising, at tariffs which rose along with rapidly escalating publishing costs at the end of the 1980s, had beneficial side-effects for editors and management alike. While relieving the pressure on editorial space allotments which had accumulated because of industry-wide structural problems based in newsprint shortages, it also transformed the magazine into a significant source of

profits for Thomson -- earning as much as \$30,000 per issue for the company by the late 1980s.⁷⁶

While the surge in Parade's popularity was aided by its remodelled popular format and boosted print runs, the key to the magazine's success depended first and foremost on its coverage of current affairs issues bypassed by the dominant national media, and Zimpapers in particular. For Moyse, this unoccupied space was a function of government's pervasive control and quiet censoring of the public media, the hesitancy of most other private publications, and the increasingly confident critical demeanour of large fragments of a disgruntled civil society. It was this new reality which presented an opportunity for a fresh intervention, backed by "traditional" commercial publishing interests.

Had the public media covered difficult issues openly and honestly, they would have retained the respect of the people, and helped to serve as a link between the masses and the government... As it stands, that function is one which the private sector is now trying to fulfil. I think the diversity and honesty of our reporting goes a long way to explaining why Parade now has two million readers nation-wide, every month.⁷⁷

Under Moyse, Parade was to become a "populist-political campaigning" magazine, with one of its priorities being critical attention over how to implement and sustain the mass-oriented national goals enunciated by Zanu at independence.⁷⁸

Although this editorial orientation enabled the magazine to capture an enormous following, it did not -- unlike other campaigning publications such as The Financial Gazette or Speak Out -- foster the coalescence of a cohesive, formal constituency under the wings of the magazine. The implications of this looser

relationship to civil society were ambiguous. Moyse recognised this reality, and noted,

Generally, there is no identifiable, massed, political group we can point to at Parade and say, "that is our constituency". We do not have a natural, pre-formed constituency: this is a bonus - it leaves us free to write from an independent perspective; and a handicap -- because we do not have any "political muscle" readily behind us, to push and defend us in case we should fall out of favour with government or the ruling party on some political or editorial point.⁷⁹

This "distance" from any specific group or collection of groups in civil society, mediated by its editorial focus on events and issues of interest to "the povo", enabled Parade to aspire to a broader national and popular status: that is, to something akin to a national forum on popular issues. Thus, Parade emerged as a naturally structured locale of articulation for popular community organisations, at a time when those bodies were consolidating their bases and -- in the process -- exploring new ways of establishing their presence in the national political space.⁸⁰ For many, Parade offered the best opportunity of instilling such a presence under the terms desired by the organisation involved, and not those mandated by the partisan agenda of Zimpapers' cowered editors. With its large circulation and wide distribution, Parade offered the possibility of popular organisations reaching their national grassroots constituency -- a function which had not been fulfilled by those organisations' media ventures, of which the ZCTU's Worker and OCCZIM's Vanguard were exemplary.

But the community organisations were not alone in recognising the instrumental political importance of Parade. Beginning around 1986, Zimpapers and

the MMT were to make various overtures to Thomson Publications regarding the takeover of Parade, in what group proprietor Alex Thomson took to be "fronting" bids for the ruling party.⁸¹ In the event, these probing gestures were rejected and Thomson, looking for a much-needed injection of financing for a programme of capital renewal, instead accepted in 1988 a 49% share-purchase offer from two companies controlled by Zimbabwean directors of the Lonrho group.⁸²

While the new, indirect Lonrho presence in the company did not have a discernible impact on management's distance from editorial decision-making at Parade (according to the magazine's editorial staff), neither did it afford much "protection" or assistance in the publication's dealings with the state and ruling party. This is not to say that Parade was harassed or blatantly intimidated by the government, ruling party or agents of either, but rather that the distinctly unco-operative conduct of these institutions remained unchanged into the 1990s.⁸³ This unwillingness of the state and ruling party to co-operate in the provision of information proved a major obstacle in the regular collection, compilation and presentation of popular news and debates. But according to the editor, the negative implications of this "defensiveness" of the state for itself, the ruling party and the private press alike, were readily apparent.

People in government are terrified of being caught "stepping out of the party line"... With government's unco-operative attitude, it is often impossible to get the necessary proof -- be it documentation, access or comment -- to be able to run a story. They just refuse. And you just can't risk running stories all the time for which you will be hit hard.⁸⁴

Zanu mostly abandoned the valuable terrain of public information offered by Parade and other private media, by not attempting to systematically and positively

stake out a presence for itself on that terrain. Instead, the party typically retreated to the security of the MMT and ZBC media, both under MOI control, when it came to using the mass media to disseminate its political perspective. As part of this tactic, these public media were granted, from time to time, the "inside information" from the ruling party and the government which was regularly denied the private media.

By adopting this strategy, however, the party ceded considerable leeway to popular organisations, critical journalists and others (for example, liberal and radical intellectuals), who had both access to the private media, and new notions concerning the political and economic direction of the government and state. The occupation of much of this power space in the private press by the representatives and political perspectives of popular political organisations, posed a concerted challenge to Zanu's overall political programme -- particularly in the historical context of increasing coherence in the popular quarters of civil society. The main impact of these group's growing presence in the private media was the mounting of a frontal challenge to the Zanu-dominated public press infrastructure; and, by extension, to the unquestioned social authority of the ruling party in the whole of the media, and in civil society at large.

Conclusion: Lost Ground and the Rising Challenge

In this chapter it has been argued that the expansion of the Zimbabwean private press, and particularly its political role as a locus of social debate and political activism, was a function of several historical factors related to changes in civil society and the shortcomings of the new MMT media in meeting government-proclaimed expectations. On the one hand, the growth and diversification of the private print media came in response to the needs of social fractions for access to information and views directly relevant to their political programme and hunger for information unmediated by the partisan agenda of Zanu functionaries in the public media. On the other, it was an indirect reaction to the failure of the MMT and ZBC media to fulfil the promises made by government in the early years of independence, relating to both the geographical and social expansion of the public media infrastructure nation-wide, and the maintenance of "press freedom" within that infrastructure.

The fragmented development of a private press, whose components were distinguished by their relative distancing from the agenda of the ruling party, represented a direct challenge to Zanu's aim of instilling its social and intellectual leadership in civil society. The challenge took many forms, from direct confrontations with Zanu's changing political programme by media intimately connected with specific socio-economic groups and classes, to the proffering of more nuanced critical perspectives which in various ways helped to deconstruct the officially-mythologized status quo. This latter category of publications, comprised of consumer and

entertainment papers, trade journals and what may be termed "indirectly activist" or "independent sources of information" about news and current affairs, contributed substantially (if not always consistently) to the construction of a vague, pervasive "culture" of criticism which was based on social discourses "other" than that of the ruling party. In this way, Zimbabwe's considerable collection of trade and consumer magazines, and regional newspapers -- not to mention its leading monthly popular entertainment publications -- should be seen in the guise of social agents, inextricably linked to the politicisation and catalyzation of Zimbabwean civil society in the 1980s. Together, they represented an eclectic, structured network of a nascent "organic intelligentsia", grounded in an equally diverse civil society.

In contrast, Zanu's response within the private sector press failed to elicit the same popular response in support of the party. Neither the Zimbabwe News, Zanu's small circulation magazine carried over from the pre-independence era, nor the People's Voice, its weekly tabloid established in July 1990, were structured in a way which would facilitate their anticipated roles as popular interlocutors of the ruling party in civil society. In the first case, sterile, rhetorical, narrowly "political" reportage pre-empted the popular appeal and social authority of the publication, which one observer likened to an in-house version of Hansard.⁸⁵ In the second, the overt deference of the paper to the ruling party proved the main stumbling block to the Voice's credibility.⁸⁶ Its editor's claims that the weekly would valiantly remain "bold, factual and fearless", and (in acknowledgement of Zanu's slipping public relations image) "criticise those leaders who make mistakes and expose leaders

engaged in any corrupt practices", were not proven in practice. For both periodicals, any pretence to "critical independence" on the part of the editors was negated by their direct financial and political dependence on the ruling party. Both the News and the Voice were non-commercial publications wholly funded by the party (and after 1987, indirectly by Zanu's appendage, the Ministry of Political Affairs), and supervised by an editorial committee consisting of senior party leaders and officials within its Information and Publicity Department.⁸⁷

While the Voice represented a more conscious and concerted effort to popularise the party's political programme, by wrapping it in a package of light entertainment and internally-leaked government news, its efforts were overshadowed by the more practised, and more discernibly, critical coverage of national affairs offered by its many competitors in the private media.⁸⁸ At the same time, the limited distribution of the two publications only underscored their sectarian appeal, and their necessarily limited reach into the grassroots of civil society.

In comparison, the diversity and vitality of the emerging private press in responding to the information needs of the vast majority of Zimbabweans was an unmistakable feature of civic life in the 1980s. It was a fact seen not only in the rapid expansion of the periodicals publishing industry, but also, with its leading components, in the concerted development of a support infrastructure aimed at spreading the media beyond the two cities of Harare and Bulawayo, the traditional "white" home of the media consumer market. In some instances, this development entailed the use of service companies established to handle the national distribution of

published materials;⁸⁹ in others, enhanced national reach depended upon the elaboration of an intricate network of associated regional distributors, wholesalers and vendors. Both approaches were to yield impressive results, in light of which the short-circuited distribution infrastructure of Zimpapers would appear desperately inadequate.

In the face of this rising challenge to Zanu's determination of the agenda of social debate and political reform, the ruling party adopted a strategy which only exacerbated a worsening situation. According to most editors and observers in the private press, this strategy was built around the notion of information closure: that is, in the blocking off of information access to the state and ruling party by the independent media. At a time when the State of Emergency was nearing its end and the tide of more open public debate was swelling, this psychology took the form of a "bureaucratization" of information.⁹⁰ Concretely, this would mean that requests for all manner of details, data, news and other information from the state and ruling party by the print media were met with the demand that questions be put in writing, and sent to the appropriate (and often elusive) authority; or even worse, refused or simply ignored.

The same dynamic of information management by the state and Zanu -- and mounting information hunger on the part of most Zimbabweans -- led, according to popular speculation among media experts and ordinary Zimbabweans, to the institutionalisation of insidious and counter-productive "rumour-mongering" in the late 1980s.⁹¹ Inevitably, therefore, Zanu's silent attempt to obstruct the flow of

information through the popular media nurtured not the acquiescence of civil society, but growing resentment among journalists, and suspicion and cynicism among large sections of civil society. Together with the government's increasingly apparent manipulation of the MMT press, the effect was to erode popular confidence in the accuracy of the new "mirror" of society which Zanu had unilaterally ascribed to Zimpapers and the public print media -- and, at the same time, bolster the popular prominence of and support for the "other" society emerging within the heart of civil society, and beyond the reach of the ruling party.

How important was the private press in the popular deconstruction of the ruling party and government? If the private media did not function as the "General Staff" (recalling Gramsci) of the popular assault on Zanu's hegemonic aspirations, they certainly served as a primary means of rallying the troops in the grassroots and community structures of civil society, in defence of their various sectoral interests. For a fuller answer, more detailed historical accounts of the involvement of the press in popular politics is required. With this aim in mind, the discussion in the following chapter charts some of the important battles waged by popular groups and communities in civil society, in tandem with the private media, in the overall struggle to liberate the terrain of national-popular politics in Zimbabwe in the 1980s. At the same time, the internal weaknesses and dysfunctions of the Zanu-led defence of the government's new media order will be examined, with a view to determining the experiences and prospects of the ruling party in its struggle for all-encompassing social leadership in its first decade in power.

References

1. SPN, pp. 148-149.
2. When the "institution" of the "private press" is referred to in this discussion it is more in recognition of the essential juridical conditions of existence of these media, which distinguish them from the public domain media of the MMT infrastructure and the parastatal ZBC. In contradistinction, the most common alternative nomenclature, including the "independent" or "opposition" press, is less incisive and analytically helpful in this respect: such unexplicit terminology leaves room for ambiguous interpretation, failing to acknowledge the inevitable problem of discerning fact from fiction in the evaluation of various publications' declared self-ascription to "independence", "opposition" and "autonomy". This sort of indistinct taxonomy, in other words, stands the risk of confusing officially stated political allegiances, and structures of control and ownership.
3. Aside from legal restrictions relating to the publication of defamatory or libellous stories, or information injurious to state security, there are no sustained, direct, "institutionalised" linkages binding the private media to the state or ruling party. Interview with Welshman Ncube, Harare, 3 June 1988. (Ncube is a senior lecturer in the Faculty of Law at the University of Zimbabwe).
4. This argument has been advanced by the author in a series of articles. For example, see various instalments of the "Press Vigil" column by 'Bayadumisa Maphenduka' in Moto magazine, notably "Back to the Beginning" (November/December 1989) and "The Politics of Press Freedom" (September 1990); Africa Information Afrique (March 1990); and "Stop the Press? The Media Struggle in Zimbabwe", Southern Africa Report (May 1991), pp. 23-26.
5. Thomson Publishing is controlled by Alex Thomson, the majority shareholder and Managing Director. Modus Publications was owned and managed by Clive Wilson until majority control was sold to a business consortia at the end of the 1980s, while Munn Publishing is the principal component of Key-Plan Africa Corporation (Private) Limited, a collection of 11 enterprises concentrated in news, publishing, marketing and periodicals distribution, and managed by Trevor Munn. All three owners/managers are white Zimbabweans.
6. Interview with Alex Thomson, Harare, 8 September 1989. Thomson is the majority shareholder and Managing Director of Thomson Publications (Private) Limited.
7. At Thomson Publications, for example, the stable of trade and consumer-dominated titles increased from four magazines in the early 1980s, to 18 by the end of the decade. This was realised through the launching of new publications and the acquisition of several others. Only

one of these magazines, Parade and Foto-Action, was directed at a substantial "black readership".

8. Interview with Geoffrey Goss (Sales and Marketing Manager, Roblaw Publishers and Argosy Press -- the book and magazine wings of Modus Publications), Harare, 29 November 1990. Goss noted that approximately 75% of magazines distribution and sales in the consumer and trade section of the industry are Harare-based, with only a tiny fraction of turnover related to the mass (black), and particularly the rural, market. According to senior staff consulted in the periodicals publishing industry, the same pattern of production and magazine sales stood for all three leading publishing houses.

9. For example, the oldest and most important agricultural periodical, the Commercial Farming Union's weekly, The Farmer, maintained a circulation of only 5,500 at the end of the 1980s. The CFU's membership at the time was approximately 4,300. Interviews with Felicity Wood (editor), Harare, 2 August 1991, and Michael Rook (General Manager of The Farmer's publisher, Modern Farming Publications Trust), Harare, 2 August 1991.

10. Recalling the Gramscian content of the term "corporate", meaning political projects restricted purposefully in their social reach and wider ambitions.

11. The Financial Gazette appeared first as Rhodesian Property and Finance, a name maintained until the late 1970s.

12. All figures on circulation, distribution and pagination of The Financial Gazette (unless otherwise noted) were compiled by the author from the newspaper's production register (1981-1990) at Modus Publications, Harare. Of the paper's 4,000 print run in 1981, roughly half was consumed by subscribers, with the other half allocated for distribution by Kingstons book stores (1300) and Modus itself (700-800, depending weekly variations in the print run). The paper was also small in terms of its pagination volume, until 1983 oscillating between 12 and 16 pages per issue.

13. The paper was founded in 1956 and was to undergo several changes in ownership over the following years. By 1969 it was controlled by the South African Perskor group, which held 49% of company shares. At the time of its buy-out by Dacomb Holdings (Private) Limited, three leading journalists of the old paper publicly dissociated themselves from the new venture, a move which can be seen as a reflection of open hostility between the old RF-aligned editorial team, and the new, more liberal group which gained control of the Gazette. (See Herald, 02.03.1979) The rumoured price paid for controlling interest in the paper was a mere \$10,000. Modus Publications, the Dacomb-controlled publishing company into which the Gazette was slotted at the time of its acquisition in 1979, had been associated previously with Bishop Muzorewa's UANC, having published that party's short-lived Drum of Zimbabwe.

14. Interview with Sarah Thompson, Harare, 27 November 1990. At the time of the interview Thompson was the advertising manager of the Gazette.

15. Interview with Rachel Stewart, Harare, 20 April 1989. This view was shared by other media observers consulted.

16. Wilson remained as full-time editor until late 1989, when controlling interest in Modus changed hands. He was succeeded by Geoff Nyarota, former editor of The Chronicle, who left Zimpapers to join Modus in February 1990.

17. The pagination of the Gazette has oscillated dramatically, often from week to week, depending on advertising support and, more importantly, the supply of paper. Still, a general pattern of sharp increase in pagination volume over the 1980s is evident. In 1982, volume hovered around 20 pages, increasing roughly by a factor of 10 pages per annum over the next few years. By the end of the decade, page volume ranged between 40-odd pages, and 72.

18. Already in 1986, subscribers consumed roughly 6,550 (43%) of the 15,200 print run, down 10% from 1981. By 1989, the share of subscriptions as a percentage of total consumption had slipped a further 10%, while the average weekly print run rose to over 20,000.

19. Probe Market Research, "Survey of The Financial Gazette", study carried out for Modus Publications, Harare, November 1990.

20. Probe Market Research report, op. cit.

21. Nationwide was hived-off from Modus at the time of parent company's takeover in late 1989, although it continued to distribute Modus' publications by contract thereafter.

22. Public attacks on the "white", "Rhodesian" Gazette from Zanu's Information and Publicity Secretary Nathan Shamuyarira, were frequent and increasingly hostile throughout the 1980s.

23. H.M.R. Farinya, "The Financial Gazette: Persistent Negative Reporting Against the Government of Zimbabwe", internal report prepared for the MOI, 1989.

24. Farinya, op. cit.

25. Stewart, interview, op. cit.:

If it seems sometimes as if The Financial Gazette has calmed down, or goes through long periods where it is less antagonistic to government, it is not because the paper has become less campaigning, or more "intimidated" by the state to be quiet. Rather, the general political climate in Zimbabwe has shifted to the right, as the announcement of trade liberalisation this week [of 20 April 1989] demonstrates. Therefore the Gazette is not so inimical as it previously was, and more people in government and Zanu are accommodated by it, and less antagonistic towards it. There is always the "problem" that we carry lots of political snippets and criticisms, alongside world news, that you don't find

elsewhere in the local media, but then that's another reason why people buy our paper -- including government and party officials.

26. Unlike the trade publications, the news and editorial content of the Gazette was investigated and produced by a regular corps of in-house journalists and correspondents. Moreover, its copy was distributed on the public media market (not according to membership lists of different private associations), a factor crucial to the attraction of substantial regular commercial advertising (as opposed to the functional and unappealing "trade" publicity which fills the pages of the trade magazines).

Although the balance sheets of the Gazette and Modus Publications were not open to inspection by the author, most sources consulted agreed that The Financial Gazette operated on solidly profitable terms from the mid 1980s. It is an opinion which would appear to be supported by the rapid growth in sales, dramatic and erratic increases in the paper's cover price (rising over 250% in just three years), and the plentiful supply of up-market, expensive advertising scattered throughout the weekly. It would also appear to be confirmed by the launching of The Weekend Gazette in 1990, and by the expansion of the newspaper's infrastructure to include regional offices in Bulawayo and Mutare.

27. The two other members of the consortia, E. Kahari and F. Muhwati, came to the company from senior posts in (respectively) the important manufacturing and financial companies, Flexible Packaging and Lion Insurance. Enoch Dumbutshena, the former Chief Justice of the Zimbabwe Supreme Court, and businessman, was later co-opted as Chairman of the company. All three men can be considered representative of an emergent fraction of white-allied, black national capital.

28. Stewart, Interview, *op. cit.* Stewart worked at the Financial Gazette from 1987 to 1989, rising to the position of chief sub-editor.

29. For elaboration of this argument, see 'Bayadumisa', "The pink paper's hot new property", Moto, no. 86/87 (March/April 1990), p. 11.

30. See 'Bayadumisa', Moto, no. 86/87, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

Up until now, some were able to imply that Fingaz was somehow less committed to the national project of development for all than it might be, thus explaining the paper's support for a hodge-podge of interests critical of the state.

Now, however, Nyarota's appointment has taken away even this point of leverage against Fingaz's blazing, hell-raising "Comments".

At Fingaz, capitalism now has a black face -- one which will be harder to attack without giving offence and causing nervous discomfort in high places.

31. This is not to mention the relatively higher price of the paper, whose cover price (\$1.90 and rising incrementally in the late 1980s) alone placed it beyond the reach of most Zimbabweans.

32. Interview with Ducas Fambai, Harare, 3 February 1988. Fambai was the editor of The Vanguard between 1984 and 1988. See also, "Co-Ops want media time" (Letter), The Vanguard, January 1983:

[T]he fact of the matter is that those in coops are in the forefront but the Department of Cooperatives are (sic) in an arm chair revolution. We are physically and mentally involved in the economic war against capitalist establishments and we should be given a chance to fight them in the mass media. Nobody should represent us other than ourselves. We then appeal now to the authorities concerned to look into this issue carefully. Our coop movement feels neglected.

33. These observations represent a summary of more detailed research on the history of The Vanguard and The Worker undertaken by the author in 1990-1991, and which is being prepared for publication elsewhere.

34. Periodically, Vanguard was distributed partly via commercial networks as well, although this proved a costly and unreliable exercise.

35. Certain of the larger, established and wealthier unions refused to allow the paper to be distributed through their shop-floor network. At the same time, they opted not to contribute funds for the running of the paper. Indeed, only three unions contributed to The Worker, and bore its running costs for the entirety of its run. Interview with Andrew Ganya, Harare, 3 May 1988.

36. While The Vanguard had enjoyed a period of regular tabloid production in the mid 1980s, printing as many as six issues annually, it appears that The Worker's print run included only seven editions over an eighteen-month period in 1987-1988. Talk at the ZCTU in 1990 of reviving the paper in co-operation with the ZCTU-affiliate, the Zimbabwe Union of Journalists, did not materialise.

37. Significantly, this recognition coincided with the political and organisational revitalisation of the movement beginning in 1988, after which the ZCTU's presence as a point of popular articulation in civil society was an established fact.

38. A random survey of the national newspapers and magazines from 1987 onwards demonstrates very clearly the increased media activity of the ZCTU after its mid-1988 reorganisation.

Among other examples of ZCTU media interventions, see "Budget abandons five-year plan - ZCTU", Ziana 15.08.1988; "ZCTU accuses government of a paternalistic attitude towards the working class", The Financial Gazette 30.09.1988; "Party accused of indecision", Herald 22.10.1988; "ZCTU group to help co-ops", Herald 24.10.1988; "ZCTU answers labour minister's allegations: the great divide", Parade November 1988; "ZCTU on political situation", Ziana 15.11.1988; "ZCTU to urge rates boycott", Chronicle 10.01.1989; "ZCTU starts campaign against civic centre", Herald 23.01.1989; "ZCTU views on Investment Code", Sunday Mail 27.08.1989; "ZCTU wants to see Minister on Emergency

Powers", Herald 21.09.1989; and numerous issues of the national daily and weekly newspapers, and monthly periodicals, for the period September-December 1989, relating to Tsvangirai's detention and appeals for his release.

39. Tsvangirai, interview, op. cit.

40. Both Social Change and SAPEM were products of fractions of the Zimbabwean radical intelligentsia. Speak Out was the magazine of the Womens' Action Group of Zimbabwe, while Read On was a more generalist, literacy aid publication with a strongly critical political content. Its publisher was the Training Aids Development Group, a collective co-operative organisation specialising in literacy and management training for co-operatives.

41. None of these periodicals was able to -- or in most cases attempted to -- attract commercial advertising. The reasons varied, but the prime factor was that the wider national reach of other media, notably the commercial press but also including the electronic media, rendered these sectoral, "political" media unattractive to market-minded advertisers.

42. The following discussion does not mean to convey the view that other private commercial media (including light entertainment magazines, regional news magazines based in Zimbabwe and various private "community" and "suburbs" newspapers and newssheets) not detailed here, have been unimportant in defining social values in Zimbabwe. Rather, the focus of discussion falls on Moto and Parade because their forthrightly structured political and social roles place distinguish them in terms of the current study of hegemonic struggles in Zimbabwe.

43. The case of Prize magazine is more ambiguous, and less fruitful as a point of inquiry into the changing political role of the popular press. Despite its relatively large print run, which for most of the 1980s stood between 35,000 and 50,000 copies per month, and its frequent inclusion of articles and commentary on national issues, it is nonetheless debateable whether Prize should be considered as belonging in the camp of the national-political press. The reason is the magazine's elusive, ill-defined "social" identity. Inherited from the Rhodesian era as a youth "pop" publication focused primarily on music and sports coverage, it is not clear that the magazine ever broke free of this editorial bottom line after independence. In the 1980s, frequent changes of editorial staff were matched by rapid alterations in editorial slant, a chaotic situation which helped provoke a temporary suspension of publication near the end of the decade. When Prize reappeared some months later, it was in the format of a pop music pin-up magazine (a format which was to endure into the 1990s, on the back of market appeal).

This is not to say that Prize was "apolitical" in content throughout the 1980s, for there were many issues (particularly after Willowgate and before the 1989 Zim-contested by-elections) which demonstrated otherwise. Rather, it is to say that the social and political motif of the magazine -- and therefore the publication itself -- was less coherent than that of Moto and Parade. It was partly because of this, that the magazine was unable to develop the same degree of loosely structured linkages with constituent groups in civil society; a fact which makes the publication less indispensable as an exemplary case of media politicization

and its effects. Interview with Alwyn Francis, Harare, 27 February 1991. Francis was editor of Prize in the mid 1980s.

44. See Chapter 3.

45. Like so much of the "African press" Parade was financed and run by white capital. Control of the magazine changed hands several times, but during the magazine's successful run in the 1950s it fell under the control of C.A.G. Paver, the South African proprietor of the African Newspapers Group. The commercial attraction of the publication diminished as UDI censorship and control undermined its appeal to its black readership. In 1970 Parade was taken over by Len Lambiris, a lecturer in Greek classics at the University of Rhodesia who for the next fourteen years worked as the magazine's sole reporter and editor.

46. Moto was operated by the Mambo Press, a Gweru-based publishing house which in turn was wholly funded by the Gweru Catholic Diocese. Established, like Mambo, by an energetic activist Swiss priest, Michael Traber, its first African editor was Paul Chidyausika (later editor of The Peoples Weekly and, still later, Kwayedza). In the 1950s and 1960s, the paper was produced by a staff of six blacks, many of them later to become officials in Zanu and its state bureaucracy. See, Menard Masvingise, "Remembering Moto", Moto, no. 82 (November-December 1989), pp. 14-15.

47. By 1974 Moto had become a hugely popular weekly tabloid, selling more than 20,000 copies in Harare alone. In December of that year, the paper was banned under the terms of the Law and Order Maintenance Act, with the Minister responsible, Desmond Lardner-Burke, accusing the publication of "an unmistakable sympathy for the terrorists, who are invariably referred to as 'guerillas' or 'freedom fighters'". All future versions of the paper were prohibited at the same time in an advance banning provision. Four years previous, co-ordinator Michael Traber was deported and declared a prohibited immigrant. See Windrich, 1981, op. cit., and Moto's thirtieth anniversary issue (no. 82 of November-December 1989).

48. The bits of local news which did appear in Parade in those war years was typically contracted from local freelances, and subject to the same direct and indirect censorship faced by other publications, including the banned Moto. According to some observers, Parade's social and political appeal had been further undermined by editor Lambiris' strong endorsement of Muzorewa's UANC in the late 1970s.

49. According to all accounts, the destruction was the work of remnants of the Rhodesian special security services.

50. See Appendix L for a look at the diversity of features in the later Moto magazine.

51. Ushewokunze's statement amounted to a direct attack on the Commission and the Prime Minister, who at that time held the portfolio of Minister of the Public Service. See, "My changes hampered -- Minister", Moto, 04.07.1981.

52. See, "Mugabe issues 'public warning' to Ushewokunze", Moto, 18.07.1981. Shortly later Ushewokunze was removed from the Ministry of Health.

53. Interview with Hugh Lewin, Harare, 4 September 1991.

54. This argument concerning the demise of the Moto newspaper was advanced by Hugh Lewin in his interview with the author, op. cit.

55. See Moto, Christmas Edition, 1981, and particularly "Saying goodbye" (Comment).

56. The cartoon strip, "Munetsi says", in the Christmas edition put it this way: "I've been banned. I've been bombed. Now, I'm told, I must be silent." The announcement of the shut-down prompted a visit to the Bishop and Mambo management by a delegation including Permanent Secretary in the MOI, Justin Nyoka, which plead the case for the paper's survival.

57. In addition to Lewin, who left Moto within a year to engage in full-time journalist training at Zimco, Zimbabwean author Wilson Katiyo was hired by Mambo. There were frequent staff changes over the remainder of the 1980s, the result of Moto's chronic financial and editorial struggles with Mambo. The magazine's print run was gradually increased, depending on available paper stocks and pagination, peaking at 23,000 in 1990.

58. Along with five other Zapu officials, the pair were charged with plotting to violently overthrow the government, after arms caches were discovered on Zapu-controlled properties in 1982. Though eventually found innocent by the High Court, the accused were immediately redetained under Emergency Powers, and remained incarcerated until the easing of Zapu-Zanu tensions in 1987 led to the slow release of "Zapu dissidents". The terminally ill Masuku was released in 1986, a short time before his death.

59. See, "The situation in Matabeleland" (Comment), "The 'bruising of the dissidents'", "Zimbabwe's first treason trial" and "Portraits of the treason trialists", all in Moto, no.10 (March 1983).

60. Lewin noted that Moto staff were informed by sympathetic Cabinet members that the coverage of the treason trialists, in particular, had raised the ire of Zanu chauvinists; but that the decision had been taken by government to adopt a wait-and-see attitude towards the magazine. Why Moto was left relatively unscathed is a matter of conjecture, and is most likely attributable to a number of factors, including the magazine's revered historical status, linkages to the Church and its internationally acknowledged status as a forum for liberal and intellectual debate. In all of this it is difficult to overestimate the importance of Mugabe's own personal connections to the formidable Zimbabwean Catholic hierarchy (the future President received his primary and secondary education at the Jesuit Kutama Mission); or, more importantly, the keen attention paid by Zanu to the well-being of its international public relations image as a party to Zimbabwe's exercise in national reconciliation -- and as a government anxious to attract continued flows of investment and aid capital.

61. Interview with Makani Kabweza, Gweru, 19 October 1989. Kabweza, the current editor of Moto, assumed the post in January 1987.

62. According to Kabweza, letters to the editor numbered roughly two hundred a month by the end of the 1980s.

63. Moto magazine is printed on poor quality newsprint, without colour photographs or illustrations, in a layout that can be described as plain and uninspiring. Its stories, often composed in dry analytical language, make no consistent mention of the entertainment, cultural and sports news which, in the earlier Moto newspaper, had been accorded considerable editorial space -- in deference to the popular daily interests of black Zimbabwean society.

64. As part of its modus vivendi, the magazine was not directed by its owners to attract sustained advertising from the commercial sector, a move which (according to most advertising industry experts interviewed) most likely would have yielded disappointing results in any case, given Moto's profile in the advertising industry as a "high-brow", black-oriented publication. For most of the 1980s the magazine was without an advertising manager, a fact which was reflected in the noticeable dearth of commercial publicity in its pages. The single exception to the rule was the long-running support of hotelier and Zanu (later Zim) politician, Patrick Kombayi, whose Gweru businesses were featured prominently in the late 1980s. Gweru is the home of Mambo Press, and since 1988 served as the base of Moto, following the magazine's move from Harare.

65. The widely-rumoured disputes between Moto staff and Plangger were confirmed in an interview with a former Moto editor, "Comrade H", who wishes to remain anonymous on this point.

66. Current Moto editor Makani Kabweza was hired by Mambo in January 1987, having spent the previous eleven years outside of Zimbabwe, as an editor of a Catholic magazine in Malawi. In what some took to be an attempt by Plangger to exert greater control over the editorial content of the magazine, Mambo decided to move the editorial offices of the magazine to its own, relatively isolated headquarters, some ten kilometres from Gweru -- and some hundreds kilometres from the capital, and the bulk of its readership.

67. Kabweza (Interview, op. cit.) noted that Moto does not have access to a range of facilities, including fax terminals, daily news wire services, a private darkroom, and, even more importantly, private transport. For example, the editor pointed out that trips to Harare, for the purposes of conducting interviews and other research, typically are made by public transport (usually this means resort to Zimbabwe's famously unreliable and painfully slow bus services).

68. The rumoured takeover price was \$100,000, a relatively small sum for a title with a thirty-year history and larger-than-average print run.

69. Moyse, Interview, 25 April 1991.

70. Moyse cited in Louis Freedberg, "Zimbabwe's collar on the press", San Francisco Chronicle, 20.11.1989.

71. Parade circulation and distribution register (1984-1990), Thomson Publications, Thomson House, Harare. Figures compiled and summarized by the author. Most observers agree with Parade staff's assessment that, if it were not for print run limitations imposed by the shortage of newsprint, the print run could have been boosted higher, to approximately 150,000 copies per month.

72. Calculated as "readers per copy" by the number of copies printed.

73. Parade estimates, on the basis of letters to the editor, that the vast majority of its readership falls within the 15-35 year old age bracket.

74. These include the small towns and their "locations" (townships), growth points, commercial farms, mines, agricultural estates, army camps, resettlement schemes and the innumerable bottle stores and tuck shops at the villages, truck and bus stops which dot the Zimbabwean countryside.

75. Over the period of 1985-1990, there was a 30% increase in the number of copies distributed to rural centres across Zimbabwe. See Table 7.5.

76. Moyse, Interview, May 1989, *op. cit.* Moyse noted that until the "boom" in Parade's circulation and public profile, certain larger (and lucrative) advertising contracts, such as that of the middle income department store chain, OK Bazaars, hesitated to regularly take out space in the magazine. The advertising management of Parade is handled by the advertising and publicity section of the Thomson group, which some see as having been an inhibiting factor in the growth of the magazine's stable of clients.

A crisis in the periodicals publishing industry in the late 1980s had severe repercussions for the magazine. Frequent shortages in national newsprint stocks, exacerbated by a shut-down of the country's only supplying plant in 1987, meant that Parade was forced to buy some paper stocks on the black market in order to go to press. Along with the economic slump in the late 1980s, which restricted advertising support and led to a new round of price increases for other publishing inputs, this paper crisis had a serious, negative impact on Parade's format. Pagination was cut back to 50 pages or less (from a previous average of 68 pages per copy), and the ratio of editorial to advertising content was pushed to as low as 45:55 (from the norm of approximately 60:40). At the same time the size of the print run varied widely, depending on the short term availability of newsprint stocks. The situation improved only after the paper shortage eased, and further increases in the print run attracted more advertising, at higher tariffs.

77. Moyse in "On defensive psychology and free media in Zimbabwe", (Interview) Moto, no. 97 (February 1991), p. 10.

78. Moyse, Interview, May 1989, op. cit.

79. Moyse, Interview, May 1989, op. cit.

80. Tsvangirai, Interview, 1990, op. cit.

81. Alex Thomson, Interview, op. cit.

82. Although Thomson denied that the purchase by the two rather unlikely media investors, Electronics (Private) Limited, and Isis (Private) Limited, represented an acceptance of Lonrho's corporate "protection" over that of Zanu, he did acknowledge that one could argue that Lonrho's stake in Thomson Publications offered the latter a degree of political and economic security it had previously been lacking.

For Lonrho, the primary importance of the deal indubitably lay in the access it opened up to Thomson's stable of trade and consumer magazines. For Thomson, the sale raised approximately \$2.4 million, part of which was soon spent on a major stake in the Colourscan company (the only facility in Zimbabwe capable of doing colour separation scans for publishers), and part of which was invested in a capital renewal programme for the group's infrastructure. Significantly, no substantial funds accrued from the share sale were earmarked for Parade, by far the company's largest publication. (Interviews with Alex Thomson and Moyse, May 1989, op. cit.)

83. Moyse recalls only one instance of being directly intimidated by government officials: a 1986 story written by expelled Zanu "dissident" Henry Hamadziripi, which gave the author's personal account of the liberation struggle (as part of a retrospective series by the magazine on the war), provoked a telephone call from Zanu Secretary for Information and Publicity, and Minister of Information, Nathan Shamuyarira, who complained of the story's content and demanded that all future instalments of the series be cancelled. The series, however, had already come to an end. In 1989, Alex Thomson received a vaguely worded letter from Shamuyarira (by then, Minister of Foreign Affairs, though still Zanu's Secretary for Information), demanding the manager come for "consultations" about unmentioned grievances and concerns regarding Thomson Publications. Thomson, however, was due away on business, and the meeting never took place.

84. Moyse, Interview, December 1990, op. cit.

85. 'Bayadumiso Maphenduka', "Zanu goes weekly", Moto, no.91 (August 1990), p. 11.

86. See "Comment", The People's Voice, 01.07.1990. As 'Maphenduka' (Moto, August 1990, op. cit.) dryly noted, the proclamations of Voice editor Charles Ndlovu, a close associate of Minister Shamuyarira, rang hollow in light of Ndlovu's criminal convictions for fraud and assault, which cost him his Zanu Parliamentary seat in 1989.

87. Additionally, both were compiled by Ministry of Political staffers and Zanu officials, and published by the party's Jongwe publishing house. It was an arrangement which facilitated

the silent movement of funds to the papers within and between party and state structures, and enabled Zanu to claim that the journals -- and the prestige project of the Voice in particular - were on the verge of surviving independently as popular, commercially viable entities.

88. In this dynamic, the palpable cynicism in the late 1980s towards Zanu-aligned social structures on the part of the reading Zimbabwean public cannot be overstated as an underlying, motivating factor.

89. The main companies in this regard include: Kingstons Wholesalers, the distribution wing of Kingstons bookstore chain, which over the 1980s grew from eight to eighteen branches nation-wide; National Marketing, the distribution subsidiary of Munn Publishing; and Nationwide Newsagents, a company set up in 1989 by Clive Murphy and Jim Felgate to distribute Modus Publications' products (Murphy had been CEO of Modus for many years, until the company's sale in late 1989) and an assortment of monograph series and stationary from different publishing clients. Felgate cited the inefficiency and expense of Kingstons' distribution company (with its commissions of up to 50% of cover price) as one of the motivating reasons behind the creation of Nationwide, which built up a network of over 100 private distributors around the country (in addition to special courier-based distribution) as company outlets. Nonetheless, Nationwide's national network betrays a bias in favour of the main consumer market: 53 of its outlets are located in Harare urban and suburbs, while 18 are based in Bulawayo, and only 31 in the rest of the country. Nationwide is the distributor of The Financial Gazette. (Interview with Jim Felgate, Harare, 5 December 1990; and, Nationwide Newsagents, "Price List and Order Form, 22 October 1990", and "Magazine and Newspaper and Analysis Sheet", [1990], in author's possession).

90. For a brief note on the importance of the lifting of the State of Emergency and the greater tolerance and recognition of civil liberties by government, to the freeing of political debates and commentary in the media, see, Judith Todd, "Civic Society and the Media", Paper presented at a Seminar on Press Freedom in Zimbabwe, Harare, January 1991.

91. See for example, Judith Todd, "Where's Press Freedom?", Prize Africa (July 1989), p. 34. The fact of rumour-mongering was one to which even government officials and the public media began making reference, in recognition of popular sentiment, by the end of the decade (and especially after the rumour-ridden Willowgate debacle).

Chapter 8. Social Crises and Regimes of Control: Deference and Defiance in the Struggle to Define the New Order

The process of social transformation cannot be achieved by the takeover of plant and machinery alone, but by the political education of the mass media workers in particular, and the population as a whole.

Dr. Nathan Shamuyarira, December 1981¹

There is freedom of the Press in Zimbabwe. A freedom allowing journalists to diligently pursue their vocation without fear or favour. And, true to their calling, some Zimbabwean journalists have done just that, only to find out that at the end of the tunnel, there is no sunshine, but utter darkness, brought about by some chefs who have been exposed [to scandal].

Tinos Guvi, Zimbabwean journalist, 1989²

Introduction: Obstacles and Openings

If the "free and responsible" press promised at the outset of independence was put in place in the 1980s, it was in spite of the actions of the ruling party, not because of them. From the early 1980s, the Zanu government targeted the national print media, and particularly the public sector press, as a primary element in the project of consolidating its national political leadership. Despite consistent rhetoric alluding to the development of non-partisan national media throughout the decade, the evolving power relations between the ruling party, state and the press were shaped primarily by the hegemonic ambitions of Zanu's ruling group. For the state, the logic of direct and indirect intervention on the terrain of the media came to be implied by the leading

social role assumed by the party in all spheres of social life: if the new national press was to have a "politicising", "conscientising", "mobilising" function, it could not be left to operate beyond the reach of the dominant political group in the state and civil society.

The concrete effects of this view of the press' social role were pronounced and chronic throughout the 1980s. While the state appealed to the press to measure and moderate its content in terms of its "national responsibilities", at the same time the MOI insisted ever more openly -- backed by intimidation and non-cooperation -- on journalists' narrower, blinkered, partisan support for the ruling party's programme. However, this campaign of censure and control was fraught with difficulties from the outset. The ruling party was confronted by unwieldy blocs of new and inherited structures and social forces which resisted efforts to subsume them under the state's control. Meanwhile, the political tensions within the Zimbabwean social formation which had been released after the attainment of majority rule, grew in momentum, and coalesced to offer a constituency base for media challenges to the ruling group. As demonstrated earlier, Zanu's attempts to use the MMT media institutions as a foundation for its partisan popularisation was confronted by the occasional obstinacy of editors and journalists, and infrastructural breakdown and limitations.³ At the same time, the private press, operating beyond the juridical supervision of the state and ruling party, provided the mirror in which the increasingly clouded and distorted image of national politics presented by the public press became apparent.

On its part, the state made attempts to guide this process of struggle over media interpretations of social life by erecting broad barriers against unhindered debate and information dissemination. In this regard, appeals to the necessity of maintaining a vaguely-defined "national security" -- appeals which were fortified by the South African destabilisation threat and the outbreak of dissident banditry in Matabeleland in the early 1980s -- were the primary means of curtailing or containing news and information about crucial points of national debate. But this strategy, too, encountered difficulties, when it was made apparent by some sections of the press that "national security" had been narrowly politicised to advantage by the ruling party. Indeed, as Willowgate helped to demonstrate, the growing media focus on the state's invocation of "national security" and "national interest" to censor ordinary political and social debate was to open the Zanu government and its ruling group to popular deconstruction in civil society.

In this sense, media posturings (and their "success" or "failure" in eliciting "spontaneous consent" in the national political constituency) are not seen as "random" and simply episodic, but rather tendential and refractive of underlying social tensions. Likewise, the impact of these discrete "media" struggles extended far beyond the terrain of information processing, reaching directly into the heart of the national political space. The most concrete example for this was the events and issues surrounding the "Willowgate" scandal of 1988-1989, which more than any other event in the 1980s opened a visible fissure in Zanu's edifice of social and political authority. In the wake of that crisis the assault on the ruling party's social authority

by the private media reflected and came to form an integral part of the consolidation and empowerment of leading fractions of civil society.

Imposing Parameters: National Security and the News

[Inherited from the past] is an excessive pre-occupation with secrecy and a tendency to discourage debate on matters of public concern. In a democratic society, the only information designated as secret is that relating to national defence and security. Anything else should be open to scrutiny by the public or press... But investigative journalism is virtually unknown in this country... [An important] deterrent is the reluctance of Government agencies to disperse information. Even the most innocuous request is generally received with suspicion and mistrust.

Anonymous correspondent writing in Moto, 1983⁴

Increasingly in the 1980s, Zanu's struggle to shape the production of popular consciousness via state intervention in the public media took the form of control of access and publication rights to information, measured in terms of appeals to sweeping and vague definitions of "national security" and the "national interest. In short, the government sought to claim for itself the right to determine and define national security issues as a means of denying access to information and debate over the party's administrative programme. For the media, this meant the coalescence of a government perspective and approach to information management which has been variously described as a "seige mentality" or "defensive psychology". Both terms refer to an operational attitude on the part of government leaders and state officials,

and to a loosely structured bureaucracy of information control centred in the MOI, characterised by suspicion of criticism and hostility to probing debates.

With the Zanu government this mind-set grew steadily. In the early part of the decade, the real political, economic and national security considerations of the new government, highlighted by the Matabeleland disturbances of 1982-1984 and the ever-present threat of South African destabilisation manoeuvres, provided concrete reasons for the imposition of security-related self-censorship in the media -- and set a precedent for government's commandist attitude to media control. An unofficial government ban on domestic reporting from Matabeleland in 1983, reflected in a complete news blackout in the pages of Zimpapers and in tight control (including deportation) of foreign journalists reporting from "sealed" security zones, stood as the most striking feature of Zanu's security censorship in the early 1980s.⁵ But with the deeper involvement of Zimbabwe in the Mozambican conflict, the guarded silence by the state on a range of political-military information of national interest was to outlive the crisis for which it was first, and most resolutely, imposed.

However, it was Zanu's anxieties about the chances of its own more traditional political consolidation inside the country which prompted the more extensive use of the "national security" stick to police the flow of information through the press. In the early 1980s and particularly during the period of Zanu's campaigning for the implementation of the one-party state, the scope of "national security" issues was extended silently by government to include a whole range of themes and debates which were more clearly of a sensitive nature to Zanu partisans only: for example,

government and ruling party corruption, the breakdown of national planning structures and the renewed, leading role of domestic and foreign capital in the country. More often than not, government silence on such issues or refusal to co-operate with investigative research was the means by which this demarcation of "sensitive" territory took place. For some observers, it was a remarkable reversal from the war-time role played by Zanu in which the party and its military machine regularly relied on its peasant base in the rural areas for all manner of high-security, as well as popular-political, information and opinions. Once in government, Zanu no longer trusted its national constituency with the same sort of information which the party had once demanded from it.⁶

In the absence of strong structures of support for journalists and media (for example, an effective union of journalists, or an association of independent print media), and in the presence of strong disincentives from the state and ruling party to engage such issues (the attacks on The Umtali Post, Herald, and Sunday Mail being indications of the risks faced), the inclusion of more broadly social issues in national security "no-go zones" usually proved an effective form of partisan agenda-setting in the media. At the same time, the successful prosecution of a series of politically-related defamation cases involving the print media only added to journalists' dampened enthusiasm for pursuing what were thought to be issues sensitive to "the chefs".⁷

By the mid 1980s, it was rare to see a critical investigative feature of a political, economic, military or social kind in the public press, which by then had

mostly succumbed to the widely-acknowledged disease of (ruling party) "speech journalism". The partisan attributes of this status quo were most easily discernible in coverage of national political affairs, which by the time of the 1985 elections had descended to the level of regular, uncritical repetitions of Zanu pronouncements (and endorsements of Zanu actions against) the Zapu "bandit opposition" and, less frequently and less vehemently, South African-allied international capitalism. Although there were innumerable instances of partisan-politicised "security" and "national affairs" coverage at Zimpapers in the 1980s, one of the last and most prominent examples of the role of the state in leading such "security" reporting is exemplary.

Five months after the breakdown of the April 1987 unity talks between Mugabe and Nkomo, and a subsequent increase in bandit attacks in Matabeleland, Zanu imposed a blanket ban on Zapu meetings and rallies. In September 1987, the government ordered the closure of Zapu offices in Bulawayo and the handing over of confidential party records. The week following, the Prime Minister's announcement that police examination of the latter had revealed "immense evidence" of Zapu linkages with dissidents culminated in the accusation that Zapu was trying to get through the gun what it could not achieve through the ballot box.

Further restrictions were imposed on Zapu activities.⁸ Invoking Presidential Powers Regulations, all six district councils of Matabeleland North Province were dissolved and their respective councillors -- 104 locally elected officials in total -- dismissed. They were to be replaced by officials appointed by the Minister

responsible.⁹ Soon afterward the sweep against Zapu was to continue with the detention of the party's Member of Parliament for Binga, Francis Mukombwe, and other local party officials.

Disclosing the initial banning action of the state, Minister of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development, Enos Chikowore, was quick to make the connections between alleged party political (Zapu versus Zanu) confrontation, the bandit problem, and the larger aspect of "national interests, peace and progress in development":

Following an investigation into the affairs of councils in Matabeleland North it has been established that councillors of the respective councils were influencing council officials not to co-operate with Government Ministries for political reasons... To ensure that the security situation improves, development programmes continue and national resources are not wasted, or destroyed, the Government has decided that the Presidential Powers be used to dissolve the present councils.¹⁰

Minister Chikowore went on to allege -- unchallenged by the media carrying his statements -- that local councillors had been specifically involved in the collaboration with dissidents. It was a theme adopted and prosecuted with a vengeance by the Minister of Home Affairs, Enos Nkala.¹¹ Nkala was less restrained in his attack and directly labelled Zapu as dissident associates and worse -- an assertion carried by the national dailies and weeklies of Zimpapers, despite the fact that no evidence was produced to that effect, for editors or the general public.¹² Given that less than three months later the "terrorist" Zapu had signed a pact of unity with Zanu setting both on course for their complete integration, it is unlikely that Nkala's widely reproduced claims held any validity.

However, the point is not whether or not the Minister of Home Affairs was describing the bandit situation accurately in his capacity as Minister, but the degree to which the state's use of national security had been used to consolidate the ruling party's own partisan programme as part and parcel of government's dealings with the public mass media. The slavishly partisan, inherently anti-democratic commentary of Zimpapers on national security matters only reflected the extent to which Zanu's political programme had been uncritically internalized by most of the public media;¹³ for example, The Herald's coverage of 2 October 1987, on the dissolution of the elected Matabeleland North district councils:

...chop down a weed and it will grow again unless the roots, too, are destroyed. And if councils and councillors serve as roots nourishing the bandits, then they too must be destroyed... the people have to be shown what they have missed out on and how much more they can expect if they turn their backs, once and for all, on those unscrupulous leaders using them in desperate efforts to promote political ambitions frustrated at the independence ballot.

If Zimpapers' consistently blinkered coverage of banditry and Zapu underscored the obedience of editors and reporters to the political line and ambitions of the ruling party, it also was to symbolise, in the long run, the failure of the state and its media instruments to come to terms with the changing needs and political reality of most Zimbabweans -- and occasionally, their popular, independent media. By 1987 senior media workers pointed to the negative repercussions of Zanu's control of debate through resort to increasingly restrictive and more openly partisan boundaries of national security.

With Zanu there is a paranoia about all range of things falling under terms of 'national interest'. The government does not fully subscribe to the idea that people should have access to a stream of information consistent with a good level of national security. But the result, of course, is that there is no stream of real information at all; and therefore, a tremendous loss of credibility on the part of those restricted media. But there is always the need for fresh, vital information, and that need is fulfilled -- sometimes by gossip; more often by other, less restricted media.¹⁴

Even if public media journalists were not able or willing to collect and publish information on events around the country, there were other readily available sources of information to Zimbabweans which made a mockery of Zanu's attempts to squelch the channelling of undesirable news into the public space. One of these was the array of accessible foreign broadcast media.¹⁵ Another was the Zimbabwean private press.

If the controls and checks on Zimpapers had cowed most Zimbabwean journalists into accepting a prevalent government-inspired silence on critical issues, such acquiescence was not unanimous throughout the private media, especially following the relaxation of inter-party political tensions after the December 1987 Unity Accord. Still, in the early 1980s such exceptions were conspicuous by their rarity. Particularly in the mass circulation press -- not including those publications like Read On and Social Change aimed at specific communities -- there was only a small collection of media which regularly featured critical material left untouched by the public press.¹⁶ They were led by the old campaigner for democratic political rights, Moto, which in the first half of the 1980s distinguished itself by bringing to ordinary Zimbabweans news, debates and popular opinions ignored by the public media.

It was a role which Moto fell into, for the simple reason that it dared venture (albeit very cautiously) into the realm of the unknown: that is, onto the terrain of critique and coverage of issues unfavourable to the government and ruling party. Indeed, it was testimony to the poverty of the new Zimbabwean media, rather than to any special traits of Moto or its small staff, that the monthly magazine stood out as an independent forum at all. Still, the journal soon came to serve as a lightning rod of popular critique, a fact reflected in its diverse array of featured articles and the increasingly vocal participation of the magazine's readership (rendered by expanded access to letters pages).¹⁷

One of the most important aspects of Moto's pioneering work involved what it demonstrated for other media and individuals: that is, non-compliance with the new rules of self-censorship represented an alternate path open to career-minded journalists and editors. Even Moto's path-breaking issue of March 1983, which for the first time in Zimbabwe presented news on the silent war in Matabeleland, left the magazine unscathed.¹⁸ The point, Moto staff member Hugh Lewin argued, was that the limits of the ruling party's tolerance outside of the public media infrastructure had been unknown, and feared as such. As one Moto writer observed in 1987, public print media journalists themselves had in most cases abrogated their professional duties without a fight -- and usually, with only a little prodding.

Some of our national journalists have themselves entered the political arena and are playing political games instead of distancing themselves from it all as required by their profession... Africa is infamous for sham freedom of the press. Ironically in Zimbabwe it is not so much the politicians who want to kill the

freedom of the press but the journalists themselves who seem bent on toeing the political line of the day.¹⁹

Partly because of fear of the unknown consequences, including the falling out of favour with the agents and structures of the ruling party and government; and partly because of the lack of an investigative critical journalist tradition, it had been left up to those media most distanced from the reach of the ruling party to experiment with news production. It was no coincidence that Moto, with its independence stemming from the financial and political support of the Catholic church, and the relative insulation of its expatriate exiled South African editor (unhindered by long-term obligations to Zanu or the state), assumed a leading role in this regard. It was only with the loosening of political tensions in the latter half of the 1980s, and the emergence of new forces (and the consolidation of old ones) in the space of civil society, that other private sector media would develop the same degree of self-confidence in striking out in new, forthrightly critical directions.

The merger of the two leading rival parties in 1987, the eradication of political banditry and the period of political glasnost which followed, coupled with the gradual consolidation of community and occupational structures independently of a ruling party increasingly seen to be under attack and in political disarray, created a new political momentum capable of demanding and extracting democratic concessions from the government and ruling party.

The "democratic awakening" in Zimbabwe in 1988, though it was taken by most -- in hindsight -- to have been the product of Willowgate, was more resolutely the outcome of the activism of a combination of critical, and better-organised, social

forces, including university students, trade unionists, and liberals inside and outside of the ruling party. It was the freeing of the political space in the wake of the Unity Accord which called these dormant social forces into a more active public existence, and which recreated an elaborate network of potentially critical constituencies in civil society. In 1988, as these constituencies launched independent but not unrelated attacks on government corruption, its anti-socialist programme, unemployment, the growing transport crisis and the ruling party's campaign for the one-party state (to name but the most important targets of criticism), there was a palpable, slow unravelling of the Zanu government's popular image and authority; an image which inevitably was partly conveyed in the space of the media.²⁰

For much of the private press -- which was one of the first and foremost benefactors of the post-1987 openness -- the altered political climate did not mark so much the creation of a new terrain of existence, as a partial confirmation of unexercised tenure rights. With the ruling group of the Zanu government in retreat in 1988, if only temporarily, the reclaiming of "traditional" media rights to information access and official comment were claimed by an array of private sector media, of which The Financial Gazette and its straightforward, wounding attack, was representative.

There is a growing unease, right across the spectrum of Zimbabwean society, with our Government's apparent reluctance to respond to a need for communication on major issues. Our top politicians and civil servants seem to be either unaware of, or to be deliberately ignoring, disquiet that is being expressed by individuals, businesses and associations on the application of, or lack of information on, Government policies. Nor does there seem to be any way of persuading the in-

dividuals responsible to participate in a necessary process of exchange of views and information... Major public issues cannot go unaddressed for months at a time. The Government was elected to represent the people, it was not given power as a personal gift, to be exercised without control or the necessity to communicate with the electorate... [there is a need for] information and debate on the real problems that are affecting [all Zimbabwean's] daily life -- whether it is housing, the cost of living, price control, or forex shortages.²¹

It was an attack which would have been unimaginable from most Zimbabwean media even one year earlier and, more importantly, one which would help consolidate the environment necessary for an enhanced political activism in the space of the media. Paradoxically, as it happened, the final push which helped boost that political role was provided by one "errant" section of the public media infrastructure, Zimpapers' Bulawayo-based daily, The Chronicle. The primary vehicle of this new momentum was the Willowgate scandal, unearthed in late 1988 by a team of journalists led by Chronicle editor Geoff Nyarota.

Party Over? Willowgate and its Aftermath

We accept criticism, but democratic principles also dictate that we be fair in our criticism. We certainly cannot in this country permit any slide down the slippery slope that inevitably leads to anarchy and the destruction of the foundations of our social and political order.

Robert Mugabe, 8 December, 1988²²

Willowgate, the name given to the scandal involving the preferential acquisition and illegal reselling of price-controlled vehicles by senior members of the

ruling party and state officials, stands as a bench mark in Zimbabwean politics.²³

Not only was Willowgate the largest political calamity Zanu faced in the 1980s (resulting in the resignation of five powerful Cabinet Ministers); but also, and more importantly, it quickly came to stand a concrete symbol and rallying point of popular disillusionment with Zanu's political programme. In this sense, the scandal was just as much a product of the political times, as of the rather small-scale wrong-doing of a few ruling party officials.²⁴

Without allegations and public demonstrations against corruption in high places, led by university students in September 1988, but also enjoined by Edgar Tekere, liberal politicians, trade unionists and some private media, Willowgate would not have been called into existence -- either as a case of legal wrong-doing or as an established political fact serving as a mooring for a new, critical public discourse.²⁵ As it happened, the facts of the Willowgate car racket confirmed the spirit and the letter of the accusations raised in preceding months, and -- given their "splashed", high-profile presentation in the pages of one of the two national dailies²⁶ -- provided a pole around which accumulated and diverse national grievances of different social groups coalesced. In response, the immediate, panicked questions posed by the ruling party and the MOI were: what mechanism of control failed at Zimpapers, and how is it possible to contain the damage? Both the answers and practical reactions to these queries focused on the special status of The Chronicle as a paper which, under Nyarota's guidance, had grown to become unacceptably independent from the commanding heights of the MMT-Zimpapers partisan hierarchy.

Indeed, the Willowgate revelations were not an isolated affair for the Chronicle, as the paper had regularly taken an independent stance on political investigative stories.²⁷ Conflicts with officialdom were frequent and intense. In one example just prior to the uncovering of the Willowgate story, the paper had a heated confrontation with the state and party leadership over an incident in November 1988, in which a Chronicle reporter and his driver had been manhandled by the Zanu-appointed Provincial Governor of Matabeleland North, Mark Dube. Despite protests from the newspaper, Zimpapers, the MMT, ZUJ and Zimbabwe Writers' Union to the President, the latter insisted in casting doubt on "innocence" of journalists investigating political stories. In a direct refutation of President Mugabe's proclaimed ambivalence on the issue, Nyarota used the front page of his paper to reiterate the details of the incident and advise the head of state that certain of his advisers were engaged in misinformation. In the same edition, a direct attack was launched on a ZBC-TV reporter, who was accused of propagating the lies of unnamed senior party members.²⁸

This and previous incidents involving disagreements with the ruling party leadership and state officials, had prompted regular counter-attacks on the paper and especially its editor -- and added to The Chronicle's growing popularity in Harare and other centres, where it had not been widely-read since independence. By 1988 there were rumours in the journalist community that the government and ruling party were applying intense pressure within Zimpapers, and through the MMT, for Nyarota to moderate the tone of his journal.

With Willowgate, such threats were to mount in frequency and volume, and lead to direct action by the state and MMT against the paper and its editorial staff. By these means, importantly, the ramifications of Willowgate were greatly compounded, as the scandal took on the guise of a broader crisis of confidence in the government, and ushered in a period of profound, persistent and widespread national debate on the question of press freedom, the MMT media and, more generally, the democratic process in Zimbabwe.²⁹

The first of such actions by Zanu involved the Minister of Defence, Enos Nkala, one of the those implicated in the affair and eventually forced to resign as a result. The day after The Chronicle broke the Willowgate story with a photograph of Nkala under the headline "Cars Racket", Nkala privately summoned Nyarota to Harare and threatened to send the army down to Bulawayo to "fetch him" if he resisted the idea. Nyarota's response was to publish Nkala's threats in The Chronicle.³⁰ Meanwhile, Nkala attacked Nyarota on television, asking rhetorically, "Who is this little Nyarota?", and warning of a defamation suit against the paper.³¹

But other, more concerted moves against the Bulawayo paper were being made at the same time, both in the open and behind closed doors. In the first case, Minister of Information Mangwende, visibly panicked by the MOI's sudden loss of monopoly control over the agenda of political reporting, threatened that "investigative reporting" had been taken too far, and that the MMT, no longer able to safeguard the national interest by supervising its media charges, would be scrutinised closely by government with a view to changing its structures and modus operandi.³² In the second instance,

Mangwende's public statements were matched in kind by the hidden actions of Zanu leaders, some of which were to come to light during the deliberations of the Sandura Commission, the state panel set up by Mugabe in January 1989 to investigate Willowgate wrong-doings. Called before the Commission, Nyarota revealed the degree of pressure exerted on editors via the MMT, after the breaking of the story.

Some people came to warn us personally that this (investigative journalism and exposure) was no longer safe for us and in fact in due course, the chairman of the Mass Media Trust summoned me to Harare and indicated that reaction was very strong at this point from certain Government Ministers. He told me he had called me for my own safety, that he understood there were instructions that I should be dismissed from work and subsequently arrested. He called me to Harare so that I could be safe here (in Harare). I did confirm that Callistus Ndlovu, who, while the Minister of Information had been away had been appointed acting Minister, had issued instructions to the Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust that I should be dismissed immediately, which move the Trust resisted.³³

In March-April, the confirmation by the Sandura Commission of Ministerial corruption which had been alleged in a general way by students and others throughout 1988, and specified -- and proven -- by Nyarota's paper in December, led to the resignation of five Ministers and eventually, several other Zanu officials and public servants. In its published findings, the Commission underlined its thanks to Nyarota and his team for the "initial investigation of this matter" and vital information rendered.³⁴

However it was too late for such praise: Nyarota already had been removed from The Chronicle in a forced "promotion" into the newly-created position of Group Public Relations Officer, an action secretly commanded by the MOI through Rusike,

and publicly condoned by President Mugabe, who claimed the move was a simple matter of normal managerial advancement.³⁵ Shortly thereafter, the editorial roster at The Chronicle was completely disassembled in a series of appointments and "promotions" by Zimpapers' head office.³⁶ Once again notice was given that no independent-minded journalist -- no matter how influential in the public sphere -- was beyond the "internal" corrective mechanisms wielded by senior management in the national newspaper chain.

However, the political environment of Zimbabwe had changed to the extent that such heavy-handed closure of debate on national issues no longer could be imposed unproblematically. After the government and ruling party harassment of students, trade unionists, "opposition" politicians and others on the question of their criticisms of the administration, and the steady consolidation of these groups and organisations following the Unity Accord, there existed new, nascent poles of political discourse embedded in new social constituencies in civil society. For these communities, Willowgate was a "social fact" with political and legal implications which have remained the focus of news and public debate.

Moreover, Zanu's panicked efforts to clamp down on the media only compounded the political damage. Willowgate's "spin-off scandal" -- involving the clumsy attempts, accepted by the President himself, to cover-up the debacle by removing from public view its commentators -- provoked renewed attacks on the ruling party and state. In this regard, a long-running debate in Parliament, led by liberal Zanu(PF) members (notably, Byron Hove and Obert Mpofu), was picked up

by and amplified in the private media. One Financial Gazette editorial was representative of the new combative stance taken by the independent press on its own behalf.

It is a tragedy for Zimbabwe, and Zimbabwe Newspapers, that an editor who fulfilled his professional duty has fallen foul of those whose conceptions of professionalism and duty are of a lower order. Mr. Geoffrey Nyarota can, however, hold his head up high, while lesser men, some of whom have been caught up in contemptible misuse of authority and sordid corruption, do not now have either a reputation to lose or a character to be impugned... The government has made a colossal blunder, jeopardising the greater reputation Zimbabwe has for press freedom for the lesser advantage of a cover-up for certain sensitive reputations.³⁷

By constant reminder, spiced with a degree of hero-making with regard to Nyarota, the private media sustained discussion of the media clampdown following Willowgate, as a subject of popular debate into the 1990s. By these means, the terrain of the press was resolutely confirmed as a component of the national political terrain, an object of political struggle and, inevitably, as a durable subject of political debate and inquiry.³⁸

Significantly, both dynamics -- the government's involvement in and denial of corruption allegations made in the media, and the persecution of those media when it became clear their claims were well-founded -- contributed enormously to the view that Zanu's besieged leadership was arrogant, hostile to justified criticism and, above all, guilty of serious misconduct. As it happened, similar conclusions were reached and publicised by the Sandura Commission. Under the political cover of the Commission's legal proceedings, and claiming the rights to investigative and critical

reporting adopted by the fired Nyarota, the private press was to persevere with its critical reportage, armed with further incriminating evidence against government leaders revealed by Sandura. This reportage was to take an increasingly hard edge in the wake of tensions fanned by the formation of Zup, 1989's hotly contested post-Sandura by-elections, student and trade union unrest (and detentions), and finally, the general elections of March 1990. The impact of this new flow of information and commentary had already been acknowledged by senior Zanu leaders in early 1989, including Mugabe:

We must now admit that we are reaping the bitter fruits of our unwholesome and negative behaviour. Our image as leaders of the Party and Government has never been so badly tarnished. Our people are crying for our blood and they certainly are entitled to do so after watching our actions and conduct over the nine years of our Government.³⁹

But in the face of later actions which belied the President's apparently contrite demeanour -- including, notably, Mugabe's glib pardoning of the first of the twelve officials initially charged with offences after the conclusion of Sandura (and the Attorney-General's exasperated dropping of all other charges, as a result) -- such mea culpas did little to alleviate the accumulation of political frustrations outside of the ruling party. As the 1989 by-elections and 1990 general elections both demonstrated by their dramatically reduced voter turnout, the Willowgate affair had left most Zimbabweans profoundly disillusioned with the politics of the ruling party. It was a disillusionment exacerbated by the private media's opening of a series of debates, particularly after the "fall" of Zanu-allied parties in Eastern Europe, on the question of Zanu's socialist path (reaffirmed, but not without difficulty, at the united Zanu's

December 1989 Congress), its commitment to the one-party state and, relatedly, its insistence on the viability of internal party structures of participatory democracy.⁴⁰

Meanwhile, the private media's sympathetic coverage of an emerging civic opposition to Zanu's leadership, and suppression of that opposition (for example, the October 1989 closure of the university, and detention of students, the ZCTU's Tsvangirai and Harare Zim officials), helped carve out a privileged place for mass circulation media like Parade, Moto and The Financial Gazette, in the popular consciousness of civil society. But if this augmented stature and social role of the private press -- which, importantly, government had been forced to concede in the wake of the Sandura proceedings and post-Willowgate debates -- afforded these media greater leeway to pursue sensitive issues, the winning of this "space" represented a positive, but not unequivocal, "gain" for the private media at the expense of the state and ruling party. As one editor observed in 1991,

Willowgate has had an ambiguous impact on the national media. On the one hand, it really demoralised journalists -- The Chronicle team under Nyarota did great work in the face of bad odds, and undertook its task with considerable courage, only to be victimised and silenced for its success. The real culprits got away with it, pardoned or not charged with the offences they committed; while Nyarota and his colleagues were shipped off to dead-end jobs, kept under watchful eyes, as punishment. On the other hand, Willowgate demonstrated that there is a space for a free Press here... Overall, I think Willowgate contributed a lot to the defensiveness of the government in its relations with the national press. Paradoxically, it also contributed to the growth of serious, responsible journalism in this country, since reporters and editors have been forced to be rigorous in the accuracy of their news coverage. This in fact represents a very healthy step forward for the local media.⁴¹

If Willowgate represented a temporary lapse in the influence of the ruling party in the media, it is clear that Zanu gradually emerged to fight back, by ensuring that, in the future, control over information would be exercised even more directly by the true core of political power in the public media: the ruling party and its government. But by then the damage had already been done. Not only had the private media established a leading civic role and space for manoeuvre as a locale of information production (a task undertaken individually and collectively, and in tandem with sympathetic constituents in civil society), but it had also become evident that there were alternative sources of news and views about national politics, beyond the state and ruling party.

Conclusion

The growth and consolidation of civil society, alongside the disgrace of (and popular disillusionment with) Zanu -- which would only deepen, after the party abruptly changed tack and officially adopted an avowedly anti-popular SAP in 1990 -- intimated the birth of a new information regime beyond the direct control of the state. In this regard, the 1980s saw the emergence of new locales and sources of critical opinion and debate, and increased demand for media which included such items in their coverage. While Willowgate and its aftermath did not lead to the disintegration of the ruling party, it did confirm and symbolize, once and for all in the popular

imagination, that the party was not invincible and that Zanu enjoyed no natural, unchallengeable claim to the mantle of Zimbabwe's pre-eminent political, social and moral authority. A vital element in this process was the demolition of Zanu's long-standing pretensions to leadership on the basis of its unique commitment to "scientific socialism", in speech if not in deed. As one Zanu sympathizer observed,

The ruling party seemed to have overlooked the need to combat the bourgeois ideology in its rank and file and consequently drifted itself into stormy waters. The party regrettably set itself on the path to a revolutionary tragedy, whose climax was the setting up of the Sandura Commission of Inquiry... The people inevitably grew discontented with the leadership's lack of allegiance to our socialist agenda and this justifies the assumption that the setting up of the commission was more of a concession to public opinion.⁴²

The important point made here is the one concerning the change in the public image of Zanu's patented socialist heritage and "popular" political programme. Like other mobilising "nodal points" of popular political coalescence which the ruling party created for itself in the early 1980s -- for example, the promise of huge land resettlement schemes, substantial and sustained rural development, vastly expanded social welfare schemes, and popular-participatory democracy, based in national unity and cemented through the one-party state -- Zanu's "scientific socialism" emerged as a fragile hegemonic principle of uncertain political utility by the end of the decade. While Zanu maintained a rhetorical commitment to a socialist agenda, its practical departure from any such programme, in combination with the consolidation in civil society of a constituency with a vested interest in a popular administrative itinerary, only rendered the party increasingly vulnerable to attack by critics armed with the

party's own political precepts. It was a dynamic repeated across a broad range of issues, particularly as real economic growth slumped, and especially over the politics of land resettlement and employment generation. As the above commentator concluded, Zanu's popular standing had declined to the extent that the party was forced to redress the tide of public hostility unleashed by its unwitting liberalisation of the national political space after December 1987.

In order to save the nation from further embarrassment, Zanu(PF) as a matter of urgency needs to redefine its position and strategies with regard to our socialist agenda... A thorough clean-up of the ruling party household is a matter of urgency. We will be wiser after the event and after all the road to hell is paved with good intentions. If it started off with glasnost, is it not logical that it should end with perestroika?⁴³

In the event, Zanu changed its rhetorical politics to match its administrative programme -- and not vice versa. The pardoning of the convicted Willowgate criminal, former Minister of Labour Frederick Shava, and the dropping of charges against the other Willowgate-related accused; the introduction of "trade liberalisation" and later, SAP; the long-standing freeze on substantial resettlement land purchases (and the private acquisition and accumulation of former commercial farms by senior Zanu and government officials); and the virtual abandonment of socialism as an orienting policy of the ruling party and government; all marked Zanu's turning of its back on its popular programme of the early 1980s. It was this "new order" to which the post-Willowgate, discredited Zimpapers newspapers slavishly switched their allegiance overnight. But was the image which they mirrored, recognised and believed by most of their readership?

For reasons related to the differentiated experiences of the public and private press, the answer must be an emphatic "no". In the first instance, Zanu's continuation of the RF's manipulative, censoring use of "national security", its intimidation of public press journalists and its open undermining of the MMT's political integrity, restricted the manoeuvrability of the public press and, therefore, torpedoed its popular legitimacy. In the second, the relatively unscathed private media, for the most part unbridled by any dogmatic commitment to the ruling party's political line, and comparatively unrestrained in their handling of national news and debates, were increasingly well-placed to present a more accurate, comprehensive, popularly-accepted interpretation of national life. Part of that portrayal -- and one contributing reason for the private media's heightened popular legitimacy -- involved a more open, critical, and ultimately deconstructive, assessment of the ruling party's political performance since independence.

Yet this struggle waged by diverse elements in the private press for the maintenance and expansion of civil participation in the running of the country had its limitations. Despite Willowgate and other examples of Zanu's flagrant abuse of state privileges (particularly the partisan use of state security agencies), the party was re-elected to power with an overwhelming majority in the March 1990 national elections. Although voter apathy was the main distinguishing feature in comparison with the national elections of 1980 and 1985, and Zanu's share of the urban vote was significantly undercut by Zum, the party nevertheless demonstrated a unique ability to mobilise much of its rural grassroots.⁴⁴ However, the question for the future was:

would the rural community of different social fractions, too, develop the same popular political antagonisms to the Zanu leadership as seen in the urban areas -- particularly in the wake of the government's new anti-popular, urban industrial-oriented development programme? More importantly, if it did, what would be the broader consequences for the ruling group's economic, political, social and intellectual leadership organised throughout the 1980s by the Zanu government?

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1. N. Shamuyarira, "Press Must Not Be Colonial", International Press Seminar on Press Responsibility, (Salisbury: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 15-18 December, 1981).
2. Cited in, "Nyarota: Politics, Press & 'Chefs'", Prize Africa, vol.17, no.4 (April 1989), pp. 8-13.
3. See Chapter 5 and Chapter 6.
4. "A New Press, the Old Story", Moto, no.13 (June 1983), p. 6. See similar observations in, Committee to Protect Journalists, Zimbabwe and South Africa..., op. cit.
5. See, "The press in Zimbabwe. Trying to find a new voice", Moto, no. 23 (May 1984), pp. 7-8. For an account of the restrictions imposed by the government on foreign media in Zimbabwe during the Matabeleland conflict, see for example, "Harare threat to censor press", The Guardian (UK), 06.08.1983, "Mugabe curbs press freedom", The Times (UK), 06.08.1983, "Journalists to protest at African states' ban", The Daily Telegraph (UK), 02.08.1983; and the oblique reference to the ban on local reporting of bandit incidents, in "Ban on security news", Herald, 06.08.1983.
6. Tim Matthews, Interview, op. cit. Matthews argued that following the achievement of independence, Zanu's paranoia -- which the party justified by a thinly-veiled contempt for the "uneducated masses" and their "diminished" ability to "absorb responsibly" sensitive information -- led to the dissolution of popular channels of communication between the ruling party and its supporters. This view was shared by many media observers and, as will be seen below, rose to become a point of political debate in the late 1980s.
7. The most important of these cases involved Zimpapers. In two 1981 editorials The Herald defamed the already out-of-favour Edgar Tekere. A later libel case launched by Solomon Tawenga, Harare Mayor, businessman, Member of Parliament and Zanu stalwart, against The Sunday Mail was settled in the plaintiff's favour (including a cash settlement, retraction by Zimpapers and dismissal of the journalist who wrote the story). In 1986 Minister Eddison Zvobgo won a separate libel claim against Zimpapers and Kingston's Bookshops. The result was that editors regularly rejected investigative features on issues ranging from transnational corporation profit repatriation swindles, to property acquisitions of ranking government officials, for fear of lawsuits. Most saw the Tawenga case as being the most significant in this regard.

8. See for example, "ZAPU has links with dissidents --PM", Chronicle, 01.10.1987.

9. "Councils in Mat North Dissolved", Chronicle, 01.10.1987.

10. Chronicle, 01.10.1987.

11. Nkala, the leading Ndebele member of Zanu, was known for his vociferous antagonism towards Zapu in general, and Nkomo in particular.

12. See Nkala in "Zapu MP Arrested", Chronicle, 13.10.1987:

We are still pursuing a number of dissident-oriented ZAPU members, and this includes everybody, even if it means taking in the big guys. Nkomo has to remember that the chapter of not treating him as a dissident has been closed... We know that ZAPU is at the centre of the dissident issue and they have been using Bulawayo as a recruiting base. They seem to think that there is a state-within-a-state and a prime minister in Matabeleland in the name of Nkomo, but mark my words, we will dress him down.

Elsewhere, Minister Nkala had likened Zapu to Renamo -- again without proffering any accompanying documentation -- and hinted that if necessary the two could be dealt with in the same decisive fashion. At the time of the statement, in October 1987, Renamo's bloody incursions into Zimbabwe were still very much in the Zimbabwean public consciousness, a fact which made Nkala's remarks all the more striking and extreme.

13. Albeit, at a time when differing opinions would have earned their authors some form of censure or harsher punishment.

14. Tim Matthews, Interview, op. cit.

15. There are numerous examples which illustrate the forcing of the state and national media's hand on questions of security coverage. Aside from the whole episode of Matabeleland banditry, one can take note of the frequent BBC and South African Broadcasting Corporation reports on Renamo banditry on the eastern border (1987-1988), corruption complaints from individuals like Tekere (1987-1988), political scandals within the ruling party (for example, the demotion of Ministers Zvobgo, Ushewokunze and others in 1987, and Deputy Minister Shuvai Mahofa's assault court case and resignation in 1988), and other miscellaneous events, such as the armed detention of British Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock in 1988.

16. It can be argued, in any case, that Read On and other left-leaning publications tended, at that time, to pitch their critiques at a more theoretical, rhetorical level, when dealing with the performance of Zanu in government.

17. See Appendix P.

18. Although the March 1983 issue was discussed in cabinet, with some Ministers calling for its banning, the article held in contention was not the series of stories on Matabeleland, but rather a profile of the recently charged Zapu treason trialists. The lead story in that edition, moreover, concerned the drought and its impact nationwide. (Interview with Hugh Lewin, Harare, 4 September, 1991).

19. M.K. Mucharangwa, "Which way gentlemen of the press?", Moto, no. 60 (November 1987), pp. 16-17.

20. The period from the signing of the Unity Accord to the eruption of Willowgate is an interesting one historically, for the explosion of critical social commentary and debate which characterised its day-to-day politics. Unfortunately no adequately detailed analysis of this period has yet been published. In its absence, a useful synopsis of the main political events of 1988-1989 is found in Welshman Ncube, "The post-unity period: developments, benefits and problems", in Canaan Banana, ed., Turmoil and Tenacity: Zimbabwe, 1890-1990 (Harare: The College Press, 1989), pp. 305-330.

21. "Govt silence on major issues is disturbing" (Comment), Financial Gazette 25.11.1988.

22. Cited in, "Mugabe hits at critics", Chronicle, 08.12.1988. Ironically, this statement was published two days before the same newspaper broke the Willowgate story.

23. A useful summary of the events at The Chronicle relating to Willowgate is found in Richard Carver, "Freedom of the Press", Africa Watch Report: Zimbabwe (USA: The Africa Watch Committee, 1989), pp. 50-57. The nickname "Willowgate" derives from the assembly plant, Willowvale Motor Industries, at which the cars in question - - Toyota Cressidas and Mazda pick-up trucks -- were assembled.

24. The profits derived from the illegal car sales, in most cases, did not exceed some few tens of thousands of Zimbabwe dollars. (At the time, the Zimbabwe dollar was equivalent to approximately \$US 0.50).

25. It is now widely-acknowledged that the vociferous denials of corruption allegations by the Zanu leadership -- denials which included President Mugabe's personal challenge to university students and other detractors to produce evidence of wrong-doing -- stood as crucial catalysts in the unfolding of the scandal. Taunted to come forward with "the facts", anonymous workers at an auto-assembly plant where Ministers and other Zanu officials were abusing privileges silently did just that. By November 1988, incriminating documents indicating the irregular distribution of highly-prized vehicles to political officials, and their rapid resale to named third parties, were in the hands of The Chronicle's senior editorial staff.

26. Not until legal proceedings were begun did The Herald even acknowledge the existence of any wrong-doing, with word put out by editor Tommy Sithole that Willowgate was the product of colleague Geoff Nyarota's fertile imagination.

27. For an unsystematic yet insightful comparison of the editorial tones of The Chronicle, Herald and Sunday Mail, see "Shhh -- it's top secret!", Moto, no.56 (June 1987), p. 6. The writer noted that the Bulawayo paper had much looser ties to the state and ruling party hierarchy, and as a less significant paper nationally (and with a home base shared with the former opposition of Zapu), more leeway in criticising the Zanu status quo. The result was readily visible in its pages:

[The Chronicle] seems so unruffled about possible official reprisals over the publishing of certain stories... Some of The Chronicle's headlines would border near subversion if they appeared in The Herald. Can The Herald carry headlines such as "Nkomo slams Nkala", or "Nkala threat to Zapu?".

28. Dube was taken to court over the matter, long after the media had (on the insistence of the MOI) called off its boycott of him. In September 1989 a Bulawayo court found Dube guilty of assaulting reporter Gibbs Dube and driver Phillip Maseko, and fined him \$150. However, Dube was to remain in his post with the tacit approval of the party leadership, and despite separate allegations about his abuse of price control regulations on the resale of a car also failed to dislodge him.

See "Don't be over zealous, reporters advised", Herald, 30.11.1988; "Claim on newscrew refuted", Chronicle, 01.12.1988; "Writers' union up in arms", Chronicle, 01.12.1988; "Writers' union up in arms", Chronicle, 01.12.1988.

29. These related debates contributed to the 1990 abandonment of the State of Emergency and Zanu's one-party state ambitions; and continues to feature prominently in the pages of the national press at time of writing.

30. See The Chronicle, 14-16 December, 1988.

31. ZBC-TV "Main News", 19:45 hrs, 15 December 1988.

32. See Hansard, 2-23 February, 1989.

33. Sandura Commission proceedings, cited in Tinos Guvi, "Nyarota: Politics, Press & 'Chefs'", Prize Africa, vol.17, no.4 (April 1989), pp. 8-13.

34. Zimbabwe, Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Distribution of Motor Vehicles [Sandura Commission-Part One] (Harare: GPO, March 1989), p. 7.

35. At the initiation of the company's Chief Executive, a new post of Group Public Relations Officer was created, and Nyarota was "promoted" into it, complete with pay raise (if little work). The MMT, particularly its Board of Trustees, had little choice

but to concur with a decision. According to Rusike, the removal of Nyarota was ordered by the MOI, and executed by Rusike in tandem with Dr. Sadza, who presented the matter to his fellow Trustees as a fait accompli. Nyarota stayed in the post for one year, before moving to The Financial Gazette as editor, under Modus Publication's new CEO -- Elias Rusike.

36. Nyarota's assistant editor who had been responsible for much of the Willowgate story, Davison Maruziva, was similarly transferred to Harare to be put under the watchful eye of The Herald's Tommy Sithole. The new editor of The Chronicle, Stephen Mpofu, had been Muradzikwa's successor at The Sunday Mail. Mpofu's replacement at the Mail was veteran journalist and Zanu stalwart, Charles Chikerema. See "New Chronicle editor named", Chronicle, 23.03.1989.

37. "Nyarota affair a major blunder by government", Financial Gazette, 10.02.1989. See also, Tinos Guvi, op. cit., "Parliament defends editor and access to information", Parade (March 1989), pp. 41, 43; "The Sandura Inquiry, Report praises editor for exposing racket", Parade (June 1989), pp. 7, 10, 14; "What will the President do?", Moto, no.73 (February 1989), p. 1; "Why we all need a 'free' press", Moto, no.13 (June 1983), p. 1.

38. For an implicit recognition of this argument by one of Zanu's leading apologists on media politics and policy, see Bornwell Chakaodza, "Sandura Commission: beyond chapter two", Sunday Mail, 28.05.1989. A more lucid account of the political significance of Sandura, particularly with regard to the confusion within and lack of political credibility of the ruling party, as well as to the need for restructuring the party's politics, is found in, "The climax is a revolution in crisis", Sunday Mail, 23.07.1989.

39. Robert Mugabe, cited in Ncube, op. cit., p. 313.

40. See various issues of Moto and Parade dealing with the "manipulated" 1989 by-elections, the calamitous Youth and Women's League Congresses, Zanu's December 1989 Congress "behind closed doors", the rigging and abuse of Zanu's 1990 primary elections, and cases of harassment, intimidation and other irregularities during the 1990 general election campaign. See also, the intriguing series of op-ed articles in The Financial Gazette in early 1990, focused on the one-party state debate.

41. Moyse, Interview, 4 December 1990.

42. "The climax is a revolution in crisis", Sunday Mail, 23.07.1989.

43. Sunday Mail, 23.07.1989, op. cit.

44. The rural sector's particular vulnerability to government manipulation stemmed from urgent needs for long and short term development assistance -- from bridge and

borehole-building to drought relief -- and from the lingering organised presence of the ruling party in the rural areas dating from the liberation war, and maintained primarily through the bureaucratic structures of the Women's and Youth Leagues. At the same time, the role of clientelist ethnic and regional rivalries, and their manipulation by the political leadership, should also be taken into account to explain Zanu's electoral successes in much of rural Zimbabwe.

Conclusion

The distinction between organic "movements" and facts and "conjunctural" or occasional ones must be applied to all types of situation; not only to those in which a regressive development or an acute crisis takes place, but also to those in which there is a progressive development or one towards prosperity, or in which the productive forces are stagnant. The dialectical nexus between the two categories of movement, and therefore of research, is hard to establish precisely. Moreover, if error is serious in historiography, it becomes still more serious in the art of politics, when it is not the reconstruction of past history but the construction of present and future history which is at stake.

Antonio Gramsci, The Modern Prince

Zanu's first decade in power was characterised by a series of political challenges which threatened to undermine the fragile foundations of "consensus" the party had erected in the early days of independence. These challenges were broadly structured by the internal dynamics of a rapidly changing social formation, in which "historic blocs" of socio-economic groups and formally constituted organizations emerged, following the relative relaxation of controls over civil society imposed by the former RF state. The unleashing of such social forces -- from unionised workers and collective co-operators, to radical intellectuals, reinvigorated white national capital and "emergent African entrepreneurs" -- was a process which ran historically parallel to the ruling party's own unfolding political programme, that of consolidating and cementing its de jure and de facto political power as the unique arbiter of the national political agenda within and outside of the state.

Inevitably, and increasingly throughout the 1980s, these two antithetical dynamics clashed. Evidence of friction is seen most clearly in the episodic eruption of discrete, diverse political struggles, all of them waged around the present and future role of the state, ruling party and "activist" civil society in the shaping of the new social formation. This study has argued that the Zimbabwean media -- public and private -- served as one "nodal point" of such contention, in two important ways: first, as an object of struggle between the ruling party and state, on the one hand, and a variety of social interests on the other; and secondly, as a terrain of broader political contestation, on which programmes of political mediation from above, and activism from below, have been played out.

In both of these respects -- that is, the media taken as object and interlocutor of social struggles -- the aim has been to demonstrate the intimate connection between sweeping political-economic developments in the space of the social formation, and the trajectory of political contestation within and about the press. In this way, the patchwork of empirical "conjunctural" moments cited in the press' development in the 1980s have been considered in terms of their deeper, "organic" origins and implications. Thus, the Mass Media Trust represents not just an experiment in bureaucratic-nationalist media management (as more traditional perspectives would have it in Zimbabwe), but more profoundly, a flawed, tension-riddled exercise in ruling group penetration of the civic-political space. Similarly, the hesitant, conservative expansion of the public press symbolizes and consolidates not just an urban or elitist model of media development, but an anti-popular political programme

carrying its own distinct, broadly political repercussions (for example, popular delegitimation of the public media, and the transferral of media loyalty to other, independent, private publications).

From this perspective, the development of the Zimbabwean media is taken to be part and parcel of the historic, accelerating fragmentation and reformation of power structures in state and civil society in the 1980s; with the state's media policy and practices being just as much limited in their political impact by the terrain of the social formation, as participant in the latter's complex unfolding.

But is this to say that the governing party's programme of hegemonic infiltration of the media and Zimbabwean civil society was irrevocably "defeated", for once and all time, by the end of the decade -- as many came to claim in the aftermath of the Willowgate affair? Or is it the case that new forms of dealing with the changing terrain of the media and civil society were (and are being) devised, more or less consciously, by the state under the guidance of the ruling party -- just as new nodal points of contention have emerged incessantly from the living fabric of daily political life? Furthermore, should it be argued that every movement on the terrain of the Zimbabwean media has a necessary, unambiguous implication (either as cause, or effect) for the wider platform of national political struggle?

In all of these instances, the Gramscian conception of hegemony provides substantial and useful insights. With Gramsci, it is clear that there are no irreversible political "defeats" on the ground of political struggles, particularly when the social bloc concerned is the single largest, best-organised, formally political entity in both

the state and civil society -- as was Zanu in the 1980s. Although an historic bloc of forces may suffer setbacks, for example political scandals like Willowgate, this is not to say that these entirely undermine the deeply-rooted structures of political alignment in the social formation. (Indeed, Zanu did triumph, after all, in the 1990 national elections.) Nor is it to argue that new forms of hegemonic mobilisation are not possible, on the part of the ruling (but no longer leading) group.

On the other hand, the ever-present potential for new nodes of dispute between the ruling group and the ruled constituencies in civil society throws up the possibility of a constantly evolving, historically new set of challenges to the political status quo, particularly in the context of a fragile national political economy. Moreover, the provisional nature of strategic compromises and alliances among groups in the social formation insinuates the pervasive unpredictability of such challenges, as well as of their outcomes in any given conjuncture.

Seen in light of such considerations, the developments within the Zimbabwean "controlled" and "free" press in the 1980s, and their political roots and implications, appear less hard-edged than at first glance. If the Unity Accord of 1987 marked a watershed in the struggle to create a more open political terrain in the media and elsewhere -- a reality reflected barely one year later in the unfolding Willowgate scandal -- it also stood as the beginning of a new period of unpredictable, oscillating political struggles. At the level of the political, Zanu's rapid rhetorical shift of its programme won the party a certain advantage in the battle to define the contours of the new society. Where previously the party had been besieged in debates concerning

the practicality and sincerity of its commitment to "scientific socialism", after its launch of SAP, it enjoyed a tactical advantage in battles to mould the features and implementation of SAP, free collective wage bargaining, and even, multi-partyism.

Yet, the advantages won here seem set to create new problems in the future: namely, the repressive political economy associated with -- and necessary for -- the implementation of SAP will likely clash directly with the Zanu government's promises of political liberalisation and greater freedom of speech and criticism. If Zanu is held to its promise of political tolerance by the inevitable pressures imposed by western donors and financial institutions, it would appear that the media (perhaps eventually including the public sector press) might be able to widen further the terrain and scope of their social and political activities. For many private media, such hopes are dependent on not only the political goodwill, but also on the financial support, of expatriate donor organisations. While these organisations may exert indirect direct and indirect pressure on the government in the future to permit continued, perhaps increased funding of the Zimbabwean media "civics", they also have their own political agendas which serve as boundaries for local media activism, and expansion. In this regard, SAP appears, in its initial stages of implementation, as a double-edged sword in the hands of the government and civil groups alike.

As Gramsci notes, major conjunctural "setbacks" are often survivable, if not "winnable" in the end. In the case of the media, while the period 1988-1989 at first seemed to indicate a tumultuous defeat of Zanu's plans to invade the public space of the media, it ultimately marked the beginning of new means of dealing with critical

media and their proponents. Though Willowgate symbolised the power and potential of elements even of the public press, it also demonstrated the firm, unabashed grip of the government and ruling party over the latter, and the resiliency of the ruling group in the face of organised opposition. While the impact of the scandal within the media itself carried into the 1990s, Zanu experimented with new forms of manipulation.

In the former case, the budding "democratic activism" within sections of the public media, led by a revitalised national union of journalists which called for the constitutional protection of journalists' freedom of speech in their professional capacity, has been one new, potentially powerful form of challenge to Zanu's media status quo. Mounting demands from within the media, published frequently in the private press, have been another.

Such challenges have prompted what appears in its early stages to be a new policy by Zanu: one of containment of a critical opposition by benign acknowledgement of its criticisms. To this end, the Trust and Zimpapers participated in a critical, privately organised media "round table" in March 1991, which called for the elimination of self-censorship in the public media and the building of new supervisory media structures outside the Trust and beyond the reach of government and state. On this occasion, the MOI encouraged the initiative, and reasserted its commitment to the "free and responsible" national press. Meanwhile, Zanu's political policeman at Zimpapers, the chain's editor-in-chief Tommy Sithole, remained in place, along with many other partisan editors, senior journalists and managers sprinkled throughout the MMT infrastructure.

If the gains of the voices of "democratic opposition" have been mediated in this way by the state, recent developments within some of the more important private media have called into question their continued role as independent arbiters of popular public opinion. In 1991 the proprietors of both Parade and The Financial Gazette, Thomson Publications and Modus Publications respectively, fired their independent, critically minded editors (Andrew Moyse, and Geoff Nyarota). In both cases, the owners were at pains to assert publicly that the decisions were the outcome of management disputes, not political pressures from Zanu to remove embarrassing "opposition" journalists from the leading journals of the private press. While some disagreed with these attestations of political neutrality, the important point is not only what motivated these moves against two influential and widely-read editors, but what the impact of the dismissals was in terms of the politics-press nexus.

In this regard the maintenance of autonomy within the private press was demonstrated as being more complex and vulnerable than had first appeared at the end of the 1980s. If much of the political integrity of the private press was found to be beyond the reach of the ruling party and state, it was still accessible to the owners of the media themselves -- some of whom went about doing the "dirty work" of the ruling group, wittingly or not. While it is too soon to gauge the lasting impact of these editorial dismissals within the journalist corps, it is not too soon to note that the such actions were a critical blow to the quality and popular appeal of an important component of the national press, particularly in the case of Parade, the country's widest read publication.

What do these developments at the beginning of the 1990s mean for the political struggles within and outside of the Zimbabwean media in the 1980s? Rather than negate the heightened importance of the media as an object and subject of popular political contention, as some would no doubt have it, what they indicate above all is the complex, deeply politicised nature of the national press; and the latter's importance in the eyes of both the ruling group, and the emergent "popular democratic" forces alike. Ultimately, the "success" of any group which "wins leadership" within this realm is therefore bound to be limited by conjuncture, as all "leading" historical blocs will inevitably be subjected to contestation and contradiction, thrown up by the broader terrain of the tensions in the Zimbabwean state and civil society. The dismissal of journalists and the emasculation of journals might in some way mark the end of one political moment, but it also signals the beginning of new forms of contestation, and raises new challenges to those who aim to consolidate their social leadership.

What is of more importance is the recognition of the spreading roots of the public and private media in the fertile, politically-charged, shifting soils of the Zimbabwean social formation. In the long interregnum between the collapse of the old and the consolidation and blossoming of the new, it is this ground which provided, and continues to provide, the sustenance, momentum and meaning to the Zimbabwean press and its deepening engagement of political struggle.

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- "BBC Advisers for ZBC", No.640/80/SFS, 17 October, 1980.
- "National News Agency to be Formed", No.671/80/GD, 28 October, 1980.
- "Minister Announces Press Takeover", No.6/81/IM, 5 January, 1981.
- "Information Spokesman Responds to Mr. Nkomo", No.10/81/JN, 6 January, 1981.
- "Mass Media Trust", No 72/81/SFS, 30 January, 1981.
- "PM Opens Zimbabwe News Agency", No.486/81/RH, 1 July, 1981.
- "Minister of Information Addresses Journalists", No.502/81/RH, 4 July, 1981.
- "Minister of Manpower Opens Institute", No.634/81/RH, 14 August, 1981.
- "Ministry of Information to Hold Workshop", No.ZIS/127/81/CA, 1 October, 1981.
- "Federation of Africa Media Women Formed", No.ZIS/172/81/CA/MC, 16 October, 1981.
- "Top Newsmen for German Tour", No.ZIS/227/81/SN, 13 November, 1981.
- "Political Events in SA and Namibia to be Given More Coverage", No.1189/82/SN, 7 December, 1981.
- "Press Must not be Colonial --Shamuyarira", No.1086/81/NM, 15 December, 1981.
- "Defend the Nation --Journalists Told", No.88/82/NM, 30 January, 1982.
- "Students Leave for Kenya", No.138/82/NM, 15 February, 1982.

"ZAPU Officials Accuse Media", No.ZIS/312/82/BJ/CS, 22 March, 1982.

"Unesco Pledges to Help in Correcting Irregularities", No.ZIS/336/82/MM, 24 March, 1982.

"Farmers Start Their Own Newsletter", No.ZIS/91/82/BC, 2 April, 1982.

"Radio Four Opens", No.1020/82/JS, 1 November, 1982.

"Reporters Taken a Step Further --Nhiwatiwa", No.1075/85/TC, 15 November, 1982.

"Two Government Officials to Study Rural Press in Kenya", No.ZIS/1556/82/TM/SK, 26 November, 1982.

"Media Should not be Government Mouthpiece --Ngwena", No.1231/82/DB, 17 December, 1982.

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"Rural-Urban Telecommunications Gap to be Narrowed", No.523/83/DB, 5 July, 1983.

"Control of Open Import Goods Ammended", No.715/83/DB/GR, 23 September, 1983.

"Media Workshop Calls for Action", No.ZIS/23/FS/83/BC/GR, 16 November, 1983.

"Supersonic to Produce Cheap Radio Receiver", No.364/84/DB/SC, 31 May, 1984.

"Skill Training vital for True Freedom --Shamuyarira", No.372/84/DB/EM, 5 June, 1984.

"Researchers to Operate Within Enunciated Policy", No.480/84/SD, 11 July, 1984.

"Nkala Calls for Gradual Realistic Change to Socialism", No.485/84/SC/SD, 16 July, 1984.

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"Push Pan-African Outlook, News Agencies Urged", No.610/84/SK/ME, 5 September, 1984.

"Ushewokunze Outlines Party Policy", No.ZIS/84/310/AM, 22 October, 1984.

"Ban on SA Based Journalists to be Tightened", No.ZIS/107/85/SC, 23 May, 1985.

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"Ushewokunze Urges Writers to Face the Truth", No.338/85/SM/RN/BCC, 3 August, 1985.

"School Broadcasting a Necessity says Mutumbuka", No.360/85/BCC/SK, 15 August, 1985.

"Youth Must Have Scientific Socialist Views", No.391/85/MA/SK, 3 September, 1985.

"Shamuyarira Opens the PATU-ESA Symposium on Satellite Communications", No.504/85/SK/SM, 14 October, 1985.

"Press is the Mirror of Society -- Mangwende", No.25/88/RC/ME/SG, 20 January, 1988.

"Counter Radio Truth --Mangwende Tells Rural Reporters", No.220/88/SK/SG/RN/MA, 19 May, 1988.

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'Wormwood', "Burning issues of the Press", Parade (June 1989), p. 59.

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"Blurred focus on Zimbabwe's image", Moto, no.13 (June 1983), pp. 10-11.

"Censorship -- Does it clean the mind?", Moto, no.23 (May 1984), pp. 5-6.

"Dealing with corruption (Comment)", Moto, no.71 (November 1988), p. 1.

"Dzivarasekwa By Election", Prize Africa (July 1989), pp. 22-23.

"Information is a right", Parade (July 1989), p. 11.

"Justice and Peace in Matabeleland (Editorial)", Moto, no.23 (May 1984), p. 1.

"Leadership Code undemocratic", Moto, no.54 (April 1987), p. 7.

"No go for ZUM rallies", Parade (July 1989), p. 17.

"Parliament defends editor and access to information", Parade (March 1989), pp. 41, 43.

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Zimbabwean Newspapers:

African Times/The People's Weekly
Bantu Mirror
Binga District News
Chaminuka News
The Chronicle
The Financial Gazette
Gwanda Times
Gweru Times
The Herald
Indonausika
The Insider
Kwayedza-Umthunywa
The Manica Post
The Masvingo Courier

Masvingo Provincial Star
Moto
Murewha Kubatana News
Mutoko News
Nehanda Guardian
Rhodesian Property and Finance
The People's Voice
The Sharpener
The Sunday News
The Sunday Mail
The Vanguard
Weekend Gazette
The Worker
Zvishavane District News

Other Zimbabwean Media:

Africa South
Commerce
CZI Industrial Review
Fallout
The Farmer
Farming World
Focus (SRC-University of Zimbabwe)
For the Record (1965-1979)
Mahogany
Moto
Parade & Foto-Action
Prize! Africa

Read On
Rhodesia Diary
Social Change and Development
Southern Africa Political and Economic
Monthly
Southern African Economist
Speak Out/Taurai/Khulumani
Ziana
Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation
Zimbabwe Information Services
Zimbabwe News
The Zimbabwe Worker (1978-1980)

Foreign Newspapers:

The Guardian (UK)
The Financial Mail (RSA)
The New York Times (USA)
The Times (UK)
The Globe and Mail (Canada)
The Washington Post (USA)
The Christian Science Monitor (USA)
The San Francisco Chronicle (USA)
The New Nation (RSA)
The Weekly Mail (RSA)

Other Foreign Media:

Africa Events
Africa Information Afrique
Africa Today
African Business
British Broadcasting Corporation
Index on Censorship (UK)
Inter-Press Service
IPI Report (UK)
Southern Africa Report (Canada)
Toward Freedom (USA)
Fair Lady (South Africa)

**The Daily and Weekly Press in Selected SADCC Countries
Late 1980s**

Country	Newspaper	Frequency	Circulation	Town
Botswana	Daily News	Daily	50,000	Gaborone
	The Gazette	Weekly	10,000	Gaborone
	Mmegi	Weekly	9,000	Gaborone
	The Guardian	Weekly	17,000	Gaborone
Lesotho	The Mirror	Weekly	4,000	Maseru
	Lentse	Weekly	4,000	Maseru
	Lesotho Today	Weekly	2,000	Maseru
	Moeletsi	Weekly	14,000	Maseru
Mozambique	Noticias	Daily	36,000	Maputo
	Diario de M.	Daily	10,000	Beira
	Domingo	Weekly	50,000	Maputo
	Tempo	Weekly	40,000	Maputo
	De Safio	Weekly	40,000	Maputo
	Kurika	Weekly	15,000	Maputo
Swaziland	The Times	Daily	10,000	Mbabane
	Swazi Observer	Daily	5,800	Mbabane
	The Times	Weekly	8,000	Mbabane
	Swazi Observer	Weekly	6,300	Mbabane
Tanzania	Daily News	Daily	-- *	Dar-es-Salaam
	Uhuru	Daily	-- *	Dar-es-Salaam
Zambia	Times of Z.	Daily	50,000	Lusaka
	Daily Mail	Daily	45,000	Lusaka
	Sunday Times	Weekly	65,000	Lusaka
Zimbabwe	Herald	Daily	140,000	Harare
	Chronicle	Daily	76,600	Bulawayo
	Sunday Mail	Weekly	151,900	Harare
	Sunday News	Weekly	72,900	Bulawayo
	Manica Post	Weekly	13,600	Mutare
	Kwayedza	Weekly	84,600	Harare
	Financial Gaz.	Weekly	16,000**	Harare
	Masv. Prov Star	Weekly	10,000**	Masvingo
	Gweru Times	Weekly	5,000**	Gweru

Source: Francis P. Kasoma, "The State of the Media in SADCC Countries", Paper presented at Nordic/SADCC Media Seminar, Harare, 1988. Kasoma estimated that Zimbabwe enjoyed a wider variety of fortnightly, monthly, semi-annual and annual popular publications, compared to other SADCC states (p. 21).

* No figures were available for the Tanzanian papers.

** These figures obtained elsewhere; see Chapter 7.

APPENDIX B

Registered Regular Publications in Zimbabwe -- 1986

Al-Itihaad Unit	The Gazette	Parade & Foto-Action
Alternatives	Gemmentebrief	Parish Panorama
Anvil	Glynns Bolts Newsletter	Picture Maker
Ararat	Go Bhora	Plain Truth
The Artist	Greek Corner	Prize Beat
Ascent	Greenscreens	Rail Loader
Azania News	The Gweru Times	The Record
Backstage	Harare Athletic Club	The Ripples
Bahai News	The Herald	The Rock
Beautiful People	Highlights of School	S.A. Economist
Beeline	The Highway	The Sable
The Bell	The Horseman	SADCC ICM
Bindura Bull	Indonsakusa	SAPEM
Bulawayo Theatre Club	Inside Track	Science News
Bulawayo Mirror	Insurance Review	Shamwari
Bulawayo This Month	Karoi News	Southern Aid
Bulawayo Bulletin	Kwayedza/Umthunywa	Sports Mirror
Bulawayo Country Club	Lomagundi Churchman	Sports Tribune
Campbell Theatre Club	Look & Listen	Sportsman
Centenary East & West ICA	Magnify	St. Andrews Presb.
C. African Zionist Dig.	Mahogany	St. Pauls Marlb.
C. African Jnl of Med.	Makonde Star	Step
Chamber of Mines Digest	Manhunga News	The Sunday Mail
Chaminuka News	The Manica Post	The Sunday News
Cheziya Gokwe Post	Mashonaland Philatelic	Teachers Forum
Christian Contact	Mashonaland Bookeepers	Telepost
The Chronicle	Masvingo Provincial Star	Total Woman
City Observer	Mazoe Messenger	Tree Society
Computer News	The Messenger	Umscan
Construction Review	Methodist Newsletter	Up to Date
The Cornerstone	Mhondoro Wild Life	Upstage
CPR Newsletter	Midlands Observer	The Vanguard
Credit Records	Mining News	The Visitor
CTC News	Mining & Engineering	Watershed News
CZI Industrial Review	Moto	The Worker
Development Magazine	Motor Trader	Zim Tobacco Today
District Digest	Mountain News	Zim Defen. Forces
E.L. Dhaddai	Murimi/Umlimi	Zimanah Newsletter
Enterprise Magazine	NCEAZ Information	Zimbabwe News Commerce
Every Home	Nehanda Guardian	Zisco Review
Fail-Out	The New Link	Zisco News
The Farmer	North Midlands Gazette	ZNCC Trade Opportunities
Farming World	Northern Suburbs News	ZNCC News
The Financial Gazette	Operations Esther	
Focus	Outpost	

Source: Zimbabwe Post Office, "Newspapers Registered at the G.P.O. in Zimbabwe", mimeo with handnotes, 1986 [sic 1987?]. This list is not exhaustive. Updated versions (also incomplete) indicate the number of publications to have oscillated between 95 (1990) and 121 (1989), although such dramatic change is unlikely to have taken place.

APPENDIX C

Research Materials Employed

One crucial problem in the collection process has been the distinct scarcity and/or incompleteness of publicly accessible, reliably recorded analytical material on the political economy of the Zimbabwean media. Despite the continuing public debates on the role of the media in development, national transformation and (especially after Willowgate) political life -- debates which have typically remained at a superficially critical plane of understanding -- there has been little concerted indigenous scholarship on the media which can be said to be rigorously and systematically critical within the broad framework of political economy. Within Zimbabwe, the same can arguably be said for the over-arching issue of class formation and political constructions of hegemony.

The use of evidence in this dissertation may sometimes appear to be eclectic, but given the circumstances (political and archival) of collection this could hardly have but been the case. At times it has been necessary to rely upon an informed interpretative reading of the media themselves, as both primary and secondary source; at others, the managerial and administrative statistics and actions speak directly for themselves. For the most part, secondary sources form the basis for the methodological and political economy chapters of the first section, although primary material collected by the author have been integrated into these discussions.

In the main, the dissertation relies on evidence constituted through the compilation of policy, administrative, and confidential survey documents; and by reference to published and unpublished statistics, press clippings, interviews by the author (with "politicians", media administrators and journalists, bureaucrats, development aid workers, community workers, trade unionists and collective co-

operators, to name but the most important), and divers documents, interviews and other primary material generously made accessible by fellow journalists, researchers and by "political activists". At later stages in the writing of this study, "feedback consultation" with a host of patient colleagues served as an important and helpful source of primary information in its own right.

APPENDIX D

Towards a monolithic petty bourgeois state in Zimbabwe? A brief critique of the views of Ibbo Mandaza and others

There is a considerable literature on the political economy of Zimbabwe in the 1970s and 1980s, much of which is devoted to the theme of the nationalist revolution and the leadership's commitment, rhetorical or otherwise, to bringing about some type of socialist transition after 1980. From different perspectives, these studies of nationalist and socialist struggles lay out detailed histories of the national democratic revolution in terms of the parties, personalities and events concerned.¹ For many, the key questions turn on the "socialist" attributes of the state, civil society and the ruling party leadership; in this context, it is asked whether Zimbabwe is on the road to socialism, "lost" on its way in that direction or even distinctly non-socialist in orientation.² But in much of the current literature produced by the Zimbabwean intelligentsia, and certainly that associated with its leading fractions,³ these issues have been addressed in a manner which has distinctly narrowed the scope of investigation of contemporary social struggles of a class nature.

This new Zimbabwean problematic focuses on the "petty bourgeois" state, the way in which it has (allegedly) been consolidated and the negative implications this consolidation has for any "socialist programme" which might have existed at some point in the nationalist period of struggle. It is a problematic which is largely limited in its investigation to the terrain of the state, to the exclusion of the myriad other social forces represented in the social formation. Moreover, it is a problematic which appropriates the phenomenal forms of political struggle over "national unity", for example, at the level of the state, and reads these as the essential struggles of the social formation. Inevitably "politics" is reduced thereby to the active political factionalism of a state-based group, and the problems of day-to-day politics in civil

society seem to fall away as potential dynamos of social change. Consider for example the wellspring of post-colonial politics as conceived by Ibbo Mandaza in his important essay of 1986, "The State in the Post-White Settler Colonial Situation",

African nationalism itself is an expression of class interests, only appearing to conceal the aspirations of the various fraction [sic] and factions within the African petit bourgeois class. Initially, the African petit bourgeoisie competes with the white settlers for political and economic power; later, in the post-colonial stage, the competition and rivalry afflicts the African petit bourgeoisie itself, as each faction and fraction makes its bid for the 'fruits of independence', for 'development' of its area, for power and influence...But since the "fruits of independence" -- and economic capacity of the neo-colony -- are inherently limited and distorted, factionalism and rivalry among the African petit bourgeoisie can become so serious as to threaten not only national unity but even the post-colonial state. A major preoccupation of the leadership becomes that of trying to reunite and unite all these groups of the African petit bourgeoisie around the post-colonial state as further reinforcement against the threat of the oppressed and exploited classes.⁴

This approach has serious implications for both the development of future projects of a mass-democratic nature, and the more "academic" appropriation of what has happened so far in Zimbabwe's post-independence epoch.

Some read Mandaza's self-proclaimed "realism" (as opposed to the "romanticism" he ascribes to others, notably John Saul) in looking at "what is" in Zimbabwe -- not what "ought to be" -- as rather more than just an objective analysis, and something approaching an apologia for the petty bourgeois state and the class which directs it.⁵ The importance of this position is underlined by the fact Mandaza is himself a member of the state-based petty bourgeoisie to which he refers, being a key advisor to the President on matters of political affairs.

Indeed the failure of Mandaza and other similarly situated "radical" intellectuals in Zimbabwe to concretely address what can be done outside of direct state action to reassert the non-petty bourgeois aims and programmes of workers, peasants and cooperators would seem to point to a distinctly dubious commitment from this group to radical measures beyond the level of rhetoric. Recent attacks by the Mandaza

coterie via The Southern Africa Political & Economic Monthly (of which Mandaza is editor) and the Zimbabwe chapter of the African Association of Political Scientists (in which Mandaza also figures prominently) on "ultra-leftists", leaves the impression that the "radical petty bourgeois" fraction of intellectuals is part of the problem of national-popular struggles, and not their solution. On occasion, elements of this intelligentsia have attacked the trade union movement, university students, squatters and others, all of whom have at one time or another risen in challenge to the ruling party and its increasingly conservative social agenda.

At a more academically-couched level of analysis, Mandaza's approach fails to critically question the deeper origins, content and potential of these and other social challenges to the social status quo. In sum, it takes far too much for granted politically: although class positions and struggles are mentioned, they are more or less excluded from the core of the analysis. The impression conveyed is that the petty bourgeoisie, despite its past linkages with and commitments to other groups within the national democratic revolution and the current challenges from "oppressed and exploited classes", somehow very quickly becomes "untouchable" or outside of history, working logically and efficiently for the interests of its foreign and local capital allies while brushing off -- ultimately unproblematically -- the various social crises at home. Not having been captured, smashed and reordered by a coherently revolutionary class force (as prescribed by Lenin) the state is taken to be petty bourgeois, full stop.⁶ The end result is that the whole question of hegemony and the dynamic of transformation in general remains and must remain unposed; as the examination of leadership groups and their factional wrangles within the state degenerates into a slightly radicalised version of more traditional "elite" analyses. As John Saxby poignantly argues,

Mandaza's analysis... in its preoccupation with imperial interests on one hand and petty-bourgeois political consolidation on the other, has little to say about dominated classes of Zimbabwean society and their relation to

the state. Yet unless a writer takes account of the constraints and possibilities of that interaction, a "class" becomes a free-floating, ahistorical political force. This, indeed, is the impression conveyed by Mandaza's account. For this reason it comes uncomfortably close to elite analysis as practised by orthodox political science... [T]here is little here by way of a materialist analysis (in terms of the social base of the nationalist movement, for example) to explain why an emergent petty-bourgeois class has secured power. Nor... does the reader have a sense of the possible trajectories of social and political change.⁷

Now this is not to say that the governing group and its associated class fractions are not important points of consideration. To the contrary, the petty bourgeoisie is significant precisely because it decisively occupies the main instruments of state and party power in all their apparatuses, and as such is both benefactor and victim of them. It is advantaged because of its accessibility to the instruments of the state and ruling party in constructing social programmes in the name of state and party, and disadvantaged because its members serve collectively and individually as the focal point for social contradictions arising from these policies. If there is a threat to any project to establish a "national" political programme which involves the petty bourgeoisie, it is surely this exogenous class fragmentation of the social formation which is the overdetermining factor, even though this may be partially refracted through struggles (or mild disagreements) within the ruling group itself.⁸

In this sense one can move beyond the determinate entity of the "petty bourgeois state", and ahead towards an examination of shifting alliances of fractions within and outside of the state apparatus, reflected in and shaped by political struggles over the contours and limits of democracy, the "national character" and similarly important practical questions. Here closer consideration must be accorded to what Mandaza so often refers to in passing as the "exploited masses". If the challenges posed to any national project of the ruling group are to be identified, attention must be given to the terrain of the widest expression of class interests -- civil society -- as well as to the internalised contradictions within the state. This is precisely the terrain of hegemonic

struggles referred to by Gramsci: struggles over narrow and broad issues within structures and institutions, between public personalities and formal ideologies, all of which can be read politically through the lens of deep-seated formations of social classes, and not just through the microscope of the "monolithic" petty bourgeois state structure. But practically, what does this entail when it comes to a brief discussion of politics in Zimbabwe?

What becomes important is the uncovering of the politico-ideological and economically-expressed ruptures which have typified politics within the social formation as a whole, underneath and complementary to the "official" state-centric resolution of problems of like "unity" and "tribalism". It is themes such as the latter which occupy the attention of most ruling party demagogues, allowing the personalisation and depoliticisation of systematic problems related to petty bourgeois "rule" (but not "leadership"). A comprehensive analysis of social ruptures implies more than an examination of inter-petty bourgeois struggles over clientelist spheres of influence, and/or struggles posed at the level of political parties. Rather, other forms of group representation and articulation must be accounted for, whether present within the state or not.

If there have been ruptures in ruling party leadership or widespread acquiescence to Zanu rule in the 1980s, these latter groups must be one of the catalysts for such developments. Sites of challenge to leadership aspirations must be pinpointed, and the balance of forces and circumstances weighed up. This task involves the identification of fulcrum points of political, ideological and economic intervention (constructive and deconstructive) from elements of the ruling party, state and other groups and structures strewn across the breadth of the social formation. In other words, it implies a consideration of Gramsci's "historic bloc of social forces", which emerges from, while remaining firmly rooted within, the totality of the social formation. It is this historically-specific bloc of concrete social forces and dynamics which Mandaza's

analysis fails to engage analytically, glibly touching on it in passing, at a theoretical level; and it is this bloc, and its wider relation to the dynamics of state, party and class in the 1980s, which stands as the central investigative concern of this dissertation.

References

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2. For discussions based on these themes of Zimbabwe's socialist orientation, see the useful collection in Colin Stoneman, ed. Zimbabwe's Prospects. Issues of Race, Class, State and Capital in Southern Africa (London: Macmillan, 1988).
3. See in this regard the important collection of essays in Ibbo Mandaza, ed., Zimbabwe: The Political Economy of Transition, 1980-1986 (Dakar: CODESRIA, 1986).
4. Ibbo Mandaza, "The State in the Post-White Settler Colonial Situation," Ibbo Mandaza, ed., 1986, op. cit., p. 23.
5. Interview with Elphias Mukonoweshuro, Harare, 3 December 1987.
6. Interview with Ibbo Mandaza, Harare, 1 April 1987.
7. John Saxby, "The Transition to Socialism?", Transformation 8 (1989), p. 79.
8. Arnold Sibanda, "The Political Situation," Colin Stoneman, ed., 1988, op. cit., pp. 257-283.

APPENDIX E

Zimbabwe: Macroeconomic Indicators

	Real GDP fc	Real GDP per head	Growth Rate Real GDP	Rate of: Real GDP per head	Inflation Rate: GDP Defl- ator	Rate: Low Income CPI	Budget Deficit as % of GDP
	Z\$m	Z\$	%	%	%	%	%
1976	3110	492	-0.8	-3.6	9.4	11.0	--
1977	2886	444	-7.2	-9.9	8.0	10.3	--
1978	2864	428	-0.8	-3.6	9.8	9.7	--
1979	2913	423	1.7	-1.2	15.5	13.8	-13.4
1980	3224	454	10.7	7.5	9.9	5.4	-8.2
1981	3537	484	9.7	6.6	14.5	13.1	-7.5
1982	3589	477	1.5	-1.4	13.3	10.7	-9.4
1983	3461	448	-3.6	-6.2	21.0	23.1	-11.3
1984	3540	445	2.3	-0.5	1.7	20.2	-12.2
1985	3798	465	7.3	4.3	2.7	8.5	-10.6
1986	3882	462	2.2	-0.6	15.5	14.3	-13.3
1987	3838	444	-1.1	-3.8	8.9	12.5	-10.8
1988	4089	460	6.5	3.7	11.9	7.4	-11.6
1989	4290	470	4.9	2.1	12.4	15.9	--

Source: CSO, National Income and Expenditure Report 1989 (Harare, June 1989).

Zimbabwe: Consolidated Revenue and Expenditure Accounts
(in 1979/80 \$ Millions)

	1979/80	1980/81	1981/82	1982/83	1983/84	1984/85	1985/86	1986/87	1987/88	1988/89
Revenue	675.9	1000.2	1359.1	1765.0	1943.6	2131.8	2516.2	2954.0	3661.3	4051.0
Recurrent Expenditure	971.4	1137.2	1449.1	1820.0	2223.2	2438.1	2912.8	3552.0	3887.1	4494.5
Current Deficit	-295.5	-137.0	-90.0	-55.0	-279.6	-306.3	-396.6	-598.0	-225.8	-443.5
International Aid Grants	--	--	5.4	24.2	56.9	81.1	100.0	102.5	123.6	160.0
Current Deficit LESS Aid	-295.5	-137.0	-84.6	-30.8	-222.7	-225.2	-296.6	-495.5	-102.2	-283.5
Capital expenditure	54.9	65.1	122.2	191.9	208.7	203.2	224.0	270.1	408.7	521.3
Investments	0.5	48.6	7.8	37.7	18.4	11.5	12.8	22.6	182.1	116.8
Net Long Term Loans	17.2	38.2	106.0	170.1	142.2	243.2	188.9	222.6	168.3	225.1
Short-term Loans	6.8	-7.2	-4.1	26.7	25.9	23.8	-30.6	-14.0	34.7	3.0
Total Non-Recurrent Expenditure	79.4	144.7	231.9	426.4	395.2	481.7	395.1	501.3	793.8	866.2
Total Expenditure	1050.8	1281.9	1681.0	2246.4	2618.4	2919.8	3307.9	4053.3	4680.9	5360.7
TOTAL DEFICIT	-374.9	-281.7	-316.5	-457.2	-617.9	-706.9	-691.7	-996.8	-896.0	-1149.7
Net Foreign Borrowing	--	--	--	50.4	50.9	489.1	210.9	210.7	147.8	133.3
Net Domestic Borrowing	--	--	--	423.5	585.8	241.9	508.8	818.3	783.4	1070.9
Total Net Borrowing	385.0	293.8	330.1	473.9	636.7	731.0	719.7	1029.0	931.2	1204.2
Contr. to Sinking Funds	-10.0	-12.2	-13.7	-16.7	-18.7	-24.1	-28.0	-32.3	-35.3	-54.4
TOTAL NET FINANCING	375.0	281.6	316.4	457.2	618.0	706.9	691.7	996.7	895.9	1149.8
Gross Nat. Disp. Income	2757.0	3387.0	4324.0	4936.0	5875.0	6558.0	7965.0	--	--	--
GDP	2794	3430	4208	4851	5486	5794	6508	7490	8292	9857

Source: Cited in Rob Davies, David Sanders and Timothy M. Shaw, "Liberalisation for Development: Zimbabwe's Adjustment Without the Fund" (Manuscript for UNICEF, 1990).

APPENDIX F

Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust: Finances, 1981-1986^a
Income and Expenditure Account

Category		1981-82^b	1983	1984	1985	1986
<u>INCOME</u>						
Dividends	358,720	172,634	8,318	9,246	9,426	
Donations & Grants	883,593	488,424	704,069	917,467	1,255,258	
Interest	30,142	25,709	20,664	1,512	9,771	
News Service Fees	152,468	186,621	192,421	212,854	246,223	
Sundry Income	99	77	117	1,343	4,843	
Rent	---	20,542	14,361	43,212	62,556	
Total Income	1,425,022	894,007	939,946	1,198,163	1,601,315	
<u>EXPENDITURE^c</u>						
Depreciation	44,325	42,794	45,255	41,895	60,767	
Interest:						
(a) Overdraft	75	---	993	1,897	4,060	
(b) Loan	---	84,646	100,438	101,290	206,721	
Telex/PTC	85,305	90,135	144,733	140,254	244,233	
Salaries & Wages	601,407	687,088	667,006	646,552	769,771	
Total Expenditure	1,081,613	1,264,989	1,309,233	1,266,967	1,749,084	
<u>MMT GAIN/LOSS</u>						
Surplus + (-)	+343,409	-370,982	-369,287	- 68,804	-147,769	
Relating to:						
The Trust	+535,083	- 29,565	-246,699	- 31,436	-261,845	
Ziana	- 96,742	-233,612	-122,588	- 37,368	+114,076	
Zimco ^d	- 94,932	-107,805	-----	-----	-----	

a Source: Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust, Annual Report 1986.

b This figure includes all accounts for the 18 months up to 30 June, 1982.

c Represents summation of major expenses only; miscellaneous costs have not been included.

d Zimco ceased to fall under the Mass Media Trust's jurisdiction during 1983.

APPENDIX G

Documents Relating to Government and Mass Media Trust Rural Newspapers, 1980-1990

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_____, Letter From Executive Secretary of Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust, to D. Gothe, Friedrich Naumann Foundation-Zimbabwe, 25 March, 1987.

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_____, "Report on Bulawayo, Hwange Trip from April 12 to 15, 1988", memo, Mass Media Trust, 1988.

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_____, Letter from the "Project Coordinator" to Mr. B. Gamble, The Chairman of Adma, 12 May 1988.

Moyo, E.M., Letter from Unesco Regional Communication Adviser for East and Southern Africa, to W. Mbanga, Rural Newspapers Coordinator, 31 March, 1988.

Saunders, Richard G., "Project Proposal for Mass Media Trust: The Establishment of a Rural Newspaper for Mashonaland Central Province at Bindura", unpublished project paper, Harare, November 1987.

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_____, "Rural Press", unsigned memo, Mass Media Trust "Provincial Rural Newspapers" file, [1988].

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_____, Correspondence and Memoranda between Executive Secretary of The Trust, and the Director, Graphic Media Development Centre (The Hague), January-April 1987.

Zimbabwe, Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, Letter from the Secretary (M.S. Sibanda) to Rural Press Project Coordinator, (ref: D/15/82), 25 February, 1988.

Zimbabwe, Ministry of Local Government and Town Planning, Matabeleland North Province, Memos and Correspondence, 1983-85 (files c/83-c/85 The Ministry, Bulawayo Provincial Headquarters, 1983-85), including: Correspondence between DA-Binga, LGPO-Binga, and Undersecretary for Development, Bulawayo Headquarters; Correspondence from DA-Binga to Undersecretary for Development, Bulawayo; and, "Notes from the discussions with Binga LGPO Cde. Mashaike (sic) about the Binga News, in Binga 24.10.85", unsigned memorandum.

_____, Promotions Department, "Memorandum From C.C. Katiza to J.G. Moyo, (ref: C/84), Harare, 17 January, 1985.

APPENDIX H

Rural Newspapers and the Ministry of Local Government, 1983-1985

The first efforts at setting up rural newspapers were to come from the MOI, the ministry with the primary responsibility for information and communication development; and the Ministry of Local Government, under Section 67, Chapter 231 of the "District Councils Act" (1981), relating to the provision of information and community development activities by the Ministry of Local Government, through its Promotions Department.

In 1982 the MOI obtained Unesco funding to send two Zimbabweans to Kenya on a research trip to learn from that country's own experiments in rural newspaper operations.¹ Although they returned to draft up proposals based on the Kenyan experiment, no funds were allocated, and the project was terminated. Some months later, in January 1983, the Ministry of Local Government undertook a more sustained effort, keyed on its cadre of community-based Local Government Promotion Officers [LGPOs].² A two week crash course in journalist training sponsored by Zimco for 30 LGPOs, with the intention of preparing the officers for the setting up of small cyclostyled newssheets, written in the vernacular, and based in and financed by District Councils across the country. But the scheme, without funding from the Ministry of Local Government headquarters and dependent upon the initiative of individual LGPOs, was a short-lived one.

Only four local, inexpensive, roughly quality, A-4 sized newssheets materialised: the Binga District News, Zvishavane District News, Chipinge District News and Marondera District News. The publications ranged in print run, from 300 to 800

copies, depending on supplies of the newsprint stationary used; cover prices were between three cents and five cents. The exception to this was the Marondera District News, which was commercially produced in tabloid format, in English, with photographs and typesetting, and a print run of 1,000 (cover price: 13 cents).

However, the Marondera paper produced only one edition after its launch in 1983. In 1985 it was revived, but was later superceded by the MMT paper launched in the same town in 1988.

Only the Binga District News, a chatty collection of local community news, gossip and jokes, was to survive for more than a few issues; and only then, because of the personal drive and commitment of the LGPO involved. Its "author", Alex Mushaike noted that the cyclostyled News was produced without funds from the Ministry, a fact which often forced him to use government stationary (new and used), second-hand inks and stencils, and his personal transport of a bicycle, to produce and deliver his single-handedly manufactured newsletter. Attempts by Mushaike to raise support from his Ministry, in the form of paper supplies, a tape recorder and part-time personnel to assist in the collection and collation of information, were refused by the the department's office in Bulawayo.³

Despite Mushaike's hard work on the ground, it is doubtful that the publication reached many. With a monthly print run of 300-400 (time and materials permitting), and with Mushaike's regular duties occupying most of his time, the News was largely confined to the district's centre of Binga town. An interview by the author with 10 School Headmasters from Binga District revealed that few had heard or seen of the News by 1988, after the newssheet had ceased publication.⁴ The Binga District News ceased regular publication in 1985.

In a telling remark which foreshadowed future government policy on the rural press, state officials noted that the papers had not lasted, primarily because they were "uneconomic", being of too rough a quality and too limited a circulation to attract local commercial support; and only secondarily, because of the insufficient training and assistance given to the LGPOs by the state.

References

- 1. The following discussion of early attempts at commissioning a rural press is based on the useful report of Mamutse (1986), the project document of Saunders, 1987, op. cit., and information collected from the Ministry of Local Government. The latter include documents cited in Appendix F, and interviews with Edward Mamutse (Harare, 18 February 1987), Alex Mushaike (Binga, 20 June 1988), Timothy Muti (Harare, 1 February 1988), and D.T. Rwafa (Masvingo, 13 June 1988).**
- 2. See, "District Councils Hives of Activity -- Chikowore", Press Statement 8/83/SK/DB, 5 January, 1983.**
- 3. See Ministry of Local Government-Bulawayo memos and correspondence, Appendix F.**
- 4. Interview with Binga District School Headmasters, Binga, June 1988.**

Zimpapers: Urban-Rural Readership, 1983-1988^a

Title	1983 ^a			1988 ^d		
	Community Readership ^b			Community Readership ^c		
	Urban 000 (%)	Rural 000 (%)	Urb/Rur Ratio ^e	Urban 000 (%)	Rural 000 (%)	Urb/Rur Ratio ^e
Herald	280(32.7)	91(3.6)	75/25	422(19.5)	211(3.0)	66/34
S. Mail	388(45.4)	178(6.9)	68/32	663(30.1)	428(6.2)	61/39
Chronicle	169(19.8)	47(1.8)	78/22	292(13.5)	179(2.6)	62/38
S. News	173(20.2)	104(4.0)	62/38	362(16.7)	191(2.8)	65/35
M. Post	35 (4.1)	15(0.6)	70/30	63 (2.9)	62(0.9)	51/49
Kwayedza	-- ---	-- ---	-----	225(10.4)	490(7.2)	31/69
Any						
Zimpaper	553(64.7)	328(12.8)	63/37	-- --	-- --	-----

a Source: Zimbabwe Newspapers, Survey All Media, September 1984.

b The "%" figure indicates the proportion of each community's literate population surveyed which reads the newspaper in question. Total numerical readership ("000") per publication calculated from estimated reader-per-capita multiplied by total population census data.

c This ratio indicates the urban/rural community share in the total calculated readership of each specified title.

d Source: Probe Market Research, Research Report, Press Media Survey. Survey No. 58/1087, 1 July, 1988. Information for "Any Zimpaper" category not provided.

e The "%" figure is calculated here on the basis of an estimated national population of 9 million, with urban and rural totals being, respectively, 2.16 million and 6.84 million.

APPENDIX J

Zimpapers: Subsidiaries and Associated Companies, 1988

<u>Subsidiary Company</u>	<u>Shareholding Company</u>	<u>Number/Type of Share</u>
National Printing and Packaging (Natprint)	Zimbabwe Newspapers	2,520,000 ordinary 125,000 preferred
Beatrice Road Properties	Natprint	200 ordinary
Typocrafters	Natprint	29,776 ordinary
Typoflex Packaging	Typocrafters	6,003 ordinary
Douglas Road Enterprises	Zimbabwe Newspapers	708,400 ordinary
Directories of Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe Newspapers	100 ordinary
A.C. Brady	Directories of Zimbabwe	1,110 ordinary
B and T Directories	Directories of Zimbabwe	4 ordinary
Central Africa Publications	Directories of Zimbabwe	11,110 ordinary
Herald Investments	Zimbabwe Newspapers	21,500 ordinary
Citizen Press	Zimbabwe Newspapers	2,502 ordinary
Independent Newspapers	Zimbabwe Newspapers	50 ordinary
Astonian Press	Zimbabwe Newspapers	(not supplied)
<u>Associated Companies</u>	<u>Zimpapers Stock Share</u>	
Colourscan	40%	

Source: Zimbabwe Newspapers (1980) Limited, 1988 Annual Report.

APPENDIX K

Zimpapers: Urban-Rural Distribution Patterns, 1981-1988*

Publicat'n	1981 ^a		1985 ^b		1987 ^c		1988 ^d	
	Urban '000 (%)	Rural '000 (%)	Urban '000 (%)	Rural '000 (%)	Urban '000 (%)	Rural '000 (%)	Urban '000 (%)	Rural '000 (%)
Herald	78.4 (81)	18.3 (19)	85.4 (66)	44.9 (34)	88.5 (66)	46.4 (34)	87.8 (67)	44.0 (33)
S. Mail	95.4 (88)	12.9 (12)	92.1 (61)	60.5 (39)	93.2 (60)	61.6 (40)	93.4 (61)	60.2 (39)
Chronicle	34.5 (83)	6.7 (17)	42.8 (69)	19.4 (31)	45.7 (67)	22.8 (33)	45.7 (62)	28.1 (38)
S. News	31.8 (86)	4.9 (14)	41.4 (85)	7.3 (15)	43.3 (72)	16.3 (28)	42.6 (66)	22.5 (34)
M. Post	4.9 (87)	.7 (13)	8.6 (86)	1.3 (14)	10.1 (85)	1.7 (15)	6.7 (51)	6.6 (49)
Kwayedza	---- --	---- --	11.1 (40)	7.4 (60)	22.2 (60)	14.7 (40)	29.6 ^e (40)	44.5 ^e (60)

a Source: G. Noack et al., Media Training Needs in Zimbabwe, p. 22.

b Source: Zimbabwe Newspapers, SAM Facts and Figures, July-December 1985

c Source: Zimbabwe Newspapers, Circulation Analysis, January-June 1987

d Source: Probe Market Research, Research Report, Press Media Survey,
(Survey No.58/1087), 1 July, 1988

e These figures are unreliable, calculated from an average readership per copy which in this case would very more than indicated here. No other statistics were available.

* Note: the differentiated figures for all years except 1981 indicate the absolute minimum circulation to urban areas, as cities other than publication place, medium- and small-sized towns, and rural growth centres have been tabulated under the "Rural" heading. This procedure has been necessary because Zimpapers and other sources have not provided more precise breakdowns of distribution points. Thus the actual urban-area circulation is likely much higher than indicated here. A good guess would be that the percentage change in urban-rural shares of circulation has, in most cases, remained unchanged or grown in favour of urban areas, though the absolute numbers of copies flowing to the rural areas has mounted.

APPENDIX L

Another Look at the News: Features Contents of Moto, 1983-1985

In the period between the outbreak of the sustained military conflict in Matabeleland and the run-up to the second general election in 1985, Moto magazine was distinguished by its remarkable variety and depth of social critique. The following survey highlights the main features and/or focus of issues Nos.10-30, March 1983-January 1985.

No.10 March 1983:

- Series of reports and editorial on the government's intervention in Matabeleland;
- Coverage of the recently opened treason trials, and profiles of the trialists;
- The drought hits nation-wide;
- Reagan and the war in El Salvador;
- "A day in the life of a village health worker";
- Angola's struggle for socialist future;
- Women ex-combatants and the difficulties of re-integration;
- The problems of industrialisation in Zimbabwe.

No.11 April 1983:

- Editorial calling for restraint in Matabeleland;
- Angolan women;
- Nicaraguan war;
- Apartheid politics in South Africa;
- The IMF and its grip on the Third World;
- The law and the people in Zimbabwe;
- Reflections on three years of independence [interviews, discussion and critique of areas of slow progress];
- New Sheraton hotel could pay for 7100 family homes.

No.12 May 1983:

- Series on education in Zimbabwe;
- Business reports on consumer and energy issues;
- Education with Production schemes;
- International and Southern African political news.

No.13 June 1983:

- Series on the press in Zimbabwe;
- The politics of nuclear energy and weapons, and Zimbabwe; -The private sector strikes back at government;
- Arts and literary review.

No.14 July 1983:

- Series on the Church in Zimbabwe;
- Detentions and Emergency powers under the law;
- International focus on South Africa and United Kingdom;
- The role of radio and oral media in Zimbabwe;
- Problems with the resettlement programme.

No.15 August 1983:

- Writers and the revolution;
- Culture: the need for a coherent national policy;
- South Africa unrest;
- Computer revolution in Zimbabwean business.

No.16 September 1983:

- Series on workers and labour: unemployment rises, problems of farm labourers, gap between rich and poor, and resettlement dilemmas;
- South Africa and Chile rights abuses, the USA in Central America;
- Women's rights in Zimbabwe;
- The IMF and Zimbabwe;

No.17 October 1983:

- Series on women in Zimbabwe: questions of agriculture, literacy, lobolo, baby dumping;
- Housing policy in Zimbabwe;
- Improving and developing rural technology;
- South Africa: the UDF, political prisoners, SADF Conscription drive.

No.18 November 1983:

- Focus on "socialist dream" in Zimbabwe: peasants and workers, and their role, socialism and the law, employment limits of the informal sector, historical analysis of socialism;
- Investors shunning Zimbabwe;
- International news from Zambia, Kenya, Australia, India;
- Amnesty International.

No.19 December 1983-January 1984:

- Following in the footsteps of other African economic disasters;
- Squatters and forced removals;

- literacy, sexual harassment, and employment problems;
- South Africa: labour movements, the anti-apartheid movement, new political developments;
- Grenada: USA invasion;
- Namibia: Multinationals looting uranium;
- Zimbabwean music;
- Tourism and the state;
- Problems of imported technology in the development process.

No.20 February 1984:

- Kadoma Declaration;
- Socialism and the Church;
- Mozambican famine;
- Zimbabwe after the USA aid cut;
- International news on Nigeria, Uganda, South Africa-Israel, PLO;
- The new international economic disorder;
- The film scene in Zimbabwe.

No.21 March 1984:

- Focus on Zimbabwean culture and new Department of Culture;
- South Africa: Sun City and superficial changes;
- Mozambique after the drought and floods;
- KAL 007 episode and the CIA;
- IMF and World Bank in the Third World.

No.22 April 1984:

- The Nkomati Accord;
- The cancer of tribal politics in Zimbabwe;
- Orphans in Mozambique;
- SADCC news;
- The gradualist threat to Zimbabwe's socialist transformation
- Zimbabwean arts and books.

No.23 May 1984:

- Justice and Peace in Matabeleland;
- Censorship in the Zimbabwean press and electronic media;
- The one-party state debate;
- Chidzero's bitter budget medicine;
- South Africa: Nkomati, repression, economic crisis; Nairobi's slums.

No.24 June 1984:

- Focus on Zimbabwe's youth: unemployment, music, youth brigades, war refugees, baby dumping;
- "On Road to Socialism?" editorial;

- Corruption in high places;
- Race relations; South African developments, apartheid sports and Zola Budd.
- War in the Sudan;

No.25 July 1984:

- Credibility gaps: corruption in the state;
- Tekere speaks out against corruption;
- The one-party state debate;
- Problems in re-orienting education;
- Renamo and Nkomati;
- International news from Ethiopia, SADCC and Kenya.

No.26 August 1984:

- The Zanu Congress;
- Disabled combatants still fighting for survival;
- Regional trade problems;
- Capital punishment debate;
- Series of articles on South African developments.

No.27 September 1984:

- No easy road to socialism in Zimbabwe;
- Corruption sweeps Africa;
- The one-party state debate;
- Chidzero's economic fire-fighting;
- Budget fails to trim civil service;
- Ziscosteel recovering;
- International news on the ANC, Cuba and Angola and the USA in Nicaragua.

No.28 October 1984:

- Justice and the state;
- Women and the law;
- Mugabe firm on one-party state (interview);
- Traditional versus contemporary customs in Zimbabwe;
- South Africa: blacks rally against reforms, forced removals, artists in the struggle;
- Kenya's tourism;
- Polisario's fight for liberation;
- African film makers.

No.29 November 1984:

- Series on international aid;
- Staffing crisis at UZ;
- Rural technology and self-reliance;
- South Africa: ANC women's year, new Parliament creates confusion, and the Renamo war against Mozambique;

-Business news from SADCC.

No.30 December 1984-January 1985:

- Focus on changing sexual morals in Zimbabwe: the sexual revolution, abortion, family planning;
- The one-party state debate;
- Features on Mutare;
- Rights to legal representation;
- South Africa: black union launches anti-asbestos campaign, profile of a South African communist activist;
- Frelimo rehabilitates Renamo bandits;
- Sports: poor administration mars good season.

END

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