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CLASS FORMATION AND THE
CHANGING STRUCTURES OF THE
STATE IN NIGERIA

by

Eme N. Ekekwe, M. A. (Carleton).

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of
Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
Department of Political Science.

Carleton University

OTTAWA, Ontario

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OF THE STATE IN NIGERIA"

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ABSTRACT

It is tempting to explain the creation of new constituent states in Nigeria as a response to the multi-ethnic nature of the society. This study suggests, however, that such an approach may not be adequate. It attempts, instead, to analyse this problem from the point of view of social class development. In particular its focus is on the nature of the post-colonial state there. Some analyses of the evolution of social class and the Nigerian state are presented.

This approach, it is argued, allows for a recognition of the fact that the forces that have led to creating new constituent states have applied both within and between ethnic groups; these forces have also originated within the Regions and not in region-centre relations. The study argues that the use of state apparatuses for private capital accumulation by some among the petty bourgeoisie who controlled them virtually forced those not so situated to press for the restructuring of the state. The reasons adduced for state demands are analysed, as are the findings of the Willink Commission and Irikefe Panel which previously studied the matter. Finally it is suggested that the creation of new states may not have exhausted the forces pushing in this direction. Perhaps only a transcendence of the capitalist

approach to development may yield such a result. But this prospect is, at present, most unlikely.

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Finally, none of the above-mentioned persons is responsible for any errors in judgement or in fact that may be found herein.

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my father: he has given me much more than he realises; to the memory of my mother: for all her struggle and sacrifice to give me some education; to my sisters Ikodiya and Onyege: they were denied elementary education in order that I may have it; to Hazel and Ron McGraw: they gave me a tremendous opportunity, an opportunity which may give greater meaning to the sacrifices of my parents and two younger sisters.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	INTRODUCTION.....	1
II.	SOCIAL CLASSES AND THE STATE.....	17
	THE STATE	32
	THE STATE IN POST-COLONIAL FORMATIONS.....	41
III.	THE COLONIAL STATE AND THE PENETRATION OF THE PRE-CAPITALIST FORMATION IN NIGERIA.....	63
	THE PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD.....	65
	THE COLONIAL STATE	73
	Some Aspects of the Colonial State's Political Economy.....	87
IV.	CLASS, STATE AND ACCESS	139
	CLASS FORMATION	145
	THE STRUGGLE FOR ACCESS	181
	THE CLASS CHARACTER OF DEPENDENCE MOVEMENT.....	191
V.	THE STATE AND THE MANAGEMENT OF THE ECONOMY	203
	DEVELOPMENT AS POLICY AND IDEOLOGY.....	204
	THE STATE'S ROLE IN THE ECONOMY.....	210
VI.	THE ROLE OF THE STATE IN CAPITAL ACCUMULATION BY THE PETTY BOURGEOISIE.....	236
	THE IDEOLOGY OF DEVELOPMENT AND CAPITAL ACCUMULATION.....	239

CHAPTER		PAGE
	THE ROLE OF CORRUPTION.....	259
	THE CONDITION FOR THE ACCUMULATION PROCESS.....	276
VII.	ACCESS TO STATE AND DEMANDS FOR NEW STATES.....	283
	THE WILLINK AND IRIKEFE FINDINGS	299
VIII.	ANALYSIS OF THE JUSTIFICATIONS FOR, AND THE CONTRADICTIONS IN, NEW STATE CREATION.....	323
	ANALYSIS OF RECOMMENDATIONS.....	324
	CONTRADICTIONS OF CREATION OF STATES.....	349
IX.	CONCLUDING REMARKS.....	363
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	391

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
1. GROWTH OF COCOA AS A MAJOR EXPORT CROP	81
2. COCOA (MAIN AND LIGHT CROP) PURCHASED BY MARKETING BOARDS.....	81
3. PALM OIL PURCHASED BY MARKETING BOARDS.....	83
4. GROUNDNUTS PURCHASED BY MARKETING BOARDS.....	83
5. NUMBER OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND PUPILS BY REGIONS IN 1959.....	108
6. COMMODITY PRODUCER PRICES AS PERCENTAGE OF WORLD PRICE: 1948-58.....	117
7. PROGRESS OF NIGERIANIZATION OF "SENIOR SERVICE", 1952.....	126
8. NIGERIA: STATE REVENUES FROM IMPORT DUTIES AND TAXATION, 1944-50.....	133
9. REGISTERED WORKERS THROUGH TRADE UNIONS 1940-1961.....	154
10. YEAR TO YEAR PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN PRODUCER PRICES 1950-60.....	171
11. NIGERIA: LOCAL AND EXTERNAL SHAREHOLDINGS IN THE ECONOMY.....	223
12. PER CAPITA STATE GOVERNMENTS REVENUES BY SOURCES: 1973-74-1975-76.....	335
13. NIGERIA'S PETROLEUM (CRUDE) EXPORTS 1973-1975.....	355

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

'You had asked me for books written by Black Professors. I wanted you to judge for yourself. Educators, men of letters, intellectuals: these are only voices - not neutral; disembodied voices - but belonging to bodies of persons, of groups, of interests. You will seek the truth about words emitted by a voice, look first for the body behind the voice. The voice merely rationalizes the needs, whims, caprices, of its owner, the master. Better therefore to know the master in whose service the intellect is and you'll be able to properly evaluate the import and imagery of its utterances. You serve the people who struggle; or you serve those who rob the people. In a situation of robber and the robbed, in a situation in which the old man of the sea is sitting on Sinbad, there can be no neutral history and politics. If you would learn look about you: choose your side.'

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, in
Petals of Blood

To even the most casual observer the critical role of the state in Africa and other post-colonial societies is obvious. Interest in the phenomenon of the post-colonial state and the relationship of social classes to it has led to some exciting work and debate.¹ This study is motivated by

¹This includes among others, Hamza Alavi, "The State in Post-Colonial Societies--Pakistan and Bangladesh," New Left Review, No. 74, 1972, pp. 59-82; John Saul, "The State in Post-Colonial Societies: Tanzania," Socialist Register, 1974, pp. 349-372; Colin Leys, "The 'Overdeveloped' Post Colonial State: A Re-evaluation," Review of African Political Economy, No. 5, 1976, pp. 39-48, also his Underdevelopment in Kenya: The Politics of Neo-colonialism (Berkeley: University of

the interest in the role of the state in Africa; it is this that provides its point of departure. In a broad sense, the study attempts to describe and analyse, in a historical context, the formation of and the relationship between social classes and the state structures in Nigeria. Specifically it attempts to elucidate and explain how the changing state structures (i.e., the demands and the creation of new constituent states) in Nigeria are directly related to class formation in that society. It will be argued here that the demands for and the creation of new constituent states in that country cannot be understood or adequately explained without reference to the class structures and struggles in that society.

The thesis for this study is this. That the demands for the creation of new constituent states in Nigeria is one of the outcomes of class formation and intra-class struggles within the locally dominant class. Access to and/or control of state apparatuses or institutions is very important for this class as it attempts to consolidate its dominance and as its members seek opportunities for personal wealth or

California Press, 1975); Steven Langdon, "The State and Capitalism in Kenya," Review of African Political Economy, 8, 1977, pp. 90-98; W. Ziemann and M. Lanzendorfer, "The State in Peripheral Societies," Socialist Register 1977, pp. 143-177; Mahmood Mamdani, Politics and Class Formation in Uganda (London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1976); Issa Shivji, Class Struggles in Tanzania (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976); and Michela von Freyhold, "The Post Colonial State and its Tanzanian Version," Review of African Political Economy, No. 8, 1977, pp. 75-89.

accumulation of capital. Given the primacy of the state in the society and the critical importance of access to and/or control over its apparatuses, such members of the dominant class that lacked this access and/or control initiated, or strongly supported, the demand for new states. They sought to create, in other words, an arena which would permit them such access and/or control that they lacked.

Several hypotheses can be said to follow from this central thesis. These hypotheses are: (1) that the dominant class was economically weak but had achieved political power in spite of this, hence the emphasis on personal enrichment and capital accumulation in order to buttress this political power; (2) that the state is central to or indispensable in this personal enrichment or accumulation process, in such a way that the state may be considered, in effect, as a means of production; and (3) therefore that the pattern of demands for the creation of new constituent states in Nigeria would show a clear and dominant trend in which those dominant class elements without access to the state are most active in supporting the demands. We will attempt to explore these hypotheses in chapters IV, V and VI of this study.

Although more detailed discussion of the concepts of class and state will follow in a subsequent chapter, some preliminary remarks may be in order here. The state is not a thing as such; it is rather the unity of various institutions in society which crystallizes the class relations in that

47

society. As such, the state is seen as playing a rôle that in the long run is in the interest of the dominant class in the economy.¹ Its institutions or apparatuses are those material means, e.g., the army, bureaucracy, state schools and public corporations, through which state intervention in society takes place. They are each "a material condensation of class relations" in society.² The existence of the state has its basis in the division of labour and property ownership in the economy. So too do social class. From the Marxist perspective, state and class are so inextricably linked that it is difficult, if at all possible, to explain one without reference to the other.

Social classes, generally speaking, are aggregates of individuals who are commonly related to the means of production and who, ceteris paribus, share common ideological and political dispositions.³ Class relations are contradictory.

¹This is the basis of Marx's and Engels' declaration in the Manifesto that "The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie." See Manifesto of the Communist Party in Lewis Feuer, ed. Marx and Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy (New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1959), p. 9. As a slogan this statement can stand, but it can pose some analytical difficulties as will be seen soon enough.

²Goran Therborn, What Does the Ruling Class Do When it Rules? State Apparatuses and State Power Under Feudalism, Capitalism, and Socialism (London: New Left Books, 1978), p. 151.

³See Nicos Poulantzas, Political Power and Social Classes, trans. by Timothy O'Hagan (London: NLB and Sheed and Ward, 1975), pp. 77-78; and Ralph Miliband, Marxism and Politics (London: Oxford University Press, 1977), chapter II.

relations; they are objective contradictions. That is, the contradictions are always given and do not depend on what the individuals think about them. Class relations are therefore marked with conflict and antagonism. To illustrate, under capitalism the bourgeoisie and the proletariat which are the major classes stand in contradictory relations. This fact should not be lost sight of even as both must come together if capitalist production is to be possible. Contradiction is basic to this production process, for what is socially produced is privately appropriated by the bourgeoisie.

To discover what classes exist in society first entails analysis of the mode(s) of production in that society; that is, an analysis of the economic and other conditions under which social production takes place. This will engage our attention in much of chapters II and III. Suffice it to say only that we shall attempt, in identifying these classes, to use as appropriately as possible the Marxist criteria for class definition and identification. This is not to imply that Marx himself offered any exhaustive definition of class but simply to say that we shall draw from the later works of researchers who have tried to further develop the concept following Marx's method.

The study of classes in capitalist peripheral societies such as Nigeria can be very difficult. Here one has to take into consideration the facts of external domination of these societies by imperialism and the possible coexistence

of several modes of production in the dominated social formation. Stavenhagen noted that under such conditions in peripheral societies "Class limits will not be clearly defined, class relationships will be ambiguous, structures that belong to different historical epochs will coexist and cut across each other . . ."¹ By no means is it to be taken, however, that by bringing up this point Stavenhagen is enjoining us to return to that sterile debate of whether or not classes even exist in Africa. We should rather be more interested, when classes are identified in the periphery, to show that they share similar or different characteristics from classes in advanced capitalist social formations. Does the petty bourgeoisie in Nigeria show the same characteristics as the traditional petty bourgeoisie described by Marx and Engels? Is the proletariat in Nigeria the same thing as in Canada or the United States? If not, in each or either case--assuming, of course, that these classes can be identified there--wherein lies the difference?

The difficulties of class analysis in the capitalist periphery notwithstanding, we have chosen this approach to the study of changes in Nigerian federal arrangements because it seems to us that the problems here are not adequately or easily amenable to analysis from the "traditional" social science literature on the state and, specifically, on

¹Rodolfo Stavenhagen, Social Classes in Agrarian Societies, trans. by Judy A. Hellman (New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1975), p. 70.

7

federalism. Such literature tells us that federal states are formed due to social and cultural diversity, expectations of economic benefit for, and the geographical contiguity of, the federating entities and also due to the effects of colonial policy.¹ Their major concern is with relations between regional and central governments. As will be seen, however, the issue of creation of new states is not principally a matter of regional and central government relations. It has been suggested by Professor Dudley² that Nigerian leaders adopted a federal model closest to that described by K. C. Wheare in his Federal Government. Perhaps it is instructive that while these leaders have in the past advocated rebuilding Nigerian federalism by using ethnic units as the building blocks, the pressures for the creation of new states have not come only from minority ethnic units within existing states. Such demands have also arisen in Nigeria within the dominant ethnic groups of given states, notably among the Igbos and Yorubas in the former East Central and Western States. Traditional political science approaches to federalism do not permit us to adequately explain these phenomena.

¹See, for example, K. C. Wheare, Federal Government 3rd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), pp. 36-38; and B. M. Sharma, Federalism in Theory and Practice, vol. 1 (Chandausi, India: G. R. Bhargava and Sons, 1951), chapter II.

²B. J. Dudley, "Federalism and the Balance of Power in Nigeria," Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies, Vol. IV, 1966, p. 16.

The arguments that follow are not meant to dispute that multi-ethnicity very likely leads to federal state structure. We take the federal structure of the state as given. We only wish to suggest that perhaps the nature of the forces that propelled the agitation for new states can be better understood from another perspective other than that prevalent in the traditional literature on federalism. An alternative approach seems called for since, as is well known by now, the issue of creating new states has not been simply and directly a matter of minority ethnic problem. Could it be that the Willink Commission (which studied this problem in 1958 and recommended no creation of states but, among other things, the addition of a Human Rights bill to the Independence Constitution) did so because its assumptions were those suggested by traditional theories of federalism? If so, did the Irikefe Panel which studied the same problem in 1975 come to their task with a different perspective? We can only answer these questions after we have analysed the view of the Commission and the Panel. At the moment we should only emphasize that by undertaking this study we are not necessarily joining the critics of federalism.¹

Although we will attempt to use the Marxist concept of class as the key to our analysis, we shall still speak of,

¹For critiques of federalism as conservative, weak and anachronistic forms of government, see Edward McWhinney, Comparative Federalism: States' Rights and National Power, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), pp. 3-6.

and about, individuals and elites where necessary. This should not be seen as contradictory since we treat the individuals and elite groups as parts of given social classes. The approach is informed by the view, as Ralph Miliband put it, that

classes as entities, do not enter into conflict--only elements of it do, though it is the case that very large parts of contending classes are on rare occasions directly drawn into battle. For the most part, however, the conflict is fought out between groups of people who are part of a given class and possibly, though not certainly, representatives of it.¹

It should, of course, be kept in mind that the individual's place in history should not be conceived of as unique or an expression of a particular genius or essence. The individual's role can only be more correctly understood when it is seen as having been acted out according to one of the possible options which the prevailing social relations of the period allow. To quote Plekhanov:

. . . individuals, thanks to the particularities of their characters, can influence the destinies of society. Their influence can be very strong, but the possibility of such an influence, as well as its extent, are determined by the organization of the society, by the relation of social forces. The character of the individual is only a 'factor' of social development of the moment and in the measure permitted it by the social relations.²

This view informs our method.

¹Miliband, op. cit., p. 28.

²Quoted in Ken Post, "Individuals and the Dialectic: A Marxist View of Political Biographies" in W. H. Morris-Jones, ed., The Making of Politicians: Studies from Africa and Asia (London: The Athlone Press, 1976), p. 18; emphasis added.

The concept of class as the key of our analysis is coupled with a historical approach. These two components constitute, in our opinion, the essence of the Marxist method. In this methodology social classes and the forces of production are given primacy as determining, in the final analysis, the dynamics of any society and of history itself. Marxism, as a methodology, considers societies as totalities, the existence and reproduction of which are based in their economic or material conditions of production and exchange. No one aspect of societies--religion, arts, ethics, etc.--is, in the event, considered divorced from the other or from the material conditions of production and exchange. When Marx and Engels wrote that "It is not consciousness that determines life, but life that determines consciousness"¹ they were emphasizing the importance that attaches to material conditions in human beings' historical development. In advancing this proposition, however, Marx and Engels are not dogmatic in positing a one-to-one correspondence between ideas and economic conditions; nor did they insist that only economic conditions are worthy of consideration in the search to understand historical development.²

¹Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, The German Ideology (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1976), p. 42.

²In his letter to Bloch, Engels wrote that "The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure...also exercise their influence upon the course of historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their form." See Basic Writings, ed. by Feuer, op. cit., p. 398; emphasis original.

In addition to its emphasis on material conditions, the Marxist method should also be seen as entailing a commitment. It is a certain commitment to work with the dominated classes in society in their attempts to achieve their own liberation because such liberation enhances, in the long run, the total liberation of society at large by widening the horizons of economic, political and social freedoms. It is for this reason that Marx and Engels did not divorce their intellectual ideas and ideals from the important political questions of their time. One can hardly read any of their works without observing their commitment to the working class and its politics. At the intellectual level Marx and Engels focused on the theory of proletarian revolution; at the political level they worked to help organize this proletariat to find its proper potential.¹ That they failed eventually was not for lack of effort or commitment.

This, briefly, is the method which we hope can help us to locate the fundamental forces at play in the demands for the creation of new constituent states in Nigeria. It should allow us to situate Nigeria within the world context of imperialism in contra-distinction to those for whom "Imperialism . . . is no word for scholars."² As some

¹See Robin Blackburn, "Marxism: Theory of Proletarian Revolution" in Robin Blackburn, ed., Revolution and Class Struggle: A Reader in Marxist Politics (London: Fontana Books, 1977), pp. 25-68.

²Professor Thornton, quoted by Harry Magdoff, in Pierre Jalée, Imperialism in the Seventies, trans. by Raymond and Margaret Sokolov (New York: The Third Press, 1972), p. vi.

Marxist writers have already argued, the historical development of social formations in the periphery of contemporary capitalism cannot be understood without references to the total world structures; the so-called external and internal factors are all inextricably related.¹ If we can understand the impact of imperialism in Nigeria and the dynamics of the different economic and political changes which resulted from it, we shall perhaps be better able to appreciate the forces which have contributed to one of the most important developments in the country: the creation of new constituent states.

The thesis for this study which was stated above derives in part from Ikenna Nzimiro. In a public lecture in which he analysed the past and continuing impact of imperialism on Nigeria; Professor Nzimiro suggested that the issue of state creation has to be explained on the basis of ethnic cleavages within Nigerian social classes.² Specifically we attempt to locate the contradictions in the process of accumulation and personal enrichment of the social class which at independence became locally dominant. Generally stated, accumulation as described by Marx is that process by which the

¹ See Nicos Poulantzas, The Crisis of Dictatorship (Portugal, Greece, Spain, trans. by David Fernbach (London: New Left Books, 1976), p. 22.

² Ikenna Nzimiro, The Crisis in the Social Sciences: The Nigerian Situation. Inaugural lecture delivered at the University of Nigeria, 15 October 1976. (Third World Forum: Occasional Paper No. 2, 1977), p. 39.

(would be) capitalist invests a certain sum of money in a means of production and the purchase of labour power for commodity production, the sale of the produced commodity and the reinvestment of the profit or surplus value thus realized.¹ It begins, according to Marx, with primitive accumulation which is "the historical process of divorcing the producers from the means of production. It appears as primitive, because it forms the pre-historic stage of capital and of the mode of production corresponding to it."² It is a process that leads to the concentration of capital in fewer and fewer hands.

We have added to this idea of accumulation the notion of personal enrichment. We wish to emphasize by it the fact that not all wealth accumulated has been turned into capital. Wealth can be seen as capital but only when, either in the form of land, buildings or money, it is employed to generate profit or surplus value. If wealth is used in conspicuous consumption then we should not consider it capital. This, it appears to us, is the essence of Marx's observation that "it was extremely important for bourgeois economy to promulgate the doctrine . . . that a man cannot accumulate, if he eats up all his revenue, instead of spending a good part of it in the acquisition of additional productive labourers, who bring

¹Karl Marx, Capital: A Critical Analysis of Capitalist Production, vol. 1 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1965), especially chapters 24 and 25.

²Ibid., p. 668.

in more than they cost."¹ Accumulation and conspicuous consumption appear as contradictory processes.²

Other scholars have called attention to the vital role the state can play in the accumulation process of the locally dominant classes in Africa.³ However, we wish to focus on mechanisms for accumulation--namely, corruption and political manipulation--which have hitherto received little attention as important in some phases of the accumulation process. It is hoped that this will help to show better the economic nature of the political struggles in Nigeria. Moreover, we attempt to show that the struggle for opportunities in the accumulation process has led to, among other things, a massive reorganization in the state apparatus.

The demands for the creation of new states began seriously in 1954 but until over a decade later they were not met adequately. In 1960 the Nigerian federal state comprised three regional (or state) governments. By 1963 another was added, making a total of four. From this number the states were increased to twelve in 1967 and to nineteen in 1976. This study attempts to analyse what social forces led to this process. To do this it examines the process of class formation in Nigeria. Although its approach is historical no attempt is

¹Ibid., p. 552.

²One can easily identify such state agencies as the marketing boards and the Development Corporations as aspects of the state involved in capital accumulation. As will be seen in a following chapter the Development Corporations sometimes invested in commercial or productive activities. It was also from them and the marketing boards that funds were made available for the various loan schemes of the Regional Governments. Some of the money capital that was loaned out to private individuals and groups was invested; some of it, however, was squandered in conspicuous consumption, even though the credit was obtained ostensibly for investment. A fuller comment follows when we attempt to show that corruption can be a veritable means of accumulation. What will be obvious is that at the individual level, and because of the role of corruption, the line between capital accumulation and conspicuous consumption is difficult to draw.

³On Kenya see Langdon, op. cit.; and Nicola Swainson, "The Rise of a National Bourgeoisie in Kenya," Review of

made here to examine in any great detail such aspects of Nigerian political history (e.g., party or constitutional developments) which other scholars have already ably described and analysed.¹

The study follows this pattern: The second chapter explicates our theoretical point of departure. Chapter III examines some of the policies of the colonial state in Nigeria and how these policies restructured the Nigerian social formation. Chapter IV focuses on the different social classes that began to form, attempting to identify the major characteristics of the locally dominant class. We attempt to show in chapter V that the post-colonial state continued to perform broadly the same functions as the colonial state. In chapter VI we examine the locally dominant class' ideology and its relationship to access and control of state apparatuses. Chapter VII attempts to analyse the history of the demands for the creation of new states. It examines also the extent to which the major groups which supported these demands may be said to belong to the elements of the locally dominant class which previously lacked access to the state. In chapter VIII the major reasons which have usually been adduced for the creation (or rejection) of new states are critically examined. In the conclusion in

African Political Economy, No. 8, 1977, pp. 39-55; on Tanzania see Issa Shivji, op. cit.; generally, see Claude Ake, Revolutionary Pressures in Africa (London: Zed Press, 1978).

¹For example, James Coleman, Nigeria: Background to Nationalism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1958); Richard Sklar, The Nigerian Political Parties: Power in an Emergent African Nation (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963); and Kalu Ezera, Constitutional Development in Nigeria (London: Cambridge University Press, 1964), among others.

chapter IX we attempt to explain why the states were created at the particular times and we speculate on the probable course of social class developments in the immediate future.

CHAPTER II

SOCIAL CLASSES AND THE STATE

It is frequently pointed out that neither Marx nor Engels discovered the concept of class. Thus Dos Santos points out that an examination of works by Aristotle, Aquinas and Adam Smith shows they used the same or similar concept. What Marx and Engels contributed to the concept of class was to give it "a scientific dimension and, moreover, make it the basis for explaining society and its history."¹ Marx had indeed made the humble claim that no credit was due to him for discovering the concept of class.²

To understand the concept of class as a scientific notion we may here adopt the definition proposed by Lenin. According to him,

Classes are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organization of

¹Theotonio Dos Santos, "The Concept of Social Classes," Science and Society, Vol. 34, No. 2, 1970, p. 167. The same point is made by Ralph Miliband, Marxism and Politics (London: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 19.

²In a letter to Joseph Weydemeyer in Marx and Engels, Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy, ed. by Lewis S. Feuer (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1959), p. 457.

labour, and, consequently, by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it. Classes are groups of people one of which can appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy.¹

From this definition Carchedi has offered four dimensions in which it should be understood in the identification of classes in a social formation.² The first is that of the producer and non-producer or, what is the same thing, exploiter and exploited. The second dimension is that of ownership or non-ownership of the means of production. The third is what Carchedi calls the "producer as labourer."³ He is referring here to the social organization of labour and in particular to the fact that every labourer or non-owner of a means of production is not a productive worker; some labourers may be unproductive labourers. The productive workers or labourers are those participants in the labour process who are engaged in the process of producing surplus value. The unproductive labourers, on the other hand, do not produce surplus value. They may contribute to the process by which such surplus value is realised. Like productive workers, they do not own the means of production; they are also economically oppressed.

¹V. Lenin, A Great Beginning in Collected Works, vol. 29 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1965), p. 421.

²G. Carchedi, "On the Economic Identification of the New Middle Class," Economy and Society, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1975, p. 10.

³Ibid., p. 12.

From this it may be seen that some non-owners of the means of production, though they may be workers, nevertheless may perform functions some of which are in fact functions of capital itself. The fourth dimension suggested by Carchedi is that of wealth or income and how it is acquired. There is a difference if this income/wealth derives either from wages or revenue. The owner of the means of production or the non-owner who performs (at least part of) the function of capital derives his income from revenue while the worker (i.e., the productive worker) receives wages. Wages are the amounts of money which the worker receives as the supposed price of his labour power; it is largely determined by what is required for the reproduction of the worker. Revenue, on the other hand, is what the capitalist derives from the surplus-product after the cost of production is paid for.¹ In saying that the income of those who perform the function of capital derives from revenue, it is meant that this income derives from a source not directly related to actual surplus-value production. It is income that derives from the surplus-product appropriated and consumed by the capitalist. It is not based simply on the reproduction needs of the capitalist or the new middle class; hence it may be a heavy income, certainly much higher than the workers wages.²

¹Capital, vol. 1, p. 554.

²Carchedi, pp. 55-56.

It can be seen that although the relative sizes of income is one of the dimensions in the identification of social classes, it is considered as a consequence of the relations of production. Thus to use the criterion of size of income per se in defining or identifying social classes would be crude, even if at certain times the distribution relations are important. It needs to be emphasized, therefore, that relative income size in social class definition is but "a consequence of the relations of production."¹ As Lenin's definition cited above makes clear it is relations of production which determines, at that historical period in a society's development when surplus production has become possible, which class appropriates the labour of others. Draper makes the same point when he writes that "Classes define themselves not simply in terms of the process of production . . . they must be defined in relation to surplus production, and especially in relation to control over the appropriation of the surplus product."²

Class definition is not limited to the economic sphere, and although that is the focus of Carchedi's analysis, he does acknowledge other criteria. These criteria are the political

¹Nicos Poulantzas, "On Social Classes," New Left Review 78, March-April 1973, p. 28.

²Hal Draper, Karl Marx's Theory of Revolution Part 1: State and Bureaucracy (New York: Monthly Review, 1977), p. 14.

and the ideological--or cultural, as Miliband prefers.¹ These two criteria refer to the importance of political struggles in class definition. In considering all three criteria--the economic, the political and the ideological--the economic is seen as the determinant. The political and ideological criteria obviously lead to problems of just what degree of class consciousness should be associated with classes. As Miliband points out this question may be easy to decide with reference to the bourgeoisie but a problem develops when one is caught in the web of fathoming what is the proletarian consciousness.² Above all, as Dos Santos pointed out, problems of class consciousness are formidable when one is studying a social formation in which social classes "are in constant transformation toward new forms of relation."³

E. P. Thompson has emphasized that class is a relationship between aggregates of people over a period of time, and not a "thing" which can be isolated from the relationships of social production and studied in that isolation.⁴ Class is a

¹ Miliband, p. 20; see also Nicos Poulantzas, *op. cit.*, p. 27, and his Political Power and Social Classes, trans. by Timothy O'Hagan (London: NLB and Sheed and Ward, 1975), pp. 63-64.

² Miliband, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-34.

³ Dos Santos, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

⁴ E. P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1968), pp. 10-11.

"historical phenomenon."¹ It is not a static relationship but a dynamic one and as such it "evades analysis if we attempt to stop it dead at any given moment and anatomize its structure."² As a relationship between aggregates of individuals, a class relationship involves conflict and opposition. There may indeed appear to be complementary aspects of class relationships as in the fact that in the capitalist mode of production the bourgeoisie (owners of the means of production) and the proletariat (non-owners of the means of production, productive labourers) must meet in the productive process if there is to be any surplus value produced. It is precisely in this seemingly complementary association between them that the elements of conflict and opposition are embedded. Conflict and opposition are rooted in the struggle for the appropriation of the surplus value. Class conflict may not always be openly expressed and it may not always take very clear forms.

In the abstract analysis of the class structure in any social formation it would appear that only two classes exist: the class that produces surplus and the class that effectively appropriates or disposes of that surplus. However, before any roster of social classes in a formation can be drawn up one must first attempt to analyse the modes of production of that social formation and their relationship

¹Ibid., p. 9; emphasis is original.

²Ibid.

to each other, for in concrete analysis the class structure of a given society does not always take the polar form.

In capitalist society there not only exist the bourgeoisie and the proletariat but also the petty bourgeoisie. Within this petty bourgeoisie, Poulantzas has identified the traditional and the new petty bourgeoisie.¹ The former are essentially the small scale producers such as artisans and self-employed carpenters and shopkeepers. As Draper puts it, "They are property owners, albeit in a small way. . . . But although property owners, they are not capitalists, that is, not employers living primarily by the extraction of surplus labour from wage workers."² In the earlier phases of capitalism the old petty bourgeoisie constituted the major intermediary class. The new petty bourgeoisie, on the other hand, tends to become a sizeable class in the advanced capitalist stage. Poulantzas sees them as non-property (i.e., productive property) owners, including civil servants who sell their labour and who are exploited not because they produce surplus value but rather "by direct extortion of surplus labour . . ."³ Both the new and the old petty bourgeoisie comprise "a relatively unified class," according to Poulantzas, because they

¹Poulantzas, "On Social Classes," p. 37.

²Hal Draper, Karl Marx Theory of Revolution Vol. II: The Politics of Social Classes (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1978), p. 289.

³Poulantzas, "On Social Classes," p. 37.

both show the same characteristics in espousing the myth of social advancement and in their attraction to the status quo.¹

An alternative and a more useful approach for identifying the new petty bourgeoisie is that suggested by Carchedi. In terms of class relations he sees the new petty bourgeoisie as occupying contradictory positions because it is "a mixture of the elements characterising the two primary classes in their pure state: the working class and the capitalist class."² The new petty bourgeoisie performs at once the functions of capital and of the collective worker: here lies its contradictory position. Carchedi's perspective is preferred to Poulantzas's because the former does not fail to emphasize the economic criterion whereas it appears that Poulantzas, in this instance, gives primacy to the political and the ideological.

In identifying classes in the advanced capitalist social formation it is not at all assumed that they are homogeneous or unified. Divisions within social classes may be identified as fractions and as strata; the two are not used interchangeably, but they may be parts of the same class. Fractions of a class are those parts of it which can become political or social forces and which are located "at the level of relations of production."³ Thus from the bourgeois

¹Ibid., pp. 37-38; emphasis added.

²Carchedi, op. cit., p. 50. See also Erik O. Wright, Class Crisis and the State (London: New Left Books, 1978), pp. 62-63.

³Poulantzas, Political Power and Social Classes, p. 84.

class one may distinguish industrial or financial, national or comprador fractions. We should perhaps define the latter two fractions. Here we may adopt Poulantzas' definitions:

The comprador bourgeoisie is that fraction of the class whose interests are constitutively linked to foreign imperialist capital . . . and which is thus completely bound politically and ideologically to foreign capital. The national bourgeoisie is that fraction . . . whose interests are linked to the nation's economic development and which comes into relative contradiction with the interests of the big foreign capital.¹

And just as there are different fractions among the bourgeoisie, so also there are among the petty bourgeoisie, for example the new and the old petty bourgeoisie.

Strata, like fractions, exist within social classes. But unlike fractions, strata are not able to constitute themselves into political or social forces. They nevertheless do have some influence on politics. A good example of a stratum within the working class is "the working-class aristocracy which . . . cannot itself constitute a social force, but it influences the political practice of the working class, functioning politically as the working class 'agent' of the bourgeoisie."² Finally, one may differentiate a social category from both strata and fractions. Unlike strata and fractions, a social category may comprise individuals from different classes but as a unity it is relatively autonomous of the classes from which it derives its members. A social

¹Poulantzas, "On Social Classes," p. 39.

²Poulantzas, Political Power and Social Classes, p. 85.

category can have an ideological and/or political influence. Examples of social categories include intellectuals and the bureaucracy.

From what can be seen of the different classes and fractions or strata thereof in advanced capitalist social formations where other modes of production have virtually been swallowed up by the capitalist mode, class analysis in the periphery social formations will be even more difficult because here other modes of production than the capitalist are in different stages of transformation and because the capitalist mode in these formations combines with different pre-capitalist modes of production. Here then is a reminder that without first analysing the modes of production in a historical context one cannot simply come up with a roster of social classes in a social formation. Some Marxist scholars who have focused on African social formations have usually been understandably cautious not to simply transpose to the periphery the class categories from the advanced capitalist social formations. Others, however, while adopting elements of the methodology, and not always with rigour, have also adopted class categories from the advanced capitalist social formations.

Shivji, writing on Tanzania, emphasizes production relations and the fact that these relations are antagonistic ones. But at other times he appears to emphasize market relations. Hence, he writes of the Asians as the price givers

and the Africans as the price takers.¹ From showing the process by which surplus is extracted from the society and how it is disposed of, Shivji is able to show how the African petty bourgeoisie who he defines as mainly small property owners were opposed to the Asian commercial bourgeoisie.² Mamdani, writing on Uganda, also focuses on contradictions in the production relations and surplus production and appropriation.³ Colin Leys also emphasized these same criteria in his study of Kenya, and he stressed the importance of "exploring contradictions" between the modes of production which still exist in Africa.⁴ The point here is not that Leys, Mamdani and Shivji are necessarily agreed on the number of social classes--assuming this were important--which one can find in social formations in the periphery. It is rather that even here, the difficulties notwithstanding, they have adopted some of the methodological canons of Marxism.

Whether or not one can speak meaningfully of a bourgeoisie that is dominant in any of the African social formations is a moot question. To be sure, elements of such a

¹Issa Shivji, Class Struggles in Tanzania (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976), p. 42.

²Ibid., pp. 37-38; p. 49.

³Mahmood Mamdani, Politics and Class Formation in Uganda (London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1976), especially in chapter 5.

⁴Colin Leys, Underdevelopment in Kenya: The Politics of Neo-Colonialism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), p. 173.

class fraction may be identified in Nigeria or Kenya, for example. What is little debated now, if at all, is the comprador nature of large elements of the locally dominant social classes. Hence Fanon's polemics in The Wretched of the Earth are directed at a corrupt comprador 'ruling' class in Africa and Leys speaks on Kenya of an "auxiliary" bourgeoisie.¹ These writers recognize the dominant position in these social formations of international capital and the role of the local social classes as the appendages of this capital. The distinction should be made between the bourgeoisie in the advanced capitalist social formations and in the periphery, if such a class is here identified or defined. It is important to show, in the latter social formation, what the relationship between this class and international capital has been. What is said here applies to other social classes in the periphery also.

It is not always clear from the literature on the class structure of the periphery formations whether the petty bourgeoisie, the proletariat or the peasantry being described are similar to or different from those of the advanced capitalist social formations. This is apparent when some writers like Shivji see the petty bourgeoisie or a fraction of it as a ruling class. This is surely a different form of petty bourgeoisie than that described by Marx and

¹Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, trans. by Constance Farrington (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1963); and Leys, op. cit.

Engels. They and later Marxists in the advanced capitalist social formation see the petty bourgeoisie as a class which is subject to pressure from both the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, a class some of which may develop into the bourgeoisie proper and some of which will be forced into the ranks of the proletariat.¹ This is clearly not the same petty bourgeoisie that Shivji, Mamdani and others are writing about.² Professor Howard, in writing of the petty bourgeoisie in Ghana, however, seems to have largely retained the classical view of this class. She identified this class as "small property owners and traders, whose aspirations to enter the bourgeoisie are constantly thwarted, at the same time as they are constantly threatened by the possibility of losing their tenuous hold on property and descending into the ranks of the poor peasantry or the proletariat."³ Unlike Shivji or Mamdani, she does not consider as part of the petty bourgeoisie the professionals and civil servants.

When we speak in this study of the petty bourgeoisie in Nigeria we shall, following Leys, Shivji and Mamdani, include the officer corps of police and army, the senior civil service and senior employees of foreign enterprises as some of the strata of this class.⁴ They will be included here because

¹ Draper, The Politics of Social Classes, pp. 288-289.

² Shivji, op. cit.; and Mamdani, op. cit.

³ Rhoda Howard, Colonialism and Underdevelopment in Ghana (London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1978), p. 182.

⁴ The major sectoral lines from which this class evolved are education, commerce and state bureaucracy. It is not to be assumed that the different class fractions used their access to the state in exactly the same way. For the teachers, for example, such access was important for job security and even the choice of job location, especially after the phasing out of missionary or voluntary agency schools. Teachers were also sure sources of recruitment for the ruling parties; in turn, the parties provided means for some teachers to either move into the bureaucracy, an occupation of higher social prestige, or secure loans for business

they are not paid wages as such but salaries, which salaries derive from state revenue and not from their own directly produced surplus. Other strata of this class (the petty bourgeoisie) will include the independent professionals and intellectuals: the former because of their interest in maintaining the status quo and the latter because of their important role in the reproduction of social relations. Some among the professionals and the intellectuals also own some small property. The chiefs, obas and emirs are included in this class, as are, finally, the traders--especially those in the import-export business. To a very large extent this is not merely a class sandwiched between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, although it is indeed subject to pressures from the foreign bourgeoisie.

Carchedi's identification of the new petty bourgeoisie as occupying contradictory class positions is useful when we conceptualize such strata within this class as the civil service and those employed at management levels in foreign enterprises. The civil service may be seen as unproductive workers. Its upper levels, for sure, may be said to perform the function of capital insofar as their roles are important for social reproduction and to the extent that they plan and execute the development process. We see such development planning as they engage in as a process of extending capitalist production in the Nigerian economy. The different strata of

activities. Mention may also be made of the role of the state in the expanded reproduction of teachers, especially after 1957. For elements of the petty bourgeoisie in the bureaucracy or in commerce, access to state facilitated accumulation and encouraged conspicuous consumption. In return, they help the ruling parties with financial contribution and in using all administrative means to secure the parties against criticism and opposition.

the petty bourgeoisie identified here are seen as only relatively unified, in the same sense that fractions of the bourgeoisie may be said to be unified: their economic interests, though not without elements of mutual conflict at least in the short run, incline them to the defence of the status quo. In the Nigerian context this status quo is the maintenance of neo-colonial relations between the national economy and international capital.

The working class or proletariat as examined here is not a fully proletarianized class. To the extent at least that its members share "common interests with others similarly situated," it has some attributes of class consciousness.¹ However, we shall not emphasize here this element of class consciousness. What is more important is that it appears to straddle two modes of production.² Because of this it is different from the proletariat of the advanced capitalist social formation. The peasantry will be identified by the fact that they still, in most cases, retain access to land, their means of production. The major object of their cultivation is subsistence, though they also produce some surplus (which largely finds its way into the national and international economy). Having said that subsistence is the major object of their production, it is not to be supposed that it is a

¹Peter Waterman, "Workers in the Third World," Monthly Review, Vol. 29, No. 4, 1977, p. 54.

²Cf. Leys, Underdevelopment in Kenya, p. 171.

self-sufficient class. In fact some of what it needs for subsistence must be produced in other sectors of the economy and to acquire this, it must sell some of its production.

The relation between some of these classes is not one of coexistence but of contradictions¹ and antagonisms. It is not that individual peasants or workers and petty bourgeois may not or cannot get along in specific conjunctures. The local petty bourgeoisie and the foreign bourgeoisie, on the one hand, and the peasants and workers, on the other, stand in contradictory relations. The workers and peasants produce the surplus product which is appropriated mostly by the foreign bourgeoisie and, to a lesser extent, by the petty bourgeoisie. From this point of view alone it may be said that the interests of the latter two classes are identical. Those interests consist primarily in the maintenance of the major outlines of the colonial political economy. On the other hand, the interests of the peasants and workers, the exploited classes, are opposed to this status quo. There is also a contradiction between the petty bourgeoisie and the foreign bourgeoisie but this is not the primary contradiction.

THE STATE

Before discussing the role of the state, we may begin by showing how it may be identified. Here Miliband's view is adopted. According to him "... 'the state' is not a

¹Cf. Mao Tse-Tung, "On Contradictions" in Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung, vol. 1 (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1967), pp. 311-347.

thing, . . . it does not, as such, exist. What 'the state' stands for is a number of particular institutions which, together, constitute its reality, and which interact as parts of what may be called the state system."¹ In this system, it is the government--not to be confused as simply the party in power--that actively represents the state. But, Miliband adds, this does not mean that the state is effectively controlled by the government. "How far governments do control it is one of the major questions to be determined"²--and it cannot be determined a priori. Other constitutive elements in the state system include the bureaucracy (at least its upper levels), the coercive apparatus (police, army, prisons), the judiciary and the lower levels of government that exist in the formation.³ The question of checks and balances which may exist between these elements should not obscure the essential unity that exists between them.

Historically, the state arose with the division of society into contradictory and antagonistic classes. It is not that the state reconciles the contradictions and antagonism between classes. What it does is maintain the social and political order of the social formation, but within such an order the process of class exploitation and subordination

¹Ralph Miliband, The State in Capitalist Society (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969), p. 49.

²Ibid., p. 50.

³Ibid., pp. 50-54.

continues. The state's role in the maintenance of order does not appear to be in doubt any longer. What continues to excite some debate are questions of how and in whose favour the state imposes order.

The liberal view is that the state is neutral; that it merely balances things out between competing elite groups.¹ According to this view, there is no ruling class as such in society; therefore it does not assume that state power is exercised in favour of any such class. In contrast to this view some Marxists see the state as maintaining an order in which it is the interests of the ruling class (the bourgeoisie in a capitalist state) which are favoured in the long run. This is so, Poulantzas argues,

not simply in those cases where there is a direct and obvious relation between (a) the organization of labour and education and (b) the political domination of class, but also where the object of these functions is the maintenance of the unity of a formation, inside which this class is the politically dominant class.²

So in merely maintaining the unity of the social formation the state acts in the long run in favour of the bourgeoisie's interests since it thereby preserves the conditions under which this class is dominant.

In maintaining social and political order, the state does not usually apply physical force. It may infrequently do so, especially against any move by the dominated classes.

¹Cf. Robert Dahl, A Preface to Democratic Theory (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956).

²Poulantzas, Political Power and Social Classes, p. 54.

to challenge the status quo. Propaganda and the ideological hegemony of the bourgeoisie help to ensure that physical force can be kept in the background.¹

Major functions of the state besides the maintenance of political order include those of legitimation and accumulation.² The legitimation function involves the state in policies that may earn for it some (at least up to that minimum that saves it from having to use physical force) basic support from even among the dominated classes. Through its accumulation function it is involved in creating or maintaining conditions conducive for private accumulation of the bourgeoisie in advanced capitalist states. These two basic functions of the state can be contradictory in the long run in that the capitalist state is required by its very nature to organize conditions by which the bourgeoisie maintains its dominance over and exploitation of the other classes and at the same time to attempt to ameliorate the effects of the dominance and exploitation. Professor Panitch points out, however, that this may not always be the case: "A taxation policy aimed at income redistribution for the purpose of legitimization may be contrary to short-term accumulation,

¹See Draper, Karl Marx's Theory of Revolution Vol. 1: State and Bureaucracy (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1977), pp. 264-270 for some other means which enable the state to use physical force only sparingly.

²For some discussion of these, see James O'Connor, The Fiscal Crisis of the State (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973).

but necessary for maintaining accumulation in the long run, indeed even for accelerating it."¹

The advanced capitalist state is not usually directly involved in capital accumulation. This is rather the special preserve of private units of the bourgeoisie. One may indeed find exceptions, for example in cases of nationalized enterprises, where the bourgeois state is directly involved in accumulation; but these are just that, exceptions. As Claus Offe maintains, the bourgeois state's authority and mandate lie in the creation and sustenance of the "conditions for accumulation."²

It can be deduced from some of the foregoing that the state can hardly be a neutral institution. However, the functions which favour only the bourgeoisie are not the only ones that the state performs. Draper points out clearly that the state is also involved in such functions as disaster relief or sanitation which would need to be performed even in nonclass societies. It is the case, however, that in carrying out some of these "nonclass tasks" the state does so "inevitably in class-distorted ways, for class ends, with class consequences."³

¹Leo Panitch, "The Role and Nature of the Canadian State" in Panitch, ed., The Canadian State: Political Economy and Political Power (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), pp. 8-9.

²Claus Offe, "The Theory of the Capitalist State and the Problem of Policy Formation" in L. Lindberg et al., Stress and Contradictions in Modern Capitalism (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1975), p. 126.

³Draper, State and Bureaucracy, p. 260; emphasis original.

Is the state then simply a mechanical and direct instrument of the ruling class? One may indeed get the impression that this is usually the case from a superficial reading of Marx and Engels. The "Manifesto," for example, portrays the state as the executive of the bourgeoisie.¹

To so leave the matter would, however, be to harbour "a simplistic and vulgarized conception" of the state.² It would be quite difficult, if at all possible, for the state to be a mere instrument of the ruling class since in fact that class is one which is internally divided and is subject to serious intra-class competition for surplus-value or profit.

The state is rather able to play its role of organizing the conditions under which the bourgeoisie is dominant precisely because it is not a direct instrument of this class. The capitalist state is indeed relatively autonomous of the bourgeois ruling class and of the dominated classes.³ The

¹"Manifesto" in Basic Writings, op. cit., p. 9; and also "The Civil War in France," op. cit., p. 363, where Engels wrote that "the state is nothing but a machine for the oppression of one class by another, and indeed in the democratic republic no less than in the monarchy ..."

²Poulantzas, Political Power and Social Classes, p. 256.

³See Draper, State and Bureaucracy, Chapter 14; and Poulantzas, Political Power, p. 256. According to Poulantzas this relative autonomy of the capitalist state has its basis in the capitalist relations of production and the separateness which this implies for political and economic struggles. See *ibid.*, pp. 275-276. For some criticism of the concept of relative autonomy as used by Poulantzas, see Thomas Bamat, "Relative Autonomy and Capitalism in Brazil and Peru," The Insurgent Sociologist, Vol. VII, No. 2, 1977, pp. 74-84.

state's relative autonomy is dynamic, being a function of the on-going class struggles in the social formation. It may allow the state ostensibly to cater for the general interests of society but it is also crucial for organizing the bourgeoisie's hegemony. For left to itself the bourgeoisie is politically inept and cannot directly run the state apparatuses since it is more interested in capital accumulation. Jostling by fractions of this class to have their particular interests served by the state can only be conducive to instability unless the state was relatively autonomous of them.

The personnel of the state need not be members of the ruling class. It may well be the case "that those who run the state . . . belong to a class which is not the economically dominant class."¹ If relative autonomy attaches to the state and the state's personnel may come from other than the economically dominant class, why cannot the state's personnel simply and easily turn the tables on the dominant class? For the state to pursue for prolonged periods of time policies inimical to the fundamental interests of the bourgeoisie it would face the real possibility of disintegrating. The state's interests or the interests of those running it are intricately linked with the capitalist mode of production. Block and Offe emphasize this point. According to Block, it is in the interests of the state personnel to see at least "some reasonable level

¹Ralph Miliband, "Marx and the State," Socialist Register, 1965, p. 283.

of economic activity" and to maintain the confidence in the economy of the bourgeois class.¹ This is necessary if the state managers are to raise the finance needed to maintain the functions of the state. Should state managers implement policies which make the ruling class lose confidence in the economy over a long period of time an economic crisis may thereby be engendered or aggravated. In such a situation the state managers would lose their position either through an election or even a coup. As Block concludes: "In short, their structural position gives the state managers both the interest and the capacity to aid the investment accumulation process."²

Determining the relationship between the dominant class and some of the state apparatuses can be very difficult.³ The difficulty is most obvious with regard to the bureaucracy (i.e., the civil service or public service of the state) since it is here that much of the state power is put en marche.

¹Fred Block, "The Ruling Class Does not Rule: Notes on the Marxist Theory of the State," Socialist Revolution, No. 33 (Vol. 7 No. 3), May-June 1977, p. 15.

²Ibid., p. 20. Offe writes: "In the absence of accumulation, everything, and especially the power of the state, tends to disintegrate.... Thus, every interest the state (or the personnel of the state apparatus, its various branches and agencies) may have in their own stability and development can only be pursued if it is in accordance with the imperative of maintaining accumulation; this fundamental dependency upon accumulation functions as a selective principle upon state policies." See Offe, op. cit., p. 126.

³Some of the problems related to this have been elaborated upon by Poulantzas, Political Power, pp. 331-340.

Generally, it would appear that there is no direct relationship or affiliation between the bureaucracy and the bourgeoisie. What relationship exists between them is mediated by the state, so the bureaucracy is able to maintain a relative autonomy vis à vis the bourgeoisie. Nor should the bureaucracy be considered a class but a social category. In the advanced capitalist formation, the conception of the bureaucracy as a class would be untenable because here the state is not usually involved directly in the productive process. The problem of determining the relationship of the bureaucracy to the dominant class is also encountered in the peripheral social formations. Suffice it here to accept the view by Poulantzas that the bureaucracy both in the advanced capitalist state and in peripheral states should be considered as a social category and not as a class or a fraction. As a social category, the bureaucracy in any formation has power but it is not an economic power; that is, its power does not derive from its class origin. It constitutes a unity despite the diverse class origins of its members and the unity specific to it is directly related to its being a state apparatus.¹

With this outline of the nature and role of the state generally and the advanced capitalist state in particular, we are now in a better position to focus only on the post-colonial state, to see what differences and similarities exist

¹Ibid., p. 335.

between it and the advanced capitalist state, and to see why those similarities and differences exist.

THE STATE IN POST-COLONIAL FORMATIONS

It is only by taking into account the historical specificity of the states in the post-colonial periphery that one can begin to understand why it may be said to be a capitalist type of state and the extent to which it is different from the state in advanced capitalist formations. In a nutshell, the difference between the two forms of capitalist state is this: that while the state in the advanced capitalist formations functions to maintain the economic and social relations under which bourgeois accumulation takes place, in the periphery of capitalism factors which are historical make the state-- through its several institutions and apparatuses--a direct instrument for accumulation for the dominant class or its elements. Differences of course exist not only between the states in advanced capitalist formations and those in the periphery but also among the former and among the latter. These differences are equally rooted in historical experiences and the nature of class struggles specific to each state whether in the advanced or peripheral capitalist formation.

We may refer to the post-colonial state as a form of the capitalist type of state since it is founded in social formations that are now largely incorporated into the global capitalist network of imperialism; in these social formations too the capitalist mode of production though not in its pure

form dominates other modes. What may still be open to debate is whether or not these peripheral formations can adequately be described as having capitalist modes of production. With regard to Latin America Frank speaks of capitalism whereas Laclau speaks not simply of capitalism but capitalist relations that are based on a production process that tends toward feudalism.¹ The weight of evidence appears to support the view that the post-colonial formation contains several modes of production in which the capitalist appears dominant. This is the view adopted in this study. The dominated modes have been restructured by the impact on them of merchant capital prior to and during colonialism. They have neither been totally destroyed by the impact of imperialism, nor are they left in their pre-capitalist forms. Their relationship with the dominant capitalist mode is what has frequently been described as articulation of modes of production which is meant to reflect the contradictory effect on them by capitalism.² Whether or not these peripheral formations are well on their way to full capitalist development are not considered

¹See A. G. Frank, Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America: Historical Studies of Chile and Brazil (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1967); and Ernesto Laclau, "Feudalism and Capitalism in Latin America," New Left Review, 67, May-June 1971, pp. 19-38.

²On articulation of modes of production, see Charles Bettelheim's "Theoretical Comments" in Arrighi Emmanuel, Unequal Exchange: A Study of the Imperialism of Trade (New York: Monthly Review, 1972), pp. 297-298; and Aidan Foster-Carter, "The Modes of Production Controversy," New Left Review, 107, January-February 1978, pp. 47-77.

here.¹ We simply note that the dominance of the externally oriented (quasi-) capitalist mode has the effect of drawing surplus from the dominated modes; it also has consequences for the social class formation and the nature of the state.

It was in consideration of the historical specificity of the post-colonial social formation that Alavi attempted to construct a Marxist theory of the post-colonial state. He found inadequate for this form of state the Marxist views that (a) the state functions in the bourgeoisie's interest by maintaining the balance of social class forces in the bourgeoisie's favour and (b) that the state is an autonomous entity yet at the bourgeoisie's service.² His argument is that:

In the post-colonial society, the problem of the relationship between the State and the underlying economic structure is more complex than the context in which it was posed even in the Bonapartist-State or other examples which arose in the context of the development of European society.³

Moreover, Alavi finds that imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism have introduced an element in the post-colonial

¹ Bill Warren is of the opinion that substantial progress has been made by some of the states in the periphery toward eventual full capitalist development. See his "Imperialism and Capitalist Industrialization," New Left Review, 81, 1973, pp. 3-44. His views are disputed by Arrighi Emmanuel, "Myths of Development versus Myths of Underdevelopment," New Left Review, 85, 1974, pp. 61-82; and by Philip McMichael, James Petras and R. Rhodes, "Imperialism and the Contradictions of Development," ibid., pp. 83-103.

² Hamza Alavi, "The State in Post-Colonial Societies: Pakistan and Bangladesh," New Left Review, 74, 1972, p. 61.

³ Ibid.

state equation which is absent from the European: foreign bourgeoisies "constitute a powerful element in its [the post-colonial state's] class structure."¹

Alavi's further contention is that because a foreign bourgeoisie used the colonial state apparatuses to subjugate "all the indigenous social classes It might be said that the 'superstructure' in the colony is therefore 'over-developed' in relation to the structure in the colony, for its basis lies in the metropolitan structure itself, from which it is later separated at the time of independence. . . . The post-colonial state inherits that over-developed apparatus of state and its institutionalized practices through which the operations of the indigenous social classes are regulated and controlled."² The post-colonial state, therefore, is not "the instrument of a single class. It is relatively autonomous, and it mediates between the competing interests, of the three propertied classes, namely the metropolitan bourgeoisies, the indigenous bourgeoisie and the landed classes" ³ And along with being "over-developed" the post-colonial state is also distinguished, according to Alavi, by that state's prominent economic role.

¹Ibid., p. 62.

²Ibid., p. 61; emphasis original.

³Ibid., p. 62.

In his contribution to the search for a clearer understanding of the post-colonial state Saul¹ adopted Alavi's notion that that state is overdeveloped and that it plays a dominant or prominent economic role. Saul further observes that in the advanced capitalist formation the state maintains an ideological hegemony over society and thus plays a role as a unifier.

In the post-colonial societies, on the other hand, and particularly in Africa, this hegemonic position must be created, and created within territorial boundaries which often appear as quite artificial once the powerful force of direct colonial fiat has been removed. Peripheral capitalism, like advanced capitalism, requires territorial unity and legitimacy and the post-colonial state's centrality to the process of creating these conditions . . . is what all the fashionable discussion of 'nation-building' in development literature is all about! 2

This unifying function is a third element which Saul now attributes to the post-colonial state.

Saul did not simply adopt Alavi uncritically. In fact, he modified some of the notions Alavi had put forward. For example, although like Alavi he attributes the post-colonial state with relative autonomy, he is doubtful that such autonomy is due to the state's mediation role between the three propertied classes suggested by Alavi. For Saul this autonomy "does remain to [the personnel of the state]--an autonomy rooted in the centrality of the state in these societies . . ." ³ And although the post-colonial state may

¹ John Saul, "The State in Post-Colonial Societies: Tanzania," Socialist Register, 1974, pp. 349-372.

² Ibid., p. 351; emphasis original.

³ Ibid., p. 353.

be overdeveloped, Saul says that in East Africa where the classes were already weak overdevelopment of state was not "so much in response to the need to 'subordinate the native social classes' as a need to subordinate pre-capitalist, generally non-feudal, social formations to the imperatives of colonial capitalism."¹

The most confusing attribute of the post-colonial state proposed by Alavi and Saul is that of its being "overdeveloped"; it has earned several critics. Professor Colin Leys has argued that to say that the post-colonial state is overdeveloped is misleading if by this is meant that its coercive apparatus is "weightier and more ramified" than it would otherwise have been.² There is no evidence, Leys thinks, to support the notion of overdeveloped post-colonial states. For one thing he points out, as do other critics such as Ziemann and Lanzendorfer, that it was after independence and not during colonialism as Alavi implies that these states began to expand rapidly.³ For another, Leys shows that post-colonial states have small sizes if this is judged by the "relatively low share of national income taken by

¹Ibid., pp. 352-353.

²Colin Leys, "The 'Overdeveloped' Post Colonial State: A Re-evaluation," Review of African Political Economy, No. 5, 1976, p. 41.

³Ibid., p. 42. See also W. Ziemann and M. Lanzendorfer, "The State in Peripheral Societies," Socialist Register, 1977, p. 145.

government revenue in underdeveloped countries . . ."; the share taken by advanced capitalist states is higher.¹ The last words in the criticism of the notion of overdevelopment of state must be left for Ziemann and Lanzendorfer. They expressed the view that: "For so long as a state is fitted for its main function, to secure the societal reproduction, the extent of its influence on society is neither too great or too small, but adequate."² That is, if a state were inadequate to maintain its reproductive functions in the social formation, it would tend to disintegrate.

More fundamentally, Leys, Ziemann and Lanzendorfer take Saul and Alavi to task for seeking to understand class struggles in the periphery by looking principally at the state. According to Leys, "In order to understand the significance of any state for class struggle we must start from the class struggle, not the state. The idea of the 'overdeveloped state' functions . . . as an apparent reason for reversing the proper order of procedure . . ."³ According to Ziemann and Lanzendorfer, the account of the post-colonial state given by Saul and Alavi was not "a materialistically-based account" because their (Alavi and Saul) major interest appeared to be the state personnel. Therefore, they conclude, the notion of "over-development" is "theoretically not very plausible."⁴

¹Leys, op. cit., p. 42.

²Ziemann and Lanzendorfer, op. cit., p. 145.

³Leys, op. cit., p. 43.

⁴Ziemann and Lanzendorfer, op. cit., p. 144.

Even the idea of the prominent economic role played by the post-colonial state put forward by Alavi and Saul also drew criticism from Ziemann and Lanzendorfer. This claim, they argue, is not substantiated. For it to be substantiated Alavi and Saul would have to indicate how much of the socially produced surplus derives from state direct participation in production; whether the state's role is different from merely providing conditions conducive for private accumulation; and the major purpose of the state's economic role.¹ Lastly, they correctly point out that Alavi said nothing about state autonomy which was not already in the Marxist classics.²

Some aspects of the criticism of Alavi and Saul in this debate themselves appear misdirected. This is the case with Leys who takes the so-called overdevelopment of the state to refer only to military and bureaucratic structures. It seems rather that Alavi and Saul intended this word, which is perhaps misleading in itself, to be understood "in relation to the structure of the colony . . ."³ Structure here seems a clear reference to the colony's economic base in the Marxist sense, for in the same sentence in which it appears there is used also the word "superstructure". It is plausible that by speaking of overdevelopment of the state superstructure they

¹Ibid., pp. 146-147.

²Ibid., p. 148.

³Alavi, op. cit., p. 61; emphasis added.

meant it in relation to a mode of production which was not fully (or even) capitalist but over which was superimposed the apparatuses of a modern state. In any case, we suggest that the word overdeveloped be simply dropped from the debate; it seems to be more mystifying than clarifying.

There seems little doubt, as some other participants in this debate have come to point out clearly, that the post-colonial state is faced with a task quite different in nature from that of any state in an advanced capitalist social formation. In the latter formation all other modes of production have virtually been swallowed up by the capitalist mode. But in the post-colonial formation pre-capitalist modes still exist along with the capitalist mode. It is in this sense that one speaks of the articulation of the modes of production. Obviously then, the functions of the state in the two sorts of social formation are bound to differ; the state in the post-colonial formation has to intervene more directly and more frequently in society if its accumulation function is to be performed at all. As Professor Langdon correctly argues:

Certainly the state has a critical general function in all class societies--the maintaining of cohesion and domination; but it would appear to have a rather particular further function in periphery economies, that of managing the meshing of capitalist and pre-capitalist modes of production. And that further function makes the colonial and post-colonial state more central in the direct process of surplus appropriation and capital accumulation than in advanced capitalist economies.¹

¹Steven Langdon, "The State and Capitalism in Kenya," Review of African Political Economy, 8, 1977, p. 92; emphasis original. In a similar vein Geoff Lamb noted: "The [post-

Another observer also notes that "the services demanded from post-colonial states require a much more particularistic interference into the economy than is customary in the metropolises"¹ in the reproduction of the particular social formation within which it exists.

To understand this further function of the post-colonial state in the economy, it is important first to understand (or situate) this state in the context of the world economy. It is in the context of this world market economy that the particular nature of the articulation of modes of production in the peripheral formation, and the role of the state here, can be better appreciated. Approaching the quest for understanding from this context may show why in the post-colonial formation the base which extends into the world economy and the superstructure (i.e., the state itself) do not achieve a reciprocal dialectic and why there is the illusion that the "superstructure determines the base,"² i.e., the domestic economy.

colonial/ state provides economic, social and political services for capitalist penetration, orchestrates the de- and restructuring of elements of pre-capitalist mode (the family is a good example), and 'copes', so to speak, at the level of cohesion of the whole formation, with the dislocative consequences of the expansion of the capitalist modes." Geoff Lamb, "Marxism, Access and the State," Development and Change, Vol. VI, No. 2, 1975, p. 132.

¹Michaela von Freyhold, "The Post-Colonial State and Its Tanzanian Version," Review of African Political Economy, 8, 1977, p. 78.

²Ziemann and Lanzendorfer, op. cit., p. 160.

This is no doubt an important point but it must seem very difficult, if not impossible, to account for class formation and the state in post-colonial formation without emphasizing the role of the colonial state. The point is that the colonial state was very important in the process by which the peripheral formations were firmly and finally incorporated into the world market. The instrumentality of the colonial state in ensuring the generation of commodities from non-capitalist modes of production is quite important. To ensure this continuous generation of commodities in Kenya, for example, the state "reinvented a feudal mode of appropriation of surplus labour" through its policies to regulate squatting.¹ One may, of course, wish to accord little importance to the colonial state by seeing it merely as an extension of the metropolitan bourgeoisie. This position, however, cannot be maintained for long in light of the conflicts, some of which were serious, that often developed between the local expatriate community and the state administrators; and in the light of the state's attempt to appear to mediate between the foreign (settler) community and the colonized--the state even sometimes appearing as the custodian of the interests of the latter.² Our purpose here, however, is not to deny that the colonial

¹Gavin Kitching, "Modes of Production and Kenyan Dependency," Review of African Political Economy, No. 8, 1977, p. 60.

²On these points, see Rhoda Howard, *op. cit.*, pp. 153-154.

state functioned in the interest of the metropolitan bourgeoisie. But we are saying that it would be simplistic to ignore the colonial state, or to regard it only as the metropolitan bourgeoisie.

A world economy came into existence as a result of the search by European capitalism for high profits and raw material. This gave rise to the overseas expansion of European industry and trade: here was the birth of imperialism. The expansion was more in the direction of trade than industry, Europe being content to manufacture at home and sell abroad. Serious overseas competitions between Europe's different nationally based capitals soon led to colonialism in the attempt to secure control over the sources of raw material and profit. In this sense, colonialism appeared inevitable given imperialism. Whereas imperialism was the mere economic and therefore indirect control of these sources of raw material and profit, colonialism was their physical and direct domination and near-monopoly control. Colonialism secured imperialism.

Under colonialism came the colonial state; it was the metropolitan bourgeoisie's chief local agent--though not in any simplistic sense--and its chief instrument of economic exploitation. As such it was instrumental in dovetailing the colonial economy into that of the metropole. The colonial state played a major role in the process of restructuring the colonial social formation in order to facilitate or induce

commodity production and surplus accumulation. In some of the pre-colonial formations there existed the potential for large surplus, but this potential was not being realized because the major means of production, land, was not yet separated from the producer and was still communally owned.¹ It fell to the colonial state to assist the process by which the separation of the producer from the means of production was begun (e.g., land alienation in East and Southern Africa) and by which peasant cultivators were forced to turn some of their production into commodities (e.g., by taxation). By some of these policy measures, among others, the colonial state facilitated the realization of the potential for surplus which already existed. In studying this process one must keep in mind Brett's reminder that "Despite the significant role played by the [colonial] State in the economic sphere primary responsibility for production and distribution remained in the hands of private entrepreneurs, . . ."²

The colonial state did not really directly participate in the colonial economy. Its task "was to supervise the initial and necessary penetration of pre-capitalist formations, to organize the conditions of exploitation of labour and land."³

¹See Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, "The Political Economy of the African Peasantry and Modes of Production" in Gutkind and Wallerstein, eds., op. cit., p. 102.

²E. A. Brett, Colonialism and Underdevelopment in East Africa: The Politics of Economic Change, 1919-1939 (London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1973), p. 55.

Henry Bernstein, "Notes on Capital and Peasantry," Review of African Political Economy, No. 10, 1977, p. 61.

The policies which the colonial state pursues here, be it land alienation, taxation and monetization of the economy or forced labour, strike at the very heart of the ability of the pre-capitalist formations to reproduce themselves. The foreign trading and mining organizations benefit from this since it is they who may gain from land alienated from their owners or simply when the combined onslaught of the state and capital force the cultivator now to produce some commodities and also tender, even if temporarily and sporadically, his labour power as a commodity. Without the role of the colonial state these trading and mining concerns may have had greater difficulty in penetrating the pre-capitalist economy or in doing their business since the predominant productive activity in such an economy was geared toward use-value production, as opposed to commodity production. This made the restructuring of the pre-capitalist economy imperative, for it often stood

opposed to economics of expanded reproduction, and to all commodity economies. Its destruction implies the progressive socialization of labour process that can be separated from the land as immediate objective condition of production, and the growth of a commodity economy, in which production is no longer in order to satisfy a direct need of the producer, but in order to create and realise exchange-value.¹

It is the process of restructuring that has gone on that has led to the so-called dual structures of post-colonial

¹Barbara Bradby, "The Destruction of Natural Economy," *Economy and Society*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1975, pp. 127-128. We prefer to speak about restructuring instead of destruction of pre-capitalist economies. 'Destruction' may imply that those pre-capitalist modes of production have disappeared; but this is not quite the case. Hence one speaks about articulation of modes of production in the capitalist periphery.

social formations which were often seen as 'impediments' to change in modernization theory. While the situation has in no sense been detrimental to the fundamental interests of capital--in fact the capitalist in the periphery can still pay the workers low wages because part of the workers' subsistence is made up from the non-capitalist sector¹--it has meant that in an epoch in which the ideology of 'development' or modernization has become prevalent, the post-colonial state inherits the task of expanding the boundaries of capitalist production. Here is one of the reasons why the state plays a major economic role. In a condition in which there is not enough local private capital to undertake the task, and especially since much of the surplus circulating in the social formation passes through it, the state is obliged to play a major economic role.

Pari passu with the process of restructuring the pre-capitalist economy, the colonial state, directly and indirectly, undertook the grooming of new social classes which were beginning to evolve. Even now the situation of these classes is still far from clear. The point here, however, is that through the state's various economic, social and political institutions (e.g., state and mission or voluntary agency schools) a certain world view consistent in the long run with the interests of the metropolitan bourgeoisie and therefore

¹See Leys, Underdevelopment in Kenya, pp. 171-172, for an example.

conducive to the consolidation of the imperialist order was constantly propagated. The evolving classes came to internalize this new bourgeois ideology.¹ Hence many persons among the new social classes not only came to reconcile themselves to the new economic and political order. They even identified their private and class interests with the continuance or furtherance of the capitalist system, as can be witnessed in the results of the African independence movements of the sixties.

As has just been pointed out, the class situation in the post-colonial social formations is not clear at all. This has been reflected in the debate on the post-colonial state. The source of the problem seems to be located in the immaturity of the capitalist mode of production in the periphery and the continued existence in one form or another of the pre-capitalist modes of production, and the relationship between the two--in other words, in the articulation of modes of production. Among the debaters are those who say that no classes began to evolve in Africa under colonialism. This is usually the view of various brands of African socialists.² On the other side of

¹On this and related points, see Claude Ake, "The Congruence of Political Economies and Ideologies in Africa" in Gutkind and Wallerstein, op. cit., pp. 189-211; and Brett, op. cit., Part 1.

²Notorious among this group is Leopold Senghor. See his On African Socialism, trans. by Mercer Cook (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964), pp. 68-69. This view also comes across in some of Nyerere's thoughts. See, for example, his Ujamaa--Essays on Socialism (Dar es Salaam: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 11. Such views have been criticized for

the debate are those who acknowledge the evolution of classes from during the colonial period. Beyond this point it is not clear just what these classes are. Shivji writes of a ruling bureaucratic bourgeoisie in Tanzania which is only a section of the petty bourgeoisie.¹ The bureaucratic bourgeoisie is defined essentially by its position as the state personnel. But we find others, such as Leys arguing, with considerable support from Poulantzas, that such class identification of a group by its position in the bureaucracy can hardly be sustained. In addition, Leys finds the concept of petty bourgeoisie as it has been used in some of the literature on the post-colonial state to differ from Marx's use of it, without their users making this point clearly.² To add to the confusion we find Shivji taking kulaks in Tanzania to be a class apart from the petty bourgeoisie whereas for Mamdani in Uganda the kulaks are a section of the petty bourgeoisie.³ It may be thought that this is due to differences in the two

being gross generalizations and/or ideological camouflages of some of their proponents. See Ahmed Mohidin, "Ujamaa: A Commentary on President Nyerere's Vision of Tanzanian Society," African Affairs, Vol. 67, No. 267, April 1968, p. 137; Kwame Nkrumah, Class Struggle in Africa (New York: International Publishers, 1970), p. 30; and Kenneth W. Grundy, "The 'Class Struggle' in Africa: An Examination of Conflicting Views," Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 2, No. 3, 1964, pp. 379-393.

¹ Shivji, Class Struggles in Tanzania, p. 64.

² Leys, "The 'Overdeveloped' Post-Colonial State," pp. 44-46.

³ Shivji, pp. 50-51; Mahmood Mamdani, Politics and Class Formation in Uganda, p. 151.

social formations. Even then, one should expect that the concept of a kulak would mean the same thing be it in the USSR, Tanzania or Uganda; it should define a certain relation in the process of social production.

These few examples call attention to the need for caution and perhaps greater rigour in analyses of the post-colonial social formation. Given modes of production in transition and a milieu which daily points out afresh that the only permanent thing is change itself, these differences and uncertainties are not surprising. In such a situation the questions regarding particular groups' role in the production process and their political and ideological dispositions need to be posed for each formation and for each conjuncture. Such questions, answered in the analysis of the mode(s) of production can point to some clearer class identification and analysis.

On one crucial point there appears to be some consensus of opinion in the class and state analysis of the post-colonial formation. This point is that whichever of the classes that can control the state apparatus has been able thereby to enrich itself. Professors Mytelka and Langdon recently made the point that those among the African petty bourgeoisie who achieved power following decolonization have exploited such power to their economic and social advantage.¹

¹ Steven Langdon and Lynn Mytelka, "Africa in the Changing World Economy" in Colin Legum et al., Africa in the 1980's: A Continent in Crisis (New York: McGraw Hill, for Council on Foreign Relations, 1979), p. 152. The same point

The same observation has been made in relation to the Third World generally by Miliband. He draws attention to how, in these social formations, political power has become a means to economic power, and not vice versa. "The state is here the source of economic power as well as an instrument of it: the state is a major 'means of production'."¹

If this process in the post-colonial formation appears to be an inversion of what obtains in the advanced capitalist formations, it is because of the specific historical development of the former. Under colonialism the state had been instrumental in ensuring the incorporation of the colonial economy into the world capitalist market. In the process of this incorporation the evolving social classes were unable, due in good part to the protection the colonial state gave the foreign business interests at the expense of these local classes, to acquire any meaningful stake in their economy. To be sure, there did evolve a handful of property owners. Given then, in comparison to the size and influence of the foreign business interests operating in the (erstwhile) colony, these local property owners were inconsequential. Having now achieved political power both as a result of changes in the international political economy and internal pressures, these local classes begin to attempt using state

is also a very important theme in Claude Ake, Revolutionary Pressures in Africa (London: Zed Press, 1978).

¹ Miliband, Marxism and Politics, p. 109.

power to find a niche for themselves in economies dominated by foreign capital and against which they are otherwise ill-equipped to compete. The extent to which they have been (or if at all they can be) successful is the subject of on-going debate. What is little in doubt is that the attempt is being made.

At the same time that this point indicates one of the characteristics of the post-colonial state's role in the economy it also raises to the fore whether the bureaucracy (that is, its personnel) should be considered a class. Following Leys point cited above, the bureaucracy, as such, may not be considered a class. It can only be so considered not by virtue of its being a bureaucracy but by virtue of the particular role it plays, if any, in production. This is what we take to be Leys meaning. In the words of Poulantzas cited by Leys it is the productive function which any post-colonial bureaucracy may perform that is the important criterion:

These economic functions have sometimes appeared capable of attributing to the bureaucracy . . . a specific place in the relations of production in the strict sense. . . . A good example is the case of the state bourgeoisie in certain developing countries: the bureaucracy may, through the state, establish a specific place for itself in the existing relations of production, or even in the not-yet-existing relations of production. But in that case it does not constitute a class by virtue of being the bureaucracy, but by virtue of being an effective class.¹

Where it is argued that the bureaucracy does have a place in

¹Poulantzas, Political Power and Social Classes, p. 334.

the relations of production, a further distinction should be made as to what branch or level of the bureaucracy--or if indeed the whole of it--occupies this place. By this approach greater clarity can possibly be achieved. Any other role which the bureaucracy may play in the social formation which can help to account for its fast growth in the post-colonial era should also be specified.

To summarize, this chapter has attempted to indicate what criteria (economic, political and ideological) are used to define and identify social classes in the Marxist approach. It has been shown that although the state arose historically because of the irreconcilable class contradictions that began to develop over time, the capitalist state should not be conceived as only or merely an extension of the bourgeoisie. It has also been shown how the roles played by the capitalist state are in the long run in the interest of the bourgeoisie. While the state in advanced capitalist formations mainly only organizes the conditions under which the bourgeoisie can continue their accumulation, it has been argued that the post-colonial state does perform further functions in the economy different from those by the advanced capitalist state. In discussing social classes and the state in post-colonial formations we have avoided being very specific. This is for two reasons. Firstly, a lot of the questions involved are yet open to debate. There exists at the moment no theory of the post-colonial state. Whether a theory will eventually

evolve is itself a moot question. We have only tried here to raise what we think are the important issues in the ongoing debate and to convey the flavour of that debate.

Secondly, any answers, tentative as they may well be, are best given with direct reference to concrete historical formations. Only when information and data from several concrete formations are available can the task of generalizations be done with profit. Our scope here does not include the latter. As we proceed in the analysis of Nigerian social formation, some of the points arising from the debate we have looked at will no doubt be raised again concretely.

CHAPTER III

THE COLONIAL STATE AND THE PENETRATION OF THE PRE-CAPITALIST FORMATION IN NIGERIA

It was suggested in the last chapter that one can hardly understand the nature of social classes in the post-colonial formation without first appreciating the role the colonial state played in determining those social classes and the post-colonial state. It was, after all, in the process of incorporation of the post-colonial formation into the world economy that the state was there imposed and its present class formation evolved. We see it as important to our thesis, therefore, that we attempt to show, at least to some extent, how the colonial state in Nigeria, along with the foreign trading companies, restructured the pre-capitalist formation. The burden of this chapter is to attempt to show this process of restructuring. In the following chapter we show what specific classes evolved. Between both chapters it may become clearer why it may be argued that the social classes and the post-colonial state bear the indelible mark of the historical process of the incorporation into the world market economy, a process with which the colonial state had a lot to do.

Perhaps an appropriate baseline for a discussion of the Nigerian colonial state as such would be 1914. This was

the year in which the Northern and Southern Protectorates which had come under formal colonization in 1900 were amalgamated--that is, their administrations were supposedly unified under Lord Frederick Lugard, the first Governor-General. However, our discussion would be incomplete if it started with 1914 as its baseline, for it would overlook the very important economic organizations and disorganizations which had taken place before this date. It may be more useful, therefore, to start by looking at the period even before 1900 because the activities that were initiated in that period of informal British empire were not without consequences later on.

Another point to be observed is that here reference to the colonial state in Nigeria is principally to the administration and government in the country between 1900 and 1957. Nigeria did not become independent until 1960 but we suggest that 1957 be considered a cut-off point for discussion of the colonial state here. This choice of cut-off point should not be seen as arbitrary. For one thing, Nigerians had begun from 1951 to participate in their own governance; this was the date when Nigerian political parties--the Action Group (AG) in the West, The Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) in the North and the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (later to become the National Convention of Nigerian Citizens, NCNC) in the East--assumed power as regional Governments. More importantly, 1957 marked when the Eastern and Western Regions--the North followed in 1959--assumed internal

self-government. It was also the year in which a national government representing the three dominant political parties was formed under the leadership of Alhaji Tafawa Balewa. It is suggested here then that 1957 marks, in effect, the abrogation in Nigeria of classical colonialism. To put it differently, 1957 marked when colonialism in Nigeria adjusted itself to meet changing conditions forced by nationalist pressure. We should prefer to call the kind of state which existed between 1957 and formal independence in 1960 a "colonial-dyarchy" state. This is to reflect Nigerian participation (though only as subordinate partners) in the composition of state authority.

This chapter is organized under two main sections. In the first section we attempt to present an impression of the pre-colonial period. It can be no more than an impression here because while it is important to the discussion, it is not central. The second section of the chapter will be devoted to analysis of important elements of the colonial political economy.

THE PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD

Trade between West Africa and Europe, via North Africa, prior to the fifteenth century and the arrival of the Portuguese on the west coast had caused little disruption of African society relative to the kind of disruption that was to follow. Such long-distance trade enabled the circulation of products both within and outside the West African region.

It enhanced both the use of various currencies and the establishment and growth of urban centres.¹ In Nigeria such centres as Sokoto and Kano derived much of their importance from their positions in the long-distance trade.

The Atlantic slave trade which began shortly after contact with the Portuguese on the west coast and which grew in proportion to Europe's and North America's economic demands not only disrupted the long-distance trade but completely reoriented the nature of the contact between West Africa and the outside world. From now on economic changes and conditions in Europe were to shape, in a determinate way, the economic future and historical change in West Africa. It was such economic changes in Europe which made possible and facilitated European explorations in Africa, which explorations immediately paved the way for the continent's eventual, gradual and relentless incorporation into the European capitalist network.²

Just as the city-states in Nigeria's riverine districts had been prominent in the slave trade, so too now when the transition in Europe from mercantilism to industrialism forced a shift from demand for slaves to palm oil were

¹See, for example, A. G. Hopkins, An Economic History of West Africa (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), pp. 51-87.

²K. O. Dike has correctly argued that both the humanitarian and strategic reasons which are sometimes adduced to account for Europe's interest in Africa are reflections of basic economic changes. See his Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta 1830-1885 (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), pp. 11-14.

they becoming prominent in the new so-called legitimate trade. For example, Dike notes that by 1830 oil "had become more vital to the economy of the city-states than trade in men."¹ As Europe's demands on West Africa were changing due to its (Europe's) changing economic needs, so the city-states' supply appropriately changed. In fact, so important was palm oil as a commodity that the Niger Delta basin through which it was exported became known to Europeans as the 'oil rivers'.² (This appellation was to assume a different significance when, almost a century later, petroleum was discovered in the same area.) Bonny, which was the major palm oil exporting port (followed by Calabar), exported 14,000 tons in 1834 and 25,000 tons in 1845.³ Although this increase was not steady it was nevertheless remarkable because of the difficulties of human portage and the movement of produce from the hinterland to the coast over rough terrain. Much of the palm oil was coming from the Igbo and Ibibio territories.

The palm oil trade is important not only because it was a strong link by which Nigeria was tied to the European capitalist network. The slave trade, in its own sinister way,

¹Ibid., p. 41.

²Cf. J. D. Fage, A History of West Africa: An Introductory Survey (London: Cambridge University Press, 1969), p. 76.

³A. J. H. Latham, Old Calabar 1600-1891: The Impact of the International Economy Upon a Traditional Society (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), p. 66.

had had the same effect. What enhances the importance of the palm oil trade is that millions of people must have been engaged in it voluntarily. That is, it opened the minds of many more Africans than the slave trade had done to the profitability of trade with Europe. The goods which the Europeans used to exchange for oil, though often of inferior quality,¹ had the effect of creating in the African population a desire to consume more products of European industry. The opportunity was not lost on the European traders. One of them was later to write that:

The only way to induce Africans to bring their oil in was by stimulating their interest in imported goods and creating a desire on the part of not only the canoe-man himself /who brought the produce down to the coast/, but of his wives and children in their villages, for all the attractive articles displayed in the store.²

This had the effect of changing even to some small extent the pre-capitalist economy (a task already begun by the slave trade, with its strife and destruction) and preparing the way for the activities of the great European trading houses--the intensification of imperialism. Some of the social consequences of the palm oil trade which saw the rise to prominence

¹Dike, op. cit., pp. 112-113. Latham, op. cit., pp. 24 and 73 denies any truth in "the common accusation that the Europeans were foisting rubbish on to the Africans." Although he points out that iron and copper were among the valuables which Europeans used in exchange, it still is significant that to Africans some of the goods were seen as inferior, hence their reaction by repudiating some debts to Europeans as Dike points out.

²Raymond G. Clough, Oil Rivers Trader: Memoirs of Iboland (London: C. Hurst & Company, 1972), p. 38.

in Calabar and Bonny of ex-slaves¹ were only a foretaste of the social class realignment which the intensification of imperialism and formal colonialism engendered in Nigeria and other African social formations. The task of formal incorporation of Nigeria into the international capitalist network was to be furthered by the Royal Niger Company (RNC) and the colonial state, established in 1900.

In order to understand and appreciate the task wrought by the foreign trading interests and the colonial state, some comment upon the pre-existing economic and social structure is in order. The major means of production was land, the ownership of which varied. In the main, however, land was communally held. For example, in the southern regions of Nigeria, among some of the Yorubas and Igbos, individual land ownership seemed to be the exception rather than the rule.²

¹See Kannan Nair, Politics and Society in South Eastern Nigeria 1841-1906: A Study of Power, Diplomacy and Commerce in Old Calabar (London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1972), pp. 37-48; Latham, op. cit., pp. 91-102. There are some points of difference in detail between Nair and Latham on the extent of the effect of the social and political influence of ex-slaves as a result of their participation in the oil trade. The latter thinks the effect, while undeniable, was less revolutionary than the former made it out to be. It would be incomplete to speak of ex-slaves whose social and political situations changed as a result of wealth they acquired in the oil trade without mentioning Ja Ja of Opobo. Sir Richard Burton, the British Consul, described this man who rose to the kingship of Bonny as "the most influential man and the greatest trader in the River, and £50,000, it is said, may annually pass through his hands." Quoted in Dike, op. cit., p. 184.

²Cf. Sara Berry, Cocoa, Custom, and Socio-Economic Changes in Rural Western Nigeria (London: Oxford University

Among some of the Igbo clans, the land was commonly cleared during planting season and divided up among family/village members. Outsiders (of the family or the village) could obtain land for the period of cultivation without being charged rent. Such land was returned to the owners automatically after harvest. In the northern territories of Nigeria, among the Hausa for example, there was a mixture of both individual and communal ownership. Communal land was often reserved for pasture and was inalienable. Polly Hill's fairly recent work among the Hausa would indicate that, contrary to received ideas, not only did individual ownership of land abound, but also that "farm selling" in some districts in the nineteenth century" was an important feature.¹ Quite importantly, Hill's work seriously questions the hitherto frequently and "uncritically adopted" notion that economic activity in this part (north) of Nigeria was feudalistic. The virtual absence of "a landholding aristocracy" leads her to "insist that from the angle of economic organization

Press, 1975), pp. 18-19; and G. T. Basden, Among the Ibos of Nigeria (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1921), p. 32. Lord Lugard noted: "It is sufficient to say that ... land is still held in communal tenure, ... the Egbas and Yorubas have reached a stage when rights of property in land are vested in the Family." Lord Lugard, Political Memoranda: Revision of Instructions to Political Officers on Subjects Chiefly Political and Administrative, ed. by A. H. M. Kirk-Greene (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1970), p. 361.

¹Polly Hill, Rural Hausa: A Village and a Setting (London: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p. 240; also p. 21.

of rural life, it is entirely misleading to employ terms
... from European feudalism...¹

In most areas production was organized in communities that were more or less self-contained but exchange between neighbouring groups was common. Such exchange sometimes took the form of wars or raids; often it took the form of trade. Production was geared primarily but not exclusively to meeting the subsistence needs of producers. The forces of production were hardly developed, and specialisation was low. Agriculture, the major industry, was subject to the vagaries of weather and soil conditions; there were hardly any means by which the producers were protected from these. Slave labour was not uncommon.² The family, however, remained the important labour unit, and the larger it was the more it produced, hence such practices as polygamy and the need for large families.

Much of the production and circulation that occurred was of use-values (not counting much of what went into the long-distance or slave trades). Production was mostly and generally for subsistence, so although the potential for surplus production existed it does not appear that much of it

¹ Polly Hill, Population, Prosperity and Poverty: Rural Kano 1900 and 1970 (London: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 8.

² Basden, op. cit., p. 109. Hill, Rural Hausa, p. 105, noted that "In 1925 slave labour was still common in Hausaland...."

was realised or that much surplus was appropriated.¹ Whether in this period any difference between social groups is to be considered one of a class stricto sensu is uncertain. We do not mean, however, to suggest that there existed general economic or social equality, or the total absence of exploitation--to so suggest may be unwarranted, especially given the paucity of reliable research. We can only point out that as a rule old men, long-distance traders and chiefs were generally wealthier. The larger wealth of the old men came not so much through any control they may have had of the means of production as through control of the youth and of dowry. The long-distance traders were wealthier through acquisition of prestige goods. The chiefs sometimes grew wealthy through their control over the communally owned means of production or through religious practices. The emirs, for example, were able to collect some form of tax from their subjects. Women and slaves always brought up the rear in economic, political and social matters. They owned no land, and much of what they produced was sometimes appropriated by their husbands or masters. If we add to the above the existence in some districts of castes, then some image of the stratification pattern begins to emerge. Under these conditions there emerged the ancient, embryonic states and empires. Further autonomous development was effectively

¹Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, "The Political Economy of African Peasantry and Modes of Production" in Peter Gutkind and Immanuel Wallerstein, eds., The Political Economy of Contemporary Africa (London: Sage Publications, Inc., 1976).

checked by the advent of the slave trade and, more decisively perhaps, by colonialism. Here then in outline form is some impression of the pre-capitalist economic and social structure. Into it, the Royal Niger Company and, later, the colonial state forced themselves.

THE COLONIAL STATE

The formal establishment of the colonial state in 1900 was directly related to the competition in West Africa between mainly British, German and French mercantile capital. Such British capital was represented in the zone later to become Nigeria by the Royal Niger Company (RNC) which was chartered in 1886 as a result of a series of mergers between smaller British trading companies. The mergers had been effected, it appears, to minimize the cut-throat competition between the companies and to better permit them meet competition from non-British companies. All this was taking place in the period of the so-called scramble for Africa which had been formally set in motion by the Berlin Conference of 1884-5. From 1886 when it received its charter, the Royal Niger Company conducted itself, in effect, like a protocolonial state. In fact, it saw itself very much along those lines, for its Council was to proudly observe in 1899 that the RNC had "added to Her Majesty's Empire a vast and populous province, including the most valuable section of tropical Africa."¹ The

¹ Allan McPhee, The Economic Revolution in British West Africa, 2nd ed. (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1971), pp. 88-89. This work, on pp. 73-90, contains a good account of the development of the RNC.

activities of the RNC indeed foreshadowed and seemed to have facilitated the establishment of the colonial state itself.

As has been observed by Professor Ikime:

The obtaining of a charter meant that the Company was not just a trading concern; it had conferred on it certain powers of government and law making, as well as powers to raise and maintain an armed force for the effective pursuit of its trade as well as for the maintenance of law and order. The appearance on the scene of the Royal Niger Company was to have momentous consequences for . . . Southern Nigeria.¹

It was not long before the RNC by making treaties (some of which may be described as dubious because the Africans did not always understand their full implications) here and outright conquest there, extended its influence up the Niger River and into the northern districts of what was to become Nigeria.

The establishment of a formal colonial state appeared inevitable given that the RNC was increasingly beginning to encounter other European national merchant capitals. It was in fact to better protect the interests of its merchant capital in the area against competition and attack from both German and French interests that Britain revoked the RNC's charter in 1899.² In the atmosphere of the 'scramble' trading companies such as the Royal Niger were forced to relinquish whatever political and administrative powers conferred on them by their charter in

¹ Obaro Ikime, The Fall of Nigeria (Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1977), p. 33, emphasis added. For good background to establishment of formal governance, see also Dike, op. cit.

² Part of the letter of revocation by the British Foreign Office is reproduced in Sir Alan Burns, History of Nigeria (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1969), pp. 168-169.

exchange for fuller protection under the mightier arm of the metropolitan state. In the event the RNC gained generous compensation from the British Government¹ and now devoted itself single-mindedly to its economic activities. From January 1, 1900, a formal colonial state came into being in Nigeria.

Given that it was an imposition and the reasons for which it was imposed, the colonial state was to become also the servant of imperialism and all those metropolitan interests which owed their existence to the continuance of imperialism. Among these interests must be counted the mercantile and the industrial fractions of the British bourgeoisie for whom especially the colonial state continued many of the roles of the RNC,² and for whom also the conditions created and maintained by the colonial state were great opportunities for buying and selling commodities. This is pointed out here because it helps place in its proper perspective the important role of the colonial state in creating conditions which will facilitate the activities of the foreign trading and mining

¹Ibid., p. 169.

²The link between the Nigerian colonial state and the RNC was maintained in the appointment of Frederick Lugard who "had spent the last few years of the nineteenth century in the service of the Royal Niger Company building up its forces ..." (Obaro Ikime, op. cit., p. 76) and was to play a major role first as High Commissioner of Northern Nigeria and later as first Governor General of Nigeria. In these roles, he simply continued the policies of the RNC. See McPhee, op. cit., pp. 90-94.

companies. It may also help to explain why the emphasis of the colonial state was on order and stability and the pursuit of policies which served more the interest of foreign companies than on developing the primary interests of the Africans. This will become more obvious in this and the next chapter when we see what kind of policies the colonial state pursued and in whose interests they were. Suffice it at this moment to take note of the point.

In suggesting that the colonial state was the servant of the interests of the metropolitan bourgeoisie, it is not meant that it was merely or only an extension of this class. To a great extent in fact it may have been, but one is somewhat hesitant to assert this categorically, bearing in mind that the colonial state was at times unable to oblige some of the desires of the foreign traders or missionary groups. To be sure, these expatriate groups played important roles in the formulation of state policy either directly in the Legislative Council in Lagos or indirectly through the pressures which different Chambers of Commerce in Britain brought to bear through the Colonial Office in London.¹ And even when Nigerians were brought into the Legislative Council their

¹See, for example, Rhoda Howard, Colonialism and Underdevelopment in Ghana (London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1978), pp. 148-152, where this point is made with reference to Ghana. There is hardly any reason to think that the situation in Nigeria was different. In fact, it was not, as can be gleaned--though without details--in Joan Wheare, The Nigerian Legislative Council (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1949), p. 83.

(Nigerian) influence amounted to very little, a fact which led Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe to call the Council "a veiled oligarchy of the worst description."¹ Even then it may be unwarranted to assume that the interests of the colonial state always coincided with those of the traders.² The state had to worry about maintaining some form of legitimacy which may not have been an immediate problem for the missionaries, traders and miners. In the face of conflicting interests the state could not just oblige the latter. One good example of this was in the state's disallowance of Christian groups from proselytising in the Muslim areas of Nigeria. This suggests some degree of relative autonomy for the colonial state. It played its role on behalf of the metropolitan bourgeoisie but we are reluctant to categorically conclude that it did so at the bourgeoisie's behest.

The first task of the colonial state was to establish its authority. It was for this reason that Lugard quickly embarked upon a mission of military conquests, and thanks to superior fire power, his task was performed relatively quickly.³ In response to the parsimony of the Colonial Office and in an attempt to gain the support of some of the ruling

¹Quoted in Wheare, op. cit., p. 163.

²See Howard, op. cit., pp. 153-154.

³For details, see Ikime, op. cit., and Michael Crowder, The Story of Nigeria (London: Faber and Faber, 1962).

local groups, Lugard continued his policy of indirect rule (already introduced by the RNC) in the northern territories and direct rule in the southern parts.¹ Chiefs, obas and emirs who were seen to be hostile to the colonial state were deposed and others appointed in their places. In some ways it was not easy to be a chief under the colonial state;² the chief was torn between wholehearted support of state policies which his subjects may find detestable and opposition to the state which was certain to earn him the displeasure of the local Resident and his superior coercive power. For those of them who managed to acquiesce in the state's policies and dominance, though they were on the lowest level of its administrative hierarchy, their power and authority were strengthened with the state's coercive apparatus such as the police or the army. Many of the chiefs also found in their position new possibilities for self-enrichment. In parts of the old Eastern Region, for example, some of the state-appointed warrant chiefs used their position to appropriate wealth whenever the opportunity arose.

¹See Lugard, Political Memoranda, pp. 296-318, for details. Polly Hill has subsequently argued that indirect rule was "based on fundamental misconception regarding the powers exercised by the Fulani Emirs, who were not 'native chiefs' [as Lugard took them to be] in any normal understanding of that term ..." Hence indirect rule was, in reference to the rural Hausaland, in effect, a "non-rule." See Hill, Population, Prosperity and Poverty, p. 22.

²For detailed study of the role and position of chiefs, see Michael Crowder and Obaro Ikime, eds., West African Chiefs: Their Changing Status under Colonial Rule and Independence (Ile-Ife, Nigeria: University of Ife Press, 1970).

It seemed that disputes over land, debts, or ancient privilege which went before the chief's court were more often than not settled to the new chief's advantage. In the case of offences which were subject to fines it was said that the chief paid only a part of the fine into court. For instance, if he levied a fine of four hundred yams, the court record would show only two hundred yams, the other two hundred going to the chief's compound. Stories were told of chiefs cheating over brideprice . . . 1

The acceptance by the chiefs, obas and emirs of positions in the colonial state helped the state to acquire some legitimacy among the local population and to maintain, generally at a lower cost, some stability.

An important feature of the Nigerian state (from the colonial period until 1967) was its regional bias. Although this is a fairly well known feature and many scholars have already described it in some detail,² it deserves further attention here as it is important to our analysis in subsequent chapters. There was really no serious attempt made to politically or administratively unify the country. Lugard's attempt in 1914 at what has been called amalgamation was really not aimed at this at all. It has been said that in fact after this date "the only bond of political unity . . . was the person of Sir Frederick Lugard . . . the administrative

¹ Clough, op. cit., p. 84.

² See, for example, Eme Awa, Federal Government in Nigeria (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964); and James Coleman, Nigeria: Background to Nationalism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1958), among others.

individuality of the former separate territories was maintained."¹ What Lugard was really seeking in 1914 was some device that would enable him to shift around for purposes of balancing his books any financial surpluses that may be available from any of the virtually separate territories.² The important question still remains as to why the individuality of the territories was maintained.

In accounting for the regional bias of the Nigerian state the coincidence of ethnic and political boundaries has often been brought to the fore. More important than this, it would seem, was the nature of the colonial economy itself which influenced to a great extent the colonial state, making feasible as it seemed to have done, that coincidence of ethnic and political boundaries. It will be recalled that even prior to the establishment of the colonial state, the oil trade had been well established in parts of the southern territories. Cocoa had just been introduced late in the nineteenth century, but it quickly spread³ and was soon one of the major export crops from the southern region. Table 1 gives an idea of the

¹Coleman, op. cit., p. 46. In the south, especially in Lagos, the amalgamation was not received without some protest. See A. H. M. Kirk-Greene, Lugard and the Amalgamation of Nigeria: A Documentary Record (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1968), pp. 20-26.

²See Adebayo Adedeji, Nigerian Federal Finance: Its Development, Problems and Prospects (New York: Hutchinson Educational Ltd., 1969), p. 27; and Margery Perham, Lugard: The Years of Authority 1898-1945 (London: Collins, 1960), pp. 414-420.

³Berry, op. cit., chapter II.

TABLE 1
GROWTH OF COCOA AS A MAJOR EXPORT CROP

Quinquennial Period	Average Annual Export Tons
1892-1896	32
1902-1906	462
1912-1916	6,000
1922-1926	37,017
1932-1936	75,000

Source: Adapted from Perham, ed., The Native Economies of Nigeria, p. 250.

TABLE 2
COCOA (MAIN AND LIGHT CROP) PURCHASED BY MARKETING BOARDS
(Tons)

Period	Region			Total
	West	East	North	
1954-55	83,579	985	418	84,982
1955-56	105,986	1,189	430	107,605
1956-57	128,418	1,535	702	130,655
1957-58	73,652	1,662	301	75,615
1958-59	131,513	2,281	556	134,350
1959-60	146,360	2,170	471	149,001

Source: Calculated from Nigeria; Annual Abstract of Statistics, 1964 (Lagos: Federal Office of Statistics, 1965), p. 33.

rapid growth in cocoa production for export. It can be seen that only 462 tons of cocoa were exported during the quinquennial period 1902-1906; but for the period 1922-1926 a total of about 37,000 tons were exported, and by 1932-36 the export had reached 75,000 tons. Much of the cocoa production was concentrated but not confined to the Western Region as figures (table 2) from later periods indicate. For example, out of a total of 84,982 tons which the Marketing Boards bought for export in 1954-55 over 98 per cent (83,000 tons) was bought in the Western Region. This was the dominant trend. Thus the same Region again produced over 98 per cent (146,000 tons out of a national total of 149,000 tons) for 1959-60. Only small amounts were being produced in the East and even smaller amounts in the North. The dominance of the Western Region in this crop is thus established.

When we look at palm oil, another major export from the earliest times until after the colonial period, the same pattern of regional dominance is evident. In this case it is the Eastern Region which appears to specialize in palm oil export. (See table 3.) In 1955, out of a national total of 190,623 tons, the Eastern Region produced about 87 per cent (165,169 tons). In 1960, it produced just a little over 89 per cent (170,000 tons) of the national total (about 190,000 tons). So here too a dominant trend is present.

Let us finally look at groundnuts, another major export. In this crop exports from the Northern Region were highest in

TABLE 3.

PALM OIL PURCHASED BY MARKETING BOARDS
(Tons)

Period	Region			Total
	West	East	North	
1952	..	..	..	190,316
1953	..	..	..	224,214
1954	..	..	..	216,449
1955	22,174	165,169	3,280	190,623
1956	18,934	161,876	3,521	184,331
1957	15,527	153,651	1,934	171,112
1958	15,398	167,052	1,905	184,355
1959	18,818	170,067	1,358	190,243
1960	19,129	170,003	973	190,105
1961	12,370	160,693	370	173,433
1962	7,661	120,884	-	128,545
1963	9,619	139,412	-	149,031

Source: Adapted from Nigeria, Annual Abstract of Statistics 1964 (Lagos: Federal Office of Statistics, 1965), p. 33.

TABLE 4.

GROUNDNUTS PURCHASED BY MARKETING BOARDS
(Tons)

Crop Year	Region			Total
	West	East	North	
1951-52	-		425,588	425,588
1952-53	-			430,696
1953-54	-			424,648
1954-55	-			372,776
1955-56	-			530,215
1956-57	-			357,932
1957-58	-	104	714,698	714,802
1958-59	-	8	533,357	533,365
1959-60	-	79	445,441	445,520

Source: Adapted from Nigeria, Annual Abstract of Statistics 1964 (Lagos: Federal Office of Statistics, 1965), p. 33.

Regional comparisons. Here also the trend is very clear (see table 4). There is no record of groundnuts being produced in or exported from the Western Region all through the colonial period. No production or export of the commodity was shown for the Eastern Region until 1957-58 and even then the recorded gross for the East of 104 tons is dwarfed by the North's 714,798 tons.¹ We have used these three major exports to show that each Region had a fairly distinctive agricultural base. This being the case it appears that the Regional administrative division was in effect a territorial division of labour within the colonial economy. The regional division of labour already appeared 'natural' by reason of the economic advantage or specialization of each Region. The territorial economic division was later invested with constitutional and political legality by the 1946 Richards' Constitution.

With such a regionalised economy, surplus extraction through increased production to meet some of the demands of the metropolitan economy or the interests of resident foreign companies did not require at this period a centralized colonial state. What necessary political and administrative inputs were required to maintain surplus production seemed satisfactorily applied through the Regions, the diversity of which made

¹Gerald K. Helleiner, in his Peasant Agriculture, Government and Economic Growth in Nigeria (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1966), suggests (at p. 107) that out of the North's population of 30 million at one point nine million persons were involved in groundnut production. Helleiner, however, fails to specify what year or period this estimate applies to.

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centralization appear impolitic. There was no strong impetus, therefore, to move in this direction. This was why the 1914 attempt was not really vigorously pursued, particularly after the financial need which stimulated it was satisfied. Colonial economies being what they were, there appeared to be more direct exchange between each of the regional economies and the metropolis than among themselves. Even the conception of a unified Nigeria appeared to be lacking or at any rate very weak in some of the highly placed official minds. The doubt expressed in 1920 by Sir Hugh Clifford (who was then Governor) that there could be a united Nigeria is indicative of the absence of a serious commitment to building a strong central state.¹ The tendency away from a strong central government seemed to have been reinforced by such factors as ethnic diversity, the application of indirect rule in the North which enabled the entrenched traditional ruling groups to maintain political power,² the apparent belief of the colonial administrators in the suitability or unsuitability of certain ethnic groups for certain roles and their attempt also to separate

¹ Sir Hugh Clifford thought at the time that the idea of a united Nigeria was an "impossible" idea and that to pursue such an idea seemed hardly desirable. He is quoted in Coleman, op. cit., p. 194. Coleman added that to Sir Hugh's government, "the idea of a Nigerian nation was inconceivable, and the government was determined to oppose its development ..." *ibid.*

² See C. S. Whitaker, Jr., The Politics of Tradition: Continuity and Change in Northern Nigeria 1946-1966. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970).

as long as possible by region and ethnic group the Nigerian educated elite,¹ and finally the geographical pattern of incorporation of the country into the international capitalist market economy. Given all this, it should perhaps not surprise us a lot that the colonial state developed such a strong regional bias as has been frequently observed by many scholars. Ethnic diversity obviously had a role to play, there should be no denying that basic fact. Rather the danger lies, we would suggest, in overemphasizing it. A more important point, we are suggesting, is the observable regional agricultural specialization which made it easier for the ethnic diversity to find such a strong expression. This regionalization of the colonial economy allowed for the evolution of regional governments, each of which functioned to supervise, so to speak, economic exploitation and surplus extraction from within a fairly distinct base. Furthermore, and very importantly, it also facilitated an evolution of new social classes out of the pre-capitalist formations which were regionally based (see subsequent chapters in this study). Through this development and the interaction of the aforementioned variables, regionalism seemed to assume a momentum of its own. This momentum manifested itself quite clearly in the strong powers that Regional

¹Cf. Dike, op. cit., pp. 37, 43-45. Awolowo has recorded the attempt by the British to disallow contact between educated Southerners, "especially if he /a Southerner/ was known to have political views," and the traditional rulers of the Northern Region. See Obafemi Awolowo, The People's Republic (Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 68.

Governments came to acquire at the expense of the Federal Government after 1954 and the intense struggle among Nigeria's national leaders to acquire or maintain their regional seats of power from as early as 1951 onwards. It was even this same momentum which later came to manifest itself in the form of demands for the creation of new states. Since we shall return to this theme subsequently, we should note here what other consequences the nature of the colonial state had on society in order to put in better perspective the evolution of social classes in this period and their effects on the post-colonial state.

Some Aspects of the Colonial State's Political Economy

Among the colonial state's efforts to ensure that Nigeria was irrevocably incorporated into the international capitalist framework through dovetailing it to the British economy, four stand out as most critical. These are taxation, transport, education, and agriculture. Through them we can begin to appreciate the role of the state in resource exploitation, trade promotion and the so-called civilizing mission. These policy areas are to be seen within the general context of division of labour in which colonial states in Africa generally found themselves. According to Brett,

This allocated to the State the provision of infrastructure services, agricultural extension and research, and control over the legal framework of marketing and production; it gave private enterprise the right to develop production, processing and marketing through either expatriate capital or African peasant production. This was the general rule; it was not, however, adhered

to rigidly since private interests did provide services when they could be made to pay, while the State involved itself in direct production when this seemed to be useful and not likely to originate through unaided private enterprise.¹

The colonial state's role in other words, "was to supervise the initial and necessary penetration of pre-capitalist formations, to organize the conditions of exploitation of labour and land."² This entailed, in effect, the restructuring of the pre-capitalist economy, making it more conducive to the production and marketing of commodities required by the trading companies.³ It requires a series of policies and programmes by the colonial state, over a period of time, to effect such changes in the pre-capitalist structural pattern that will permit or facilitate the shift from production of use-values into production of exchange values and commodities. The policies and programmes of the colonial state define new needs and obligations which force the cultivators to go into commodity production. The above-mentioned policy areas worked in Nigeria in the direction of coercing the agricultural

¹ E. A. Brett, Colonialism and Underdevelopment in East Africa: The Politics of Economic Change 1919-1939 (London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1973), p. 80.

² Henry Bernstein, "Notes on Capital and Peasantry," Review of African Political Economy, No. 10, 1977, p. 61.

³ "... merchant capital [which dominates this process] is the acid test in which structures on non-capitalist society are dissolved." Geoffrey Kay, Development and Underdevelopment: A Marxist Analysis (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1975), p. 94. To say that non-capitalist structures are dissolved is perhaps to overstate the problem; there is no doubt, however, that they are changed, often weakened.

producers to produce and market commodities; they also effected change, to some degree, of the pre-capitalist structures. Let us see how this was the case.

1. Except in the North, taxation was virtually unknown in Nigeria. The Fulani emirs collected tributes from communities over which they had imposed themselves. Since the colonial state had to raise its own money, for none was forthcoming from the Colonial Office in London, Lugard quickly moved to rationalize this taxation system and channel the proceeds into the coffers of the state.¹ The colonized had to pay for the maintenance of the instrument of their colonizers. So important was this tax matter that all else seemed secondary to it.

"Lugard's interest in the more detailed aspects of existent District or Village administration derived almost entirely from his concern with taxation: he was uninterested in any rural administrative functions which had no bearing on taxation."²

That interest seemed to have been handsomely rewarded for "everyone was astonished by the rise in revenue [from taxation] from £61,000 in 1907, to £124,000 in 1909, to £180,000 in 1911 and to £215,000 in 1913 . . ."³ In pouncing on the tax money through indirect rule, the state, in effect, saw to it that such "surplus appropriated in the form of tribute levied on village

¹Hill, Population, Prosperity and Poverty, pp. 49-54, outlines the various taxes that pre-existed the colonial state and the latter's attempt to rationalize them.

²Ibid., p. 35.

³Ibid., p. 25.

communities [first by Emirs] was itself marketed."¹ Here, in the pre-capitalist situation, was a possibility to appropriate surplus without undue or great disturbance to the social formation. This, no doubt, inclined the state to the wisdom and economy of indirect rule. Although taxation was important to the state, it was by no means the most important source of its revenue in later years.

The colonial state was being very circumspect with the introduction of taxation. It had to be since, for almost a decade after its imposition, the state still met with pockets of resistance within the territory it claimed to govern. Hence, not until 1916 and 1928 was direct taxation introduced in the Western and Eastern Regions respectively. It was possible for the state to overlook for so long such sure sources of revenue because of the on-going problem of pacification and subjugation, and also because it had another important source of income through import and export duties. Certainly it was not because the Colonial Office was becoming any less parsimonious. Custom duties had been an important source of revenue for the state. In the days before trade fully developed, a good percentage of this duty was levied on spirits. With the perceived need to stop or restrict the traffic in spirits, it became urgent to find suitable means whereby state revenue would be maintained, if not increased.

¹ Samir Amin, "Underdevelopment and Dependence in Black Africa--Origins and Contemporary Forms," Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 10, No. 4, 1972; p. 522.

Lugard wrote in his memo on taxation:

Clearly, therefore, Custom duties alone could not, without the aid of the spirit traffic, afford a sufficient revenue, even if they were increased to the point at which trade would be seriously affected. Direct taxation is, therefore, a necessary concomitant to the cessation of the spirit traffic, since it would be difficult to devise any other means.¹

It is not surprising therefore that, as Helleiner has shown, revenue from direct taxation between 1928 and 1939 increased while that from import duties was decreasing. Whereas in 1928-29 the latter comprised 51 per cent and the former 38 per cent of all public revenue, by 1938-39 the figures were 46 per cent and 43 per cent, respectively²--a rather symmetrical decline and increase of 5 per cent. When other trade than in spirits became more important, import duties again took their position as major sources of state revenue.

The full ramifications of taxation as one of the means of introducing and consolidating capitalist market relations is clear when it is realised that it was also a means of introducing coin currency, eliminating trade by barter and the use of other local currencies which pre-existed the colonial state. McPhee has noted that the introduction of coin currency was a factor in attracting and coercing Africans into the new system:

At first they [Africans] had to be press-ganged into the [Public Works]/service. Later they became eager workers,

¹Lugard, op. cit., p. 106; see also pp. 166-167.

²Helleiner, op. cit., p. 210, see table 50.

when they discovered that instead of labouring at their own charges they were given silver discs which could fetch them all manner of desirable commodities at the nearest 'store'. . . . Direct taxation, conversely, compelled the /Africans/ to accumulate a certain amount of those same silver discs to avoid the displeasure of the Government. This accumulation was a difficult matter when the coinage had not attained a wide circulation . . . 1

The need "to avoid the displeasure of the Government" became the necessity to market at least part of the produce and in some cases to grow mainly cash crops. With the introduction of coin currency and the beginnings of some accumulation, banking was not far behind.² Pre-capitalist patterns had to change; labour now had to be diverted to activity conducive to building an outwardly oriented economy.

It is a measure of the importance which the colonial state attached to the introduction of the new economic base and, conversely, a reflection of the disdain with which pre-capitalist structures were viewed that taxation which would help to destroy the latter but underpin the former was seen by Lugard as morally desirable: ". . . direct taxation is a moral benefit to the people . . . and African communities which aspire to be regarded as civilised must share the common burden of civilisation."³ In the event, the contribution of the Nigerian peasant in lightening "the common burden of civilisation" was that his surplus collected as tax went

¹ McPhee, op. cit., p. 238.

² Ibid., p. 239.

³ Lugard, op. cit., p. 166.

to support activities of the colonial state and into infrastructure construction by that state for economic exploitation by foreign private interests. Transportation was such a major economic infrastructure.

2. The River Niger, which for so long excited the imagination of Europe and was the object of several missions of exploration, together with its tributary, the River Benue, was the main transportation artery in Nigeria at the beginning of the century. The network of its distributaries became lines of access through which European influence reached several regions of Southern Nigeria. Also by means of the river, the Royal Niger penetrated inland to parts of what became the Northern Protectorate. "Unfortunately," wrote Perham, "this Niger-Benue river system has not provided Nigeria with a great commercial waterway."¹ Therefore, the river system could not be depended upon. Nor were harbour facilities adequate. It fell to the state to provide new or usable harbours and other transportation networks.² However, we focus on the railway because it was indispensable in the opening up of Nigeria to foreign penetration and capitalist exploitation.

Although the desirability and importance of a good transportation system in Nigeria may have been widely

¹ Margery Perham, ed., The Economics of a Tropical Dependency, Vol. 1, The Native Economies of Nigeria (London: Faber and Faber, 1948), pp. 24-25.

² McPhee, op. cit., pp. 124-125.

realized, no private economic company showed strong enough interest because the venture was considered of the order of "economic speculations." It was so considered because of the paucity of both geographical and geological information on Nigeria. Consequently the Nigerian railway, like those in Ghana (then Gold Coast) and Sierra Leone, had to be "State-built, State-owned and State-managed."¹ Apparently, however, the state did not just get into railway construction purely and directly to facilitate economic penetration, or (as suggested by McPhee)² for "philanthropic purposes." Political and military reasons at the immediate time weighed uppermost amongst all other considerations.

Winston Churchill [then Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Colonies] was much impressed with this project - in 1907 he wrote of it as 'Napoleonic both in compass and precision'. . . ; like others he saw its main [and immediate] justification as political and military, not economic. As Governor Girouard put it in a dispatch of 30 May 1907 . . . , it was because 'the people are not attached as yet to our rule' that it was necessary to maintain 2,000 troops in the North to restrain their fellow countrymen--and armies need lines of supply.³

¹Ibid., p. 111.

²Ibid.

³Hill, Population, Prosperity and Poverty, p. 28; emphasis added. Churchill's support of the railway construction was not based apparently only on the military need for such a line.. He is shown to have been a strong supporter of the British Cotton Growers Association (BCGA) which was hoping that a railway into the North would open the country up for large cotton trade to meet the needs of Lancaster. See J. S. Hogendorin, "The Origins of Groundnut Trade in Northern Nigeria" in Carl K. Eicher and Carl Liedholm, eds., Growth and Development of the Nigerian Economy (East Lansing: Michigan

The railway, of which there were two lines running in a north-south direction, one terminating in Lagos and the other in Port Harcourt, was financed with loan capital from the metropole. The colonial state guaranteed the loan capital. Construction of the major lines lasted from 1907 to 1912.

Although we have pointed out that political and military considerations appear to have weighed uppermost in the decision to build the railway, it is not to be supposed, of course, that economic considerations did not matter. On the contrary. Economic considerations should be seen as always given and constant. Rather, we emphasized the political and the military to indicate the immediate interest of the state, to show why railway construction was perceived as most urgent and necessary. Political and military considerations were not the only ones. Once the project was begun, economic considerations could not be ignored. And indeed they were not. As Professor Akin Mabogunje has argued:

A line was considered viable if it opened up areas which could grow or produce such crops as the British industrialists would buy, areas which had valuable mineral deposits, or . . . with good accessibility to Europe for export of these commodities. [The Western line, for

State University Press, 1970), pp. 31-32. The BCGA's role does not necessarily tell us why the line was indeed built when it was. We still suggest that the defence needs of the state were decisive, especially in the wake of the revolt against British dominance in Satiru in 1906, a revolt which "annihilated the local forces and could have been the signal for a concerted rising of the emirates." Mary Bull, "Indirect Rule in Northern Nigeria 1906-1911" in Kenneth Robinson and Frederick Madden, eds., Essays in Imperial Government Presented to Margery Perham (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1963), p. 52.

example, by-passed¹ Oyo city, the metropolis of Yorubaland, in order to keep closely within the forest belt with its high potential for the export of palm produce.¹

It was not until 1919 that any major effort was made to supplement the rail network with road construction. The roads fed the railway lines with produce from many corners of the country. We should not, however, leave the impression that between the railway and roads an adequate transportation network for Nigeria was thus provided. The fact is rather that even what was provided quickly became inadequate. Nor was there too much attempt made to gear the transportation network toward regional integration. For the time being it seemed to have met the military and political needs of the colonial state fairly adequately. The economic impact was high (see below). There seemed no need, therefore, to consider using the network as a mechanism for national integration. In fact, such a consideration would have been alien to the metropolitan bourgeoisie because they would see no immediate economic or political pay-off. Besides, as already suggested, they could not conceive of a united Nigeria.

Road and railway construction aided the penetration into the hinterland of foreign trading companies. They were now enabled to establish chains of stations and warehouses inland. In some serious ways the new transportation system

¹Akin L. Mabongunje, Urbanization in Nigeria (London: University of London Press, 1968), p. 144.

changed the pattern of trade. Some of the urban centres, such as Calabar, lost their growth momentum and began to stagnate because the new transportation infrastructure drastically changed the pattern and flow of trade. Former urban centres which were not well served by road or rail suffered decline.¹ What new urban centres did arise became "of the commercial-administrative type"²--a true reflection of the times and circumstances under which the new centres were established.

Aside from the impact on urbanization, the new transportation infrastructure greatly affected trade and production. Akin Mabogunje has written of this as follows:

Groundnut export from the Kano region . . . showed an increase within two years of almost 1,000 per cent--from less than 2,000 tons in 1911, before the arrival of the railway, to about 20,000 tons in 1913, a year after the railway reached Kano. Indeed . . . in the twenty-five years before the Second World War, the railway caused the exports of groundnuts to increase 200 times, of cocoa 30 times, of tin 12 times and the internal trade in fish to develop a hundredfold.³

He goes on to show that lower cost of transportation and the shortening of time over which long distances were travelled enhanced the effect on production and trade by the rail network. More produce now found its way to either the

¹Latham, op. cit., last chapter; Clough, op. cit.; "The Road"; Mabogunje, op. cit.

²Coleman, op. cit., p. 77. See also R. K. Home, "Urban Growth and Urban Government: Contradictions in the Colonial Political Economy" in G. Williams, ed., op. cit., pp. 57-61.

³Mabogunje, op. cit., p. 144.

growing urban or export market.

The penetration into the hinterland of European trading companies via the transportation infrastructure meant a fuller incorporation of Nigeria into the international capitalist market system. The new but powerful factor of economic incentive, coupled with the need to earn money for taxation purposes, was also to tie the peasant producer into the new political economy ever more firmly. From now on, even crop specialization or concentration on cash crop production became possible and lucrative economic options. But more than this, the trading companies also needed and recruited Nigerians to man the proliferating stations and warehouses. A different crop of traders emerged: Long-distance trade, formerly northward oriented, now faced south to the coast. Lorry and rail transportation began in many areas to replace animal transportation. As new possibilities opened up, old handicrafts sometimes atrophied. For example, Nigerian craftsmen found that the penetration into the interior of foreign goods was inimical to their livelihood. "Now they were required to compete with cheap imported manufactures, and with craftsmen from other towns who could take advantage of improved transport facilities or even move to other towns. The extension of markets for craft products went together with more rigorous competition, and increasing dependence on imported materials."¹ The more the foreign companies were

¹Gavin Williams, "Nigeria: A Political Economy" in Gavin Williams, ed., Nigeria: Economy and Society (London: Rex Collings Ltd., 1976), p. 22.

able to penetrate the hinterland and the more the colonial state spread its administrative tentacles, the more also the combined effect of their activities worked to consolidate the colonial economy and begin the transformation of the existent stratification pattern. The role of education in this gradual process of transformation is important.

3. Colonial education should be seen as the ideological apparatus of the colonial state. This may seem far-fetched in view of the fact that education started in Nigeria several decades before the formal establishment of the colonial state. Be that as it may, the important point to keep in mind is that the foreign missionary groups which brought western formal education to Nigeria and other parts of Africa were not immune from the same imperialist ideology which informed many of the roles of the army of colonial administrators who followed them. It may also be pointed out that in some important ways the activities of the missionary groups complemented those of the state administrators. For example, the peace and brotherhood theme of the Christian message may have disposed those Africans who received it to acquiesce in colonial rule. Furthermore, the missionary groups' message had a similar effect on pre-capitalist structures as did some of the state policies. Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart is a good fictional portrayal of the kind of social disorganization which sometimes followed in the wake of the activities

of missionary groups.¹ The missionary groups and the state also complemented each other since the mission schools provided the state with some qualified manpower while the state provided the missionaries with protection. Both were indeed intricately linked partners in the so-called civilizing mission of imperialism, even if there may have been some differences of view between them. In this imperialist mission both maxim guns and the Bible found mutual support and benefit. This relationship was not lost to Lugard, for he was anxious that the state should not place any undue demands on the missionaries, especially in the field of education. For this reason he urged that fairness to the missionary groups made it desirable that the state should be more involved in training some of the staff it required.²

That the state kept missionary activity out of Northern Nigeria--with grave consequences for the country's later development--is not the result of mutual antipathies between missionaries and administrators. Lugard, himself from a missionary background, harboured no "consistent anti-missionary bias."³ The restriction of missionary work to

¹ Chinua Achebe, Things Fall Apart (Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1958).

² See Sonia F. Graham, Government and Mission Education in Northern Nigeria 1900-1919 with Special Reference to the Work of Hanns Vischer (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1966), pp. 8-9.

³ Ibid., p. 18.

Lokoja and the southern territories was more the result of an attempt to consolidate the newly founded colonial state without courting any great hostility from the Moslem leaders in the Northern Provinces. The lack of active co-operation between church and state in the North should not be seen as a sign of disinterest by the state in education as such. More than anything else it was an attempt to keep the missionaries from proselytising among the Moslems. Where proselytising could be avoided or at least minimized, the state was willing to use missionaries to start educational institutions in the North. Thus it was not mere coincidence that some of the important Europeans who helped the state establish schools in the North were of the Church Missionary Society (CMS).¹ Co-operation then does not appear to have been really lacking between the two groups.

In the South, most of the work in education was being done by the missions. Here they had a free hand to operate. Aside from grants it gave to some of the schools, the state left education to the missions alone. There was a kind of division of labour here. On their part, the missionaries had a limited scope in their perception of education. Their primary purpose was originally to provide such education as would enable new converts to read and understand the Bible. However, with the increase in the activity of the trading companies and the expansion of the state administration, it

¹ Ibid., pp. 32 and 60ff.

became quite clear that these two agencies would become major employers of the graduates of the mission schools.

For more than two decades after the imposition of the colonial state, its policy on education amounted to little more than aiding the mission schools to provide it and the commercial houses with junior staff--"clerks, accountants, dispensers, dressers, sanitary and other inspectors, station-masters, railway guards, etc."¹ There was concern expressed by some of the colonial administrators that not enough of these persons was produced and that what there was were mostly young men who were "unreliable and lack integrity, self-control and discipline; that they show no respect for authority of any kind, and that a large proportion are ill-educated."² This situation appeared to have been a big problem for the state about which it could not for long remain idle. Two contradictions seemed to have confronted the state in its education policy. At the same time that it was obliged to restrict the missionary groups in the North, the administrators believed that Christian instruction was vital to proper training and personal development.

. . . even moral instruction divorced from religious sanction, among races who have not the atmosphere which centuries of Christian ethical standards have produced in Europe, infallibly produces a class of young men and

¹Lugard, op. cit., p. 127. Lugard noted that "There is not, however, any opening at present for fully qualified Native engineers, since it is difficult for them to work with European foremen. Nor does the African seem as a rule to make a good engineer." p. 128.

²Ibid., p. 126..

women who lack reverence alike for their parents, their social superiors, their employers, or the Government. They lack self-restraint and control, and they lack the foundation on which the best work is based, whether of public usefulness or private effort.¹

So on the one hand Christian religious sanction or instruction was seen as very important but on the other hand the state was compelled to restrict Christianity. The second contradiction was one in which there was apparently some need to educate more people but at the same time fear that the African's education may lead him or her to some measure of unhappiness with the status quo or even "to the subversion of constituted authority." Apparently, the evidence was already there: "If the local Press may be taken as a criterion of the feelings of the educated communities in all the West African Colonies, we must admit that education has not brought them happiness and contentment."² In an apparent attempt to resolve the contradictions in policy it was provided that the state, through the "Lieut.-Governors, Residents, and the Directors of Education" should interest itself more in the educational work of missions; in each Province there was to be "a very strong European staff"; and, moral instruction should include, inter alia, "Anecdotes illustrative of the value of kindness and honesty," "Biography of good men--Gordon, Livingstone, &c.," "Lessons in patriotism," "Essays on duties to the State. Respect for authority.", and "Value

¹Ibid., p. 135; emphasis added.

²Ibid., p. 130.

of good Government. Citizenship."¹ Here, clearly, we see the combined purposes of education and those of the ideological groundings of the colonial state. In this any doubt is dismissed that because private missionary groups were primarily responsible for education, it may not adequately be seen as part of the state's ideological apparatus.

The lack of any stronger commitment to education by the state other than giving occasional grants to the missionary groups may be seen as resulting partly from the fact that there was no serious thought at this early period of giving Africans political independence, and partly also from the fact that the state saw little need to train Africans to work other than as subordinates in its bureaucracy or for the commercial houses. There was no impetus to further liberalize education, especially since, even in Britain at this time education was still a fairly restricted commodity. The colonial state therefore continued to show little interest in this matter. According to Fafunwa, it was not until 1924 with the publication of the Phelps-Stokes Commission report on education that the colonial state was "jolted . . . from its serene and lackadaisical position into positive action."² Part of this positive action included the establishment in 1930 of the Yaba Higher College and in 1948 of the University

¹ Ibid., pp. 131, 134 and 137.

² A. Babs Fafunwa, History of Education in Nigeria (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1974), p. 121.

College, Ibadan. Even given these institutions, Nigerians were clamouring for more and better quality ones--such was the great thirst which had developed for education. It is perhaps instructive that the heavy financial burden notwithstanding, more Nigerians were studying overseas than came to the University College in Ibadan when it was founded. "For instance, in 1948 there were 210 students at Ibadan as against 550 abroad; in 1953 there were only 400 students at Ibadan as against 2,000 abroad."¹

Education under the colonial state should probably be considered important more for its consequences and orientation than for the number of students who received it. It was certainly congruent with an imperialist ideology which saw the colonized as sub-species of humanity.² So it would appear that what education the state and missionary groups provided, at least before nationalist pressure was brought to bear on them in the 1940s and '50s, was such that in their view suited the African in his/her position as colonized.

¹Ibid., p. 151.

²At best, imperialist ideology treated the black race with paternalism. A good example of this can be found in Margery Perham, Africans and British Rule (London: Oxford University Press, 1941). Few have written more eloquently and persuasively on the effects of this ideology than Fanon. "In fact," he wrote, "the terms the settler uses when he mentions the native are zoological terms." Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, trans. by Constance Farrington (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1963), p. 42. See also, Immanuel Wallerstein, The Road to Independence: Ghana and the Ivory Coast (Paris: Mouton & Co., 1964), p. 16.

Nor could the state have provided liberalized education. As already pointed out education in Britain was yet to be liberalized in this period; how could it be different with the colonial state, itself an appendage of the British state?

Yet for all its limited scope colonial education played an important role in those areas it reached in orienting the Africans toward the values and ethos of the capitalist market economy. It was largely instrumental in the evolution of qualified personnel who would later move into positions of importance in the post-colonial state or even during the period of colonial dyarchy. To this extent it would perhaps have produced fewer political problems if it had reached all parts of the country equally. As the ideological medium of the colonial economy, colonial education gradually introduced the African to a particular consciousness that predisposed him/her largely to reconcile him/herself to the colonial market economy--even if (due to its own peculiar contradiction) it also helped equip the African with a means to effectively reject colonialism per se.¹ It helped the educated African to acquire not only the rudimentary skills to make a living in the new order but also the tastes and life-styles of the colonizer. This was the logical consequence of the British educational philosophy of the period; it was "the philosophy of educated gentlemen--the refined elite . . . that select

¹See Claude Ake, "The Congruence of Political Economies and Ideologies in Africa" in Gutkind and Wallerstein, eds., op. cit., pp. 198-204.

group, of like mind, who form the cream of society, leaders necessarily chosen and trained for the purpose and not a spontaneous outgrowth of a whole people participating in their attempt to solve problems."¹ From this point of view it may be said of colonial education that it was elitist. Education's role as an ideological mechanism helps put in clearer perspective Coleman's comment about Nigeria that "Western economic forces and ideas have not been imposed upon unwilling and protesting peoples";² no doubt many educated persons came to acquiesce in the new order.

Because of its critical role, the pattern by which western formal education was introduced into Nigeria was to have lasting political consequences for the country. Since it was for quite a long while left almost entirely in the hands of missionary groups, the virtual exclusion of these groups from the Northern Provinces meant, ipso facto, the virtual exclusion of much western educational activity in that part of the country. Table 5 gives some indication of the degree of lop-sidedness that existed in the spread of educational facilities in the country. In 1958, the North had only 2,290 educational institutions to the West's 7,273 and the East's 6,880. These two latter Regions each had over one million persons in attendance at different

¹P. U. Okeke, "Background to the Problems of Nigerian Education" in Okechukwu Ikejiani, ed., Education in Nigeria (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965), p. 10.

²Coleman, op. cit., p. 63.

TABLE 5
NUMBER OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS[†] AND PUPILS
BY REGIONS IN 1958

Region	Number of Schools	Enrolment		Total
		Male	Female	
West*	7,273	735,517	438,206	1,173,723
East	6,880	812,880	438,049	1,250,929
North	2,290	179,058	59,040	238,098
Federation	16,443	1,727,455	953,295	2,662,750

† Includes: Primary and Secondary Schools, Teacher Training Colleges and Technical and Vocational Schools.

* Includes: Lagos.

Source: Adapted from Otoni Nduka, Western Education and the Nigerian Cultural Background (Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 127, table V.

educational institutions in the same year while the North had less than a quarter of a million persons in attendance at similar institutions. What the table does not reveal but which should be pointed out is that for a much longer period western education had been established in the West before it reached the East. By 1859, for example, there already existed in Lagos the CMS Grammar School, but it was not until 1895 that the Church of Scotland Mission (CSM) established the Hope Waddell Training Institute (HWTI) in Calabar.¹ The important political repercussions of these situations, as well as their consequences for class formation are discussed in subsequent chapters.

¹Fafunwa, op. cit., p. 99. See his table 4.3.

4. Agriculture is the fourth area in the colonial state's policies that were critical in restructuring the pre-capitalist formations. Three important points need to be discussed here in relation to the colonial state's agricultural policy: (a) the absence of a foreign-owned plantation economy; (b) the lack of any serious attempt to develop the forces of production, which is not entirely unrelated to (a); and (c) the establishment of marketing boards.

That no large expatriate-owned plantations existed in Nigeria¹ is not due to total lack of effort to establish some. For example, the need in Lancashire to develop and maintain in any part of the British empire a sure and steady source of raw material for the textile industry led the British Cotton Growing Association (BCGA), soon after its formation in 1902, to interest itself in growing cotton in the colonies. Nigeria held a special attraction for the BCGA because cotton and textile products were already very much in evidence in places like Kano and were widely reported by explorers even before colonialism. This accounts for some of the interest the BCGA showed in building a railway line to the North from Lagos at the turn of the century. It appears that the Association was hoping not so much to start a cotton plantation of its own than simply to divert the cotton already produced by African

¹This may soon change! "In its effort to increase agricultural production the Federal Military Government (FMG) is inviting foreigners to come and open up "commercial (or industrial) agriculture." See Nigerian Review (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information), No. 14, 1978, p. 1.

cultivators from the local looms to the mills of Lancashire.¹ In this they had the generous support of the colonial state. The programme eventually failed because the cultivators were not paid enough for their cotton to encourage the diversion; soon groundnuts replaced cotton as the most important agricultural export from the North.² Any attempts by the BCGA to establish plantations in Nigeria or in any of the West African colonies failed, for three reasons. In the first place, land was not generally available since the colonial state had decided against massive land alienation.³ The state, for all its readiness to assist the BCGA, was understandably reluctant to alienate land or relocate large populations to provide it; such an exercise would have been tantamount to courting local hostility. For similar reasons, too, Unilever was unsuccessful in starting any palm oil plantations in the southern areas. Secondly, the Africans were reportedly not "so ready to work for wages."⁴ Thirdly, local climatic conditions were not conducive to large settlements by expatriates; such settlements would have been necessary to at least start the plantations. On its own the second reason may not weigh very much when it is remembered that other factors,

¹See Hogendorin, op. cit., pp. 30-35.

²Ibid., pp. 38-41.

³See Bull, op. cit., pp. 60-61.

⁴McPhee, op. cit., p. 46.

namely state coercion could have been applied to get the necessary labour force as was the case in the attempt to make the squatters' labour available to settlers in Kenya. For this second reason to have any force, therefore, it should perhaps be taken in association with the third. For, had there been expatriate settlers in the country interested in starting agricultural plantations, and all other things being equal, they probably would have influenced the state to cater first, if not only, to their interests. Again the Kenya example springs to mind.

Perhaps more important than any of the above reasons were the receptiveness to economic incentives by the Nigerian agricultural producers and the increased production which became evident after the railway was built. It is noted with regard to groundnut production that so great was the increase that the railway management could not always guarantee that they could evacuate to the coast what the foreign traders in the hinterland had bought.¹ Farmers had also brought into cultivation land which was hitherto left fallow--to this, in part, is attributed by Sara Berry and others the rapid increase in production and export of cocoa.² Helleiner has observed that, "The whole history of the introduction and vast extension of cash cropping in Nigeria is one of peasant

¹Hogendorin, op. cit., p. 41.

²Sara Berry, "Cocoa and Economic Development in Western Nigeria" in Eicher and Liedholm, op. cit., p. 18.

response to improved incentive"¹ Given relatively good market prices, the cultivators produced more for export. The task then of the expatriate trading companies was essentially to organize the produce for export while that of the colonial state was to organize the necessary conditions for all this to take place by trying to ensure that peace and stability was maintained and that roads and communication which facilitated the export trade were in place. So then it appears that, with a fairly well established production capability and a demonstrated willingness to take advantage of relatively favourable market conditions (from the earlier period when fierce competition between the foreign traders resulted in high prices paid to palm oil producers), the need for large-scale agricultural plantations was not pressing in Nigeria during the colonial period.

But while output increased, the dominant feature of Nigerian agriculture was its low level of technological input. The hoe and the machete remained the dominant tools of production. Government extension services had introduced fertilizers and new seed varieties but precious little was being done by way of improving the forces of production. There has been little difference in the method of production from early in the century to the present.² The colonial state worried little about this situation, for the existing production method

¹Helleiner, op. cit., p. 59. See also, Berry, Cocoa, Custom and Socio-Economic Changes in Rural Western Nigeria, op. cit., chapter II, pp. 37-54.

seemed adequate to generate substantial export. With the exception of the introduction of some pioneer oil mills it went little further. Its attitude is not so difficult to understand. There would most likely have been cause for it to strive harder than it did if exports were dwindling. But with millions of peasants diligently working their land and breaking into virgin lands to increase production there appeared to be little cause for concern, either by the state or by the foreign trading firms.

Nor did the Nigerian cultivators themselves see any pressing need to adopt new production techniques. A possible exception here were the cocoa farmers who, Berry has argued, not only improved their labour mobilization techniques but also where possible invested in such other facilities as transport which aided their production activity.¹ For most other cultivators, however, there was little change. This may be accounted for by two important reasons. The first is that for most of the cultivators cash crop farming was an activity carried on alongside food crop farming. The predominantly rural economy was such that it easily could provide the cultivators' subsistence needs. There appeared to be, from this point of view, no immediate or strong pressure on the cultivator to innovate. Farm sizes were (and still are) fairly small. As late as 1967/68, for example, 31 per cent

¹Berry, "Cocoa and Economic Development in Western Nigeria," op. cit., pp. 25-26.

of all farmers in the North had farms between 2.5 and 5 acres each, while in the West (including Mid-West) 22.7 per cent of all farmers each had farms between 2.5 and 5 acres.¹ In the same period, only 7.3 per cent of the farmers in the North and 1.9 per cent of those in the West (including Mid-West) each had farms over 10 acres. Add to this picture of generally small sizes of farms the forested terrain (especially in the southern districts) and it may be seen that for the cultivators to have attempted mechanized agriculture would have involved prohibitive costs. Cattle, horses or bullocks could hardly be used for cultivation in the East and West due to the infestation of those regions by tse-tse fly. The colonial state's attempt to introduce some mechanized farming appeared to have been limited to its experimental farms and was not successful.

A second reason for the apparent lack of interest in adopting new agricultural instruments or techniques by the cultivators appears to have been the fact that especially after 1947, the prices paid for agricultural produce by the marketing boards were falling. In other words, there was now a decreased incentive for the growers. It has been suggested by Olatunbosun that from 1948 onwards Nigerian growers "were worse off than when there were no marketing boards. In practice, the boards paid farmers persistently low fixed rates

¹Nigeria, Economic Indicators, Vol. 8, No. 4, 1972 (Lagos: Federal Office of Statistics, 1972), p. 2.

during many years when world prices were rising."¹ This would have strongly and adversely affected any inclination that farmers may have had to adopt new forces of production to increase productivity. What would have been the point in investing in techniques of production if the return from the produce was not enough to warrant the investment? What returns there were from increased production went to help the grower meet new obligations imposed by the state (e.g., taxation) and to buy what new products may be available from the neighbourhood petty trader that would help complement his/her consumption. Only in a few cases was enough left over to pay children's school fees.

The marketing boards established in 1947 caused, or at least contributed to, this disincentive to innovate. By 1949 the major agricultural export commodities (palm produce, groundnuts, cocoa and cotton) had all come under control by the boards. The boards were established partly (and perhaps only ostensibly?) to help farmers better to cope with periods of falling world market prices. Profits from their operation were to be returned to the agricultural producers:

The intention is that 'profits' will be utilized primarily to maintain the maximum possible stability in the price paid to the producer. Thus on the average of a period of years, it is to be expected that the average price paid in West Africa will be substantially equal to the average net price realised on world markets and

¹Dupe Olatunbosun, Nigeria's Neglected Rural Majority (Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 52.

that the Board's buying and selling transactions will therefore approximately balance.¹

The establishment of the boards also resulted partly from a need in Britain to find means of alleviating that country's dwindled dollar reserves at the end of the Second World War. It was this latter need that the boards met more adequately than the former. Instead of helping farmers to cope better with fluctuations in the world prices of their products, the boards seemed to have become a mechanism by which these same farmers were taxed and exploited. According to Olatunbosun:

The marketing boards became an effective mechanism for taxing the rural sector to finance 'development' in order to increase capital formation . . . in Nigeria in 1946 the boards paid only N33.5 for a ton of palm oil and sold it for N90 at a gross profit of 488 per cent. Groundnuts which received only N30 per ton when bought by the boards, were later sold in Britain at N220 per ton at a gross profit of about 633 per cent. Over 75 per cent of the surplus accumulated was invested Rather than stabilize the prices, the boards destabilized the prices and deviated completely from the declared purpose of their existence.²

How this came about may be seen even by a cursory examination of table 6. This table indicates that only in 1955, 1957, and 1958 did groundnut producers receive 50 per cent or more (the highest was 63.3% in 1960) of the world market price of their commodity. By comparison, palm oil seemed to have fared better than groundnuts. Palm oil producers were paid

¹Quoted in P. T. Bauer, West African Trade: A Study of Competition, Oligopoly and Monopoly in a Changing Economy (New York: Augustus M. Kelly, Publishers, 1954), p. 269.

²Olatunbosun, op. cit., p. 53.

TABLE 6

COMMODITY PRODUCER PRICES AS PERCENTAGE
OF WORLD PRICE: 1948-58

Year	Cocoa	Palm Oil	Groundnut
1948	32.3	-	-
1949	98.4	55.8	39.6
1950	50.0	59.7	32.3
1951	46.9	59.1	22.8
1952	68.5	72.6	45.7
Mean '48-'52	49.2	61.8	35.1
1953	70.8	93.5	43.3
1954	43.3	71.4	45.5
1955	67.5	52.4	50.0
1956	96.2	46.2	46.1
1957	72.1	46.7	54.0
Mean '53-'57	70.0	62.0	47.8
1958	48.0	51.8	50.7

Source: Adapted from Onitiri and Olatunbosun,
eds., The Marketing Board System, p. 10.

as high as 93.5 per cent of the world market price of their commodity in 1953; however, three years later in 1956 they received only 46.2 per cent of the world price. This is a drastic decline but overall they seemed to have got better prices relative to groundnut producers. Between 1948 and 1952, cocoa producers received a mean annual percentage of 49.2. The mean annual percentage price for cocoa was to rise to 70.0 between 1953 and 1957. The most important point from the table is that agricultural producers did not benefit from the stabilizing role the marketing boards had been created to perform.

As may be expected, the net effect of the negative fiscal role of the board vis-à-vis primary commodity producers was probably decline in the total acreage cultivated as judged by changes in earnings from agricultural export commodities. Professors Olatunbosun and Olayide have reported a continuous downward trend in earnings from the three major crops we have been dealing with. They found that cocoa's average export earning "declined from 23.2 per cent [of all exports] between 1948 and 1952 to 20.8 per cent between 1953 and 1957. Although this percentage of 20.8 was maintained between 1958 and 1962, it fell to 16.2 per cent during the period 1963-67."¹ The decline in the average earning as percentage of total exports for palm oil was from its 1948-52 figure of 13.3 to 10.3 between 1953 and 1957, to 7.8 for 1958-62. Groundnuts showed an increase from an average earning as percentage of total exports of 16.1 between 1948-52 to 18.8 for the period 1953-57, but between 1958-62 it declined by 1.2 to 17.6 as percentage of all exports.²

The marketing boards appeared very much to be the direct instruments of the state for interfering with the colonial economy. Their members, who decided what price to

¹Dupe Olatunbosun and S. O. Olayide, "Effects of the Nigerian Marketing Boards on the Output and Income of Primary Producers" in H. M. A. Onitiri and Dupe Olatunbosun, eds., The Marketing Board System: Proceedings of an International Conference (Ibadan: The Nigerian Institute for Social and Economic Research, 1974), p. 2.

²Ibid.

pay the producers, were appointed by the Governors. The boards served, rather as in a command economy, to divert surpluses from the labour of the farmers into the coffers of the state and later into the capitalistic enclave of the economy. In this respect at least, the colonial economy was not a laissez faire economy. Even in the post-colonial era, the marketing boards continued their fiscal role which we have seen here in a glimpse: the extraction of surplus from the rural economy. Although the boards or the funds accumulated from them eventually were supposed to play a role in "development," such development benefitted the primary producers the least. According to Olatunbosun, these "boards did not contribute much towards the development of rural areas [where the primary producers lived] since all expenditure on rural areas was less than 10 per cent of the total funds accumulated by the marketing boards."¹ During the colonial period, the bulk of the accumulated funds of the boards went into serving the needs of the British state. After 1960, it went to serving some of the needs of the locally dominant political groups. How this was so we shall see in subsequent chapters.

Thus far we have concentrated on some of the policies of the colonial state (taxation, transportation, education and agriculture) which, it was suggested, were facilitating the gradual restructuring of the pre-capitalist formations.

¹Olatunbosun, Nigeria's Neglected Rural Majority, p. 53.

These policies also facilitated the activities of the trading firms. It has been mentioned, for example, that the building of the railway not only facilitated the evacuation from the hinterland to the coast for export of agricultural products but that at the same time it opened up the country to the foreign trading agencies. How else did these trading agencies and the state affect the changing social structures? How did the Nigerians perceive the roles of the trading agencies and those of the state? What further salient features can be discerned in the relationship between the colonial state and the foreign economic interests?

Professor Colin Leys has shown for Kenya, and Mahmood Mamdani has shown for Uganda, that in these places the colonial state played a role which made it impossible or, at best, very difficult for Africans to compete effectively in the economy with members of the settler communities (British and Asian).¹ The settler communities in Kenya worked hand in glove with the colonial state which, through various policies, totally excluded or greatly circumscribed African participation in certain sectors of the economy. The East African case appears more clear cut, no doubt, because of the European settlements there. However, even in West Africa where no large European settlements occurred the trend does not appear to have been very different. Here too, there is evidence to

¹Colin Leys, Underdevelopment in Kenya: The Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974); and M. Mamdani, Politics and Class Formation in Uganda (London: Heinemann Educational Books, Ltd., 1976).

indicate that state power and the intrigues of foreign firms combined to frustrate significant participation in the colonial economy by Africans. Rhoda Howard has observed with respect to Ghana that:

... attempts were made by Africans to enter manufacturing or processing, but all met with discouragement either from government or the expatriate firms. Far from granting help to indigenous manufacture, the government from as early as 1887 imposed duties on all goods manufactured in the colony, yet at the same time it allowed goods which were necessary for European industrial development, especially mining plant, to be imported free of duty.¹

In Nigeria too some evidence exists which can support the view that a similar trend obtained.

The monopoly position of expatriate firms in Nigeria placed an almost insurmountable barrier to Nigerians desirous of entering the import-export business which, until the dawn of political independence, was the mainstay of the Nigerian economy. Kilby has identified the dominant expatriate firms as "the United Africa Company (a Unilever affiliate), John Holt, Patterson Zochonis, Compagnie Française de l'Afrique Occidentale (CFAO), Société Commerciale de l'Ouest Africain (SCOA) and the Swiss Union Trading Company (UTC)."² So complete was the hold of this group of companies that it was not until after the Second World War that even the Lebanese, Syrians, Cypriots and Greeks were able to make any significant

¹Howard, op. cit., p. 192.

²Peter Kilby, Industrialization in an Open Economy: Nigeria 1945-1960 (London: Cambridge University Press, 1969), p. 60.

impact in this trade.¹ Bauer has noted that "the Levantine enterprises enjoy/ēd/ the respect, confidence and financial backing of British banks and firms. In some instances the supporters are highly regarded old-established British firms whose names are household words the world over."² Perhaps this explains why the Levantines who started arriving in Nigeria in the 1930s were able to break into the Nigerian market with some success. The Nigerians had no such luck. As in the import-export sector, so in the banking sector were the foreign banks, principally, "the Bank of British West Africa and Barclays Bank (D.C. and O)" dominant.³ It was with these expatriate banks that the state transacted its business.

Given the self-interest of the expatriate firms to maintain their monopoly and the unwillingness of the state to transact business with any of the Nigerian enterprises, it is little wonder that the latter could not develop. The foreign firms through their Association of West African Merchants (AWAM) not only influenced government policies but also were able to control the price and supply of commodities. It has already been observed by Bauer that the colonial state

¹Ibid., p. 61.

²P. Bauer, West African Trade: A Study of Competition, Oligopoly and Monopoly in a Changing Economy (New York: Augustus M. Kelly, Publishers, 1954), p. 149.

³Ibid., p. 180.

"relied for advice almost wholly" on the foreign firms and that at least with reference to stockfish these firms did control the price and supply through an agreement between themselves.¹ Frequently, it seemed, the influence of the merchants on government was not even exerted in the colony itself but through various British Chambers of Commerce on the Colonial Office or through consultations "with Governors when home on leave."² The African community lacked this kind of contact or co-operation between it and the colonial state. This, therefore, was hardly a situation in which official support and encouragement could easily, if at all, be gained by the Nigerians.

Nigerian entrepreneurs did not meet with problems simply because of the sheer size and superior organization of the expatriate firms, as Bauer has suggested.³ His own account of price-fixing contradicts this. It would seem that these expatriate firms actively sought to stifle the emergence of Nigerian entrepreneurs, unless they could control such persons. Bauer finds insufficient as a support for this view, "a prima facie case of destructive price-cutting in connexion with the

¹Ibid., pp. 132-133; p. 147.

²Wheare, op. cit; also Howard, pp. 146-156.

³According to Bauer, the large firms were dominant simply because of their "possession of large capital" and superior resources. Bauer, West African Trade, pp. 104 and 147.

manufacture and marketing of soap in Nigeria" by Lever Brothers, through its subsidiary, the West African Soap Company.¹ This was a case in which the Kano Niger Soap Factory (Nigerian-owned) was forced to close down "temporarily" because of "an ultimatum by the general manager of the West African Soap Company . . ."² Similar incidents were reported in other large commercial centres, namely Port Harcourt.³ An agent had this to say about John Holt, the second-largest expatriate trading firm:

One of the irritating things in Nigeria and which helps to hinder the progress of trade at a station occupied by a blackman is the tendency on the part of some authorities to give more credence to what a European of another firm tells them to that of a blackman working for them. Take a station at which white and black are in charge of the factories and there be an agreed rule between the firms as to prices and dashes in nine cases out of ten, the European will break the rule in order to get more than his share of the produce, if your blackman were to report or do the same in order to get for you your full share of the trade no credence will be given to his report, and he will be told stop; As a wire was once sent to a certain blackman 'Stop buying produce with soap dashes else I remove you from charge.' In very truth the white man who reported him was giving out 10 times more soap and tobacco dashes . . . 4

Putting these pieces of evidence together, it seems rather clear to us, contra Bauer, that there was active, if sometimes subtle, attempts on the part of the expatriate merchants to

¹Ibid., p. 122.

²Ibid., pp. 122-123.

³Ibid., p. 123

⁴Quoted in Howard, op. cit., pp. 190-191.

throttle or at least control any emergence of local competition.

What role did the colonial state itself play in furthering African entrepreneurship? The state, it appears, was no more interested than the foreign firms in assisting the Nigerians to participate effectively in the colonial administration or to compete effectively with the foreign firms. As already noted, the state transacted most of its business with the large expatriate firms. The monopoly it imposed after 1947 on the purchasing and marketing of agricultural products was, in effect, a mechanism by which it delivered the economic future not only of the evolving entrepreneurs but also that of the entire producing population into the hands of the expatriate firms. It was these firms who became the buying agents for the West Africa Produce Control Board, and subsequently the marketing boards.¹ We can agree with Coleman when he noted in this connection that "the government in effect froze, legitimized, and perpetuated for the duration of the war [and long afterwards, we may add] the prewar alien oligopoly in Nigeria's export trade."²

In its own administrative service the government retained most of the Nigerians in its service primarily in the lower echelons of the state bureaucracy. The upper echelons were dominated by expatriate staff. As can be seen from

¹Bauer, op. cit., pp. 265-270.

²Coleman, op. cit., p. 82.

TABLE 7
PROGRESS OF NIGERIANIZATION OF "SENIOR SERVICE" ON 1 June 1952

Department	Total authorised Establishment	Number of Vacancies	Number of Expatriates	Number of Non- Expatriates	Number of Non- Expatriates promoted from Junior Service
Agriculture	148	45	81	22	20
Education	557	184	322	51	41
Marine	136	17	94	25	25
Medical					
Services	741	185	399	157	57
Police	142+	19+	92+	31+	31
Posts and Telegraphs	182	33	121	28	28
Public Works,	609	146	431	32	32
Railway	470*	83*	294*	93	92
Administrative Services	654	95	522	37	22

† Figures are of July 1, 1952

* Capital Works staff included

Source: The Nigerianization of the Civil Service: A Review of Policy and Machinery. Report of an Inquiry by Sir Sydney Phillipson and M. S. O. Adebo, (Lagos: Government Printer, 1954, Appendix IV, pp. 107-108.

table 7, there were only 37 non-expatriates (22 of whom reached their position through promotion) in the state's administrative services' "senior service" category in 1952, while there were 522 expatriates in the same job category for the same year. Comparable lop-sidedness appears in favour of expatriates in all other services shown on the table. Of course, it may very well have been that there was not enough qualified Nigerians to fill the many vacancies which existed in these job categories or to bring a better balance between the Nigerians and the expatriates. To take this point very far anyway would be to ignore that the colonial state, as already seen, was primarily concerned earlier on with producing clerks and artisans and that colonial education was not (could not have been) liberalized. There certainly appeared to be more Nigerians qualified for service but who were rejected for very obscure reasons. Among such persons were, for example, Dr. Azikiwe and Dr. Akanu Ibiam.¹ A similar situation as is evident in the administrative service of the state was paralleled in the structure of the foreign firms. As Hopkins noted; "In 1939 Africans accounted for only seven per cent of the company's [the U.A.C.] total management staff in West Africa; by 1957 the proportion had risen to twenty-one per cent; . . ."²

¹Dr. Akanu Ibiam made this point very strongly in a public talk at Aba, Nigeria, on 30 September 1978.

²Hopkins, op. cit., p. 277.

To the Nigerian entrepreneurs it was fairly clear where the major part of their problem in effectively participating in the colonial economy (and therefore competing effectively against the foreign firms) was: it was in the colonial state's collusion with the foreign firms. Some of these firms, the Nigerians found out, often had for their directors persons who were either former colonial administrators or otherwise closely connected with the colonial and/or the British state. The clearest example was the Bank of British West Africa (BBWA) which handled all the colonial state accounts in Nigeria and whose list of Directors comprised an overwhelming number of former colonial administrators.¹ It was widely believed that the colonial government would do anything to protect the BBWA's monopoly hold, and that this was epitomized in the inquiry instituted by the Colonial Office in 1956 into the affairs of Dr. Azikiwe and the African Continental Bank (ACB). From the points of view of Dr. Azikiwe and a host of others the inquiry was designed to check and control local competition against expatriate interests. As one member of the then House of Assembly put it, the inquiry was "designed to kill any other business and uphold the interest of the BBWA's monopoly in this country."² And according to Azikiwe himself, "The Colonial Office did not

¹See Eastern Nigeria, Eastern House of Assembly Debates, Third Session, 1956 (Enugu: Government Printer, 1957), pp. 209-210. The list was disclosed in the Assembly by Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe.

²Ibid., p. 202.

give protection to the Nigerian businessmen. It feigned complete ignorance of the prevailing restraint of trade."¹

Dr. Azikiwe went on to charge that even in Ghana the BBWA had attempted to "discredit" an African bank and that

. . . . banks started by Nigerians [as was the ACB by him] have also experienced the same attitude of hostility against them by the B.B.W.A. The Mercantile Bank Limited was established in August 1931, but by 1936 it went into liquidation to the joy of the B.B.W.A. octopus. Three former Directors of the Mercantile Bank Limited (Dr. A. Maja, Mr. T. A. Doherty and Mr. H. A. Subair) then took another chance at fighting the B.B.W.A. On February 11, 1933 the National Bank of Nigeria was founded For many years this Nigerian bank was the butt of all sorts of jokes and gossip manufactured by the B.B.W.A. . . . Since the [African] Continental Bank began to function [1948], the B.B.W.A. has refused to recognise it and it has done everything possible to discredit it . . . many influential expatriate civil servants and the Colonial Office have always been hostile to its existence.²

Not only that, the government's attempt to discourage the operation of motor transportation was another sign to the Nigerian entrepreneurs that government co-operated with the foreign firms to discourage them. The reason behind the government's action was apparently that:

In the early thirties, the Nigerian railways [which were constructed, owned and operated by the government] were being run at a loss. The government laid the blame for the regular deficits of the railways at the door of motor transporters who were accused of unfair competition, and it decided that such competition should be discouraged. Accordingly, the traffic regulations were amended so that any lorry plying between areas from which the railways normally procured its traffic would pay double the licence fee imposed on other lorries. This 'double licence fee',

¹Ibid., p. 206.

²Ibid., pp. 207-208.

which was intended to act as a check on road-rail competition was applicable to specified routes throughout the country.¹

It should perhaps occasion little surprise that the government did not seem to facilitate the evolution of Nigerian entrepreneurs, or that it appeared unwilling to patronise them and instead patronised the expatriate firms. In trying to explain away the situation, Bauer credits it to the reliability and efficiency of these foreign firms. "The administrative preference in favour of large firms is coupled with a noticeable (and understandable) desire to deal with established firms rather than with newcomers or with firms set up comparatively recently. The administrative and personal convenience is obvious."² Apparently too, it would have reflected rather badly on the efficiency of the colonial administrators if they encouraged or patronised the new entrepreneurs, and this because, "A multiplicity of traders, especially of small or medium-sized firms, presents a chaotic and untidy appearance which is readily identified with inefficiency and administrative inconvenience."³ Coleman, who agrees that the "image of close association between alien political control and an alien economic oligopoly was not without

¹See Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Awo: The Autobiography of Chief Obafemi Awolowo (Ibadan: Cambridge University Press, 1960), pp. 125-126. See also Ekundare, An Economic History of Nigeria 1860-1960, pp. 147-148.

²Bauer, op. cit., pp. 146-147.

³Ibid., p. 148.

substance," offers an explanation not altogether different from Bauer's. If only the African firms had been long established, "they would in all likelihood have been given the same opportunities as European firms." Hence the alleged attempt by both government and expatriate firms to thwart the efforts by Nigerians to establish some viable enterprises "does not necessarily mean that ideological or national affinities linked government and management, although the possibility cannot be excluded."¹ These explanations by Bauer and Coleman, while not totally useless, nevertheless appear to us less than satisfactory.

A clearer and perhaps more plausible explanation may be sought both in the nature and role of the colonial state and merchant capital which was dominant in the colonial economy. In addition, imperialist and colonialist ideology may also have had a role to play in the matter. The colonial state was playing a role which first and foremost was to protect the interest of the British state of which it was an appendage. This, ipso facto, meant that it necessarily had to protect the overall interest of British merchant capital in the Nigerian colonial economy. It may not have done so as a direct instrument of this merchant capital or necessarily at its behest; so to establish that it did or did not do so is not very important for the argument. What is important to show is that in the long run the vital interests of both

¹Coleman, op. cit., p. 81.

merchant capital and the colonial state converge. In the short or medium run, too, those interests may converge; or it may be that separate interests may incline them to what appears to be common cause. What we seem to have with this particular instance is that a separate interest of the state, different from but coinciding with that of merchant capital, was at play in its lack of support to African entrepreneurs.

Professor Howard has suggested with regard to the Ghana case that the colonial state had its own proper interest in discouraging African competition with foreign enterprises. She writes, "If indigenous industry were allowed to develop, imports and import duties would decrease, and the state would be obliged to find an alternative tax base . . ."¹ Howard's point is also applicable to Nigeria. Table 8 shows that government was deriving substantial revenue from import duties. For the year 1944-45 national revenue from import duties was about 63 per cent of the total while revenue from all taxes in the country came to only about 37 per cent of that total. Revenue from taxation dropped to about 32 per cent of the total revenue in 1946-47 from about 44 per cent in 1945-46. Although it climbed marginally to about 34 per cent (over N7 million) in 1947-48, it dropped even further to 30 per cent in 1948-49. And although it nearly reached N10 million in 1949-50 it was only 29 per cent of total revenue and was still dwarfed by the increase in import duties from about 70 per

¹Howard, op. cit., p. 84.

TABLE 8

NIGERIA: STATE REVENUES FROM IMPORT DUTIES
AND TAXATION, 1944-50

Year	Revenue (nearest N,000)†			% of Duties	% of Taxation
	Import Duties	Taxation*	Total		
1944-45	7,616	4,411	12,027	63	37
1945-46	8,300	6,640	14,940	56	44
1946-47	10,514	4,938	15,452	68	32
1947-48	14,752	7,497	22,249	66	34
1948-49	17,280	7,554	24,834	70	30
1949-50	23,333	9,661	32,994	71	29

* Includes Native Direct Taxation, Individuals' and Companies' Income Taxes.

† Originally computed in £s but here converted to naira, Nigeria's present national currency. There are two nairas to the pound, so the original figures were multiplied by two to arrive at the above approximations.

Sources: Calculated from Nigeria, Report of the Accountant-General with Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st March, 1947, p. 6, and the Report of the Accountant-General with Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st March, 1950, pp. iii-iv:

cent (N17 million) in 1948-49 to about 71 per cent (N23 million) in 1949-50. In fact, throughout the period looked at revenue from import duties was on a steady climb, almost doubling, for example, between 1945-46 and 1947-48. Generalizing from this, it may be said that the colonial state derived substantial revenue from import duties. We see that although taxation was important, as shown earlier, it was not nearly as important as import duties in the later period when trade increased.

It would not be at all far-fetched to suggest, therefore, that the colonial state was trying to protect one of its important sources of revenue in colluding with the foreign enterprises to check effective local participation in the colonial economy.

Another point which may be briefly noted in this matter is that it was certainly in the interest of merchant capital to discourage, if it could, the establishment of local industries in the colony. To have diverted into or encouraged such development would have been tantamount to its willing its own subordination. Its profits come not from adding any value to products but from buying and/or selling above or below the cost of production. If it must make profit it must sell a particular commodity at a higher price than it paid for the commodity without having added any value to that commodity. This being the case it seeks to not only maintain commodity circulation but also to minimize as much as possible free competition in this economic sphere. That is why in the Nigerian and other colonies merchant capital "never embraced the advantages of competition but strived to form monopolies wherever it could in particular markets and internationally. It eschewed the principle laissez-faire and sought state support for monopolistic privileges."¹

Finally, we should consider a possible role or influence here by imperialist ideology. As is now well known,

¹Kay, op. cit., p. 100.

colonialism justified itself by alleging the immaturity and inferiority of the colonized and by assigning a civilizing role to the colonizers. Imperialist ideology gives a dog a bad name in order to hang the dog, so to speak. That the imperialist ideology had some able protagonists in Nigeria can be gleaned from warnings by Sir P. Girouard (who replaced Lugard in 1906) which he issued in 1908 and that of another Governor, Sir Hesketh Bell, issued in 1910. Girouard warned against some danger inherent in bringing a people who had long pined in darkness too quickly to light: "Hitherto they have moved about as far as seventh century by our reckoning-- I am not sure but that some of them are positively ante-diluvian."¹ According to Bell: "It must never be forgotten that we are 'protecting' a people in spite of themselves, and almost every improvement and development initiated by us is absolutely opposed to all their instincts and traditions."² Can it very well be ruled out that such sentiment informed the activities of those who were attempting to sponsor the capitalist mode of production in the Nigerian colonial economy? The colonial government and the expatriate firms showed little confidence in the ability of the Africans and hence had little or no qualms about excluding them from high administrative office or from actively and more meaningfully participating

¹Hill, Population, Prosperity and Poverty, p. 29.

²Ibid., p. 27.

in the colonial economy. Moreover, to so restrict the economic activity of the Africans meant that much of the profit was accruing to the colonizer. In imperialist ideology the colonized was a ne'er do well; with all the odds against successful participation in the colonial economy weighted against the African, he appeared to the imperialist as a ne'er do well.

By relating the foregoing to the colonial economic process in Nigeria one can see that contra Coleman ideological affinity and common nationality had much to do with the collusion between government and the expatriate firms doing business one with another "while allowing African businessmen . . . to remain exposed to the full rigour of market forces."¹ Both the colonial state and the firms were protecting their best interests. Against the background that we have suggested one can see why Bauer's explanations of the plight of the African entrepreneur may be said to look more like (clinical) rationalizations than proper explanation of the facts.

We have concentrated in this chapter on looking at how the colonial state, through various policy measures, attempted, with the foreign trading enterprises, to penetrate and restructure the pre-capitalist formations. We concentrated on agricultural production because this was really the cornerstone of the colonial economy. Mining (of tin, columbite

¹Hopkins, op. cit., p. 260.

and coal) existed but it was not as important in the colonial economy as was agriculture. What has been argued for the agricultural sector of the economy was largely applicable to mining also. The point is fairly clear especially with reference to tin. Morrison has noted, in connection with tin mining in Jos, the 'coincidence' of the interests of the colonial state (revenue) and those of the Nigerian Chamber of Mines (a regular labour force) in increasing the taxation rate. Morrison found that:

In June, 1919, the local Nigerian Chamber of Mines unanimously passed a resolution that higher taxes should be imposed on the 'pagan' in order that he work in the mines more often. As it was, he was only working three or four days to obtain his tax. Thus a higher tax meant that he would help the mines with their labour problem, the government with his tax money and himself by becoming more 'civilized'. The Lieutenant Governor of Southern Nigeria, A. G. Boyle, expressed support for this suggestion . . . the Acting Resident of Bauchi province /also supported it/. . .

By September, 1919, the administration of the Northern Provinces notified the Chamber of Mines that a ten percent increase had been levied . . . By 1920-21, the pagan tax had gone up by a total of twenty-eight percent over 1919. ¹

The local Chamber of Mines in question was firmly British, the Nigerian rivals in the tin-mining operation having been squeezed out of commission by the failure of the colonial government to protect it from what appeared to be unfair competition (1906-1911) from a subsidiary of the Niger Company.²

¹J. H. Morrison, "Early Tin Production and Nigerian Labour 1906-1921," Canadian Journal of African Studies, Vol. 11, No. 2, 1977, p. 215.

²Ibid., pp. 207-208.

At the coal mine in Enugu, the state also hastened to the mine's labour problem by using local chiefs to supply forced labour.¹

By some of these activities and policies of the foreign firms and the colonial state, Nigeria's social structure was gradually being forced to change to meet new demands and challenges. At the same time, the country was being gradually and relentlessly incorporated into the world capitalist market system. How the state's policies and the activities of the foreign firms shaped the new structures and social groups that were beginning to emerge is the focus of the next chapter.

¹See Agwu Akpala, "Problems of Initiating Industrial Labour in Preindustrial Community," Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines, Vol. 12, No. 46, 1972, pp. 293-295.

CHAPTER IV

CLASS, STATE AND ACCESS

Nigeria's incorporation into the world economic system took the form of the articulation of the pre-capitalist modes of production with the capitalist mode. The consequence was that the latter mode became determinant and the former re-structured. It has been seen that the colonial state played a major role in this process. The pre-capitalist modes retained some of their attributes but in forms which can no longer be described as pre-capitalist and which were subordinated to the capitalist mode of production. In speaking here of the capitalist mode of production we do not use the term in its strict sense and we may refer not only to the elements of this mode that were introduced into the colonial economy. By themselves these elements can hardly be correctly spoken of as the capitalist mode of production as such--not in the early colonial period at any rate.¹ They did not necessarily entail the creation of a true proletariat, one that is completely separated from any means of production. It is

¹See Gavin Kitching, "Modes of Production and Kenyan Dependency," Review of African Political Economy, No. 8, 1977, pp. 56-58, who argues with regard to Kenya that she can hardly be said to have a capitalist mode of production if the criteria used by Marx are here applied.

necessary, therefore, to emphasize the articulation of the colonial economy with the metropolitan economy and therefore to bring into the conception of the capitalist mode of production here the more important elements of this mode which existed in the metropolises and to which the colonial economy became subjected. There existed in the colonial economy no pure mode of production, hence one speaks of the articulation of several modes.

Neither the colonial state nor the foreign enterprises showed much interest in industrializing the colonial economy. The reason for this may not be hard to find. The colonial state was little involved in direct production but concentrated mainly on securing the conditions under which the commercial companies could carry on their business. On their own part the commercial companies had little immediate interest in establishing serious manufacturing in Nigeria at the time. As has been observed by Professor Oni, "The United Trading Company and other colonial trading enterprises which dominated the Nigerian economy deliberately rejected industrialisation in Nigeria for the primary motive of protecting their own trading interests. They succeeded with this policy because they were supported by the British colonial government."¹

¹ See his "Industrialisation Including Indigenisation" in S. O. Olayide, ed., Economic Survey of Nigeria (1960-1970) (Ibadan: Aromolaran Publishing Company Ltd., 1976), p. 53. See also Peter Kilby, Industrialisation in an Open Economy: Nigeria 1945-1966 (London: Cambridge University Press, 1969), pp. 60-61, where he quotes John Mars on why foreign enterprises were reluctant to go into local industrialization. Mars

Only when they found it necessary to protect their markets in the economy from foreign competition did the companies move to establish local industries. This was the case in 1949 when the United Africa Company (UAC) established Brewing in Nigeria.¹

Since the major aspect of the capitalist mode of production in the colony was commercial the major forces of capitalist production were either undeveloped or simply never introduced. With the predominance of commercial or merchant capital the state and the foreign enterprises were encouraging the permeation of the society by such relations of distribution as would facilitate surplus production in agricultural cultivation. Serious attempts to promote local industrialization and therefore to develop capitalist forces of production can only be said to have begun during the period of colonial dyarchy and after political independence. A look at the contribution to the Gross Domestic Product of manufacturing and public utilities between 1950-1960 supports this view. According to Ekundare,² manufacturing and public utilities

wrote, inter alia, "The companies do not wish to harm home manufacturers and home processors with whom they have contractual relations or in whose property they are financially interested."

¹Ibid., p. 67.

²The figures given here are calculated in naira whereas Ekundare used figures calculated in pounds. See R. Olufemi Ekundare, An Economic History of Nigeria 1860-1960 (New York: Africana Publishing Co., 1973), p. 251.

contributed about 0.5 per cent (N7 million) in 1950 to the total GDP (about N1,377 million). In 1955 its contribution was about 0.94 per cent (N17 million to a total of about N1,790 million). By 1960 it contributed about 3.6 per cent (N72 million out of a total GDP of about N1,963 million).

The contribution made by manufacturing is dwarfed by that made by distribution for the same period: about 9.5 per cent (N132 million) in 1950, about 12.2 per cent (N220 million) in 1955, and about 12 per cent again (N236 million) in 1960. When it is also realized that much of the apparent improvement in manufacturing was caused by import substitution then it may be seen why the development of capitalist forces of production in the economy may be said to have been minimal.

The colonial economy was very much dependent on the peasant mode of production.¹ As Henry Bernstein notes, this mode of production can be distinguished from the capitalist mode "by its logic of subsistence (meeting the needs of simple reproduction) as opposed to the logic of the appropriation and realisation of surplus-value and the accumulation of capital" which characterizes the capitalist mode.² The family is still

¹This is the same as Henry Bernstein refers to as "simple commodity production." See his "Notes on Capital and Peasantry," Review of African Political Economy, No. 10, 1977, p. 62. Mahmood Mamdani, Politics and Class Formation in Uganda (London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1976), p. 139, refers to this same mode as the communal mode of production. It appears to us that this mode is best characterized as the peasant mode in order to point out the class nature of the agents involved while not ruling out that some commodity is here also produced.

²Bernstein, op. cit., p. 63.

the important unit of production organization. However, this mode is also assuming some capitalist relations: there appears to be a greater degree of land alienation and private appropriation.¹ The forces of production changed little. Increasingly the producer lost his/her independence as the price of any surplus production was determined outside the colonial economy and later through the fiats of the marketing boards. In those instances where local production had been stifled by competition from outside, for example in salt mining and craft production, the cultivators became dependent on outside sources even for some of their subsistence material. From this point of view much was produced as exchange value. Some cultivators were also able to hire labour, even if only seasonally.

There is also the simple commodity mode of production which appears to assume some aspects of both the capitalist and the peasant modes. It seems to be a transitional stage between both. As Professor Ake describes this mode, "it meets and merges with the lower forms of capitalism."² Private ownership is combined with labour organization paralleling that

¹General Obasanjo referred in his March 29, 1978 address on the nationalization of land to "The appropriation of rising land values by a few so-called landowners and speculators..." as one of the reasons the state must step in. See Imo State, The Head of State's Broadcast to the Nation (Embodying the Land Use Decree No. 6 of 1978) (Owerri: Ministry of Education and Information, 1978), p. 1.

²Claude Ake, "Explanatory Notes on the Political Economy of Africa," Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 14, No. 1, 1976, p. 2.

in the peasant mode of production. Producers in small shops may be related by kinship and they work more as apprentices, than as hired hands. They may be fed by the shop-owner but are paid no wages. In some cases in fact where the apprentice is no relation of the shop-owner, the former may pay the latter some fee to enter, work and learn from the shop.

There is no doubt that this mode of production has come to occupy a very important place in the Nigerian social formation. But while some of the small-scale production have eventually become fully developed capitalist operations, many more are simply unable to make the transition. As has been correctly observed,

This mode of production continues to thrive because of lack of credit facilities, and because the ability of 'small' producers to accommodate themselves to an extremely low standard of living has enabled them to 'hang on' despite the encroachment of capitalism. Moreover their ranks are being swelled by jobless urban proletarians, semi-proletarianised peasants, and landless peasants. It looks as though in the short run, the spread of capitalism is in fact making simple commodity production more widespread.¹

It may be stressed that these modes of production are in no sense mature, nor do they operate in isolation. Instead, they are linked together, each having a bearing on the other. Deriving from the pre-capitalist modes, some are in states of dissolution/conservation. Here we have the problems of the articulation of modes of production. Full maturity or development for the capitalist mode, for example, would mean full commercialization of agriculture, the complete

¹Ibid.

separation of producers from the means of production and the full conversion of labour power into a commodity. This has yet to occur in the Nigerian situation. The articulation of modes of production in the colonial economy and subsequently has meant that the social classes in the formation are difficult to analyse and they do not appear in their pure form. We now look at the class structure that emerged as a result of the restructuring of the pre-capitalist formation and its incorporation into the world economy.

CLASS FORMATION

As a result of the events that we saw in chapter III a new class structure began to evolve, a class structure which we may say was largely created by colonialism. The colonial state represented the British bourgeoisie in the colony. This is one important reason why that state, along with the foreign enterprises were working both to induce surplus production from the agricultural producers and to divert such surplus from internal purposes to external trade. It is from this point of view that the state's provision of communication and other infrastructure to facilitate trade should be seen. These activities were intensified with the passage in Britain of the Colonial Development Welfare Act in 1940. The Act which was supplemented in 1945 required Britain's colonial governments to take necessary steps to increase production from the colonies. As a result of its implementation in Nigeria trade activities in the economy increased significantly.

"The value of total domestic exports increased from /N477 million in 1946, to /N259.67 million and /N331.27 million in 1955 and 1960 respectively. "The various restrictions on imported goods . . . were gradually lifted. . . . The value of total imports increased from /N39.67 million in 1946 to /N272.27 million and /N431.87 million in 1955 and 1960 respectively."¹

This increase in trade was mainly to the advantage of the foreign enterprises. Few Nigerians, and perhaps some of the Lebanese, Greeks and Syrians who were able to penetrate the circle of foreign oligopoly, made enough profit in trade to join the ranks of the bourgeoisie. What elements of a local bourgeoisie that emerged at this point were mainly in commerce and comprador in nature. In many cases they were people who had acquired their initial capital through apprenticeship in the large commercial houses, or who had been encouraged to enter into commerce by the foreign enterprises when they themselves (the latter) were seeking to diversify somewhat.² The relatively easy profits in marketing and distribution have served to entice these bourgeois elements to concentrate in commerce with little interest in manufacturing. According to Tom Forrest:

Commerce does not inevitably evolve into productive activity and may possibly discourage it. Contrary

¹Ekundare, op. cit., pp. 225-226.

²Kilby, op. cit., pp. 62-63.

to the expectations of many, the Nigerian middleman who has accumulated significant funds does not invest in production. He or she is much more likely to extend the commercial operation laterally so as to encompass the distribution of more commodities and to extend it 'upstream' to absorb the marketing and distribution functions which are closer to the foreign manufacturing operation itself.¹

The expansion of state bureaucracy and the administrative requirements of the foreign enterprises resulted in the increased recruitment of Nigerians into these institutions. Among those so recruited, two broad groups may be identified. One was the traditional elite without whom the state's policy of indirect rule could not have worked. The other comprised mostly educated persons without any links to traditional rule. Some from both groups were to become professionals (independent lawyers and doctors) and private entrepreneurs. However they were to develop into the two major fractions of a petty bourgeois class. Some were small property owners, others are in this class by virtue of the functions they performed in enhancing surplus extraction from the economy. They received high salaries as a result of these functions; they performed the functions of the capitalist, to put it in Carchedi's terms.² Other strata of the petty bourgeoisie included teachers and those in senior positions in the cultural institutions who played a role in the process of social reproduction,

¹Tom Forrest, "Notes on the Political Economy of State Intervention in Nigeria," IDS Bulletin, Vol. 9, No. 1, July 1977, p. 46; emphasis added.

²G. Carchedi, "On the Economic Identification of the New Middle Class," Economy and Society, Vol. 4, No. 4, 1975, especially p. 55.

and traders who acted as retailers for the foreign enterprises. It is difficult to clearly mark the divisions.

From among the fractions and strata of the petty bourgeoisie came its dominant elements: the political leaders. In the main the evolution of the political leaders paralleled the regional structure of the state and the existence of the traditional and new petty bourgeoisie which did not develop evenly throughout the society. The relative success of Lugard's indirect rule in the North and parts of the West where, for religious and other reasons, traditional chieftaincy was strong before colonialism meant that chiefs and emirs would become important political leaders. In political matters they quickly gained the upper hand vis à vis members of the new petty bourgeoisie. This situation can be seen most clearly in the North and explains the much observed strong political position of the traditional ruling groups in that region.¹ In the West where traditional ruling groups survived the colonial period but where also the long influence of western formal education produced an equally strong group of educated persons who had no historical attachment to tradition, elements of the two fractions of the petty bourgeoisie were in an uneasy balance. A good example of the struggle between them for political dominance in the region,

¹ See C. S. Whitaker, Jr., The Politics of Tradition: Continuity and Change in Northern Nigeria 1946-1966 (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1970); and B. Dudley, Parties and Politics in Northern Nigeria (London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1968).

especially in the 1950s would be the fight for the control of Ibadan district.¹ Here the predominant interest in the ruling party, the Action Group, was that of the educated elements while the opposition party, the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (as it was then called) mainly represented the interest of the traditional ruling group, especially through its alliance with the Mabolaje. This latter political group desired, inter alia, the preservation of the position of the Olubadan and other chiefs.

The position in the Eastern Region was different. Here the virtual absence of powerful and widely recognized traditional rulers and the collapse of indirect rule allowed for the emergence of a petty bourgeois class dominantly rooted in education and urban culture and one which acquired its class position by involvement in the colonial economy. There was not a strong element in this regional petty bourgeois fraction which owed its position to the direct protection and encouragement by the colonial state. In an ideological milieu in which the key concepts were modernization and development and in which, conversely, tradition was something to be transcended in the march toward the bright sun of civilization, this regional petty bourgeois class appeared quite

¹See K. W. J. Post and George D. Jenkins, The Price of Liberty (London: Cambridge University Press, 1973), chapter 8, pp. 159-201 for an account of the fight between the two parties for the control of Ibadan, an important political prize. Akinyemi observed that the wing of the NCNC which fought the AG on the control of Ibadan District Council was "right wing" and "dedicated to traditionalism." A. B. Akinyemi, Foreign Policy and Federalism: The Nigerian Experience (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1974), p. 28.

conscious of its role as the vanguard of modernization and development. It looked with contempt on that stratum of the class which had arisen out of a traditional base. Thus at the Constitutional Review conference held at Ibadan in 1950, two representatives of this self-confident, well-educated regional fraction of the petty bourgeoisie stood firm against a recommendation for a House of Chiefs in each Region. Mazi Mbonu Ojike and Professor Eyo Ita submitted a minority report against the view at the conference that the regional Houses of Chiefs be endowed with powers "'concurrent and equal'" with those of the Houses of Assembly. Ojike and Ita argued, instead, that "The power of Princes and the power of the people are never 'concurrent and equal'. . . . Today we are out to abolish feudalism, not to reform it."¹ In the event there was not established in the East any House of Chiefs until 1960. Even then it was "hard to assemble" people who were styled chiefs; the government of the Region carried out the exercise more for political utility for itself than out of any other ideological convictions.²

¹Kalu Ezera, Constitutional Development in Nigeria (London: Cambridge University Press, 1964), p. 118. The position these two men took was probably so strong because the proposal for the Houses of Chiefs was made by the British and was thus perceived with suspicion, especially given the cordiality which characterized the relationship between the colonial administrators and the traditional ruling groups in the North. See Sir Ahmadu Bello, My Life (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), p. 19; and Sir Bryan Sharwood Smith, But Always as Friends (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1969), pp. 364-366.

²See John P. Mackintosh et al., Nigerian Government and Politics (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1966), pp. 131-132.

The dominance of the political leaders in each region was quite strong. Their control of the political parties, especially after 1951, provided them with a means both to mobilize the masses for particular issues and to pressure the colonial state for concessions. Their ability to press on the colonial state to further Nigerianize the public services and to ease the constraints against local businessmen easily won them the gratitude of large elements within the bureaucracy¹ and the local businessmen. Working easily in favour of the political leadership of the petty bourgeoisie in gaining dominance over other strata was the fact that they all shared the same goal of the accumulation of wealth and capital. The bureaucratic elements could do this since many of them came to appropriate intact the salary structure and other perquisites of office which the army of colonial administrators had enjoyed. What further secured the interests of the bureaucratic elements was the role of the bureaucracy in the redistribution of socially accumulated surplus through the development planning process. This meant that the senior bureaucrats had a lot to say about how that surplus (much of which was accumulated through the marketing boards) was deployed. It is this role of the senior bureaucrats in appropriating and deploying the surplus which facilitates "their entry into business on favourable terms/alongside politicians, merchants, army officers

¹See, for example, Richard Sklar, Nigerian Political Parties: Power in an Emergent African Nation (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 497.

and their respective wives, thereby assimilating them even further to the interests and objectives of the bourgeoisie as a whole."¹

Between the political leadership and the small businessmen there was no contradiction. In fact there was a harmony of interests. In none of its political demands on the colonial state and the metropolitan bourgeoisie was the political leadership seeking to tamper fundamentally with the colonial economy. It was seeking within that framework to lift the ceiling which foreign oligopoly had imposed on the local businessmen. Foreign capital on which many of the local businessmen depended for credit and other assistance was never under any serious threat. In fact it was partly as a result of pressure from the political leadership of the petty bourgeoisie and partly as a result of increased opportunities for expansion created by state policies under the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts that in the late 1940s and early 1950s the foreign enterprises began to make room for the local businessmen. This move stood foreign capital in the economy in good stead.² By taking more Nigerians under its wing

¹Gavin Williams, "Class Relations in a Neo-Colony: The Case of Nigeria" in Peter Gutkind and Peter Waterman, eds., African Social Studies: A Radical Reader (London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1977), p. 285.

²See A. G. Hopkins, An Economic History of West Africa (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), p. 278. Additional reasons for the conciliatory posture of foreign capital are to be seen in international pressure and opinion which in the period were becoming increasingly anti-colonial. One cannot discount the pressure of American capital for access into the colonies and the effect of the Bandung Conference.

foreign capital ensured for itself a large pool of support and even representation in the decision-making circles.

An important characteristic of the whole petty bourgeois class which was emerging under the colonial state was that in the absence of any strong local bourgeoisie it acquired political importance disproportionate to its economic position. The evolution of a dominant local bourgeoisie was thwarted by the role of foreign oligopoly and the support of the oligopoly by the colonial state... The petty bourgeoisie was also frustrated and although it became the dominant political force and subscribed to an ideological position which favoured foreign capital it was economically very weak in relation to this capital. In fact it came to achieve political power less because of its economic position than because the metropolitan bourgeoisie handed it such power. The metropolitan bourgeoisie had to do so because of increasing international pressure--in particular from American capital through the United Nations--and Britain's own growing international weakness which became manifest during the Suez crisis. In Nigeria, Britain chose those segments of the petty bourgeoisie whose ideological position most closely corresponded to that of its bourgeoisie as the heir to its political rule.¹ We can anticipate subsequent pages and say here that upon achieving political power elements of the petty bourgeoisie turned such

¹See, for example, Henry L. Bretton, Power and Stability in Nigeria: The Politics of Decolonization (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), especially pp. 69-70.

power into a means for the accumulation of both wealth and capital.

The working class¹ that was evolving was small, reflecting the size of the industrial base. It will be seen that this is correct if we take as a measure the number of workers registered in trade unions (table 9). In 1940 there were fourteen registered trade unions with 4,629 members. Given the relative increase in manufacturing in the 1950s the number of workers registered through 232 unions in 1955-6 became nearly 176,000. By 1960-1 total registered union membership was a little over 274,000--very small relative to a population of over 50 million.

TABLE 9
REGISTERED WORKERS THROUGH TRADE UNIONS 1940-1961

Year	Number of Trade Unions	Membership
1940	14	4,629
1945	97	n.a.
1950-51*	144	144,358
1955-56	232	175,987
1960-61	360	274,126

n.a. - figure not known

* - shows financial year

Source: Adapted from Ananaba, The Trade Union Movement in Nigeria, p. 262.

¹For some studies of this class, see Richard Sandbrook and Robin Cohen, eds., The Development of an African Working Class: Studies in Class Formation and Action (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975, articles by Adrian Peace, Paul Lubeck and Dorothy Remy; also Robin Cohen, Labour and Politics in Nigeria 1945-1971 (London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.,

It does not appear that there was any particular pressure on workers to join unions. This is evident when it is considered that according to Yesufu union membership in 1959 was only "about 33 1/3 per cent. of the total wage-earning population."¹

The development of this working class had commenced pari passu with the creation of the colonial economy. Railway construction, tin and coal mining in Jos and Enugu respectively, shipping produce and even the domestic needs of resident expatriates--all these required the creation of a pool of wage-earners. For such a pool to be created meant a persistent and continuing application of political and economic pressures. We have shown in the last chapter how, at least with regard to tin, the tax measure by the state was important in coercing the people into (at least partial) proletarianization. A measure of coercion was necessary to create the labour force since wage labour was by no means the only economic activity of the persons involved.²

One of the important characteristics about the evolving working class is that at once it existed in two modes of production. That is to say, although its members are factory

1974); and Wogu Ananaba, The Trade Union Movement in Nigeria (London: C. Hurst and Co., 1969).

¹ T. M. Yesufu, An Introduction to Industrial Relations in Nigeria (Ibadan: Nigerian Institute for Social and Economic Research, 1962), p. 39.

² Cf. James F. Petras, "Class and Politics in the Periphery and the Transition to Socialism," Review of Radical Political Economics, Vol. 8, No. 2, 1976, p. 22.

or industrial workers, their links with the peasant mode are often not completely severed. Thus proletarianization is incomplete. Many workers receive food supplement from their relations in the rural areas; this link remains important. In many cases too they still retained their rights to communal land and, through ethnic "improvement" associations and unions, or even family, still participate in lifestyles more associated with another mode of production than that to which they ostensibly belong.¹ Nor is this characteristic specific only to Nigeria. As Colin Leys showed with regard to Kenya, many workers there were also participants to some degree in the peasant mode of production, "although when at work they would frequently be members of a very differently composed urban household . . ."² Claude Ake also notes the same point with reference to the proletariat on the African continent. He writes: "Many workers remain peasants at heart, keep a foot in the village and regard the village as home"; they also try to re-create "the village community in the city as a basis for . . . economic and social security."³ Thus one finds

¹See Josef Gugler, "Life in a Dual System: Eastern Nigerians in Town, 1961," Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines, Vol. 11, No. 43, 1971, pp. 400-421.

²Colin Leys, Underdevelopment in Kenya (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), p. 171.

³Claude Ake, Revolutionary Pressures in Africa (London: Zed Press, 1978), p. 63.

Professor Leys speaking of an "'industrial peasant'"¹ while Professor Ake includes peasants in his conceptualization of the proletariat.²

The fact that the working class was not fully proletarianized should not be taken to mean that it was a quiescent class. From the 1920s the Nigerian workers had begun to make themselves felt by the employers. As the veteran labour leader, Michael Imoudu, said to Peter Gutkind:

It was during this period that the Nigerian workers began to understand what it meant to be inferior; to be subject to the 'busts' and 'booms' of Western capitalist manipulations. While the suffering of our workers was great, they learned to stand on their own feet. They expressed themselves by means of strikes and unrest which the British did not appreciate. More important than the strikes were the expressions of fraternal interest in workers elsewhere. We did not have an effective trade union organization in the 1920's, but we had a lot of Nigerian workers who thought and acted like trade unionists.³

Little wonder that the colonial government was in no hurry to legalize trade unionism and sought to control union activity after it was legalized in 1939. The government sought to control unionism through training in Britain, or locally through designated Labour Advisers, of union leaders. Jack Woddis has suggested that these advisers were not neutral

¹Leys, op. cit.

²Ake, Revolutionary Pressures, p. 63.

³Cited in Peter C. W. Gutkind, The Emergent African Urban Proletariat. Occasional Paper Series, No. 8, Centre for Developing Area Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 1974, p. 7.

but "safe right-wing trade unions officers, or, more often Ministry of Labour officials with no trade union background at all."¹ The advisers' duties were, inter alia, to "encourage class collaboration" between unionists and their employers, to isolate union movements from nationalist struggles, and "to win colonial workers to support imperialism in the cold war so as to have a safe rear in the event of actual war."² While this was going on, government still retained its policy of being tough on the labour movement, as can be seen from the 1949 shooting of striking coal miners in Enugu.³ Government would also not recognize unions if it considered their leadership to be of radical persuasion.⁴

If we take the incidents of workers strikes as indicative of the kind of trade union movement that developed, we may say that the government's attempts at curbing militancy among workers was less than successful. The 1945 general strike for increase in cost of living allowance and minimum daily wage and in protest against government attempt to banish one of the labour leaders, Michael Imoudu, is an important example. Other examples include the 1950 strike against

¹ Jack Woddis, Africa: The Lion Awakens (London: Laurence and Wishart, 1961), p. 50.

² Ibid., pp. 51 and 53.

³ W. M. Warren, "Urban Real Wages and the Nigerian Trade Union Movement, 1939-1960," Economic Development and Cultural Change, Vol. 15, No. 1, 1966, p. 28; also Sklar, op. cit., pp. 76-78.

⁴ An example is the (1950) All-Nigeria Trade Union Federation (ANTUF). See Woddis, p. 127.

the UAC led by Nduka Eze and the 1950 strike at the tin mines in Jos.¹ The militancy of the labour movement made it an indispensable element in the nationalist movement which was beginning to gather momentum at this period. As the Davies Commission which looked at the workers' demands in the 1945 strike prophetically noted:

It is apparent that the influence and power of the Nigerian Trade Unions for good or ill should not be underestimated, for if their organisational strength-- financial and numerical--is small what may be termed their operational strength is great.²

This was a point not lost on the petty bourgeois politicians. Hence the NCNC in particular (and the Nigerian Youth Movement) tried to make a lot of political mileage out of the workers' struggles.³ From this point of view perhaps Warren is essentially correct in his conclusion that the government did not achieve its goal of insulating the unions from political orientations: "... in the case of trade union apoliticism, the successes achieved have been at best partial and unstable and have been achieved only by permitting substantial wage gains."⁴ To say this, however, is not to imply that the government's efforts may not have left any imprints on the character of the working class movement.

¹On these strikes, see details in *ibid.*, pp. 129-130 and Cohen, *op. cit.*, pp. 159-163.

²Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 164.

³*Ibid.*, pp. 161-162.

⁴Warren, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

Colonial officials did not always understand the nature of the labour force that was evolving. Thus these officials sometimes described the workers as lazy, lacking in initiative and generally uninterested in earning money. As a District Commissioner of Port Harcourt in 1931 put it:

A recent informal census indicates that a wide variety of work is available in the town. Although there are said to be several hundred so-called unemployed Africans, few of them express an interest in the work . . . the same circumstance prevails in Lagos where the number of unemployed is said to be even higher. We must assume that many Africans still fail to understand the merits of steady and rewarding employment. As long as this attitude prevails we are not bound to take a serious view of thieves and ruffians who are hanging about. It appears that only the more educated natives have the initiative to respond to opportunity . . . 1

Such views were, of course, often unfounded. They were made with no due consideration for the African's perception of the kind of work he was being asked to undertake. As Michael Tausig has pointed out, seeming reluctance to take wage employment by persons from a pre-capitalist background and who still have 'a use value mentality' should best be seen as a sort of critique of capitalism by this person. "Rather than dismissing these responses as 'traditional' or irrational . . . it would seem to be more true to the facts as well as more enlightening to consider these reactions as

¹ Cited in Gutkind, The Emergent African Urban Proletariat, p. 8. See, in addition, T. M. Yesufu, An Introduction to Industrial Relations in Nigeria (Ibadan: Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, 1962), pp. 113-115. For an alternative opinion, see John F. Weeks, "Wage Policy and the Colonial Legacy--a Comparative Study," Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 9, No. 3, 1971, p. 364, according to which Lugard was favourably impressed by Nigerian workers.

outcomes of a clash between a use value orientation and an exchange value orientation, thus viewing them as the beginning of a potential critique of capitalism." Such persons who are reluctant to take up wage labour may be seeing "the capitalist system . . . as anything but natural and good."¹

The remark by Engels in 1858 that the proletariat in England was assuming bourgeois elements² may be applicable to at least a section of the leadership of Nigerian workers as it continued to develop over the years. Two categories of Nigerian union leadership may be distinguished.³ One is of a moderate hue while the other is inclined to militancy. The success of the 1945 general strike is attributed to the leadership impact of the latter which included Imoudu, Adebola and Chukwura who were leaders in the Labour Unity Front, United Labour Congress and the Nigerian Workers Council, respectively, in 1963.⁴ They were often less educated but more overtly political in their approach to union matters; they appeared also to be more dedicated to the principles of

¹Michael Tausig, "The Genesis of Capitalism Amongst a South American Peasantry: Devil's Labor and the Baptism of Money," Comparative Studies in Society and History, Vol. 19, No. 2, 1977, p. 132.

²Cited in V. I. Lenin, Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1975), p. 129.

³See Cohen, op. cit., pp. 71-74.

⁴Ibid., p. 122.

labour unionism. It did not seem that they saw union leadership as a means to personal enrichment. Their militancy often set them at odds with the petty bourgeois political leadership and the colonial government. Although at first the NCNC attempted to co-opt them during the mid-1940s, it was forced to expel them by 1951 when the NCNC became "increasingly aware of the possibility of transforming itself into a ruling political class"¹ by appearing more "proper" to the British bourgeoisie.

The moderates among union leaders were more quickly accommodated by both the colonial and post-colonial governments. It was also largely through some of its members that political leaders were able to bring under their political umbrella sections of the working class. Much of the inability to form a central union body in Nigeria over the years can be explained in part from the rivalries and intrigues between the radicals and moderates in the trade union leadership ranks.

It is not possible to establish beyond a doubt that the moderates were 'planted' in the union movement either by the colonial or post-colonial governments. What can be said is that it appears to us, from Cohen's study and comments about this group that the moderates saw their union leadership role as one possible route to eventually achieve bourgeois status.² Some of them appeared to be in union leadership for

¹Ibid., p. 75.

²Ibid., pp. 119-124.

the money and influence it may bring them. That they came to dominate the leadership of the working class is also fairly clear. It is their kind of union leadership that Peter Waterman has interestingly and accurately characterized as "trade union entrepreneurship."¹ And according to Cohen, these leaders seem to have become "professional consultants undertaking to act in the interest of their clients in much the same way as a solicitor would." What is more, they "are likely also to have little understanding of the exact nature of the work of their members, and consequently may be unable to appreciate special problems or grievances that may arise from particular working conditions."² It is this that may be one of the reasons why the working class in Nigeria has been unable to realize its full political potential. Bourgeois tendencies within union leadership most likely inclined unions to co-operation and co-optation by the regional political parties through which the union leaders may get favour in return.

Further subordination of the working class to the state occurred through what Gavin Williams has called the "national system of wage determination."³ He is referring here to the method by which wage awards are made to workers

¹Peter Waterman, "Communist Theory and the Nigerian Trade Union Movement," Politics and Society, Vol. 3, No. 3, 1973, p. 294.

²Cohen, Labour and Politics, pp. 120 and 121.

³Williams, "Class Relations in a Neo-Colony," p. 287.

by state-appointed Commissions. This practice was begun by the colonial state and has continued under the post-colonial state. Through this system of wage awards the state has been able to 'divide and rule' the workers. It has divided the workers because usually these settlements apply only directly to the public sector. Wages in this sector have usually led those in the private sector. This effectively puts a ceiling on how much the workers in the latter sector can bargain for. Even then their employers have often been reluctant to pay up to the publicly determined wage level, arguing "that enterprises would operate at a loss if they paid the daily minimum wages . . ."¹ This system of wage awards, the latest of which have been the Morgan, Adebo and Udoji Commissions of 1964, 1971 and 1974 respectively, may be said to amount to (at least) some partial emasculation of the working class. The beneficiaries of this system are the civil servants, not the workers. Perhaps the most notorious examples here are the awards made by the Udoji Commission. This Commission, established in 1972 under Chief Jerome Udoji by the Gowon regime, made wage awards² so disproportionately in favour of the nation's bureaucrats that a newspaper

¹S. A. Aluko, "Prices, Wages and Costs" in A. Ayida and H. M. A. Onitiri, eds., Reconstruction and Development in Nigeria: Proceedings of a National Conference (Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 424.

²The awards are set out in Volume IV of the Commission's Report: Federal Republic of Nigeria, Public Service Review Commission: Report on Grading and Pay (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1974).

columnist had this to say: "all Nigerian civil servants . . . are sure going to have a wonderful new year--thanks to Chief Jerome Udoji who has now turned out to be Father Christmas of Nigerian civil servants. The way Father Udoji has handed out pay booties to our civil servants could make the mind of the Shah of Iran boggle."¹ The Commission justified its skewed awards with the excuse that it was concerned "with the efficiency and effectiveness of the public services in meeting the challenge of development."² As is characteristic of such Commissions, this one left out of its consideration workers in the private sector; they were asked, instead, negotiate with their employers.

An important point is that this system of wage determination may have the effect of shielding or insulating the state and its apparatuses from direct political action by the working class. For in the state's important role in the economy and as the largest employer of labour, any strong action by this class may become an immediate threat to the state itself, hence a potentially revolutionary situation.³ The lesson of the successful 1945 and 1964 general strikes brought this point home. Some understanding of this situation by the politically dominant petty bourgeoisie may not be

¹See Sunday Times (Lagos), January 5, 1975, p. 7.

²Federal Republic of Nigeria, Public Service Review Commission: Main Report (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1974), p. 1.

³Ake, Revolutionary Pressure, passim, especially p. 102.

unconnected with its attempts sometimes to win labour over by making awards to it. A good example would be the 1954 wage awards first by the government of the Western Region which was subsequently followed by the Eastern and Northern Regions.¹ The attempts by the locally dominant petty bourgeoisie to disorganize and control the working class through regional organizations were aided no doubt by the bourgeois-minded attitude of some labour leaders.² The local dominance of the petty bourgeoisie was also possible because of the nature of the peasantry. Let us now consider this class.

The peasantry³ was the most numerous class to evolve in Nigeria as a result of the articulation of the colonial economy with the international economy. In fact the colonial economy was literally in the hands of this class. Since there were no large plantations established in the colony, agricultural commodity production rested on peasant cultivation. It would be a mistake, therefore, to see the Nigerian peasant farmer as village- or tradition-bound if by this is

¹ Warren, op. cit., pp. 29-30.

² In a vein reminiscent of Engels' statement noted above (vide p.161, n. 2) Professor Leys wrote that it "is worth repeating" that "in Africa, there are more bourgeois-minded people than bourgeois." Leys, op. cit., p. 174.

³ For appropriate definitions, see Roger Woods and John Saul, "African Peasantries" in T. Shanin, ed., Peasants and Peasant Societies (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1971), pp. 103-114; and Ken Post, "'Peasantization' and Rural Political Movements in West Africa," Archives Européennes de Sociologie, Vol. 13, No. 2, 1972, pp. 223-254. This last article shows how the peasantry is very much a creation of the colonial state.

meant that he/she is unaffected by events in the national and international economy, in matters of production and exchange. The Nigerian peasantry was tied to the international economy through the network of the marketing boards, especially from 1947 onwards. Consequently even the peasants' level of subsistence needs was affected by this international connection.

Although some capitalist relations are increasingly permeating the peasant economy, the peasantry still appears to hold on strongly to elements of the traditional ideology. This is because, as already noted, the pre-capitalist mode of production was not destroyed but restructured. It is this that has remained conducive to the survival or adaptation of the ideological elements from the past. Its effect on the political relations of the peasantry will be made obvious below. Suffice it at the moment to point out that such elements of the traditional ideology which have survived include emphasis on family, village or clan solidarity. Included also are many aspects of traditional religion which are still strong, especially where these have to do with the sacredness and fertility of land, the peasants' indispensable means of production.

The peasantry is very much a differentiated class. Polly Hill has already drawn attention to this point. Much of her research among the Hausa in Nigeria's northern states supports this. Hill was able to identify both rich and poor

farmers. The latter were "those who suffer seriously during the pre-harvest weeks" while the rich were "those who stay on an even keel at that time, or who are even in a position to help others."¹ In the fuller report of her research, Hill shows that inequality among the Hausa peasantry leads to the existence of a rural proletariat which labours for the richer peasants at fixed wages. "The wage-rate, which 'establishes itself' without discussion, is effectively determined by the small number of richer farmers who account for the demand for labour; by actually testing the market, these farmers ascertain the level of wage adequate to ensure instant recruitment of sufficient supplies of high-quality labour . . ."² The general pattern of stratification that Hill finds among the Hausa farmers repeats itself in other regions. Among the Igbo, for example, there is some fairly well-established pattern of rural labour migration. During the planting season farm labourers would move from division to division in search of work. They usually carry with them their own work implements; these are usually very large hoes used for making especially huge mounds for yams or cocoyams. Because these labourers are migrants and often are housed

¹Polly Hill, "The Myth of the Amorphous Peasantry: A Northern Nigerian Case Study," Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1968, p. 246.

²Polly Hill, Rural Hausa: A Village and a Setting (London: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p. 107; emphasis original.

by whoever hires them, it is usually the better-off farmers who can afford to hire any number of them.¹

Many a Nigerian peasant often maintains other economic activities than simply farming. Petty trading is a major activity engaged in by some peasants;² it would usually be the better-off peasants who can afford the initial capital for this activity. Articles sold in this medium range from foreign imported goods (e.g., stockfish and some second-hand clothing) to food and other items produced in different parts of the country or region (e.g., beans, groundnuts and pots). The relatively poor to average peasants supplement their subsistence needs by occasionally hiring themselves out as labourers (e.g., on rural building sites) or by producing such locally needed crafts and materials as roof thatches or sleeping mats.³

It may be remarked about the Nigerian peasantry that (a) it is undergoing partial proletarianization, and (b) those

¹This writer has observed these farm labourers quite closely. How much they are paid in monetary wage depends on if their hirer is going to feed them while at the farm. Sometimes too there are 'agents' for these labourers who house them for the duration of their stay in the area and receive payment for doing so. As Cohen commented, "Many of the richer peasants and farmers are fast moving into the position of becoming small employers of labor, and it is in this area... that rural proletarianization will grow." See Robin Cohen, "From Peasants to Workers in Africa" in Peter Gutkind and Immanuel Wallerstein, eds., The Political Economy of Contemporary Africa (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, Inc., 1976), p. 162.

²Hill, "The Myth of Amorphous Peasantry," pp. 244 and 260.

³See Eno J. Usoro, "Producer Prices and Rural Economic Activity: A Case Study of Two Itak Villages in the South-Eastern State of Nigeria," Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies, Vol. 14, No. 2, 1972, p. 165.

who grow more cash crops seem generally better off than the mainly food crop farmers. It is in fact quite difficult--except perhaps with regard to cocoa farmers where the attempt has been made¹--to differentiate cash crop and food crop farming; both are often undertaken by the same families simultaneously. In the case of some cocoa farmers Galletti, Baldwin and Dina have shown that among those they surveyed the greatest contributor to their net income (between 10% and 15%) seemed to be from sale of cocoa.² It would appear also that probably because of their greater dependence on the marketing boards, those who grow more cash than food crops have a greater potential for political activity, as is evident from the 1968 uprising, about which more will be said.

Partial proletarianization of the peasantry results from a combination of the population pressure on land, especially in the south-eastern areas of the country and government policies (e.g., the establishment of plantations) that aim at transforming agriculture. In addition is the fact that agriculture is fast losing any element of social

¹See the work by R. Galletti, K. D. S. Baldwin and I. O. Dina, Nigerian Cocoa Farmers: An Economic Survey of Yoruba Cocoa Farming Families (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1972), in which it is shown that although cocoa is an important cash earner for the farmers, they also grow food crops. See their chapter 11, pp. 409-426.

²Ibid., pp. 437 and 444. Further evidence that those who produce cash crops are generally better off than other farmers may be gleaned from G. K. Helleiner, Peasant Agriculture, Government and Economic Growth in Nigeria (Homewood, Illinois: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1966), chapter 4.

prestige it may have had--this notwithstanding that successive Development Plans accord highest priority to agriculture.¹ But simply, rural life is stagnating and returns from agricultural production to the peasants seem to be diminishing by the year, thanks in part to government action.² Nor is this just a recent phenomenon (see table 10).

TABLE 10
YEAR TO YEAR PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN PRODUCER PRICES
1950-60

Year	Cocoa	Palm Oil	Groundnut
1950-51	+20.0	+27.9	0.0
1951-52	+41.7	+10.9	+71.4
1952-53	0.0	-4.9	0.0
1953-54	0.0	-13.8	0.0
1954-55	+17.6	-14.0	+2.8
1955-56	0.0	0.0	-2.7
1956-57	-25.0	0.0	-8.3
1957-58	0.0	0.0	0.0
1958-59	0.0	0.0	-9.1
1959-60	+6.7	0.0	+50.0

Source: Adapted from Onitiri and Olatunbosun, The Marketing Board System: Proceedings of an International Conference (Ibadan: The Nigerian Institute for Social and Economic Research, 1974), p. 13.

¹See Nigeria, Second National Development Plan 1970-1974 (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1970), p. 35.

²Usoro, op. cit., shows clearly how government attempts to channel sales of palm produce to the South-Eastern State Marketing Board resulted in lower prices to producers. In turn, the producers reacted by diverting their labour into producing for local consumption. My own observations accord with this. As Chief Okpi said in an interview at Aba on 24 September 1978, government policies of improving the lot of farmers are mere "window dressing."

Take palm oil producers for example. It appears that what prices they were paid between 1952/3 and 1959/60 were consistently less than what they were paid previous to 1950-52. The same applies to cocoa farmers. Only groundnut producers were not as adversely affected, in fact they enjoyed some increase. The dominant trend of price decreases can be fully appreciated when it is recalled that the cost of living was rising during the period under review. The cost of living rose by about 32 per cent between 1953 and 1960.¹ We may say then that even the reproduction of the peasantry has been under serious threat in the face of general decline in the peasant's income and a rising cost of living. In this situation many of the peasants and their children offer their labour at the rural market or drift to the urban centres in search of survival. With the urban drift comes the creation of the lumpenproletariat. Before discussing this 'class' we should first place the peasantry in political perspective.

We have already alluded above to the survival among the peasantry of traditional ideological elements. The philosophy of solidarity and communalism is still held dear by the Nigerian peasantry, for it is this that defines and touches deeply the mode of organization in its production process. Although this class is tied to national and international markets both as food or cash crop producers, this great involvement in the wider economy has yet to be reflected

¹ See Ekundare, op. cit., pp. 363-364.

in its ideological perspective. In other words, there seems to be a certain disjunction between the present and concrete material circumstances of the Nigerian peasantry and the dominant elements of its ideological disposition. This ideological disposition places grave limitations on the political capability of the peasantry. It does so by predisposing the peasantry not to perceive and so politically react to the contradictions present in their relations with the state and the petty bourgeoisie. It also makes the peasant a ready material for clientelist relations with the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie.

Observation soon reveals the great extent to which rural people in many parts of Nigeria still regard political leaders, members of the intelligentsia, army/police officer, or civil servant, who hail from their village or clan simply as one of them. Such a person is seen as 'our' son or daughter; his or her position in society is hardly correlated with their exploitation. On the contrary, such a person is expected to share his/her wealth and prestige with the local community either through his/her extended family and/or through periodic distribution of largess. The individual's social prestige and economic wealth is seen as reflecting on the whole community. Much as the farmer or hunter shares his product with the community, the individual who has established him/herself in the capitalist economy or government is expected to bring for and share with the community the wealth or services of the economy.

or government. That individual is perceived as the avenue through which the community partakes of the national cake.¹ The periodic and judicious distribution of largess by the patron goes a long way in sustaining this illusion.

Such a situation here described easily lends itself to shielding or camouflaging the objective antagonism that exists between the peasantry and the political or bureaucratic elites of the petty bourgeoisie. It fosters the development of patron-client relationships which are aptly congruent with some elements of traditional ideology which

¹Cf., with reservations, Peter P. Ekeh, "Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement," Comparative Studies in Society and History, Vol. 17, 1975, pp. 91-112. Ekeh's analysis posits two "publics" within which African politicians presumably operate. One public is based on primordial kinship associations. Here moral principles apply to members' actions. This public is opposed to the second, the "civic" public which Ekeh argues was established under colonialism and has survived in the post-colonial period. This latter public is not based on kinship; it is largely related to the state. To the African, this public is amoral. This is to say, anybody who is able can legitimately "rob the civic public in order to strengthen the primordial public" (p. 108). There is, no doubt, a ring of some truth (as a descriptive account, at best). Our reservations stem, however, from the fact that Ekeh's case is overstated and it is based on what we consider to be a warped interpretation of African history. For example, he posits that colonialism was the result of a search for political power by the bourgeoisie in Europe. Unable to satisfy this need in their own land, this bourgeoisie, according to Ekeh, carried their search to Africa and other foreign lands. Such views are opposed to the more plausible interpretation of the involvement of Africa in the international capitalist economy. For the latter view see, for example, Immanuel Wallerstein, "The Three Stages of African Involvement in the World Economy" in Peter C. W. Gutkind and Immanuel Wallerstein, eds., The Political Economy of Contemporary Africa, pp. 30-57, among others.

place a premium on personal relationships and the occasional if not frequent distribution of largess. And so for the peasant community the politician, bureaucrat or intellectual comes not so much to represent (because of his/her class position) an opponent or exploiter as a source of patronage, a channel through which sons and daughters of the peasantry can obtain jobs, scholarships or accommodation in urban centres. At play here are the kinship ties which in intra-peasant relations and production process are very important. Thus although the state exploits the peasantry and this class "remains at the mercy of the state and the world market, which control the sale of his crop and the distribution of the surplus value appropriated from him,"¹ the peasantry does not perceive any antagonism between it and its patrons.

It should be pointed out that in the ensuing patron-client relations that bind the peasantry to the petty bourgeoisie and the state, it is usually the richer peasants, as local influentials who stand to benefit most. "They are likely to be recognised by the authorities and other farmers as the proper representatives of their communities, and they have far greater access than others to credit, extension services, sprays and fertilizers."² In addition, more than other farmers', their children are likely to break out of

¹Gavin Williams, "Taking the Part of Peasants: Rural Development in Nigeria and Tanzania" in Gutkind and Wallerstein, op. cit., p. 134.

²Ibid., p. 144.

the rural rot and into urban economy employment.¹ Anybody who is faintly familiar with the Nigerian scene will know that such successful transitions, in quite a few cases, can hardly be made without either 'long legs' (local jargon for bribery) or 'god-father'.

The Nigerian peasantry's situation has some striking parallels with that of the Kenyan peasantry. Professor Colin Leys finds that in Kenya the peasantry is linked to the ruling class through kinship and patron-client ties. This seems to have seriously constrained any overt and/or sustained political action--revolt or revolution--by the peasantry. He concluded by warning that "the clientelist political structures characteristic of peasant society have a resilience which can easily be underestimated."² He also noted that:

One cannot help feeling that . . . the character of politics will for some considerable time be determined by the fact that the peasantry as a class has not yet reached the limits of development, and that the symbiosis between it and the emerging urban-based classes is not yet fully developed either. This symbiosis is mediated by the various kinds of patron-client ties which link peasants to the politicians in the towns locality by locality. This corresponds to the continuing importance of the clan or lineage as a unit of social organization; one might say that it is the characteristic mode of political self-expression of peasantries. The continuing vitality of clientelism in politics can be seen as a reflection of the failure of capitalistic

¹Cf. Polly Hill, "Notes on the Occupations of Former Schoolboys: The Case of a Hausa Village," Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies, Vol. 11, No. 2, 1969, pp. 241-245.

²Colin Leys, "Political Implications of the Development of Peasant Society in Kenya" in Gutkind and Waterman, eds., African Social Studies, pp. 356-357.

development to transform social relationships by transforming the mode of production in an underdeveloped country.¹

In our opinion, and as has been shown in preceding paragraphs, Leys' analysis of the Kenyan situation is very applicable to that in Nigeria.

Events in the Western state in 1968 do indicate, though, that the peasantry can look beyond the clientelism that links it with the petty bourgeoisie and the state to perceive the contradictions and antagonisms that exist between itself and the exploiting classes. The political eruptions that year by the peasants in Ibadan, Oyo and surrounding vicinity seem to have been expressions of consciousness long existent. The farmers were protesting what they believed to be a persistent case of being overtaxed and short-changed by the government.² There had been peasant rumblings during the civilian era. Feeling, in 1968, that they had had enough, the farmers and hunters in Ibadan district united, this time against the military government of the state. Matchets and dane guns--all duly fortified by juju!--combined in opposition to automatic weapons. It would appear that the rebellion was not merely a case of peasant spontaneity. According to Gavin

¹ Ibid., p. 353.

² This is clear from the findings of the Ayoola Commission. See Western State, Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Civil Disturbances Which Occurred in Certain Parts of the Western State of Nigeria in the Month of December 1968 and Other Matters Incidental Thereto or Connected Therewith (Ibadan: Government Printer, 1969), especially pp. 80-90.

Williams:

This peasant consciousness includes . . . an awareness that resources are being expropriated from the peasantry through taxes, through the exactions of corrupt officials, through 'cheating by produce buyers', and, most particularly, through the marketing board surpluses, and that they are being used to benefit the people, and especially the wealthy people, of the urban areas.¹

Furthermore, the farmers are said to have declared that:

"From now on there shall be no more elections as far as we are concerned. We have all decided not to support any political party any more and we shall not vote for any one party any longer. We have had enough."² This short-lived but serious rebellion exposed clearly for the first time the political relevance of the emerging and continuing stratification pattern among the farmers. Williams' study showed that the "wealthiest farmers" were not active in the rebellion³--thus paralleling a similar report on the Chinese peasantry and the revolution by Mao Tse-tung.⁴

It is difficult to generalize from this one incident of peasant class action. Its significance, nevertheless, should not be dismissed. For the rebellion clearly poses the

¹Gavin Williams, "Political Consciousness Among the Ibadan Poor" in Emmanuel De Kadt and Gavin Williams, eds., Sociology and Development (London: Tavistock Publications, 1974), p. 131.

²Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 134.

³*Ibid.*, p. 130.

⁴See The Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, vol. 1 (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1967), p. 31.

probability that even without any sort of deus ex machina, the peasantry can organize itself to protect what it sees as its class interests. In the immediate sense, this rebellion would seem to indicate that as federal and state agricultural policies tend to further intensify rural stratification patterns and displace or dispossess more farmers than the probability of peasant political movements will increasingly grow.

Located, so to speak, between the peasantry and the proletariat, is the lumpenproletariat. The extent to which the lumpenproletariat can be considered a class stricto sensu given the criteria earlier established in chapter II is uncertain. It should perhaps best be seen here as marginalized elements of the peasantry and the proletariat.¹ Unlike the peasantry, the lumpenproletariat appears to have lost access to the major means of production in agriculture. This is as a result of the squeeze put on the peasantry by the determinant capitalist mode of production, which squeeze has been making it increasingly difficult for the peasantry to reproduce itself. Unlike the proletariat, the lumpenproletariat has yet to succeed in selling its labour-power for wages, a situation frequently induced by the relatively slow rate of industrial expansion or the capital-intensive nature of

¹This is following Wright who considers the lumpenproletariat of the advanced capitalist state provisionally as "a marginalized segment of the working class." See Erik Olin Wright, Class, Crisis and the State (London: New Left Books, 1978), p. 94.

industry and/or the lack of appropriate skill by the job-hunter.

Professor Nzimiro has well described the lumpen-proletariat as "the army of the less or half employed and underemployed people who vainly migrate from rural areas to the urban societies in search of their daily means of livelihood." He added: ". . . they become pedlars of drugs, organized into pickpocket groups engaged in stealing and all sorts of crimes. The girls become prostitutes . . ."¹

Gutkind has also described the lumpenproletariat in similar language.² Seemingly hoisted above some meaningful productive process in society the lumpenproletariat are disposed to seeking their subsistence and survival by ways and means outside the prevailing norms of society.

Considering the pattern of class evolution in Nigeria which we have tried to analyse in this section, it may become clear why the petty bourgeoisie was able to emerge as the locally dominant class. As we have pointed out its dominance was purely political because foreign capital still ruled the national economy. Throughout the intensification of the nationalist political struggle from 1946 onwards and through the period of colonial dyarchy the different fractions within

¹ Ikenna Nzimiro, "The Political and Social Implications of Multi-National Corporations in Nigeria" in Carl Widstrand, ed., Multi-National Firms in Africa (Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1975), p. 230.

² Gutkind, The Emergent African Urban Proletariat, p. 19.

the petty bourgeoisie busied themselves in the fight to secure access to and control of the colonial state apparatuses. It had become clear to them that the best means to increase their capital accumulation potential was by raising the ceiling put on their development by the foreign oligopoly and the colonial state and in first wresting political power in the colony. As can be seen from the last chapter it had become clear to men like Dr. Azikiwe and Chief Awolowo and their followers that the state's political power was not working in their interests. Hence the bid to try and seize that power and gain control of and access to the state.

THE STRUGGLE FOR ACCESS

It is worth stressing that the pattern of the political struggle was determined by the foreign bourgeoisie. In the first place those who achieved political power were more or less those of their choice.¹ This is not crudely interpreted as meaning that the British had a list of people who they simply appointed to office. But they certainly set the tone of the political debate. It may be recalled that the expulsion of so-called radical Zikists and labour leaders from the NCNC in 1951 was an attempt by that party at least in part to please the foreign master. In the second place, the control of the physical force available to the state by the British cannot be totally dismissed as not influencing the pattern of the political struggles that ensued, even

¹Bretton, op. cit.

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during the period of colonial dyarchy. Finally, the federal nature of the state which to some extent at least was a British creation also helped determine the pattern of the struggles for access and political control.

The Richards Constitution introduced by the British in 1946 formalized the federal structure of the state. As a result of increasing nationalist pressure (mounted mostly by labour and the NCNC) and international opinion the metropolitan bourgeoisie was forced to concede some political power by allowing limited access to the state for the local petty bourgeoisie. Hence the 1951 elections under the Macpherson Constitution, the first general elections to be held, into the regional legislatures and the Federal House of Representatives. From this period onwards the petty bourgeoisie fought hard to increase the powers of the regional governments at the expense of the federal government.

Before we look at the increasing powers of the regional governments let us first observe the pattern by which the several fractions of the petty bourgeoisie fought and won regional political power. Beginning with this first election the ethnic and religious cleavages within the petty bourgeoisie were given political expression.¹ In order to gain

¹ Some may want to argue that the ethnic cleavage gaining political expression goes back to 1941 when Dr. Azikiwe and Chief Awolowo disagreed over the leadership question in the Nigerian Youth Movement. This split is discussed in James Coleman, Nigeria: Background, Nationalism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1958), p. 227. In our opinion, however, the 1951 elections were decisive.

votes easily, the petty bourgeois political elites appealed to ethnic and religious sentiment. These developments were most obvious in the Western Region. Here the Action Group (AG) virtually manipulated its way into power, much to the surprise and consternation of the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons which felt cheated out of power. Dr. Azikiwe, the NCNC leader, was left "pigeon-holed as the unofficial leader of the Opposition in the Western House of Assembly."¹ The situation in the Eastern and Northern Regions was fairly straightforward. The traditional elite in the North had quickly secured control of the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) from the more liberally minded educated young men who had formed it. In the East the NCNC was a clear winner, thanks no doubt to the fact that its leader hailed from the largest ethnic group in the region. In the North and East respectively the traditional and educated elites of the petty bourgeoisie were clearly in control. In the West both elites were uneasily accommodated under the AG. We shall see in a subsequent chapter that this created for the AG a strain that it could not withstand for too long. The NCNC's unhappy position of finding its national leader outside the political limelight plunged it into an internal crisis. It also inclined it to

¹Richard Sklar, Nigerian Political Parties (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 118. For Dr. Azikiwe's account of the election, see his "Essentials for Nigerian Survival," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 43, No. 3, 1965, p. 449 and his My Odyssey: An Autobiography (London: C. Hurst and Co., 1970), pp. 304-305.

force fresh elections in the East so that Dr. Azikiwe may be duly elected into the legislature there.¹ The Eastern House of Assembly was dissolved in 1953 and in the elections which followed Dr. Azikiwe and the NCNC were elected with a majority.

No doubt, the masses succumbed to the ethnic and religious appeals of the politicians at least in part because of the prevailing traditional ideology among them. The ethnic and religious cleavages were themselves at least in part accentuated by the regional differences in the impact of colonization. Also the seeming unwillingness of the British to foster a greater measure of integration which we saw in chapter III may possibly have aided the accentuation of ethnic and religious cleavages. This last point is only a probability, for it would be rash to assume that greater integration would ipso facto have translated into harmonious inter-relationships.

The 1951 elections, then, allowed elements of the political leadership of the petty bourgeoisie access to the regional state apparatuses. The regionally based political leaders, perhaps as a means to securing their office, began seeking to fractionalize state power. At the 1957 Constitutional Conference in London, for example, the AG and the NPC demanded for their governments in the West and North respectively the instruments for the maintenance of internal order,

¹For details, see Kalu Ezera, Constitutional Development in Nigeria (London: Cambridge University Press, 1964), pp. 158-161.

namely the regionalization of the police. In the event a compromise was struck. Police were to be "transferred from the Exclusive Federal to the Concurrent List, with the proviso that no Region should legislate to establish a Regional force unless the Secretary of State, after consultation with all the Nigerian Governments, decided that Regions should set up their own forces."¹ The stage seemed set in this period for what appeared to be a continuous whittling away of power from the centre to the regions. The civil service and the marketing boards all became regionalized after 1954. In fact by 1960 there appeared few powers of accumulation and legitimation which the regional governments did not have. From this point of view it would be controversial, and highly so, were one to argue that the central government was a primus inter pares. In any case the men and women who drew up and operated the constitution in 1960 did not so envisage the role of the central government. There was little regard shown to the important idea in the 1960 Constitution that no Region was "to endanger the continuance of the federal government of Nigeria."² For an example, the Northern Region often sought to displace or ignore the central

¹"Conference Conclusions," West Africa, No. 2098, June 29, 1957, p. 603; see also "Independence in Sight," West African Pilot, June 29, 1957, p. 1.

²See the reproduction of the Constitution in Oluwale I. Odumosu, The Nigerian Constitution: History and Development (Lagos: African Universities Press, 1963), pp. 309-397.

government in matters relating to Nigeria's dealings with the Arab world and Israël.¹

The acquisition of political power by the petty bourgeoisie, in particular the increasing powers of the Regions at the expense of the centre, may be seen as the beginning of a process of the private appropriation of the state apparatuses by those elements of this class who gained access to the state. It amounted to what may be described, for lack of a better term, as the 'feudalization' of the state,² a process which completed itself with the departure of the colonial power. Even a cursory examination of the political history of Nigeria from 1951 to 1965 will show that those who gained political office from the 1951 series of elections never lost that office. Governance in the Regions became their right. State power was used by them to disorganize their political opponents, those who also wanted access to the state. Without further anticipating the discussion in following chapters, let us show here how increasingly the Regions became the centre of attention of the political leaders. This may be important to understanding the nature of the Nigerian state.

The management of the country's economy, its administrative setting and the political perception of its leaders reflected the apparent dominance over the centre by the regions.

¹See A. B. Akinyemi, Foreign Policy and Federalism: The Nigerian Experience (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1974), pp. 100-105.

²In speaking of the feudalization of the state we are not to be understood as implying any sense of social hierarchy. Nor is there any reference here to the social and economic structures of the former Northern Region (especially before the advent of colonialism) which some writers have described as feudalistic. It may be recalled that following Hill's view we accepted (*supra*, p. 71) that such description was misleading. Here feudalization of that state stresses the ideas of luxury consumption by politically significant groups and, more importantly, the "parcellization of sovereignty" which characterized the state at this period. On this last point see Perry Anderson, Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism (London: New Left Books, 1974), p. 148.

Regional rather than national perspectives seemed to dominate in matters of economic planning. The so-called First National Development Plan was national only in the sense that it was the sum of the different Regional Plans. So dominant and pervasive was the regional perspective in matters of economic development that, as Schatz noted, "Political leaders . . . were not impressed by more uncertain and possibly only theoretical long-run regional benefits which would result from . . . development in the country as a whole."¹ Professor Adebayo Adedeji made the point even more forcefully. In his view Nigeria, especially in the First Republic, was characterized by a situation in which

The regional tail has successfully wagged the national dog. Political parties and politicians, including federal ministers, were more concerned with regional economic advantage than with the national interest. All this has meant the absence of a set of coherent national development objectives.²

This regional pull was at once the cause and the consequence of a weak central administrative service. Adedeji laments that "the Nigerian Federal Civil Service failed to provide any leadership to its regional counterparts," and this for various reasons.³ Apparently the situation had

¹Sayre-Schatz, Nigerian Capitalism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), p. 210.

²Adebayo Adedeji, "Federalism and Development Planning in Nigeria" in A. A. Ayida and H. M. A. Onitiri, eds., Reconstruction and Development in Nigeria: Proceedings of a National Conference, p. 107; emphasis added.

³Ibid., p. 108.

changed little from 1954 when the public services were regionalized. Nicolson's description of the federal service at that period, though more dramatic, is in essence the same as Adedeji observed more than a decade later.

The picture in the federal service . . . was one of a crew without a captain, in a ship riven by a series of explosions, each more disconcerting than the last. Under uneasy coalition government there was insufficient agreement at the political level to permit the framing of rational civil service policies; the politicians were unable either to leave the civil service to govern itself or to agree on a consistent method of control.¹

Until the collapse of the First Republic, the coalition government (NPC-NCNC) was indeed an uneasy one. It is remarkable that the leaders of the parties in coalition chose to remain in their regional seats of government. Under this condition it was well-nigh impossible either to develop a strongly national perspective and a strong federal administrative service, or to subordinate the regions to the centre.

The Regions held such great attraction for the political leaders because each Region retained control over a very important accumulation mechanism, the most important of which were the Marketing Boards. The role of the Federal Government had become minimal following the establishment in 1954 of Regional Marketing Boards, complete with powers "To grant, renew and withhold licenses to licensed buying agents, to impose conditions upon the granting or renewal

¹I. F. Nicolson, The Administration of Nigeria 1900-1960: Men, Methods and Myths (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), p. 296.

of such licenses or to cancel or suspend them for any good cause."¹ The Federal Government since then was left only with "the powers of prescribing grades and standards of quality for produce purchased by the . . . Boards." Effective controlling powers rested with the Regions. "Thus, there was the curious situation whereby 80 per cent of Nigeria's exports were controlled by an organisation [the Nigeria Produce Marketing Company which handled the marketing of produce abroad for the Regions] which the Federal Government, responsible for external trade policy, did not control."² Just how important this Marketing Board accumulation base is to the Regional Government can be seen from the fact that "During the 1962-1968 Development Plan period it was anticipated that 78 per cent of total internal financial resources available for financing the capital programme of the regional governments would come from marketing board surpluses."³

¹See Report by the Resumed Conference on the Nigerian Constitution, Lagos 1954 (Lagos: Government Printer, 1954), p. 55; and the Report by the Ad Hoc Meeting of the Nigeria Constitutional Conference (Lagos: Federal Government Printer, 1958), p. 16. Consequent upon effective Regional control of the Marketing Boards, the Federal Government tended to see "agricultural development as essentially a state rather than a national responsibility. This attitude of the Federal Government leaves much to be desired--particularly when agriculture has been the major source of finance capital for economic development and the most important contributor to the Gross Domestic Product..." See H. A. Oluwasanmi, "Agricultural and Rural Development" in Ayida and Onitiri, eds., op. cit., p. 143.

²Second National Development Plan, p. 226.

³Victor P. Diejomaoh, "Rural Development in Nigeria: The Role of Fiscal Policy" in The Nigerian Economic Society, Rural Development: Proceedings of the 1972 Annual Conference

In addition to this, any Region was entitled to as much as 50 per cent of the rents and royalties in respect of minerals from its territory.¹ Thus it is obvious that a regional government would hardly find itself beholden to the central government.²

This process in which the economic accumulation powers of the regional governments were increasing helps to explain why these regions were the foci of serious political struggles for access. These political struggles by the different elements of the petty bourgeoisie were taking place concurrently with the nationalist movement. They almost jeopardized the latter because they made it very difficult for the politicians to always present a united front against the metropolitan bourgeoisie. At the same time, though, the movement provided the local petty bourgeoisie with an opportunity to justify to their constituencies and to the metropolitan bourgeoisie why power should now devolve to it. In fact in the politics of decolonization in Nigeria one is

of the Nigerian Economic Society (Ibadan: University of Ibadan Press, 1973), pp. 100-101.

¹See the Constitution in Odumosu, *op. cit.*, pp. 383-384.

²As Mr. Justice Charles remarked, "The Nigerian Constitution has been drafted--deliberately, it would seem--...so as to ensure that the Federation cannot make the regions financially dependent upon it...the powers of taxation are divided into exclusive fields and the Regions are given a right to a substantial part of federal revenue from taxation." See his "The Division of Powers with Respect to Taxation and the Control of Private Borrowing and Credit Under the Nigerian Constitution" in Lionel Brett, ed., Constitutional Problems of Federalism in Nigeria (Lagos: Times Press, 1960), p. 77.

provided both with a preview of the politics of the First Republic and a synopsis of the political struggles prior to 1960.

CLASS CHARACTER OF INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT

The struggle to negate the colonial state and against the metropolitan bourgeoisie was waged by an alliance of all social classes in the formation under petty bourgeois leadership. Throughout the struggle the petty bourgeoisie was already painting itself in the image of the ruling class and heirs of the metropolitan bourgeoisie. It was of course the class best placed to lead the struggle, in part because of the modern skills that it had acquired through education. Even then its members never failed to proclaim those qualifications. We may take as examples some of Awolowo's and Azikiwe's views. According to the former, the educated elite of the petty bourgeoisie was "qualified by natural rights" to assume the position of rulership.¹ Furthermore, he noted,

It must be realised now and for all time that this articulate minority are destined to rule the country. It is their heritage. It is they who must be trained in the art of government so as to enable them to take over complete control of the affairs of their country. Their regime may be delayed, but it cannot be precluded.²

Awolowo premises the apparent inevitability of the rulership

¹Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Path to Nigerian Freedom (London: Faber and Faber, 1947), p. 64; emphasis added.

²Ibid., p. 63.

of the petty bourgeoisie on his view that the broad masses in Nigeria, especially the peasantry, were incapable of sustained political activity. According to him:

they are ignorant and will not be bothered by politics. Their sole preoccupation is the search for food, clothing, and shelter of a wretched type. To them it does not seem to matter who rules the country, so long as in the process they are allowed to live their lives in peace and crude comfort. If they bestir themselves at all, as they do occasionally, it is because they have been unduly oppressed by a tribal chieftain, or outraged by the blunders of an Administrative Officer.¹

Similar opinions, in essence, appear in Dr. Azikiwe's writing. In his Renascent Africa he expressed bountiful faith in the ability of the educated African to assume rulership. Such an educated African is "mentally emancipated" and "politically resurgent."² And, to Azikiwe, those who worked the land, the peasantry, were men and women who did not survive the Darwinian struggle.³

The (petty bourgeoisie's preoccupation with who should rule is easy to explain. As already stated, it needed to control state apparatuses if its accumulation process was to be speeded up. Suffice it here to point out that given the adopted liberal model of decolonization the question of which class must control the state was one of the few important

¹Ibid., p. 31.

²Nnamdi Azikiwe, Renascent Africa (London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1968), pp. 312-313.

³Ibid., p. 127.

issues that could be permitted such public discussion. As far as the petty bourgeois leadership of the nationalist movement was concerned imperialism was an external matter; they failed to correlate it with the social structures and economic orientation which evolved under the colonial state, and which they firmly intended to retain and even to further.¹ Independence was seen simply as the appropriation by the (educated elite among the) colonized of the instrument of colonization, the colonial state. The petty bourgeoisie did not see itself as the internal collaborators of imperialism by virtue of their preparedness to maintain the same economic and political institutions cherished by the metropolitan bourgeoisie.

It may be argued that if the leadership of the nationalist movement had questioned or sought a radical alternative to the economic and political pattern imposed by imperialism they would have invited on themselves the full force of the colonial state and the metropolitan bourgeoisie. That may well have been true, and indeed the metropolitan bourgeoisie was not prepared to jeopardize any of its vital interests in the colony. However, another and perhaps more convincing reason is that the petty bourgeoisie was not in any mood to commit suicide as a class. As Cabral said in

¹ According to Azikiwe, imperialism is "the enforced rule of one nation by another nation." Nnamdi Azikiwe, Zik: A Selection from the Speeches of Nnamdi Azikiwe (London: Cambridge University Press, 1961), p. 159.

discussing the case of Guinea, in a colonial situation two choices may be open to the petty bourgeoisie. It can

. . . : either ally itself with imperialism and the reactionary strata in its own country and preserve itself as a petty bourgeoisie or ally itself with the workers and peasants who must themselves take power or control to make the revolution. We must be very clear exactly what we are asking the petty bourgeoisie to do. Are we asking it to commit suicide? Because if there is a revolution, then the petty bourgeoisie will have to abandon power to the workers and to the peasants and to cease to exist qua petty bourgeoisie.¹

Obviously the Nigerian petty bourgeoisie chose the course of self-preservation. In our opinion this was not necessarily because they feared the might of the metropolitan bourgeoisie and the colonial state. Instead, it may have been more because they shared the foreign bourgeoisie's economic interest and desired to appropriate the colonial state in order to put it at their own service. To put it differently, the Nigerian petty bourgeois class recognized that there was some antagonism between its class interests and those of the metropolitan bourgeoisie. This antagonism was not irreconcilable. As a class it sought the necessary reconciliation in acquiring control of, and access to, the colonial state. There is no question but that the antagonism which the Nigerian petty bourgeoisie perceived between it and

¹Amilcar Cabral, Revolution in Guinea: An African People's Struggle (London: Stage 1, 1969), p. 57. The purpose of class suicide by the petty bourgeoisie would be "in order to be reborn as revolutionary workers..." Ibid., p. 89.

seen both as the condition for and the consequence of increased economic and political rationalization and institutionalization. An enormous interest in development was thus aroused. The United Nations declared the sixties to be the First Development Decade. Businessmen and politicians shuttled between national capital cities negotiating deals. So-called experts in development and institutes of development administration mushroomed in many universities and colleges.¹ The businessman, the politician and the intellectual joined battle to bring about development and modernization.

It has been argued, correctly in our view, that there has now come to exist a global ideology of development.²

¹Some of the literature that reflected this phenomenon include Fred W. Riggs, Administration in Developing Countries (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1964); Gabriel Almond and James Coleman, The Politics of Developing Areas (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1960); W. W. Rostow, The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960); Benjamin Higgins, Economic Development: Principles, Problems and Policies (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1959) and P. T. Bauer and B. S. Yamey, The Economics of Under-Developed Countries (London: Cambridge University Press, 1957); Edward Weidner, Technical Assistance in Public Administration Overseas: The Case for Development Administration (Chicago: Public Administration Service, 1964); Ferrel Heady and Sybil L. Stokes, eds., Papers in Comparative Public Administration (Michigan: Institute of Public Administration, 1962). For counter views, see M. Kesselman, "Order or Movement: The Literature of Political Development as Ideology," World Politics, Vol. I, No. 26, 1973, pp. 139-154; Brian Loveman, "The Comparative Administration Group, Development and Antidevelopment," Public Administration Review, Vol. 36, No. 6, 1976, pp. 616-621.

²We are drawing here on Professor Ake's Political Science as Imperialism which is yet to be published. He was kind enough to allow me to read several chapters of the manuscript. He rigorously argues in this work that the concept

• capitalism was only an institution which was necessary in a man's economic evolution . . . I must admit that since realities must be faced, the capitalist system is universal and until it is universally rejected, our economic lives must thus be led, pending the revolution which might transform the world into a socialist Leviathan.¹

Both the pragmatism of the liberal and the prevarication of the petty bourgeoisie are evident in this attitude. On the one hand realities must be faced, the capitalist system is universal'. The present problem for the local petty bourgeoisie was to eliminate the upper limits on its advance that the colonial state has imposed. This done, it would then advance, using the very structures of that state. On the other hand, there is a recognition of the possibility of a socialist revolution, but this petty bourgeoisie is in no mood, given that it must face the reality of the universality of the capitalist system, to spearhead or encourage in any way, the realization of the socialist future.

Although the leadership of the nationalist movement was aware of the radical alternative to national liberation, it consciously and successfully blocked the implementation, or even any extended public discussion, of this model.

Dr. Azikiwe made it clear from the start that he did not "wish to inject into them [the Nigerian workers and peasants] the proletarian philosophy of Marxism on the perpetual existence of warfare between capital and labour."² Although

¹Quoted in Michael J. C. Echeruo, "Nnamdi Azikiwe and Nineteenth Century Nigerian Thought," Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 12, No. 2, 1974, p. 260.

²Azikiwe, My Odyssey, p. 162.

Azikiwe talked in 1948 of the possibility of violence as a means of national emancipation,¹ we should regard as more concrete and more eloquent the expulsion already referred to by the NCNC (of which he was leader) from within its ranks of the Zikists who were more inclined toward radicalism. In fact, it is interesting to note that the Zikists were expelled from the NCNC on the pretext that they were communists. Like Azikiwe and the NCNC, Chief Awolowo and the AG also ruled out the possibility of violence as a viable means: to the latter "violence in any shape or form" was objectionable because "whatever is won by violence can only be kept by violence or at least by constant show of it."² Thus, unable to relate the nationalist movement to the class struggle and anxious to avoid any kind of violence against imperialism, the leadership of Nigerian nationalism concentrated its effort on acquiring the colonial state without radically transforming it.

It may be wondered why and how, in these circumstances the petty bourgeoisie retained the following and support of the proletariat and the peasantry in the nationalist alliance. First, it should be noted that in the colonial situation, it appears that the only contradiction is between the metropolitan bourgeoisie and the colonized. In particular, given that the bulk of the Nigerian peasantry still retain access

¹Azikiwe, Zik, pp. 163-166.

²Awolowo, Awo, pp. 251-252.

to its major means of production, land, and that a high degree of illiteracy was a factor among the working class, class political consciousness was not highly developed. In the event neither of them could provide a viable radical alternative. Second, the leadership of the nationalist movement, having rejected class struggle, was often quick, as already pointed out, to capitalize on the ethnic and religious cleavages in the society, thus posing these as the main or only important contradictions within the society. The nature of the political parties that emerged in the movement attest to this. The NCNC's links with the Igbo State Union, the AG's links with the Egbe Omo Oduduwa and the NPC's religious overtones are all well known. These tactics could only have succeeded because of the strong presence within the society of traditional attitudes, beliefs and dispositions. The petty bourgeoisie exploited the situation to great advantage. Because ethnic and religious sentiments are easily excitable, appeals for votes made on these grounds were usually easily and well answered. In a situation in which all that the British asked of the Nigerian petty bourgeoisie was to show that it could attract votes at elections, there was no compunction in using ethnicity as a vote-catching mechanism. This practice continued well beyond the nationalist era, from which time the petty bourgeois intellectuals had been seeking to rationalize their tactic and to sanctify ethnicity (tribalism) by using it as the basis of national political

life.¹ It is remarkable that the same people who were practising and advocating this approach to political struggles and structures could so frequently accuse the British of divide and rule without being aware of the hypocrisy of it all. For, shorn of its intellectual and ideological rationalizations, the practice of building a political career on an ethnic basis is little different from the use by the British of traditional structures to sustain their domination.

A third and very important part of the explanation of why the proletariat and peasantry did not break ranks with the petty bourgeoisie was the fact that the latter, when it came to participate more meaningfully in Nigeria's governance after regional autonomy and internal self-government had become a reality (colonial dyarchy), used government patronage judiciously to assure support for itself. The existence of patron-client relationships earlier referred to helped the process along by masking the real nature of the relations between the dominant and dominated classes. It is important not to underestimate the significance of this relatively short period of colonial dyarchy in Nigeria's political history. It is important because, now given access to state

¹Awolowo, in his Path to Nigerian Freedom, had advocated the political division of the country along ethnic lines. Apparently, so too had Azikiwe in his Political Blueprint for Nigeria (cited in Okechukwu Ikejiani, The Biafran Revolution, forthcoming). In particular, see Nnamdi Azikiwe, Tribalism: A Pragmatic Instrument for National Unity (Enugu: Eastern Nigeria Printing Corporation, 1964).

apparatuses and by the same token, a chance to accumulate, any possible disaffection within the petty bourgeoisie which could have (possibly) spilled over to organizing the broad masses on a clearly ideological or class basis was minimized. As Osoba has noted, "Many of them were perceptive enough to realise that, in view of the general poverty in the country and the scarcity of capital, good connections with governments and the parties controlling them were indispensable if their ambitions for wealth were not to remain mere pipe dreams."¹ This is a situation that could not have been met without this class acquiring control of the state apparatus. It came to characterize the politics of the nationalist era and of the First Republic.

Now in a position to meet some of their personal economic needs, the petty bourgeoisie, from their vantage point of state control, was able to build intricate patron-client networks. Through these networks they could dispense patronage in such a manner as to ensure continued political allegiance and following. Supporters were amply rewarded and opponents ruthlessly dealt with. Here we have the precursor of the politics of the First Republic.

The foregoing are situations the combination of which in a milieu of nationalist fervour, virtually assured that the petty bourgeoisie would emerge as the ruling class in the

¹Segun Osoba, "The Nigerian Power Elite, 1952-65" in Waterman and Gutkind, eds., African Social Studies: A Radical Reader, p. 377.

post-colonial state. Decolonization was pursued on the liberal model; the radical alternative did not find any expression. There was no serious challenge to the class that had arrogated to itself the 'natural rights' of rulership and for which the presence of an external enemy and the use of egalitarian rhetoric in promising heaven on earth served effectively to obscure its appetite for bourgeoisification. Thus, the nationalist movement was thoroughly a (petty) bourgeois affair. Of course it could not have succeeded without the active involvement or support of the workers and peasants. These two classes were constant factors with which the colonial state had to reckon. If that state had forgotten the women's uprising in 1929¹ which surprised and scared it, it could hardly have forgotten the successful 1945 general strike which also gave it a big fright. Even the Nigerian petty bourgeois class was painfully aware of the political weapon in the hands of the workers. Hence the use of wage increase by the Regional governments in 1954 to retain labour's allegiance. In all, however, the workers and peasants were unable to establish their class presence in political matters very clearly and unequivocally, even as the

¹On the uprising see V. C. Onwuteaka, "The Aba Riot of 1929 and its Relation to the System of 'Indirect Rule'," Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1965, pp. 273-282; Elizabeth Isichei, The Ibo People and the Europeans (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973); Harry A. Gailey, The Road to Aba: A Study of British Administrative Policy in Eastern Nigeria (New York: New York University Press, 1970); and Clough, Oil Rivers Trader (London: C. Hurst and Company, 1972), pp. 84-113.

transformation of the petty bourgeoisie into a bourgeoisie proper was taking place and their (the former's) exploitation was being enhanced. The state was set for the petty bourgeoisie to use its appropriation of the state apparatus, especially in the Regions, to commence and then to continue its accumulation and political domination. It was doing so as a junior partner of international capital whose dominance in the economy it never really challenged either during the nationalist period or after. The accumulation process of the petty bourgeoisie and its consequence for state structure engage our attention in subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER V

THE STATE AND THE MANAGEMENT OF THE ECONOMY

In this chapter and in the next, one we shall engage in a general discussion of the roles of the state in meshing the domestic modes of production, in harmonizing the national economy with international capital; in facilitating wealth and capital accumulation by the petty bourgeoisie and the political struggle that this last point engendered. It is for purely organizational (and not chronological) considerations that this discussion is done in two chapters. The present chapter will concentrate on the state's function of meshing the domestic modes of production and of articulating the national economy with the international economy. This is discussed first in order to show the economic environment within which the domestic political process occurs. In chapter VI we then discuss the petty bourgeoisie's process of accumulation through access to the state and the political consequences that follow from this. To proceed thus should facilitate subsequent discussion of the relationship of this kind of accumulation process to the changing state structures. The general discussion in the two chapters is closely knit by the policy and ideology of development.

DEVELOPMENT AS POLICY AND IDEOLOGY

Since the end of the Second World War and the reconstruction of Europe through the Marshall Plan what is now known as 'development' has generally become a global phenomenon. Before this period the concept was hardly used; it was certainly not in vogue then as it appears to have been following the Second World War. It is a concept that has virtually defied any scientific definition and has occasioned much debate. In the sense in which it has been generally used, development was understood as increased industrialization and Gross National Product (GNP), with concomitant growth in literacy rates, improved health and living standards. From these were supposed or expected to follow economic and political stability. In addition, it was often understood or assumed that for these things to happen a kind of osmotic process would spark the engine of development. That is to say, resources (capital and know-how) would be transferred from countries in which they were fairly concentrated (the 'developed' ones) to countries in which they were relatively scarce (the 'developing' ones). The transfer would take place through bilateral and/or multilateral institutions. Much as the Marshall Plan organized the reconstruction of ravaged Europe by shifting to it resources from the United States, so development was supposed to bring about rapid economic and political changes in colonial and newly independent states. Development was

seen both as the condition for and the consequence of increased economic and political rationalization and institutionalization. An enormous interest in development was thus aroused. The United Nations declared the sixties to be the First Development Decade. Businessmen and politicians shuttled between national capital cities negotiating deals. So-called experts in development and institutes of development administration mushroomed in many universities and colleges.¹ The businessman, the politician and the intellectual joined battle to bring about development and modernization.

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Development has everywhere come to be accepted as desirable. It has become the guiding principle of state programmes and policies. Because in effect the West is assumed to be the model image of development it is easy to see why development has been frequently taken to be synonymous with capitalism.. Development, in essence, is concerned with the need for, and the process of, enhancing the capitalist mode of production and the smooth articulation of the several modes of production in peripheral societies one with another and with international capital. This process is seen by those who subscribe to development in this sense as a series of technical problems that can be solved by the 'correct' policies. From this point of view in development class struggles do not exist; revolution is not seen as a viable process of change. The evolutionary process is advocated. "This is precisely one of the major reasons why Western imperialism, which wants to insulate

of political development does not have the scientific and explanatory value which its proponents claim for it. Tracing the various explanations and definitions of the concept in works by Gabriel Almond, Sidney Verba, Binder, Coleman and Huntington and Easton, Ake concludes that political development is a euphemism for the development of bureaucracy, the political emasculation of democratic forces and the creation of conditions for the development of capitalism in societies of the periphery, hence a tool for imperialism. Ake notes: "Development translates to Westernization. To study a third world country in the context of the theory of political development, is to explore how it can be like the West. All the students of the third world who are being taught this level of analysis are being recruited into the search for building their countries after the image of the West." Hence this approach in Political Science is a tool for imperialism. In his Revolutionary Pressures in Africa (London: Zed Press, 1978), Ake returns to this theme.

Africa against socialism is promoting it [development] so zealously" there.¹ That is, the development process is so presented as to counterpoise socialism which would call for revolutionary change in Africa. By positing the possibility and necessity of the flow of capital and know-how from the technologically advanced centres to the periphery, the ideology of development "legitimizes dependence, especially economic dependence."² However, as one of the strong proponents of this development process later found out from experience, this transfer of capital and know-how has been painfully slow and the gap between rich and poor, nationally and internationally, continues to grow. Ul Haq thinks that the conventional approach to development has shown little positive result for countries of the Third World, and that "new perspectives" are required.³

Its apparent shortcomings notwithstanding, the idea of development as traditionally understood still seems to dominate current economic and political thought. In most countries of Africa, Nigeria included, the political leadership has accepted the ideology of development. It is through the policy and ideology of development that many of the

¹ Ibid., p. 67.

² Ibid.

³ Muhibul Ul Haq, The Poverty Curtain: Choices for the Third World (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), chapter 2.

post-colonial states are able to play certain political and economic roles for foreign and local private capital. These roles include protecting the rights of property and facilitating the availability of factors of production at fairly low cost.¹ The concrete mechanism by which these political and economic roles are played are the development plans. It is also through these plans that the articulation of domestic modes of production and the articulation of the national and international economy are maintained. Also importantly, the ideology of development facilitates the creation in the peripheral society of capitalist classes. Or, to put it differently, the ideology of development appears congruent with the creation in the periphery societies of local capitalist classes.

The acceptance of the ideology of development in Nigeria has its origins in colonialism and the colonial state. This ideology was the basis of the various attempts at development planning by the colonial state. It was also this ideology which was the basis of the three successive National Development Plans thus far in the post-colonial era. It may be little wonder therefore that in none of these plans no serious and concerted effort appears to have been made to lessen Nigeria's dependence on foreign private investment,

¹See Robin Murray, "The Internationalization of Capital and the Nation State" in Hugo Radice, ed., International Firms and Modern Imperialism (New York: Penguin Books, 1975), pp. 110-117.

its detrimental effects notwithstanding. Instead, the emphasis seems to have been for the state to play a complimentary and facilitating role for private (local and foreign) capital accumulation.¹ The role of foreign private agencies such as the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations has been prominent in Nigeria's development planning, both at the university and bureaucracy levels.² Their quick profit, growth-now-distribution-later mentality and their creed of centre-periphery integration were manifest among those persons who drew up the First National Development Plan.³

¹ Sayre P. Schatz, Nigerian Capitalism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977).

² See Ikenna Nzimiro, The Crisis in the Social Sciences: The Nigerian Situation. Inaugural Lecture Delivered at the University of Nigeria, 15 October 1976 (Third World Forum: Occasional Paper No. 2, 1977), pp. 21-25.

³ See Wolfgang F. Stölper, Planning Without Facts: Lessons in Resource Allocation from Nigeria's Development (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966). He argued for Nigeria's continued integration with foreign capital on the grounds that "the countries increasing their income as well as their standard of living at the most spectacular rate are also countries in which foreign integration has been substantial" (p. 61). Nor did Stolper see much use in pursuing protectionist policies; such measures to him were tantamount to misallocation of resources (pp. 159-160). Profitability was his watchword. Stolper was sent to Nigeria (to head the team that drew up the 1962-1968 Plan) under the auspices of the Ford Foundation. For some--though not basic--disagreement with Stolper by another American member of the planning team, see Clive C. Gray, "Planning Without Facts--A Review Article," Nigerian Journal of Economics and Social Studies, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1968, pp. 3-31. More views about the Plan appeared in W. F. Stolper, "The Main Features of the 1962-68 National Plan," Nigerian Journal of Economics and Social Studies, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1962, pp. 85-91; L. M. Hansen, "Methods of Economic Programming and Analysis in the Plan," *ibid.*, pp. 92-109; and O. Aboyade, "A General Critique of the Plan," *ibid.*, pp. 110-115.

The foregoing views on development provide the context of the discussion which follows in the rest of this chapter and in the next one. The reader is asked to keep in mind that both chapters discuss different sides of the same question of the state's role in meshing the domestic modes of production, in articulating the national economy and international economy and in creating a local capitalist class, along with the political struggles this has generated in Nigeria.

THE STATE'S ROLE IN THE ECONOMY

As can well be imagined from the nature of the nationalist movement and its petty bourgeois leadership the post-colonial state was substantively little different from the colonial state. The petty bourgeoisie became the governing class. We cannot here call it a ruling class because aside from occupying political posts it had little stake in the economy. A ruling class may be defined as that class in society in whose long-run interests state power intervenes, the class whose dominant economic interests to a large extent determine the nature of state power and intervention.¹ Clearly then, since it was not the dominant economic class at independence, we shall not call this petty bourgeois

¹Cf. Goran Therbon, What Does the Ruling Class Do When it Rules? State Apparatuses and State Power under Feudalism, Capitalism and Socialism (London: NLB, 1978) pp. 144-161; and Michaela von Freyhold, "The Post-Colonial State and Its Tanzanian Version," Review of African Political Economy, No. 8, 1977, pp. 75-77.

class a ruling class. The ruling class proper remained the foreign bourgeoisie,¹ for its dominance in the economy remained largely unchallenged. This foreign bourgeoisie no longer needed to control state power directly in the post-colonial era. There was now a locally dominant class which had come to largely define its own economic and political interests within the very parameters defined and determined by imperialism. Consequently it may be argued, strictly from this point of view, that the function of the post-colonial state was little different from that of the colonial state. But the difference, though 'little', should not therefore be discounted, for it reflected the social basis of this state which now comprised both the foreign bourgeoisie and the locally dominant petty bourgeoisie in an unequal partnership. The state, to some extent, had also to cater for the latter's interest; this became one of its defining characteristics.

¹By foreign bourgeoisie we refer here not simply to British capital. Although British capital was dominant throughout the colonial period--principally through the foreign trading firms--a noticeable shift in the economy has meant an increasing influence by European and American capital. French, Italian and other European capitals are involved in the petroleum industry which has latterly become the mainstay of the Nigerian economy. This means that the local activities of these foreign capitals provide the most important sources of revenue for the Nigerian Federal Government. And because the Federal Government, especially since 1970, has become a source of huge contracts in which these foreign capitals often bid, they have developed important linkages at this level. It is not yet clear to us what the internal political result (in terms of class alliances and struggles) the diminishing or growing importance of British and other capitals, respectively, have been or will be. One reason for this is that neither the decline of the influence of British capital nor the growth of American or European capital's influence has been dramatic. Some data on the dominance of foreign capital in Nigeria is presented below (see, in particular, pp. 222-231).

Although the Nigerian petty bourgeoisie now appropriated the state system it continued to use the latter largely to articulate the local economy with the international economy. From this point of view Sayre Schatz has argued that the role of the post-colonial state in the economy has been quite comparable to that of the colonial state. He characterizes both forms of state in Nigeria as agents of what he calls "nuture-capitalism."¹ By this, Schatz means that the colonial and post-colonial states have left the mainly productive areas of the economy for private agents while their role has been primarily in providing the infrastructure necessary for those private agents to carry on their accumulation. In this the state attempts to support indigenous entrepreneurs at the same time as it welcomes foreign private interests.² Schatz is no doubt correct in this view. What he should have recognized, in addition, is the fact that it was only from the period of colonial-dyarchy that the nationalist element in the state's role in nutre-capitalism became possible. Prior to this period local participation in the economy was greatly circumscribed and much less important than it became from 1957 onwards. This difference between the colonial and post-colonial states needs to be emphasized.

If the post-colonial state was to maintain the articulation of the national and international economy this required that it must maintain, in the first place, the articulation of modes of production in the national economy itself. The concrete manifestation of this important role of the state may be seen in the policy of development. With the Regions having acquired important roles in the general accumulation process, we may best show how the state's approach to development and its mediation of the different classes thrown up by the internal modes of production were carried out through

¹Schatz, op. cit., p. 3.

²Ibid., pp. 3-4.

regional state apparatuses. We examine principally the case of the former Eastern Region.

The NCNC Government in the East accepted that its role was that of "organising or re-organising the economy. . ." in partnership with private enterprise, domestic and foreign.¹

What was really aimed at here was the transformation of peasant into capitalist agriculture, or since this cannot be achieved outright or in one fell swoop, stimulating peasant agriculture to produce more. The surplus thus produced would be transferred into the capitalist sector of the economy. As the Government asked in the Official Document No. 5 of 1962:

"How can we industrialise without the development of commercial crops to meet the requirements of both the proposed industries and of exports?"² To bring about increased production of crops for export and also to better manage or control the social and political situation engendered by the juxtaposition of peasant and capitalist production, Government set itself the following priorities:

- (i) the establishment of farm settlements;
- (ii) the encouragement of plantation agriculture;
- (iii) the organisation of more effective extension services;
- (iv) the development of farmers' co-operatives;
- (v) the development of research and irrigation.³

¹ Eastern Nigeria, Report of the Economic Mission, 1961 (Enugu: Government Printer, 1962), p. 1.

² Ibid., p. 3.

³ Ibid., p. 5.

The farm settlements were clearly established in an attempt to increase production. It appears, however, that the major stimulus for action here was the need to control and manage the growing percentage of the population who, as a result of the threat facing the survival and reproduction of the peasantry, were drifting to the cities in search of work. So it was hoped that the farm settlements would absorb this "growing population of primary school leavers, unskilled in trade, but unwilling to embrace [peasant] agriculture as a life-long occupation. These young men do not live in villages and are sources of irritation in the townships."¹ Therefore the political purpose of the farm settlements cannot be separated from the purely economic purpose. The Region's 'Leaders of Thought', a political umbrella for the whole petty bourgeoisie, were also quick to urge that the farm settlements be run "by a limited liability company specially constituted for that purpose" in which individuals could invest.² The development of co-operatives, it has been found, has not been the best method of making credit available to the smaller farmers since they have been open to political manipulation. Nor have different credit schemes devised in the past been successful in meeting farmers' needs, especially when the means of obtaining

¹Ibid., p. 6.

²Eastern Nigeria, Report on the Third Conference of Leading Personalities of Eastern Nigerian Origin (Enugu: Government Printer, 1962), p. 22.

such credit were unclear or unknown to them and they are unable to meet the requirements.¹

The general policy in Regional development was aimed at the transformation of peasant production into capitalist production in agriculture and even more importantly in extracting surplus from the peasant economy which would be used to bolster the capitalist enclave. The largest single state agency involved here was the Eastern Nigeria Development Corporation (ENDC).

The ENDC came into existence in February 1955, superseding the Eastern Region Development Planning Board (ERDPB) which was established in 1949 and also absorbing the functions of the Eastern Region Finance Corporation (ERFC). The ENDC was originally named the Eastern Region Development Corporation (ERDC). But in 1960 it became ENDC. This was simply a change in name, for the functions of the agency were hardly affected. The Corporation was one of the channels through which state development strategy was to be implemented, especially in agriculture. However, its mandate was not limited to bringing greater capitalist production in agriculture, it was allowed to initiate or participate in other production processes than agriculture. It thus participated in some commercial and industrial ventures either alone or in partnership with private individuals, or loaned money in assistance to those undertaking

¹See for example, H. A. Oluwasanmi and J. A. Alao, "The Role of Credit in the Transformation of Traditional Agriculture: The Nigerian Experience," Nigerian Journal of Economics and Social Studies, Vol. 7, No. 1, 1965, pp. 31-50.

such ventures. The funds which it expended in this process derived mainly from the Marketing Board.¹ We shall have occasion in the next chapter to look again at some of the loans activity of the ENDC and other similar institutions in the country.

One of the concomitants of the development strategy was the alienation of peasant land and the virtual proletarianization of the peasants thus affected. The ENDC's role in all this was remarkable. Together with the Region's Marketing Board it was instrumental in the surplus extraction process (by the Board paying peasants less than the sale price of their produce in the world market). Such surplus was then deployed in mainly capitalist production. For example, the surplus thus realized enabled the ENDC to be involved in such ventures as cement production, banking, bottling and catering.² To establish its plantations and estates the ENDC

¹This discussion is based on Eastern Nigeria, The ENDC in the First Decade 1955-1964 (Enugu: ENDC, n.d.) and G. K. Helleiner, "The Eastern Nigeria Development Corporation: A Study in Sources and Uses of Public Development Funds 1949-1962," Nigerian Journal of Economics and Social Studies, Vol. 6, No. 1, 1964, pp. 98-123. See also O. Teriba, "Development Strategy, Investment Decision and Expenditure Patterns of a Public Development Institution: The Case of Western Nigeria Development Corporation, 1949-1962," Nigerian Journal of Economics and Social Studies, Vol. 8, No. 2, 1966, pp. 235-258.

²See Eastern Nigeria, Sixth Annual Report of the Eastern Nigeria Marketing Board (Port Harcourt: C.M.S. Press, n.d.), pp. 32-33; and the Eighth Annual Report of the Eastern Nigeria Development Corporation 1962-63 and the Accounts Dated 31 March 1963 (Enugu: Eastern Nigeria Printing Corporation, n.d.).

had to acquire land by displacing peasants, for there was little 'free' land into which it could easily move. Occasionally peasants who were displaced were then hired by the agency. In 1962-63 the ENDC's agricultural and plantations divisions had about 8,435 daily paid workers on its staff.¹ Acquisition of land by the ENDC sometimes brought the peasants in violent opposition to the agency. In one of its reports, for example, it notes that "in many places where the ENDC went to acquire lands for its plantations, the people had raised hue and cry, carried matchets and cudgels to chase ENDC officials out."² Nevertheless, by 1964, the ENDC maintained about 22 plantations (mainly for oil palm) and 8 estates (mainly for cocoa and coconut trees), with about 150,000 acres it was yet to develop.³

So engrossed was the Eastern Region's government in promoting cash crop production that it virtually neglected food production. Thus in its 1962-1968 Development Plan it was to make capital investment of about N44 million in cash crop production as opposed to a little over N5 million for food crops.⁴ Although 34 per cent of the Plan's total outlay

¹Eastern Nigeria, Eighth Annual Report of the Eastern Nigeria Development Corporation, p. 16.

²Eastern Nigeria, The ENDC in the First Decade 1955-1964, p. 25. It interpreted such incidents as merely cases of misunderstanding by the peasants.

³Ibid., p. 9.

⁴Eastern Nigeria, Eastern Nigeria Development Plan 1962-1968 (Enugu: Government Printer, 1962), p. 7.

was devoted to agriculture which was expected to "lead to a substantial increase in export earnings and to an improvement in the nutritional standard of the population,"¹ the latter aim appears to be only secondary. This seemed clear to the Leaders of Thought, for they urged more emphasis on food production and nutrition in the Plan.²

The foregoing may be summarized by saying that the Eastern Region's central rôle appeared to be in enhancing capitalist production and the further subordination of the peasant or rural economy to it. There does not appear to have been any successful attempt made to help the peasants to regain their independence in production, rather more surplus was being extracted from them through the Marketing Board. The emphasis on facilitating capitalist production in the Region appears unmistakable, what with the serious attempts at expanding or establishing industrial layouts in Port Harcourt, Enugu, Aba, Umuahia and Onitsha, the Region's major urban centres.³ Consider also that in the 1962-1968 Plan Trade, Industry and Transportation claimed 21 per cent of the

¹Ibid., p. 9.

²Report on the Conference of Leading Personalities, p. 15. Professor Oluwasanmi has drawn attention to this problem as it existed on a national scale: "It is not easy to obtain even an approximate idea of present food production for domestic consumption in Nigeria." See his "Agriculture and Rural Development" in A. A. Ayida and H. M. A. Onitiri, eds., Reconstruction and Development in Nigeria: Proceedings of a National Conference (Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 144.

³Eastern Nigeria Development Plan 1962-1968, p. 37.

total outlay.¹ These items accounted for 37 per cent. in the 1958-62 Plan period but the apparent decline of 16 per cent was largely illusory if one interpreted it as meaning that the government was showing, in the 1962-68 Plan, less interest in capitalist production. This is so because much of the heavy outlay for agriculture (34 per cent) in this same latter period was principally oriented toward encouraging capitalist production.

What trend we see here for the Eastern Region seems to apply with little or no difference to other Regions. Like the Eastern Region, the Western Region pursued a policy of transforming agriculture through the agency of farm settlements. The Western Nigeria Development Corporation (WNDC) played a similar role as the ENDC. The policy was no more successful than in the Eastern Region. Adegboye, Basu and Olatunbosun have concluded that the farms did not have the desired effect: ". . . it appears that the government has not in fact succeeded in making farmers out of the settlers themselves. This is made manifest by the fact that some of these settlers hire labour to do much of their farm operations while they themselves live and work in towns."² In the

¹Ibid., p. 12.

²R. O. Adegboye, A. C. Basu and Dupe Olatunbosun, "Impact of Western Nigeria Farm Settlements on Surrounding Farmers," Nigerian Journal of Economics and Social Studies, Vol. 11, No. 2, 1969, p. 238.

Mid-Western Region the government also, for similar reasons as in the East, embarked on the farm settlements route in agricultural production. It also placed great urgency on the establishment of infrastructural facilities such as industrial estates and hotels.¹

It would appear then aside from pursuing its policy in development with greater vigour, the post-colonial state followed more or less the same approach as did the colonial state. A more important difference was the more overt attempt made in the latter period to help out local entrepreneurs. The latter demanded more direct assistance from the state in "personal, day-to-day, and immediately tangible ways and [in dealing] with the individual problems of each particular firm."² Politicians joined businessmen in pressing such demands. The example of the colonial state's support of the foreign firms was not lost on those making these demands of the post-colonial state. Schatz observed that "the view that government was an instrument for serving important business interests appeared to accord with Nigerian observations of colonial practice."³ For the clamouring local entrepreneurs, the state provided loan programmes. We shall see how these were administered in the next chapter.

¹Mid-Western Nigeria, Mid-Western Nigeria Development Plan, 1964-1968 (Benin City: Ministry of Internal Affairs, 1964), pp. 15 and 25.

²Schatz, op. cit., pp. 84-85.

³Ibid., p. 85.

At the same time as the state was aiding the local entrepreneurs it continued to maintain the major thrust of the external linkages of the national economy. Foreign capital continued to dominate the economy and there appeared to the state little contradiction between the latter situation and the programme of aiding local entrepreneurs. What shift appeared noticeable in external trade was that after 1960 the European Economic Community (EEC) became Nigeria's major trading partner, replacing Britain. Whereas in 1960 Britain took in about 46 per cent of Nigeria's exports and the EEC about 30 per cent, by 1973 the figures were about 18.6 per cent to Britain and about 33 per cent to the EEC. The United States also became a more important trading partner. From taking in about 11 per cent of Nigeria's exports in 1960, it took in about 24 per cent in 1973.¹ Reasons cited by Ojo for these shifts include a decline in Britain's total share of world trade from about 8 per cent in 1967 to about 7 per cent in 1970, and the incidence of tied aid which determined to some extent how Nigeria may order its external trade relations.² The latter reason may be more appropriate with regard to imports rather than exports.

¹See O. Adewumi and S. O. Olayide, "Foreign Trade and Public Finance" in S. O. Olayide, ed., Economic Survey of Nigeria (1960-1975) (Ibadan: Aromolaran Publishing Co. Ltd., 1976), p. 127.

²Folayan Ojo, "Economic Integration: The Nigerian Experience since Independence," Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies, Vol. 18, No. 2, 1976, p. 291.

A similar trend as above is also observable in the pattern of Nigerian imports. In 1960 Nigeria's imports from Britain, the EEC and the U.S. were about 43 per cent, about 19 per cent and 6 per cent respectively of total imports. By 1972 the figures had become, again respectively and of total imports, about 26 per cent, about 30 per cent and about 10 per cent.¹ It again appears that the EEC and the U.S. have gained at the expense of Britain. The West remains, however, the most important traders with Nigeria.

The dominance of the Nigerian economy by foreign capital has been demonstrated. In a survey of 1,320 firms it has been shown that Nigerian participation in the national economy was still very low, even after the state's attempts to encourage local entrepreneurs (up to 1969) have been taken into account.² Table 11 helps to illustrate this point. It will be seen that Nigerians held 56.4 per cent of the shares of the value of N2, and that the higher the value of the shares, the less the percentage of Nigerians participating. Thus for the shares of the value of between N10,000 and N20,000, 33.3 per cent was in Nigerian hands while 66.7 per cent was in expatriate hands. Looking at shares valued at N200,000 and above one finds that only 26.4 per cent was in

¹Ibid., p. 290, table 2.

²We are drawing here from O. Teriba, E. C. Edozien and M. O. Kayode, "Some Aspects of Ownership and Control of Business Enterprise in a Developing Economy: The Nigerian Experience," Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies, Vol. 14, No. 1, 1972, pp. 3-26.

TABLE 11
NIGERIA: LOCAL AND EXPATRIATE SHAREHOLDINGS IN THE ECONOMY

Shareholder	Number		Percentage	
Value of Shares Held (N)	Nigerian	Expatriate	Total	Total
2	146	113	259	56.4
2- 2,000	267	418	685	39.0
2,000- 10,000	182	193	375	48.5
10,000- 20,000	62	124	186	33.3
20,000- 40,000	46	82	128	35.9
40,000- 100,000	47	128	175	27.9
100,000- 200,000	28	80	108	25.9
Above 200,000	43	120	163	26.4
Total	821	1,258	2,079	39.5
				60.4
				100.0

Source: Adapted from O. Teriba et al., "Some Aspects of Ownership and Control of Business Enterprises," op. cit., p. 8.

the hands of Nigerians while 73.6 per cent was in expatriate hands.

In the same number of firms as above, it was also found that expatriates dominated the Boards. "Expatriate Board members own the total Board's holdings in 569 or 43 per cent of the firms, and have majority shareholding in 827 or 62.8 per cent of the firms."¹ Only in 25 per cent of the Boards studied were there no expatriates, and these were usually the small Boards of about 3-5 persons. On the other hand, on about 40 per cent of the Boards there were no Nigerians. These were usually the Boards of the largest firms where in many cases paid-up capital was over N20,000. The study concludes that ". . . expatriates can thus be seen /sic/ to control over 60 per cent of all the Boards studied."²

It appears to have been some recognition of the contradiction between encouraging local entrepreneurship and foreign interests simultaneously that inclined the state to seek attempts that would rationalize the relationship between the two. Nationalist pressure too may in fact have forced the decision to bring in the 1972 Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree commonly called the Indigenisation Decree. This appears logical from the desire of the petty bourgeoisie to become a bourgeoisie, a desire which was evident from 1960.

¹Ibid., p. 15.

²Ibid., p. 16.

The decree aimed not only at maximizing retention within the economy of profits and at helping Nigerian entrepreneurs but also at raising the level of capital and intermediate goods production within the national economy. Two schedules were proposed in the decree. Schedule I included such service sector activities as retail trade, dry cleaning, hairdressing and other things such as some road haulage, bottling, tyre trading, block, bricks and tiles production, bread and cake-making, etc. In all, this schedule comprised some twenty-two items or activities. Most of them, it has been argued, "are strategically unimportant in terms of the control which expatriates wield over the economy."¹ The decree provided for one hundred per cent Nigerian ownership in this schedule.

Schedule II comprised 33 enterprises. These included beer brewing, manufacture of matches, furniture, cement and paint, plywood production, wholesale distribution, paper conversion, electronics assembly, clearing and forwarding meat, fish and poultry processing, etc. The decree allowed for 40 per cent participation in the enterprises listed under this schedule by Nigerians.

To facilitate the entry of Nigerians into these enterprises the Federal Government moved to acquire 40 per cent of the shares in foreign banks and now required that they make 40 per cent of their loans to Nigerian businesses. It also established in 1973 the Nigerian Bank for Commerce and Industry

¹Ibid., p. 18.

(NBCI) which was "expected to play a more stimulating role, operating more as an industrial promoter rather than a bank."¹ Other agencies established to facilitate the process included the Capital Issues Commission and the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Board, the latter agency was to oversee the implementation of the decree.

The consensus of opinion appears to be that the decree has achieved very little in terms of indigenizing any substantial part of Nigerian industry; it has perhaps succeeded in domesticating some foreign capital. The most affected single category of expatriate enterprise was that in which Lebanese predominated. Apparently they have adapted very quickly by obtaining Nigerian citizenship or going into partnership with Nigerians.² The decree did not aim at areas in local industry wherein Nigerians were totally uninvolved. It is estimated that 56 per cent and about 32 per cent respectively of the enterprises under schedules I and II were already in Nigerian hands by 1967.³ Control of many of these enterprises still remained with the expatriates who have found Nigerians who, for lucrative rewards, co-operate in arranging transfers on

¹See S. A. Oni, "Industry Including Indigenisation" in Olayide, ed., op. cit., pp. 66-67.

²See Paul Collins, "Public Policy and the Development of Indigenous Capitalism: The Nigerian Experience," Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics, Vol. XV, No. 2, 1977, p. 133.

³Schatz, op. cit., p. 60.

terms favourable to these expatriates.¹ The Nigerians who have benefitted most from the whole exercise appear to be principally the "strategically placed or wealthy" ones.² Finally, the decree seemed to have been badly implemented. It is not clear that the Promotion Board was as vigilant as it could have been. What is clearer is that some of the agencies such as the NBCI performed poorly.

In spite of the apparent link between the establishment of the NBCI and the indigenisation policy, the NBCI has disappointingly not been of a great help in financing the purchase of the business or shares in alien companies affected by indigenisation. It has given little or no money at all to individuals to buy shares . . . nor has it played any great role in the acquisition of businesses under Schedule I. . . . For one thing, the NBCI opened its door for business only some six months before the D-Day for the completion of the first phase of indigenisation exercise. . . . For another thing, the NBCI does not normally grant applications for loans below N20,000. 3

It may be said in summary that the 1972 decree has not done too much towards a resolution of the contradiction between aiding local and foreign private capital simultaneously. What little it has done is in defining the areas of operation of local and foreign capital, thereby diffusing any immediate conflict between them.⁴ We shall return to the further consequences of the decree below.

¹Ibid., p. 61.

²Ibid.

³Dr. A. O. Falusi, "Money, Banking and Insurance" in Olayide, ed., op. cit., p. 165.

⁴Ake, Revolutionary Pressures in Africa, p. 49.

Perhaps the greatest irony of the whole exercise is that sections of the Nigerian business community were urging that even more foreign investment be attracted into the economy. According to the late Chief Fajemirokun, then President of the Lagos Chamber of Commerce:

In spite of . . . indigenisation policy, Nigeria still needs foreign investment and rapid manpower development in managerial, technical and technological skills . . . Nigeria should not only be prepared to pay for such services but it must also be seen to be so prepared. This is why we would like the government to draw out specific guidelines promptly so as to facilitate the attraction of the much needed foreign private investment.¹

It may be argued, however, that Chief Fajemirokun was not really departing from the view of the government since the latter was not aiming at curtailing the influence in the economy of foreign investment. After all the indigenisation exercise hardly affected oil which has become the mainstay of the economy. In fact one can trace the state's attitude to foreign investment and the local private sector through successive development plans from the colonial period into the post-colonial era. In them the commitment to local capitalist development that is linked to the international system may be observed. For example, in his evaluation of the two development plans drawn up by the colonial state and the first plan under the post-colonial state, Nafziger found that they had certain important points in common. They were all

¹Daily Times (Lagos), December 7, 1974, cited in Schatz, op. cit., p. 41.

communities to own, and control the essential means of production and distribution and thereby more effectively promote political freedom, economic security, social equality, religious toleration and communal welfare."¹ Yet even as the party was proclaiming this line the contradictions were becoming more evident. For example, seven short months before the call to democratise Nigeria and socialise the major means of production and exchange Dr. Azikiwe, on behalf of the NCNC, had called for the "De-nationalization of our public utilities, like Building Construction, Colliery, Electricity, Marine, Railway, Road Construction and Telecommunications."² In 1959 the NCNC's election policy was reportedly in "opposition to nationalization of existing enterprises" even as it was still advocating a "transition to socialism."³ Back in 1957 the party had resolved to vigorously pursue a policy of fraternizing with the colonial rulers as a means of assuring itself political office.⁴

¹Nnamdi Azikiwe, Zik: A Selection from the Speeches of Nnamdi Azikiwe, (Ibadan: Cambridge University Press, 1961), p. 159.

²Ibid., p. 216.

³Anthony Enahoro, Fugitive Offender: The Story of a Political Prisoner, (London: Cassell and Company, 1965), p. 161.

⁴See K.W.J. Post, "The National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons, and the Decision of December 1959" in John P. Mackintosh, et. al., Nigerian Government and Politics (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1966), pp. 418-9.

the locally dominant classes "are embedded, namely the institution of private property and the capitalist mode as the dominant mode of production."¹ What Alavi should perhaps have emphasized more is that the locally dominant class is most likely to be the junior partner to foreign capital and that even where the former class appropriates the state to aid its own economic purposes this situation hardly changes. This, we suggest, is the case of the Nigerian post-colonial state and the governing class. It remains so because even the parameters within which state power can operate in the service of the locally dominant class are already determined by the international economy. The historical relation between the peripheral state's dominant class and some of the metropolitan bourgeoisies, and the dominance in the peripheral economy of capital from the metropole help to define the parameters. Short of incurring the loss of confidence of international capital and thus possibly causing an economic crisis, the state in the peripheral formation has to keep within the parameters--which parameters are by no means static, of course--in its service to the class which locally appropriates its apparatuses. In fact in the face of extreme dependence that characterizes the Nigerian economy it may be argued that the foreign bourgeoisie is effectively represented, so to speak, in the internal political process. The fact of

¹Hamza Alavi, "The State in Post-Colonial Societies: Pakistan and Bangladesh," New Left Review, No. 74, 1972, p. 62.

the conservation of the colonial economic structure may be adduced to support such a point of view. Within such an economic structure the foreign bourgeoisie remains the effective ruling class. The local class which controls the political apparatus has to be consistently mindful of the foreign bourgeoisie if its own interests are not to be jeopardized.

This has precisely been the case with the governing class in Nigeria. This class appears to have been in some fear that it cannot, on its own, effectively control the economy. A reflection of this can be seen from Waziri Ibrahim's view that

If we want to really set about improving the economy of our country in a particular way, they may say we are Communists. They can make our countrymen suspect our every move. If they do not succeed by false propaganda, by calling us all sorts of names, if they fail to make us unpopular in order to win their case, they can arrange assassination. They can do it by poison or by setting our own people against us. They can go to any extent without discrimination.¹

Waziri made this defence of the government's economic strategy in 1961 when he was Minister for Economic Development, a ministry which was very important for development planning and implementation. How strongly the Minister or the government believed this fear is difficult to ascertain. What is important is the fact that for some reason or other the governing class was beholden to, and impotent vis à vis, the

¹Quoted in Segun Osoba, "The Nigerian Power Elite, 1952-65" in Peter Gutkind and Peter Waterman, eds., African Social Studies: A Radical Reader (London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1977), p. 380.

foreign bourgeoisie. With the foreign bourgeoisie determining the nature and direction of the economy and with this class therefore appropriating a higher percentage of the surplus product than the governing class, the latter are forced to rely even more directly on the state and on means of accumulation other than the ordinary process of accumulation under capitalism. This has been the case for much of the period between colonial dyarchy and the military interregnum.

Perhaps as the effect of some of the measures (including Indigenisation) taken in the latter period work themselves out one may begin to see capital accumulation by the local capitalist class proceeding along more ordinary capitalist means.

To be sure, one of the important consequences of the Indigenisation Decree has been the expansion of the ranks of the comprador bourgeoisie. They are those from among the hitherto impoverished petty bourgeoisie who, because of some wealth they had accumulated or through their access to the institutions established to facilitate the implementation of the decree, were able to integrate themselves more with international capital. This process of integration of Nigerians with international capital took the forms of either buying shares in foreign enterprises or acting as fronts for such enterprises. The latter form appears to have been fairly blatant, for it drew a lot of both official and unofficial comment. It was carried on on such a scale that

General Obasanjo, in his address to the nation on June 29, 1976 noted that Nigerians were indeed helping foreign interests to circumvent the decree and that the result of this was a "shocking performance."¹ Another observer noted that "In many cases, Nigerian frontmen were given directorships. Some even condescended very low by buying shares on behalf of foreigners."² As with the Indigenisation Decree, so it had been with attempts by government to help indigenous contracting firms. Many of them who secured large contracts from the state simply turned around and brought in foreign firms to do the jobs they contracted.³

The conclusion appears inevitable that the Indigenisation policy has not lessened but may in fact have enhanced Nigeria's dependence position. Perhaps by its very nature the policy could not have done much to lessen this dependence. For while the Indigenisation Decree better rationalizes the relationship between Nigerian and foreign capital and provides the former greater room for capital accumulation, it still leaves virtually untouched the big league players such as the United Africa Company and the Standard Bank, to mention only a few of those that have long been dominant.⁴ And since the decree was

¹In Call to Duty, (Speeches by Brigadier, later General, Olusegun Obasanjo), (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, n.d.), p. 63.

²Babatunde Jose, Jr., Daily Times (Lagos), 9 February, 1978.

³Schatz, op. cit., p. 195. ⁴Ake, op. cit., pp. 48-49.

promulgated Nigerian businessmen and the federal government have been at pains to assure foreign investment that it was still warmly welcome. Addressing Commercial and Merchant Banks' Chief Executives in November 1975, General Obasanjo (then Brigadier and not yet Head of State) said:

I like to assure you that . . . you can count on the warm disposition of this administration towards private enterprise and endeavour. We have sought every opportunity to emphasise our intention to continue to collaborate with foreign investors in promoting joint ventures and in ensuring fair and equitable returns on investments. I like to assure you that investments, from external and internal sources, in the deserving areas of the Nigerian economy have our guarantee of safety . . . I hope that you will accept the assurances and re-assurances of our favourable disposition to private enterprise and initiative, and pass them on in all your business contacts.¹

The effect of the Indigenisation Decree and the open arms policy toward foreign investment is that Nigerians have been able to take over the low and medium levels in the economy (such as bottling, baking, entertainment, wholesale distribution and shipping) while the real commanding heights of the economy (such as in the oil industry and technology) will still remain foreign dominated. The UAC, John Holt, Leventis, G.B. Oliphant and the Compagnie Française de l'Afrique Occidentale (CFAO) who had had their tentacles in nearly every area of the economy² may now attempt to consolidate their resources in the higher grounds of the economy.

¹Call to Duty, p. 21.

²Interestingly enough, these companies were still listed as Licensed Buying Agents for the Northern Nigeria Marketing Board until 1966. See, for example, Northern Nigeria, Twelfth Annual Report of the Northern States

All this means that the Nigerian state and the governing class continue to play an intermediary role between the national economy and international capital. What accumulation of capital has taken place among the comprador bourgeoisie and elements of the petty bourgeoisie seems to have been quick-profit yielding endeavours. Doing this, they have become agents of, instead of a viable alternative to, international capital. Echoes of Frantz Fanon come to mind at this point. He had written of the dominant class in most African states in the following perceptive, if caustic, terms:

Seen through its eyes, its mission has nothing to do with transforming the nation; it consists, prosaically, of being the transmission line between the nation and a capitalism, rampant though camouflaged, which today puts on the mask of neo-colonialism. The national bourgeoisie will be quite content with the role of the Western bourgeoisie's business agent, and it will play its part without any complexes in a most dignified manner. But this lucrative role, this cheap-Jack's function, this meanness of outlook and this absence of all ambition symbolize the incapacity of the national middle class to fulfill its historic role of bourgeoisie.¹

Marketing Board, 1 August 1965 - 31 July 1966 (Kano: Oluseyi Press Ltd., 1968). Since Indigenisation--and because of it too--the multinational corporations of which the above companies are parts have achieved "greater domestication and legitimisation within Nigeria..." Richard A. Joseph, "Affluence and Underdevelopment: The Nigerian Experience," Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 16, No. 2, 1978, p. 229.

¹Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, trans. by Constance Farrington (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1963), pp. 152-153.

CHAPTER VI

THE ROLE OF THE STATE IN CAPITAL ACCUMULATION

BY THE PETTY BOURGEOISIE

The preceding chapter focused on the role of the state in the management of the economy. This chapter continues the general discussion. Its focus is on the capital accumulation of the governing class and the role of the state in this process. It will be seen that the ideology of development also comes into prominence here. The point made in chapter III that the colonial state and the foreign trading firms made it virtually impossible for Nigerian entrepreneurs to establish themselves actively in the economy should be kept in mind. Its consequence was that these local entrepreneurs lacked the economic power to accumulate much capital. At least in part, this explains why, from the period of colonial dyarchy onwards, these entrepreneurs and other elements within the petty bourgeoisie looked to the state and also used it as an effective medium through which they can initiate or enhance their own capital accumulation.

What we attempt to describe in this chapter is by no means peculiar to Nigeria. For example, Professors Langdon and Mytelka have observed that:

Throughout Africa those segments of the African petit-bourgeoisie who led successful

nationalist movements attempted in the postindependence period to use their new control over the state to direct financial resources and economic opportunities to themselves, in order to consolidate their economic and social position and become something of a dominant bourgeoisie.¹

This is also the theme that has been explored in some detail by Claude Ake.² He notes in a vein similar to that of Mytelka and Langdon that the African governing classes have attempted to use political power for their own class and private accumulation.² Professor Ake also observes that the accumulation by these classes has done little to lessen the grip on African economies of international capital.

This situation is not only general in Africa but seems to be so in most post-colonial societies, where economically dominant groups hardly exist. Invariably, it appears, state power assumes significance as a means for creating an economically dominant class. Hence the importance of access to and/or control of state apparatus. Professor Miliband's observation on this general phenomenon is important enough to be quoted here in extenso. In the post-colonial social formation, he notes that

...the state must be taken mainly to 'represent' itself, in the sense that those people who occupy the leading

¹Colin Legum, I. William Zartman, Steven Langdon and Lynn K. Mytelka, Africa in the 1980s: A Continent in Crisis, (New York: McGraw-Hill, for Council on Foreign Relations, 1979), p. 152.

²Claude Ake, Revolutionary Pressures in Africa, (London: Zed Press, 1978), pp. 70-76.

positions in the state system will use their power, inter alia, to advance their own economic interests of their families, friends, and followers, or clients. A process of enrichment occurs, which assumes a great number of forms and leads to a proliferation of diverse economic ventures, and activities. In this process, a genuine local bourgeoisie may come into being and grow strong, with continuing close connections to the state and its leading members, who are themselves part of that new bourgeoisie.

In such cases the relation between economic and political power has been inverted: it is not economic power which results in the wielding of political power and influence and which shapes political decision making. It is rather political power (which also means here administrative and military power) which creates the possibilities of enrichment and which provides the basis for the formation of an economically powerful class... The state is here the source of economic power as well as an instrument of it: the state is a major 'means of production'.

It is an instrument of economic power... because those who hold state power use it for their own economic purposes and the economic purposes of whoever they choose. This use of state power assumes many different forms, including of course the suppression of any challenge to the supremacy of what turns in effect into an economically and politically dominant class.¹

It is this enrichment or the acquisition of economic interests by those who control, and/or have access to, the state apparatuses that we must now explore. In the rest of this chapter we shall relate the ideology of the Nigerian petty bourgeois ruling class to its attempts to accumulate. Then

¹Ralph Miliband, Marxism and Politics; (London: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 108-109; original emphasis.

we shall look at corruption and political manipulation as one important processes of this capital accumulation. In the final section we look at the role of violence and instability in the process and how these may be related to the demands for new state creation in the Nigerian context.

THE IDEOLOGY OF DEVELOPMENT AND CAPITAL ACCUMULATION

The crucial role that control of and/or access to state power plays in the process of (wealth and) capital accumulation was recognised and given expression by the Constitution Drafting Committee (C.D.C) set up by General Muhammed in October 1975 to prepare a suitable draft constitution for Nigeria. In the C.D.C.'s analysis of the ills of the First Republic and in its attempt to establish a new modus operandi it observed that

Government in Nigeria, as indeed in other developing countries, has tended to be pre-occupied with power and its material prerequisites. Given the country's conditions of under-development, power offers the opportunity of a lifetime to rise above the general poverty and squalor that pervades the entire society. It provides a rare opportunity to acquire wealth and prestige, to be able to distribute benefits in the form of jobs, contracts, scholarships and gifts of money and so on to one's relatives, and political allies. Such is the pre-occupation with power and its material benefits that political ideologies as to how society can be organised and ruled to the best advantage of all hardly enter into the calculation.¹

¹Federal Republic of Nigeria, Reports of the Constitution Drafting Committee, Vol. II (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1976), p. 35. Emphasis added.

The C.D.C. is certainly correct here in pointing out how political power has served the private interests of those who controlled or had access to it. We shall return to this in a moment. In the meantime we wish to show that the impression left by the C.D.C. that Nigeria was thus bereft of any political ideology cannot be sustained;¹ that indeed a particular ideology prevailed which was conducive to and congruent with the use of state power for private purposes of economic consolidation by the governing class for itself and for foreign capital. As we suggested in the last chapter, the ideology which prevailed was that of development. In Nigeria, this ideology has expressed itself anew in the guise of a desirable ideal of "Mixed Economy" now enshrined in the constitution.² Among the C.D.C., it was argued by a

¹Earlier, in his charge to the C.D.C. General Muhammed had also given the impression that Nigeria was operating in an ideological vacuum and that the new constitution should not establish any. According to him, "... until all our people, or a large majority of them have acknowledged a common ideological motivation it would be fruitless to proclaim any particular philosophy or ideology in our Constitution." See Nigeria, Drafting a New Constitution, (Lagos: Federal Government Press, 1975), p. 10. Although a sub-committee of the C.D.C. argued for a particular ideology (of socialism) contra General Muhammed, it still noted that "Ideology arouses a certain mysticism and suspicion amongst us"--Nigerians, generally. See Reports of the Constitution Drafting Committee, op. cit., p. 35

²See Federal Republic of Nigeria, Report of the Constitution Drafting Committee containing the Draft Constitution, Vol. 1. (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1976), p. xiii.

few persons, quite correctly in this instance, that this had always been Nigeria's ideology. This was the ideology which in their view, encouraged the salutary effects of "the role of incentives, private profit, and larger reward" for individual exertion. Besides, they concluded

It is perhaps, instructive that in the two things which mean most for the comfort of the ordinary man--agriculture to produce food, and housing to provide adequate shelter--the achievements of the socialist economies are not as good as their achievements in heavy industry and certainly inferior to the achievements of Western countries and other societies which allow also for a large measure of individual initiative in these matters...it will be best for Nigeria, for every sector of the Nigerian society, to maintain a mixed economy in which the public sector plays a large and leading role and able (sic) to determine basic prices and to mitigate the harsher effects of private competition but at the same time also allows for private initiative.¹

In its specifically Nigerian rendition, the ideology of development may be said to comprise three components, namely (a) Democratic (or Pragmatic African) socialism, (b) national unity and, (c) ethnicity. The second and last components contradict each other but there is an unmistakable link between the three. They are all, more or less, consistent

¹Ibid., p. xiv. This is simply an advocacy of capitalism, with some kind of welfarism for its suitable camouflage. Let us just note without further comment that already in some top circles in Nigeria the tendency toward any kind of welfarism was already seen (strictly speaking, quite correctly) as distraction from rapid development. See A. Adedeji, "Economic Planning in Theory and Practice", Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1962, pp. 7-12.

with the development of a Nigerian capitalist class. They have served well the capital accumulation of those among the petty bourgeois political elite (including their family and friends) who gained and maintained access to the state. Let us first examine in some detail this ideology of development in Nigeria.

Two of the political parties that achieved and maintained power in the Regions since 1951, internal contradictions within them notwithstanding, saw themselves as 'socialist' in one sense or another. The Action Group (AG) saw itself as democratic socialist. At first the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) adopted African Socialism; later this doctrine was transformed into Pragmatic African Socialism. The third political party, the Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC), simply did not bother itself with these ideological trappings. It was confident enough of its secure Regional base and source of support that unlike the AG and the NCNC it had no need to attract or maintain support by appearing to espouse any such philosophies or doctrines. Besides, to speak of any kind of socialism would have been rather contrary to its nature and temperament, anchored as it was in the traditional elite.

The contradictions within the NCNC and its professed philosophy of (African) socialism were most glaring. Consider, for example, that at its 1955 Ibadan Convention, the party had successfully expelled the radical elements within it,

accusing them of being communists and confusionists. This was only to allow it to manoeuvre closer to British views.¹ Even as this was taking place, Dr. Azikiwe was expounding the party's so-called socialist commitment in these terms:

As a party whose aim, among others, is the achievement of a Socialist Commonwealth, we have begun in earnest to tackle the fundamental problem which must confront any Government, ... Our first task, as socialists, is to control the means of production and the media of exchange. Realising the difficulties in creating a Socialist society in the midst of capitalistically inclined compatriots and expatriates, we decided that our first move is to devise a means of coexistence with the economic forces at work. We, therefore, established two giant public corporations, the Finance Corporation, and the Development Corporation--to expand our economy by stimulating and diversifying investments, in order to achieve an equilibrium in the interest of producers and consumers.²

There was no shortage of socialist rhetoric in the NCNC. This was in keeping with its attempt to retain some association with the labour movement, especially during the period when it (NCNC) was not yet in power.³ Thus in 1949, Dr. Azikiwe committed the NCNC to building a socialist Nigeria that would "enable our various nationalities and

¹For an account see Kenneth W. J. Post and George D. Jenkins, The Price of Liberty, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1973), pp. 259-263.

²Cited in *ibid.*, p. 261. Emphasis added.

³Cf. Robin Cohen, Labour and Politics in Nigeria 1945-1971, (London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1974), p. 161.

communities to own, and control the essential means of production and distribution and thereby more effectively promote political freedom, economic security, social equality, religious toleration and communal welfare."¹ Yet even as the party was proclaiming this line the contradictions were becoming more evident. For example, seven short months before the call to democratise Nigeria and socialise the major means of production and exchange Dr. Azikiwe, on behalf of the NCNC, had called for the "De-nationalization of our public utilities, like Building Construction, Colliery, Electricity, Marine, Railway, Road Construction and Telecommunications."² In 1959 the NCNC's election policy was reportedly in "opposition to nationalization of existing enterprises" even as it was still advocating a "transition to socialism."³ Back in 1957 the party had resolved to vigorously pursue a policy of fraternizing with the colonial rulers as a means of assuring itself political office.⁴

¹Nnamdi Azikiwe, Zik: A Selection from the Speeches of Nnamdi Azikiwe, (Ibadan: Cambridge University Press, 1961), p. 159.

²Ibid., p. 216.

³Anthony Enahoro, Fugitive Offender: The Story of a Political Prisoner, (London: Cassell and Company, 1965), p. 161.

⁴See K.W.J. Post, "The National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons, and the Decision of December 1959" in John P. Mackintosh, et. al., Nigerian Government and Politics (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1966), pp. 418-9.

The only plausible explanation of this apparent contradiction in the NCNC's philosophy of African socialism is that the party really wanted to build up African capitalism in lieu of or alongside expatriate capitalism. The encouragement of indigenous capitalists was the party's goal, these indigenous capitalists being its member and their supporters. What gave this goal its peculiar tinge of 'socialism' was that it was to be achieved by use of state power. Speaking in the Eastern House of Assembly in 1956, a leading member of the NCNC proclaimed anew the party's commitment to socialism, adding: "We must be judged against this background..."¹ And, as if confident of a favourable verdict and therefore anxious to commence the judgement, this same individual proceeded to enumerate the NCNC government's role in helping individuals to establish private enterprises.² Furthermore, Dr. Azikiwe's own personal situation is itself instructive. There is no doubting his acceptance of capitalism and its ethos. As we have already seen, he himself became a capitalist to show that capitalism was a viable mode of production, one that Nigerians could live with. The intricate relationship between his private fortune in the African Continental Bank (A.C.B.) and the Eastern Regional Government and ruling party

¹Eastern Nigeria, Eastern House of Assembly Debates, Vol. 1, 5-19 March, 1956, (Enugu: Government Printer, 1957) p. 331.

²Ibid., p. 333.

(NCNC) which he led caused colonial eyebrows to be raised.¹

What has been said here of the NCNC--that its 'socialism' is but an attempt to use state power to create opportunities and possibilities for the emergence from among its members and their supporters of indigenous capitalists--is equally true of the Action Group, or at least of the dominant and effective influence within it. Although the AG had a clearer populist or welfarist tendency than both the NCNC and the NPC, it was no less committed to private capitalist development than its rivals. Richard Sklar has summarized the view of the dominant elements within the AG as being as follows:

There is no contradiction between our capitalistic activities or beliefs and our directorships of public enterprises. Public wealth is the chief source of capital in Nigeria, and its prudent use will create many opportunities for private enterprise. Besides, public ownership will protect the natural resources of Nigeria from foreign ownership and control.²

Being ideologically disposed toward capitalism the Nigerian governing petty bourgeoisie proceeded, under the philosophical guise of 'socialism' to use state apparatuses for private enrichment. It had no qualms about doing so, for

¹Cf. Nigeria, Proceedings of the Tribunal Appointed to Inquire into Allegations of Improper Conduct by the Premier of Eastern Region of Nigeria in Connection with the Affairs of the African Continental Bank Limited and other Relevant Matters, (Lagos: Federal Government Printer, 1957). See also Richard Sklar, Nigerian Political Parties, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963), pp. 165-185.

²Sklar, Nigerian Political Parties, p. 262.

two reasons. In the first place it perceived the strengthening of its economic base as part of its nationalism; that is, as an integral part of the fight against foreign dominance and rule. This is why Azikiwe had very strong support when his and the Eastern Region's government connections with the A.C.B. were being probed by the colonial office.

Speaking in the Eastern House of Assembly before the probe, several members of the NCNC charged that the Colonial Office, in probing Dr. Azikiwe and the African Continental Bank, was actually aiming at destroying indigenous enterprise and thereby preserving the banking monopoly of the British Bank for West Africa (B.B.W.A.). As one speaker declared: "We talk of the crisis in the Eastern Region which is designed to kill any other business and uphold the interest of the B.B.W.A.'s monopoly in this country. Some say it is a personal matter [a direct reference to the regional political opposition (AG)] . Mr. Speaker, it is not a personal matter."¹ Not to be out-done, Azikiwe tendered letters to the Assembly which seemed to indicate that indeed the B.B.W.A. would go to any lengths to retain its monopoly position. He argued that it was for this very reason that he was being hounded-- "...the Colonial Office is after my blood on the pretext of public morality."² Concluding what was an eloquent speech Azikiwe feigned to

¹Eastern Region of Nigeria, Eastern House of Assembly Debates, Third Session, 2-22 June and 2-8 August 1956, (Enugu: Government Printer, 1957), p. 202.

²Ibid., p. 213.

offer himself as a martyr. "I know the price I will have to pay for daring to challenge the millionaires of Great Britain, but I am not afraid. I founded the African Continental Bank not only because I resented the personal insult of the B.B.W.A., but because I have always been opposed to monopolies...I shall not take a backward step..."¹ It is in this context that we can understand why "Action Group businessmen in the Western Region were not wholly unsympathetic to Dr. Azikiwe during his ordeal of investigation..."² They, like the NCNC and Dr. Azikiwe, saw the establishment of their economic base by use of state apparatuses as consonant with genuine and practical nationalism. Perhaps sympathy from the Western AG would have been stronger for Azikiwe if the AG in the East had not opened the can of worms in the first place, for it was the latter who pushed for the inquiry.

Aside from seeing their use of state power to create conditions for their private enrichment as effective and tangible nationalism, the petty bourgeoisie also equated this process with development. This is easily understandable. Both in theory and in practice development translated to capitalism. The capitalist West was the model of development. Capitalism needs capitalists. If state power was to be used to foster development, that is to say, enhance capitalism in

¹Ibid., p. 216

²Sklar, Nigerian Political Parties, p. 263.

the periphery, such state power was then to be used to create the capitalist class. Therefore, the use of state power for private capital accumulation was logical and congruent with the goal of development. Hence this process appeared to the governing class as normal and necessary.

Given this role that state power plays in development it was imperative that to engage in this capitalist accumulation process, access to and/or control of state apparatuses was to be acquired; such access or control was a sine qua non for enrichment. Competition for office is consequently fierce and "tends to be a fight until death, notably because of the increasing premium being placed on the control of state power."¹ This situation develops because those who were able to win power tend to monopolise the use of state power and patronage in strengthening their economic position and those of their supporters and clients. Those politicians out of power, as well as their followers eclipsed, not least because coercion by the state can become a means of accumulation by those who can deploy such power.² Professor Ake has observed that the situation has allowed for "the direct use of coercive power

¹Claude Ake, "Explanatory Notes on the Political Economy of Africa", The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 14, No. 1, 1976, p. 11.

²Perhaps the most glaring recent example of this in Nigeria would be the case of "abandoned properties" by Igbos in Port Harcourt as a result of the civil war. The Rivers State government virtually confiscated much of the property and its Governor (1967-1975), Diogo Spiff allegedly took over as personal property for himself and his relatives, many of

for expropriation. Something akin to what Marx describes as primitive accumulation [was and] is taking place all over Africa: the direct use of coercion to appropriate economic surplus or the means of production."¹ This, in our opinion, applies to Nigeria. Thus those who achieved power did not want to lose it; opposition parties had little hope of achieving power constitutionally. Excluded from power by the government of the day by all effective means, the opposition groups sought to achieve power in Nigeria by all means, for it was only by success in achieving and retaining power that their members would hope to accumulate. The usual means of private capitalist accumulation has been virtually ineffective for the governing class to bolster its economic base (especially just prior to and immediately after 1960) without recourse to state power in Nigeria. The availability of only small capital and the dominance in the economy of foreign interests militate against it. Hence instability and violence must attend the struggle for control of and/or access to the state that occurs within the petty bourgeoisie.²

the abandoned houses. The Gowon Regime appeared incapable or unwilling of arbitrating the issue. It was not until Murtala Muhammed came to power that the issue was effectively dealt with.

¹Revolutionary Pressures in Africa, p. 71.

²See E. Wayne Nafziger, "The Political Economy of Disintegration in Nigeria", The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 11, No. 4, 1973, p. 518; Terisa Turner, "Multinational Corporations and the Instability of the Nigerian State", Review of African Political Economy, No. 5, 1976, pp. 63-79.

It is in the competition for control of and/or access to the state that a second component of the ideology of development comes in... This component is ethnicity. Conflict between ethnic groups can be manifestations of class struggles and competitions. In the Nigerian situation this appears to have been the case; explanations of ethnic conflict there would be incomplete without references to the class situation. As Amilcar Cabral pointed out, it is usually the detribalized and well-off persons--such as comprise the governing class--that resort to appealing to ethnicity.¹ There exists a certain dialectic between ethnicity and class that has to be appreciated in the search to understand politics in many post-colonial societies; the danger for the analyst is to ignore this dialectic and to deny either the phenomenon of ethnicity or that of class formation and struggle.²

The division of Nigeria into three regions, given the coincidence of ethnic and geographical factors, meant that each region contained within it one majority ethnic and several minority ethnic groups. We have already seen how, given the pre-capitalist structures and formations, and the differential impacts of colonial policies, there also emerged various, regionally based strata of the petty bourgeois class. We have also seen that it was this class that has gained the upper hand in politics, the peasantry and the proletariat

¹Amilcar Cabral, *Revolution in Guinea*, (London: Stage 1, 1974), pp. 84-85.

²See John Saul, "The Dialectics of Class and Tribe", *Studies in Political Economy: A Socialist Review*, No. 1, 1979,

being, as a result of their contemporary class character, rather still susceptible to communalism and patron-client relationships. What all this amounts to is a ready-made equation in which struggles and competitions between the various strata and fractions of the petty bourgeoisie come to involve the subordinated classes through ethnic identifications. As to why this should be the case, four plausible reasons have been put forward:

First, ethnic consciousness was already well developed before the nationalist era. Ethnic loyalty was something that made sense to a lot of people, and its utility was already demonstrated in the urban areas where ethnic associations catered to the needs of new immigrants from the countryside. Secondly, the appeal to ethnicity was very likely to be successful in a society with little industrialization and a rudimentary development of secondary associations. Thirdly, the regions and political constituencies tended to be homogeneous in ethnicity. Thus to win an election you had to win an ethnic group, and if this happened to be large, a political base was guaranteed. Fourthly, the appeal to ethnicity had the marvellous advantage to concealing the contradictions between the interests of the bourgeoisie and those of the peasantry and proletariat.¹

Even a cursory look at Nigerian politics confirms a fairly persistent pattern of ethnicity. This pattern is directly related to the struggle within the petty bourgeois class for control of state apparatuses. At the national

pp. 1-42.

¹Claude Ake, "Explanatory Notes", op cit., p. 8. A further useful reference here is Okwudibia Nnoli, "Socio-Economic Insecurity and Ethnic Politics in Africa," The African Review, Vol. 14, No. 1, 1974, pp. 1-23.

level the struggle would appear to be principally between the traditional elite within this class and the educated elite, that is to say, between the NPC on the one hand and the AG and NCNC on the other.

The NCNC-NPC coalition at the centre from 1959 onwards may appear to contradict our contention here. But it must be recalled that the NCNC and the AG had first attempted to form a coalition. The NCNC-NPC coalition was a political marriage of convenience par excellence. It lacked serious conviction. If at all it showed anything, it was that no fundamental ideological differences existed between any of fractions and strata of the petty bourgeoisie and that for them the primary objective was to gain and maintain access and/or control of state apparatuses. The only important question that divided the NCNC and the NPC was which one of them was to be the dominant one, that is, which one could alone control the centre. The divide between the traditional elite and the educated elite became much clearer in the 1964 general elections when Akintola's Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP, a conservative off-shoot of the AG) joined the NPC to form the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA) while the AG and the NCNC formed the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA). The NNA was the party of the traditional and conservative. The UPGA was the party of the liberal. Neither was opposed to capitalism; nor to the use of state power for the economic benefit mainly only of those who controlled or had access to it.

At the regional level, the contest for power was between elements of the governing class who belonged to the majority ethnic groups and those who belonged to the minority ethnic groups. The former, having used their majority group advantage to gain power refused to let go. The latter, unable to gain power and share the plums of office, were being frustrated. Both sides, the one in the fight to retain office and the other in the fight to gain it, resorted to the use of ethnicity to win political support. The group in power portrayed any attempt to replace it in office as an attack on the ethnic group to which it belonged. This was the path of least resistance, especially since no fundamental ideological differences existed between the contenders for power. "Against parties with similar programs and similar ideologies, the only 'real' difference was ethnic difference and the exploiting of deeply ingrained prejudices. Thus it was the exigencies of power, not the inability of tribes to work together, that let the AG, and by the same token, its rivals, to invoke tribal differences."¹ In our opinion this statement accurately describes the situation.

Because each contender for power, whether at national or regional level, was desperate to retain or gain office, for without office its chances for capital accumulation would be gravely jeopardized, violence and thuggery

¹Moyibi Amoda, "Background to the Conflict: A Summary of Nigeria's Political History from 1914-1964" in Joseph Okpaku, ed., Nigeria: Dilemma of Nationhood, (New York: The Third Press, 1972), p. 27.

became synonymous with politics. People killed and were killed in the fight to gain or retain office. Here, as under colonial rule, "Those in power used their power with little or no restraint to maintain their privileges, and to repress those out of power who wanted to replace them. Those who were not in power sought power with the same indifference to the 'rules of the game'."¹ Nigerian politics in the First Republic could be quite adequately described as approaching a Hobbesian so-called state of nature. Not only was there a known disposition to fight among the politicians and parties, there were prolonged periods of fighting in the Middle Belt area of the Northern Region and in the Western Region--even inside that Region's House of Assembly in 1962.² For the politicians, especially during periods of regional or national elections, life was indeed "solitary, poore, nasty, brutish and short."³ The logical conclusion to this state of affairs came with the coup d'etat.

¹Claude Ake, "Explaining Political Instability in New States", The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 11, No. 3, 1973, p. 358.

²For accounts, see Mackintosh, op. cit., pp. 441-443 and pp. 486-500.

³Thomas Hobbes, Laviathan, ed. by C. B. Macpherson, (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1968), p. 186. Even in the Eastern Region which was relatively calm, the Electoral Commission once commented that the level of violence there "suggests situations more readily associated with Fascist Germany and Italy and with Chicago and the Southern States of the U.S.A. that (sic) with Eastern Nigeria..." See Eastern Nigeria Electoral Commission, Eastern Nigeria General Election Report. Official Document No. 15 of 1962, (Enugu: The Government Printer, 1962), p. 32.

of January 1966. In a situation of competition between different political elements in the governing class where naked force was the defining and predominant element, the masters of such force were bound to step in. The 1966 coup seemed inevitable. A few short months after the coup, the momentum set in motion by the 'politics of force' by the petty bourgeoisie unleashed more tragic and cruel forces: the tragic (1967-1970) civil war began.

Ethnicity assumed the potency it did among the working class and peasantry because it was also often the basis of patron-client relationships which linked them with the petty bourgeoisie. The ability (or lack of same) of the petty bourgeois patrons to deliver the goods quite clearly depended on their access to state power. The ruling parties made it possible for their members to retain their clients by judicious allocation of public services to their constituencies. Constituencies represented by opposition members invariably suffered deprivation, while those who supported the ruling party candidates were better off.¹ Such use of the state's welfare allocation functions for purely partisan purposes translated into the concentration of social

¹See Anthony Enahoro, Fugitive Offender, pp. 104-105. and K. W. J. Post, The Nigerian Federal Election of 1959, (Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 393. It has been correctly observed for the Eastern Region that: "People commonly believed, and often with justification, that the regional government would refuse to allocate development funds to areas that voted for opposition parties. Constituents also expected rewards in the form of more amenities for their faithfulness in continuing to return party candidates to the regional and federal legislatures." This observation would be applicable with equal force to all

amenities in constituencies of government party supporters. These were often in majority ethnic areas, or so it appeared to be. In any case, such a situation lent much credence to the charge of ethnic discrimination by minority group elements in the petty bourgeois class. Conversely, the majority ethnic group elements, aware that unless they support the government they may suffer the fate of the deprived areas, continue their support. In this milieu, ethnic perceptions of power hardens and ethnic hatred grows.

How does one assess the fact that although the politicians sought to ride to office on the crest of ethnic support and sentiment they nevertheless often call in their speeches for national unity and for the eschewal of ethnic hatred? Such calls could be dismissed as hypocritical, which is quite possible. However, this would not be totally satisfactory. We are rather inclined to the view that the search for national unity was a genuine part of the petty bourgeoisie's ideology of development. This may appear contradictory in the face of the reality of the feudalization of the state. However, it seems logical to us because national unity would ensure for the class as a whole a stronger economy and a wider arena from which accumulation would be possible. It was not entirely as an after-thought (although there was a large element of it) that the Federal Government

regions. See David R. Smock and Audrey C. Smock, Cultural and Political Aspects of Rural Transformation: A Case Study of Eastern Nigeria, (New York: Praeger Publishers, Inc., 1972), p. 33.

fought the civil war on the slogan of keeping Nigeria one. And it must be recalled that the Biafrans were often at pains to show that it was they who had been the strongest advocates of a united country, that secession was an act of the last resort. Perhaps it was very instructive that in July 1966 when the fate of the country as a unit was most uncertain as a section of the army was contemplating splitting it up into several sovereign units, British and American diplomats were on hand "to give their advice."¹

There is no doubt a contradiction between arousing ethnic sentiment on the one hand and advocating national unity on the other. In fact not only did the politicization of ethnicity threaten national unity, it also threatened even regionalism, the very power centres of the governing class. The fact is that ethnicity was, in the search for power, a handy and convenient prop, ready made, as it were, by the contemporary level of the articulation of modes of production. We therefore should take seriously the call by these politicians to eschew ethnic hatred; but we should also suspect that the dominant foreign capital may not have been quite disinterested. (Unfortunately we are unable here to show how or to what extent this could have been the case). It was rather a contradiction of the petty bourgeoisie's political situation that no sooner they expressed themselves in favour of national unity than they were tossed back to

¹ John de St. Jorre, The Nigerian Civil War, (Toronto: Hodder and Stoughton, 1972), p. 71.

eat their own words. The incessant and increasing calls for the creation of new states was for some among them an attempt to resolve this contradiction, for it was seen as a panacea for ethnic domination and discrimination, real or imagined, and therefore as the magic recipe for national unity. We shall further analyse this development in the next chapter.

THE ROLE OF CORRUPTION

The foregoing section attempted to show that for the Nigerian governing class development was synonymous with personal enrichment, and that the use of state power for this process was theoretically and practically accepted by them. It was also shown that to achieve or retain state power, ethnic appeals were often made. In this section we shall attempt to show how state power, once achieved, was used for the personal economic enrichment of those who achieved it, and for that of their supporters. We do so by analysing the role of corruption and political manipulation--the two may be used interchangeably--as a means of private enrichment and capital accumulation.

By corruption and political manipulation we mean here the process of obtaining material enrichment or opportunities for same, for oneself and/or for others, through use of public office (or influence) in ways other than those publicly acknowledged through the rules and procedures of

that office.¹ If an import licensing officer issues a licence to X either because X gave the officer some gift or because Y who is an important political figure and X's patron has pressed the officer to issue the licence regardless of any regulations contraventions, corruption has taken place. Both the officer, if he issued the licence upon receipt or promise of receipt of some gain other than his/her usual salary, and X and Y have engaged in corruption. We include under corruption favouritism, bribery, nepotism and kick-backs.

In the literature, the problem of corruption is often seen as a moral problem, as a problem which is easily traced to 'traditional' mores and customs and therefore more rampant in 'developing' societies, as a problem made more acute by large income disparities which exist in these societies, as a problem created by weak identification with the nation-state by the populace, and finally as an obstacle to development because it directs resources away from public to private use.² While there is no denying that corruption is highly

¹This definition has similarities with that offered by J. S. Nye, "Corruption and Political Development: A Cost-Benefit Analysis", American Political Science Review, Vol. 61, No. 2, 1967, p. 419.

²Works being referred to here include Colin Leys, "What is the Problem about Corruption?" The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1965, pp. 215-230; A. J. Heidenheimer, ed., Political Corruption: Readings in Comparative Analysis, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1970); Gunnar Myrdal, Asian Drama, Vol. II, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1968), chapter 20; Ralph Braibanti, "Reflections on Bureaucratic Corruption", Public Administration,

visible in post-colonial societies we find rather inadequate the attempts made to explain it by linking it with traditional custom. Furthermore, we do not think corruption is a moral problem and we do not think that it is necessarily a hindrance.

Let us state then that we consider corruption as a veritable, if often illegal, means of accumulation. This is not to say in any sense that we therefore approve of it. It creates, for those who engage in it, an economic opportunity. Corruption is not necessarily antithetical to development in the conventional sense (increases in GNP or income per capita and references to statistical growth indices as criteria for growth) of that word. Corruption necessarily exists in every capitalist economy,¹ since, in such an economic system the drive and competition for private profit and capital accumulation are the motor. In such an economic system the profit maximising bourgeois leaves no avenue unexplored and no stone unturned in the search for

Vol. XI, 1962, pp. 357-372; Stanislaw Andreski, The African Predicament: A Study in the Pathology of Modernization, (London: Micheal Joseph Ltd., 1968); Victor Levine, Political Corruption: The Ghana Case, (California: Hoover Institute Press, 1975) and B. Labanji, Anatomy of Corruption in Nigeria, (Ibadan: Daystar Press, 1970). For a different opinion see Nyé, op. cit.

¹See Anne O. Krueger, "The Political Economy of the Rent-Seeking Society", American Economic Review, Vol. LXIV, No. 3, 1974, pp. 291-303. Although her thesis is that economic restrictions lead to competitions for rent which often takes the form of corruption, we find of interest her conclusion that "...all market economies have some rent-

profit. Since money and capital hardly acknowledge any rules or ethics except those that encourage their growth and multiplication, morality goes out the door when the profit motive enters. Therefore, we consider corruption not to be an issue of ethics or morality; it should be seen, instead, as one of the technical terms for capitalist accumulation. In this sense we consider corruption as very much a part of what may be called here the 'economic culture'--with due apologies to the proponents of 'political culture'--of the capitalist system. That is to say, corruption is part of the values, attitudes, skills and orientation that are at play for the maintenance of the system. This may be precisely why, when the capitalist economy is in a state of crisis, there is a tendency for corruption to increase. The 'Watergate' scandal may be a case in point.

The foregoing suggests that corruption may exist in both underdeveloped and technologically advanced social formations. It also points to why it should be more rampant or visible in dependent capitalist societies whose economies are more or less in permanent states of crisis as a result of their links with the international economy. To understand and explain this situation is to look at the

generating restrictions." (p. 302, emphasis added). On this basis we feel quite safe in generalizing to say that corruption is then necessarily part of the capitalist economy because it is a system that has its theoretical and ideological basis in the concept of scarcity.

problems of accumulation in these societies.¹ We may now further comment here with special reference to Nigeria. As already pointed out, the Nigerian economy is dominated by foreign capital. This places a severe limit on the normal process of private accumulation for indigenous capitalists--a process exacerbated by the low level of the development of productive forces. What is accumulated through the normal means is that much more inadequate especially given the (largely false) bourgeoisification--that is, conspicuous consumption and ostentatious living and lifestyle that is generally beyond the means of socially available surplus--which has been so evident in Nigeria. Thus members of the governing class, in the search for more money for consumption and capital for investment, turn to illegal means for further accumulation and enrichment. Corruption takes place principally through the state apparatuses because it is through the state that most of the surplus appropriation and redistribution takes place in the society. Moreover, it is also because the state is the centre of focus of economic activities as it attempts to articulate the national with the international economy.² Opportunities for corruption abound within the state apparatuses.

¹See, for example, Tetteh Kofi's "The Roots of Corruption" in West Africa, March 29, 1976, pp. 424-425.

²Terisa Turner, op. cit.

These opportunities for corruption within the state apparatus are easily realised, especially for the bureaucrats and the other elements within the petty bourgeoisie who control state power because of their virtual private appropriation of the state. It is this virtual private appropriation of the state by those elements of the petty bourgeoisie in power that we referred to in chapter IV as the feudalization of the state. With very little democratic influence from other social and political groups in the society, those who control and/or have access to the state could get away with almost anything; it is no exaggeration to say that they made and interpreted laws to suit their whims. The pressure for politicians to engage in corruption came not only from the immediate need for them to consolidate their own personal economic bases but--and this is, of course, related to it--also from the fact that in order for them to keep doing so they must retain their position as patrons either for other members of their class, or for their constituencies generally. So they must deliver the goods now and then. These 'goods' may take the form of favouritism, nepotism, direct appropriation of funds and also kick-backs. Thus it is to be observed that it is among the governing class generally that corruption is most rampant.

It was Richard Sklar who remarked that for senior bureaucrats, politicians, the traditional elite and businessmen in Nigeria, the regional party to which they belonged had

indeed become "a veritable engine of class formation."

Sklar's remark was with reference to the use by these groups of their control of and/or access to state apparatuses for private capital accumulation.¹ Later investigations of the role of corruption or political manipulation bear him out. We now consider some of them more closely.

Perhaps the most revealing studies of private capital accumulation by corruption or political manipulation in Nigeria are those by Sayre Schatz.² He points out that in all cases the regional loans boards were politically appointed and consequently they all "acted in a highly partisan manner."³ This usually meant that loan applicants who were known sympathizers or members of opposition parties in the regions stood little chance of being loaned money. In his view, it was only the Federal Loans Board which was virtually free of political manipulation⁴--and this was mainly because all

¹Richard Sklar, "Contradictions in the Nigerian Political System", The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1965, p. 204.

²Schatz, Nigerian Capitalism, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), and Economics, Politics and Administration in Government Lending: The Regional Loans Boards of Nigeria, (Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1970). We will also consider below evidence from various commissions of inquiry instituted after 1966.

³Nigerian Capitalism, p. 226.

⁴Ibid., pp. 235-236. One could assume that the foreign personnel were disinterested. However it would appear that political partisanship applied in federal statutory corporations. In the Nigeria Airways, employment was often "a question of knowing a top executive in the NCNC or NPC party and getting the post." Federal Republic

three regionally ruling parties and foreign personnel were represented on it. On the other hand, however, "the regional boards were political instruments. They were used to sustain the party in power. Original intentions of promoting economic development were soon relegated to the background."¹

It is not really that economic development as such was no longer important, just that the agents of such development were usually seen as mainly those who comprised the governing party, or their family and friends.

Loans made to party supporters in the regions often ignored the stipulated criteria for making them. The loan recipients also often used the loans for purposes other than for what they were applied for. These practices were most rampant at periods when money for loans was low or had dried up. This clearly suggests that a very high degree of political manipulation was involved.

Thus, a loan of £30,000 was made to the Waziri of Bornu in September 1964. It was ostensibly for mechanised farming and related activities, but it was issued 'without detailed estimates or appraisal' in the same month in which the application was submitted. A £55,000 loan was issued to a well-known Northern businessman, Alhaji Mahmud Dantata, in the same month in which the application was received, and was not applied to the purposes for which it was granted.²

of Nigeria, Report of the Tribunal of Inquiry into the affairs of W.A.A.C. (Nig.) Limited Otherwise Known as Nigeria Airways for the Period 1 March, 1961 to 31 December, 1965, (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1968), p. 217.

¹Schatz, Nigerian Capitalism, p. 230.

²Schatz, Economic, Politics and Administration in

Schatz also notes that of the eight loans issued by the Northern Nigerian Development Corporation (NNDC) during the lean period, six of them "were issued before they were ratified" by the Loans Committee, with pressure from the Economic Planning minister.¹ In the Western Region, the situation was the same. For example, the Western Nigeria Finance Corporation's (WNFC) largest loan was made to the Nigerian Fishing Company during a lean period.² The company was owned by founding and leading members of the AG. Among them was Dr. A. Maja, also one of the three founders of the National Bank, a bank related to the AG and the government of the West in the same hand-in-glove way that the African Continental Bank was related to the NCNC and the government of Eastern Nigeria until that relationship was probed by the Colonial Office. (The NPC had its Bank of the North). The loan to the Nigerian Fishing Company was influenced from the highest political office in the region. "All information available to the WNFC appears to have been passed on to the Premier. The decision to go ahead with the loan despite the shortage of funds was made in the Premier's office."³

Government Lending, op. cit., p. 53.

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., p. 57.

³Ibid., p. 59.

In the Eastern Region the situation was no different. The largest loan ever made by the Eastern Nigeria Development Corporation (ENDC) was that of N2 million made to the African Real Estate and Investment Company. This company was based in Lagos; its Chairman "was also the Chairman of the ENDC."¹ The loan was made through political manipulation and at "a time when funds were simply unavailable for other borrowers."² In his own study of ENDC lending, Helleiner saw little in them that one could reasonably expect from a lending institution the function of which is to stimulate the development of the regional economy.³

Having made these kinds of loans, one would have expected that the regional governments would attempt to see that repayments were duly made. Apparently this was hardly the case.⁴ Again, political considerations weighed in decisions and actions brought to bear against the delinquents. In many cases the loans were not repaid. Those who took them had simply not invested the money but had apparently

¹Ibid., p. 60. On this and other loans, see also G. K. Helleiner, "The Eastern Nigeria Development Corporation; Sources and Uses of Public Development Funds 1949-1962", Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies, Vol. 6, No. 1, 1964, pp. 98-123.

²Schatz, Economics, Politics and Administration, p. 60.

³Helleiner, "The Eastern Nigeria Development Corporation", op. cit., p. 117.

⁴Schatz, Economics, Politics and Administration, pp. 102-110.

used it up in conspicuous consumption; therefore they were without any means of paying back.¹ According to Schatz, by 1964 "almost three-fourths (73.7%) of past and current payments due to the WNFC remained unpaid, more than half (53%) were unpaid in the North, and seven-eighths in the Eastern Region."²

It should be noted that the funds for these loans came principally from the profits realised by the Marketing (now Commodity) Boards. This means, then, that it was really the peasant economy which supported the loan activities, that it was the surplus produced by the peasantry which was being used to sponsor the capital accumulation of the petty bourgeoisie through corruption or political manipulation. Therefore the conclusion appears to us inevitable that corruption at least in this instance is a form of exploitation. The difference between it and other forms of capitalist exploitation is that it is mediated by the state. The surplus which went into the coffers of the Regional Development or Finance corporations was realised from the difference between what

¹According to the ENDC itself, many borrowers had simply "diverted the loans to purchasing of long saloon cars and building of mighty mansions purely for personal aggrandizement--with the inevitable concomitant that they were unable to pay." The ENDC in the First Decade: 1955-1964, (Enugu: ENDC, n.d.), p. 27. It did report however, that the L1 m. to the African Real Estate Company was "fully repaid...by giving the ENDC shares in the Company." p. 13.

²Economics, Politics and Administration, p. 101.

the farmers were paid for their produce and the sale price of the produce in the international market. As was pointed out in chapter III very little, about 10 per cent, of such surplus, was spent where the peasants could derive much benefit from it. The possible result of this process of capital accumulation was to lay the foundation for the evolution of a national bourgeoisie, elements of which have become observable in the political process leading up to the Second Republic.

Corruption or political manipulation was by no means limited to the activities of the loans boards. It was also rife in those other channels and institutions in which state intervention in society took place. Construction and public works rank very high because they were avenue for the bulk of government expenditures in building infrastructure and development projects. As Schatz notes, "governmental capital expenditures were almost synonymous with construction."¹

In construction, government policy usually favoured indigenous firms.² However, even here the policy was not applied even-

¹ Schatz, Nigerian Capitalism, p. 170.

² This was in an attempt to help them build up as many of them were small and weak. "The link between smallness and indigenoussness was strong." Ibid., p. 182. Interestingly, some Nigerian contractors do not think the government is interested in helping them. In an interview with one of them (Port Harcourt, 24 October, 1978) I was told that foreign contractors continued to dominate not only in the Rivers state but all over the federation because federal

handedly and procedures for tenders were often ignored by politicians and officials who wanted favours for their supporters or themselves. "The major purposes of the manipulation of contracting procedures were support of party operations and enhancement of personal income and wealth."¹ In many cases it was the politicians or some relation of theirs who owned the firm which received the contract. In the Western Region for example, Sklar had "calculated that in the period 1951-1957 building contracts exceeding the value of £2,500 each had been awarded to ... to 12 African contracting firms, all of which were owned and managed by members or supporters of the ruling Action Group."²

Since after the civil war and especially with the oil boom opportunities for state contract jobs escalated.

and state governments tend to patronize the foreign ones more. He also pointed out that many of them the indigenous contractors were still quite incompetent and lacked initial capital. Nor were the banks ready to help them out, "especially where the Bank Manager is a Nigerian. The Nigerian bank managers seem to think they are doing themselves a disservice to help you. That is, if your business becomes lucrative you get more money than they. I had a case where a Nigerian bank official was very reluctant to help me but when I saw his superior who was an expatriate, he was glad to assist me. My fellow Nigerian was not!"

¹Ibid., p. 190. In his Nigerian Political Parties, op. cit., pp. 416-417, Sklar notes that some of the money thus gained by politicians cum contractors sometimes become the source of party funds.

²Ibid., p. 452.

The spectacular construction boom characterized by, among other things, the Universal Primary Education (UPE) scheme, the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC) and the building of barracks for soldiers, has spawned an equally spectacular number of nouveaux riches. Many of them are contractors who have the rare and distinguishing ability to supply the same material for two different contracts, or to supply that same material twice for the one contract, or both. At federal and state levels, the construction industry has been a dominant source for making quick money. Post-war reconstruction and new states' capitals construction have been sources of fortune for many established and hastily organised contractors. Invariably, it is those who have connections with top officials who got the most lucrative contracts. A full study of the role of the post-war construction industry in the changing class structures is yet to be done. It is quite conceivable that it was here that the foundation of a genuine national bourgeoisie was being further strengthened.

Virtually all high offices in the land have been turned into avenues and means for personal enrichment. Chairmen of public corporations and state agencies use their 'good offices' to acquire wealth and economic property. As in the First Republic, so during the military interregnum, and at all levels of government. Thus it was revealed that property belonging to the Lagos Executive Development

Board (LEDB) was often used by the senior employees for private purposes: LEDB equipment went into building their private homes and for those of their relatives.¹ The Board's contracting awards were often subject to political manipulation and members of the Board gave themselves priority in matters of land allocation. "The policy of 'one man one plot', was interpreted to suit the whims of those responsible for allocation...there were many instances when these few got plots all over the place and under different schemes."² Many of the Army and Police Officers and their civilian counterparts who assumed decision-making positions after 1966 at federal and state levels also used this 'opportunity of a lifetime' to enrich themselves, as the probes instituted after 1975 clearly show. Between them, former state Military Governors and the Administrator of the East Central State, and federal Commissioners, had appropriated illegally property worth over N10 million (over \$30 million).³

¹Federal Republic of Nigeria, Report of the Tribunal of Inquiry Into the Affairs of the Lagos Executive Development Board for the Period 1 October, 1960 to 31 December, 1965, (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1968); pp. 66-70.

²Ibid., pp. 191-192. Personal wealth accumulation was also found in the probe into the Lagos City Council. See Federal Republic of Nigeria, Comments of the Federal Military Government on the Report of the Tribunal of Inquiry into the Affairs of the Lagos City Council for the Period October 15, 1962 to April 18, 1966, (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1966), pp. 1-16.

³For details, see New Nigerian February 9, 1976 and Nigerian Herald February 9, 1976 in which are reprinted the Federal Governments White Paper dealing with these matters.

At the state level we find that in the former East Central State one of the Commissioners for Lands allocated "5 plots to her husband, 3 to her father and 32 to her relations/ kinsmen."¹ Apparently feeling protected by the barrel of their guns, the Military Administrators and their Commissioners lived as though they had natural rights to their offices, doing practically as they wished and imposing a certain inertia and aimlessness on the country. They imposed a certain rigid order on the society, which order was to allow their private accumulation of capital by shielding themselves from public criticism and challenge. What we have described as the feudalization of the state was evident once more. As in 1966, the situation was propitious for forcible intervention by other elements of the governing class. In his maiden speech as Head of State in 1975 Brigadier (later, General) Muhammed reflected well the general mood in the country: "Nigeria is being left to drift." The chaos had to be arrested.² Hence the coup d'etat.

¹East Central State, Government White Paper on the Report of the Administrative Board of Inquiry into the Plot Allocation, (Enugu: The Government Printer, 1976), p. 5. For further evidence from the East Central State see Report of the Administrative Board of Inquiry into the Activities of the Nigeria Construction and Furniture Company Limited from 1970 to 30 November, 1975, (Enugu: Government Printer, 1976) and Anambra/Imo States, Government White Paper on the Report of the Administrative Board of Inquiry into the Ministry of Economic Development and Reconstruction 1970-75, (Enugu: Government Printer, 1976), to mention only a couple.

²This speech is printed in The Renaissance, 1 August, 1975, p. 2.

THE CONDITION FOR THE ACCUMULATION PROCESS

Thus far in this chapter it has been argued that the state was central to the bid for accumulation by the petty bourgeoisie, and that it equated its private accumulation of capital with development, thus clearing the way for it to bend the will and resources of the state to its private class interests. In this process those who had gained political power sought to maintain it by any and all effective means. And just as strongly too those out of power sought to gain power. Violence and instability were necessary and inevitable ingredients of the process. They appeared to be, we would suggest, under the existing circumstances, necessary conditions for the accumulation process. It is this situation that gives such capital accumulation the character of primitive accumulation, as already noted.

Given the central role of the state, a necessary and indeed even sufficient condition becomes the monopoly of state power. Survival in office against strong pressures from other fractions of the petty bourgeoisie and the demands by the working class and peasantry dictates that all competition and demands must be minimised. To do this the groups in power embark on a continuous depoliticization process. This process is defined as entailing

reducing the effective participation of the masses and of non-hegemonic factions of the ruling class, and preventing some interests and points of view from finding political expression. The point of reducing the effective participation of the masses is to render them impotent...and to render the masses less available for socialization into

radical political or oppositional behaviour by non-hegemonic factions of the ruling class.¹

Depoliticization is but another side of the coin in the process of primitive accumulation.

In the rest of this chapter we look at some examples of depoliticization in Nigeria in an attempt to relate it, along with the pattern of accumulation, to the pattern of demand for new states or changing state structures.

Depoliticization may be said to have occurred through four ways: through (i) religion and/or ethnicity, (ii) direct violence; (iii) use of police and military powers and (iv) use of economic power. We shall briefly examine how each of these applied.

From the earliest beginnings of Nigerian politics competition for dominance among the emergent petty bourgeoisie has often led them to invoke ethnic support. The first and most lasting blow to unified political leadership in the country came in 1941, over leadership of the Nigerian Youth Movement as already pointed out. From then on Azikiwe's increasing economic and political activities made him appear as a threat to the older established Yorubas. The emerging Yoruba intelligentsia and businessmen, because of their earlier and longer contact with formal western education could not tolerate the possibility of being eclipsed in the leadership race. It was most likely to this that Awolowo obliquely referred in his Path of Nigerian Freedom when he

¹Ake, Revolutionary Pressures, op. cit., p. 78.

remarked that Yorubas "mark[ed] time on their higher level while other sections [i.e. ethnic groups] hasten[ed] to catch up with them. Because of this it is wrongly believed that the Yorubas are deteriorating."¹ Azikiwe, not to be outdone, used his West African Pilot frequently to proclaim that an invincible Igbo force had arrived on the scene.² The die was cast for leadership competition in the Southern regions.

It was virtually in response to and as a preparation for competition among themselves that these emergent petty bourgeois fractions and strata organised their ethnic groups into 'cultural' unions--Igbo State Union, Egbe Omo Oduduwa, Ibibio State Union and the Jam'iyyar Mutanen Arewa A Yau. Although these unions frequently served the social and cultural needs of their members, Ezera has correctly observed that "they tended in practice to propagate separatist and particularistic political outlooks."³ The Igbo State Union

¹Obafemi Awolowo, Path to Nigerian Freedom (London: Faber and Faber, 1947), p. 49. It should be noted that this was generally in a period when the number of Igbos migrating to Lagos and other parts of Nigeria was on the increase. Of course they would be seen as competitors for jobs.

²In the West African Pilot of 3 March 1942 Zik (as he is often and popularly called) proclaimed that Igbos were rising from the position of under-dogs to national and even continental leadership. On 7 February 1946, the West African Pilot's editorial claimed that "The Ibo Lars Parsena has taken up the gauntlet and is at last on the march for Rome."

³Kalu Ezera, Constitutional Development in Nigeria, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1964), p. 96; emphasis added.

grew to become virtually synonymous with the NCNC and at one time Dr. Azikiwe was the leader of both.¹ The significance of the Egbe Omo Oduduwa was that it was a means by which Chief Awolowo sought to bring under one umbrella both the educated and traditional elite of the petty bourgeoisie in the Western region, the better to meet what he and others perceived as Igbo challenge. The Egbe became launching pad for the AG. In turn, the Jam'iyyar was an organisational mechanism of the traditional elite in the North not only in order to keep under their wing the educated elite in that region but also to fight off the educated elites from the southern regions. It later became the NPC.

Once the NCNC, AG and NPC first won power in the Eastern, Western and Northern Regions, they never allowed themselves to be seriously challenged until the end of the First Republic. The only development worthy of further comment was that each regionally based party tried to weaken its opponent's base by supporting any minority ethnic sentiment in the opponent's region, sometimes even by appearing radical. However, the effect of this did not even weaken the government, let alone replace it. Each Region became a

¹There is some evidence to suggest that close association between the NCNC and the Igbo State Union was more apparent than real. See Sklar, Nigerian Political Parties, op. cit., p. 463 and Audrey Smock, Ibo Politics: The Role of Ethnic Unions in Eastern Nigeria, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 19.

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a one-party state in the sense that the opposition had no chance for success at the polls. Election results were virtually known before the voting had taken place, yet the motions of democracy were gone through. This could not have been but for keeping up appearances.

The status quo was maintained by a judicious mixture of the four elements of depoliticisation mentioned above. Professor Eme Awa has noted that Westerners, in 1956, were asked to reject the NCNC because to give it electoral support would lead to its taking money out of the region to the poor Igbos in the Eastern Region.¹ (This was a period when cocoa, the basic commodity of the West, was selling well at the international market and that region was relatively better off than the East). And in the Eastern Region, candidates other than those of the NCNC were portrayed as friends of Yorubas (and therefore the enemy of Igbos).² The North was no different. There the NCNC was seen as "a party of 'unbelievers' whose chief support came from the hated Ibos."³

As the elites from majority ethnic groups consolidated their power position by making religious and ethnic

¹Eme Awa, Federal Government in Nigeria, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964), p. 128.

²Ibid.

³Kenneth Post, The Nigerian Federal Election of 1959, (Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 104. In the North, religion, ethnicity and politics were inseparable. For their use of religious symbols see B. Dudley, Parties and Politics in Northern Nigeria, (London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1968).

appeals they also came to use the coercive power of the state against their challengers. Within the regions such challenge usually came from minority ethnic group elites in the petty bourgeois class. In every region, the ruling parties denied their opponents freedom of movement and association during election periods. Opponents were imprisoned even for minor offences. Politicians from other Regions were often kept out or their movements restricted. Sympathisers of opposition parties were denied jobs and threatened with loss of property. Scholarships, contracts and public works projects were denied them. All these were common in all the Regions and they reached frightful proportions during the 1959 elections, a year before independence.¹ Those who bore the brunt of this indiscriminate use of physical and economic coercion, but by no means the only victims, as we shall see later, were people from minority ethnic groups. Professor Nwabueze has described the treatment they received at the hands of others as dictatorial.²

Two points follow from this situation thus briefly described. One is that in this atmosphere ethnicity served the interest of the petty bourgeoisie as a whole, but in

¹For details and specifics, see Post, The Nigerian Federal Election of 1959, pp. 286-292; Awa, *op. cit.*, p. 129 and Sklar, Nigerian Political Parties, pp. 452-453, note 38.

²B. O. Nwabueze, Constitutionalism in Emergent States, (London: C. Hurst and Co. Ltd., 1973), p. 114.

particular that of the groups in power. In the process of the AG, NPC or NCNC leaderships seeking support on the basis of ethnicity, they blurred the class differences between themselves and Igbo, Hausa or Yoruba workers and peasants. Solidarity was thus achieved and maintained on a basis other than relations and positions in the productive process. Yet it was to gain and retain a certain position in that process, a position that would enhance their exploitation of other classes and its accumulation, that the party leadership sought support and solidarity on ethnic grounds. The dominant fraction stood to benefit more because it was successful in gaining and retaining power, which power it used to advantage in its attempt at capital accumulation. The losers were the working class and peasantry who, on the basis of ethnic sentiment, supported the very class that grew rich only by climbing on their backs--through its access to and/or control of the state.

The second point which follows is that by this kind of politics in every Region, the opposition parties and their members were thoroughly frustrated. Their rates of accumulation were often slowed and even their rates of promotion in jobs were also slower. Sometimes, as already noted, they simply lost their jobs or property. With no hope of ever winning power, they were left no alternative than to consider that their only chance of accumulating at any faster rate and enjoying greater job and property security

would be "in a state where they ruled supreme."¹ They could appeal to, and receive, ethnic support because with them their clients and constituents suffered deprivation as a result of the ruling party's use of government patronage and public services allocation to buttress its political support. In other words, as those out of power were denied access to opportunities and positions for greater capital accumulation so their ethnic clients and constituencies who may have been workers and peasants were denied certain public services. Both groups then joined common cause. The next chapter will attempt to show the role of opposition politicians and their constituencies in the demands to have the Nigerian state restructured.

¹Frederich A. O. Schwarz, Jr., Nigeria: The Tribes, The Nation or the Race--The Politics of Independence, (Cambridge, Mass.: The M.I.T. Press, 1965), p. 85.

CHAPTER VII

ACCESS TO STATE AND DEMANDS FOR NEW STATES

It has been argued in preceding chapters that those among the governing class who, as a result of the 1951 elections and subsequently under the colonial dyarchy period, gained access to the state proceeded to virtually feudalize the state. To put it differently, they captured for their interests and those of their family and followers the state apparatuses. Through this they were able to begin a process of private capital accumulation, albeit within the narrow bounds defined by the dominance in the economy of foreign capital. Those among this class who were not so strategically located as to participate in this process (that is, the opposition politicians) had no other recourse than to initiate or vigorously support pressures for the restructuring of the state system. This took the form of demands for the creation of new states. In the event these demands were given various justifications some of which we shall analyse in a subsequent chapter. Here we seek to establish that it was opposition politicians among the governing class who were behind the demands for restructuring the state system. Suggestions along these lines have already been made by Professor Nzimiro as was noted in chapter I. Dr. Ali D. Yahaya has similarly noted

that the proponents for the creation of new states were those who saw the whole exercise "as an opportunity to share booty."¹ Dr. Yahaya's observation refers only to the most recent exercise in 1976 in which the number of states was increased to 19. So indeed does Professor Nzimiro's. It will be shown here that this pattern can be discerned from the moment that the Nigerian petty bourgeoisie acceded to political power.

This discussion begins with the first successful attempt at restructuring the Nigerian state: the creation in 1963 of the Midwest region. It goes on to an examination of the Reports of the Willink Commission which was appointed in 1957 by the Colonial Office² and the Irikefe Panel³ appointed in 1975 under Brigadier (later General) Muhammed's regime. Both agencies reported on the nature of the demands for the creation of new states.

The demands for the creation of new states in Nigeria became strongly articulated not long after the 1951 elections.

¹Ali D. Yahaya, "The Creation of States" in Keith Panter-Brick, ed., Soldiers and Oil: The Political Transformation of Nigeria (London: Frank Cass, 1978), pp. 220-221.

²See Nigeria, Report of the Commission appointed to Enquire into the Fears of Minorities and Means of Allaying Them (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1958). Hereafter we shall refer to it as simply Report of the Commission. Some refer to it as the Willink Commission, reflecting the fact that Sir Henry Willink was its chairman.

³See Federal Republic of Nigeria, Report of the Panel on the Creation of States (Lagos: Cabinet Office, 1976). This is (yet) an unpublished Report. Summary of it appears in Federal Republic of Nigeria, Federal Military Government Views on the Report of the Panel on Creation of States (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1976).

They were heard from political parties who were in opposition at the regional levels. It will be seen that it was primarily at the regional and not at the central state level that the impetus for the restructuring of the state had its focus. This may be attributed by and large to the importance of the Regions in the economy and the feudalization of the state at this level by those who were in the government and the party that formed it. The party and the government appeared inseparable. Opposition politicians who lost access to the state were virtually consigned to political oblivion. One should not be much surprised, in these circumstances, that in the Eastern Region the United National Independence Party (UNIP) along with the Ibibio State Union came in 1953 to demand the creation in the Region of the Calabar-Ogoja-Rivers (COR) state.¹ The UNIP was the opposition party in the East. It had been formed by erstwhile NCNC members after this party's 1952 crisis. The UNIP later atrophied and was absorbed by the AG which now established an opposition base in the East and which also came to identify itself with the demand for COR state. The regional ruling party, the NCNC, adamantly opposed the COR state demand,² seeing it as a purely anti-Igbo

¹Richard Sklar, Nigerian Political Parties: Power in an Emergent African Nation (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 137.

²Apparently, the NCNC tried very hard to persuade the leaders of the COR State movement to abandon their idea. According to Mrs. Hannah Odudor, one of the prominent leaders of the movement, the NCNC tried to dissuade her not only by offers of directorships and other high positions but even used

movement. The NCNC offered instead some administrative concessions--for example, a Regional House of Chiefs, a greater number of, and increased functions for, local governments--which appeared to have only temporarily abated the movement's momentum.¹

Because similar conditions of virtually marginalized opposition politicians existed in the West and in the North as did in the East there also developed in the former two Regions demands for new states. In the West it was the demand for the Midwest state that we consider at the moment. As with the COR state movement, the Midwest state movement was championed principally by those who in the Western Region found themselves in political opposition. In this case it was the NCNC which supported it. The differences are that unlike the NCNC, the AG government in the West supported the creation of a Midwest State, having, in 1955, passed a resolution in the Regional Assembly to that effect; secondly, the Midwest state was eventually created in 1963.

The idea of a Midwest state originated in 1953, under the banner of the Benin Delta People's Party. Later, in 1956, this became the Mid-West State Movement, led by Chief Dennis Osadebay who was a strong NCNC leader in the Western Region.

the good offices of Moral Rearmament in Switzerland to make approaches to her and the movement. See "Her Dream Came True in Her Own Life-time," Sadness and Joy (Lagos), No. 74, 1978, pp. 8-10.

¹ Sklar, op. cit., p. 138.

By that same year, in fact, Sklar says the Movement had become "essentially an adjunct of the NCNC . . ."¹ From then on this latter party, in opposition in the Western Region, ceaselessly championed the cause of a Midwest State.

The AG, of course, had not suddenly shelved its plan for and support of a Midwest State. In fact it had specifically mentioned the creation of new states, including the Midwest State in its platform for the December 1959 general elections.² But it was understandably being cautious, seeing that the other two major parties would not entertain the creation of new states in their regions, even though the demands were obvious. On the other hand, it was not unlikely that the AG was simply trying to buy votes with its pro-state creation stance; this may have been its strategy for expansion beginning from 1959 into other regions in the attempt to minimize for itself the ethnic and regionalist image which it came to ascribe to the NPC. (As a matter of fact too, the only times the NPC made any attempt to reach beyond the Northern Region it affiliated with state demanding groups in the East.) In any case this seems to be how the people in the Midwest area perceived the AG in 1959. For in that election the NCNC took 12 seats in the area to the AG's disappointing three.³

¹Ibid., p. 136.

²Anthony Enahoro, Fugitive Offender: The Story of a Political Prisoner (London: Cassell and Co., Ltd., 1965), p. 160.

³Ibid., p. 161.

Another and more important reason for the AG's poor performance was the fact, apparently, that its action did not match its words. In the politics of patronage that was the order of the day the party seemed to have concentrated its public services allocations in the Midwest area to constituencies which had returned AG members to the Assembly. Enahoro's career as a politician may be used as a guide. He belonged to the AG government in the West. In fact he was at one time the Minister for Midwest Affairs. By his own account his constituency and clients were happy "for my part in attracting development to the area." The 'area' here refers principally to his own constituency, of course. This development included

A secondary grammar school, a new hospital, pipe-borne water supply, free schools in every village, tarred roads, a catering rest house, a yaws elimination campaign . . . all in progress, in a place which four years before had none of them.¹

These 'development' projects were, it appears, part of the "understanding" he had reached with his constituents.² It appears to have been simply because of his access to the state apparatus and as a member of the ruling party in the Region that Enahoro was able to supply in his constituency "all but one of the amenities they sought and more; the only one left--electricity--happened to be a Federal subject. I had even met their wishes in my personal affairs . . . I was

¹Ibid., p. 150.

²Ibid., p. 104.

building a new house among them, in Uromi."¹ Little wonder, then, that it was in the immediate vicinity of the constituency that two of the three AG victories in the 1959 election took place.

On the other hand, NCNC members of the regional legislature did not and could not maintain their position as patrons vis à vis their constituents as did Enahoro. These NCNC members often complained of discrimination against them in the award of contracts by the AG government, and of political victimization.² The government's reply that the NCNC people were not available to be involved appears rather weak.³ In fact, Sayre Schatz has argued that there is indeed some evidence to show that in the West most loan recipients were AG members, and he questioned the complete veracity of the AG's claim in regard to this that opposition (NCNC) members were given the same privileges.⁴ He noted that: "... when it is realised that the popular votes of the NCNC and Action Group had been almost equal, the proportion of loans going to known NCNC adherents appears suspiciously small."⁵ Finally, the

¹Ibid., p. 159.

²See, for example, Western Nigeria, House of Assembly Debates. 11th Session, 1962 (Ibadan: Government Printer, 1962), cols. 198-200.

³Ibid., cols. 212-214.

⁴Sayre P. Schatz, Economics, Politics and Administration in Government Lending: The Regional Loans Boards of Nigeria (Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 55-56.

⁵Ibid., p. 57.

following statement attributed to an AG leader during the 1959 election is instructive:

If by any stroke of the misjudgement of the people in this constituency they cast their votes for a worthless NCNC candidate, the regret will be theirs and theirs for a long time. Imagine what is happening today in Asaba because the people decided to recognise their Government. Observe the phenomenal rate of development within so short a time that has poured into Asaba.¹

It clearly points in the same direction suggested by Schatz.

What all this points to is this: that the NCNC members in the West were denied the same opportunities and possibilities for accumulation (or the means to do so, e.g. loans) which were available to those who controlled the state apparatus, the AG. By the same token, the constituencies of the NCNC petty bourgeois politicians in the Region, as well as their clients whose needs could not be met, suffered.

It may be noted here that the NCNC's base in the Region was not confined to the area of the proposed Midwest. The party could count among its members from the locally dominant class persons who hailed from Yorubaland. Here also state creation was being demanded as will be shown later. The point now being made is that the NCNC's support in the Region for new state creation did not reflect ethnic cleavage so much as it appeared to be a desire to create other political arena in which those currently without access to the state could gain such access the better to meet their need for more accumulation with less hindrance. More on this below.

¹K. W. J. Post, The Nigerian Federal Election of 1959 (Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1963), cited on p. 393.

Why was the Midwest the only state to be created when others apparently failed? The Colonial Office had been reluctant to create new states before 1960. Its final position was taken as a result of the Report of the Willink Commission which advised against creating new states. However, during the last constitutional talks the possibility of new state creation was left open. Such action could be taken if the Federal and Regional legislatures would pass the enabling legislation. Why then did others fail where the Midwest succeeded?

It appears to us that the success of the Midwest state movement has a lot to do with the nature of the AG and the fact of its being in opposition at the federal state level after independence. The AG, it may be recalled, was a curious combination of the traditional and educated elite of the petty bourgeoisie. Awolowo, its leader, had realized quite earlier on that for the educated elite in the Region to stage "a frontal attack" against the more conservative traditional elite would be suicidal.¹ A modus vivendi for both within the AG was thus a political imperative, especially in the formative phase of the party and its bid to win political power in the West in 1951. It would appear that while Chief Awolowo was both leader of the party and Premier of the Region the delicate balance was maintained and the more liberal forces even occasionally gained the upper hand. That this was so could be seen in the AG's

¹Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Awo: The Autobiography of Chief Obafemi Awolowo (Ibadan: Cambridge University Press, 1960), pp. 261-262.

attempts at reforming the roles and institutions of traditional rulers and Local Government, and in its attempt to universalize free primary education.

Chief Awolowo's move to the federal scene and the assumption by S. L. Akintola (AG's deputy leader) of the Premiership of Western Nigeria marks the shift of the balance within the party in favour of the more conservative, traditionally inclined interests. Here was the immediate cause of the 1962 AG crisis.¹ The now dominant conservative forces within this party, already stung by the attempt under Chief Awolowo to democratize traditional institutions, now moved to put the brakes on some of the more liberal approaches adopted when the Chief was Premier. The AG now became even more equivocal in its support for the creation of the Midwest. The free primary education programme started in 1957 under Awolowo was jeopardized. It became obvious during the AG congress in Jos in 1962 that the modus vivendi between the more conservative (traditional) and liberal (educated) strata within the party had come undone. For at that congress "Chief Akintola, Chief Rosiji, Chief Adeyi, Chief Adigun . . . and Dr. Omitowoju (Western Minister of Chieftaincy Affairs)"² walked out.

¹For a detailed account, see "The Action Group: The Crisis of 1962 and Its Aftermath" in John P. Mackintosh et al., Nigerian Government and Politics (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1966), pp. 441-457. Our account is based on that chapter. See also Charles U. Uwanaka, Awolowo and Akintola in Political Storm (Yaba, Lagos: Okwesa and Co., 1964).

²Mackintosh, op. cit., p. 445.

Opposing them were "most of the members of the Federal House of Representatives and the younger and more ideological Westerners."¹ It was also clear that Akintola virtually challenged Awolowo's leadership. For all intents and purposes he wanted to control the party. Akintola made attempts to align the party with the NPC, with an eye to joining the federal coalition with it. For as only an opposition party at the centre the AG members were virtually left out of the possibility of sharing in the patronage system at that level. The NCNC and the NPC were fighting each other to monopolize the patronage system. The crisis engendered within the AG by this political struggle between different elements within it was to culminate in the outbreak of physical violence in the Western legislature in 1962.

The AG crisis afforded the NCNC an excellent opportunity to push as hard as possible on the issue of the Midwest State. The NPC too saw the moment as propitious to help clip the wings of an otherwise formidable political opponent. This was certainly the view taken by many persons in the Western Region at the time with regard to the way the Federal Government--in effect, the NCNC and NPC--handled the crisis in the Region.²

¹Ibid., p. 444.

²See Aliyi Ekineh, Democratic Rights During Emergency: A Study of the 1962 Nigerian Emergency (Yaba, Lagos: Liberty, n.d.), pp. 13-14. Chief Awolowo's own speech in the Federal House of Representatives certainly confirms this view. See Nigeria, House of Representatives Debates, Third Session, 1962-63, Vol. 1 (Lagos: Government Printer, 1962), cols. 2171-2180.

It was when the AG was weakening that the motion to create a fourth region, the Midwest, was brought before the House of Representatives.

The motion in the House of Representatives for the creation of the Midwest state found support from all parties represented in the House. The Action Group, given their previous publicly announced policy, could not oppose it; it remained faithful to the principle. As Chief Enahoro said, "it is quite clear that . . . in the Western Region the party in power has actively supported the demand . . . for a separate state . . ."¹ Just how actively might have been a matter of some debate, especially since Akintola the current AG Premier was soon to oppose the motion; but the support cannot be denied. Enahoro, on behalf of the AG, proposed an amendment to the motion by calling for the simultaneous creation of the Midwest, COR and Middle Belt States; he even called for the implementation of such an exercise "before the 31st March 1962."² However, it was clear that the Federal (NCNC-NPC coalition) Government would not countenance the AG amendment. Okotie Eboh, the Government House Leader, himself an indigene of the proposed Midwest State, opposed the AG amendment "very vehemently."³ Said an NPC member: "We are

¹Federation of Nigeria, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives 1961-62. Vol. 1 (Lagos: Federal Government Printer, 1962), col. 765.

²Ibid., col. 767.

³Ibid., col. 771.

not going to create the Middle Belt State in retaliation to the Mid-West State. The two cases are not identical."¹

Chief Awolowo already correctly anticipated the fate of the AG's attempt to link the creation of the Midwest with the creation of other states. Summing up his own speech he said, ". . . whatever happens to this Amendment we are voting hundred per cent for the substantive motion itself."²

The Government motion was thus carried. For those members of the regional opposition parties in the House the motion had been a source of hope and encouragement. Joseph Tarka, leader of the UMBC which was demanding the creation in the North of Middle Belt State summed up this sentiment of hope. He said, in-part:

The creation of the Mid-West State, Sir, will only set the ball rolling for the creation of all other states in the Federation of Nigeria. I say so, Sir, because I know very well that the motion for the creation of a Mid-West State is going to pass through this House unopposed. I want to . . . rejoice with our brothers in the Mid-West area, for their achievement of a Mid-West State is not an achievement confined to the Mid-West alone The creation of new states is the only basis on which the unity of this country is going to continue and it is upon the creation of states that the breaking of the monopoly of all other Regions by one Region which constitutes an unbalanced structure in the federation will be achieved.³

¹Ibid., col. 785.

²Ibid., cols. 790-791.

³Ibid., col. 784.

however, this optimism was not rewarded until 1967 and under vastly different circumstances of grave national crisis. The NCNC and the NPC made certain that no states were created in the East and North respectively, as in the West. The Action Group was in no situation to force their hands as they had its own.

The AG government in the West was not prepared to follow the lead of Awolowo and its other members in the House of Representatives. The rift between Akintola and Awolowo was already apparent here. For the federal motion to be implemented it had to have the consent of two-thirds majorities in at least two of the regional legislatures. The Eastern and Northern Houses of Assembly were quickly forthcoming. In the Western House of Assembly, Akintola and his AG majority fought hard against it. Akintola saw in the passage of the federal motion an attempt to destroy the West as a region, and not an honourable intention.¹ He wanted to know, "If it is good to create states, why are new states not created in the North? . . . in the East? Why should the West be singled out for this operation?"² Akintola went on to declare null and void the 1955 AG resolution in the Western Assembly supporting the Midwest State creation. It was so, he argued, because it had not "till today been debated in the Western House of Chiefs.

¹Western Nigeria, House of Assembly Debates. Official Report, 11th Session 1962, (Ibadan: Government Printer, 1962), cols. 689-690.

²Ibid., col. 693.

. . . It has, therefore, not received the approval of the Western Legislature."¹ Furthermore, he had argued,

Assuming that a former Parliament, long ago, passed a Motion in the light of circumstances prevailing at the time, must that be necessarily binding on every parliament which succeeds it, if it can be shown that the circumstances have changed so much as to make the substance of the Motion no longer tenable? It is a cardinal principle of democracy that no parliament can bind its successor. If it were not so, laws passed by one parliament could never be subject either to revocation or to amendment by any succeeding parliament.²

Suffice it simply to note that the brave efforts made by Akintola and the AG in the West to put some distance between them and the 1955 resolution were eventually of little avail. For the Midwest region did come into being in 1963.

The creation of the Midwest State could hardly have succeeded had not the opposition NCNC in the West had recourse to go through the NCNC at the federal level. The AG in the West was understandably reluctant to push its conviction about the creation of the Midwest to its logical conclusion. To have done so would have meant that it was prepared to narrow the economic base from which its members were accumulating. It would have meant the excision from the region of a large section of territory in which palm oil, one of its two major agricultural products--the other being cocoa--was produced. This would possibly have meant, in turn, an appreciable possible drop in revenue accruing to the regional Development

¹Ibid., col. 694.

²Ibid.

Corporation, which Corporation was the major source of funds for loans, public services supply, infrastructural development and the general maintenance of the government. It was for similar reasons that the NPC and the NCNC successfully resisted, until the end of the First Republic, any creation of new states in their regions.

The decisive role of the NCNC in the West in the creation of the Midwest supports the view that political struggles within the governing class were the stimuli behind the creation of new states; that those without access to the state spearheaded the demands for the creation of new states. It was the NCNC in the West that articulated the demand most unequivocally and insistently. Of course, it was able to carry the majority of the people in the area with it. This is because along with those people, it had suffered intimidation and deprivation at the hands of the ruling Action Group. So there appeared to be here some coincidence of its political and economic interests with those of the dominated classes. But no sooner was the struggle for a new state successful and the group that lacked access to the state gains such access than its specific class interests diverge from those of the peasantry and the working class. The new state apparatuses thus established become mechanisms for "development" or, what is the same thing, the extraction of surplus from the peasantry (the objects of development) and the working class (the factors of development). The principal beneficiaries of this

'development', as we have already seen, is the group that now controls the state. This process has had a tendency to repeat itself, developing into what we may call an 'Oliver Twist syndrome' in Nigerian politics. By this is simply meant an exponential increase in demands for the creation of new states over the number in existence at any one time. To see how this syndrome has developed over time we now look at the findings of the Willink Commission of 1957 and the Irikefe Panel of 1975.

THE WILLINK AND IRIKEFE FINDINGS

Although the demands for new states were first made in a substantive way at the 1954 Constitutional conference, by the 1957 conference in London the clamour had become quite intense, for "no less than 15 new states" were being demanded.¹ The demands were coming from all regions and they were being made in the name of ethnic minorities in those regions. It was in the attempt to determine an appropriate solution or approach to the problem that a Commission of Enquiry was set up by the Colonial Office with the knowledge and consent of the Nigerian leaders, inter alia, to "ascertain the facts about the fears of minorities in any part of Nigeria and to propose means of allaying those fears, whether well- or ill-founded."²

The Commission made a clear point of the fact--and this is important--that the fears "were all expressed in regard

¹Report of the Commission, p. 12.

²Ibid.; p. 1.

to the Regional Governments, who in each Region were thought of as a majority group, No minority expressed fears of the Federal Government, . . .¹ It is important because it demonstrates that demands for a restructuring of the state were not really a matter that easily lends itself to analysis from the traditional approach to federalism, since such an approach focuses principally on centre-region relations. It also reflects the general weakness and remoteness of the central government in the lives of the population. Substantive power, by and large, was in the regions. It is also important to note that, according to the Commission, in all cases it was not just mere constitutional provisions that were being sought. "It was generally the object of the party giving evidence to persuade us of the necessity of a new state rather than to press us for any form of constitutional safeguard . . ."² Moreover, there is nothing to indicate that the people testifying before the Commission made any connection between their demands for new states and the fine points of successful federalism. This is yet another indication that the demands for the creation of states had little to do with federal balance.

All evidence tendered to the Commission as the basis for state demands focused on economic and cultural domination

¹Ibid., p. 2; emphasis added.

²Ibid., p. 12.

and the denial of amenities or public services by the Regional governments. The governments, it was alleged, did these things because they were under the dominant control of persons belonging to majority ethnic groups in the Region. Examples of government conivance at or even attempts at cultural domination by the majority were often cited. The Commission was told in the West that "the Regional Government" had "a deliberate intention of obliterating the separate language, culture and institutions of the Mid-West or at least . . . of fostering tendencies which would have this result, . . ." The general use of "derogatory epithets" in reference to members of a minority was alleged.¹ In addition, "sweeping allegations were made that all public boards in the Western Region, including the Scholarship Board, were Yoruba in composition and discriminatory in operation."² Political intimidation was alleged against the Government, as was grave economic neglect of the Midwest region.³ It was apparently for these reasons that a new state was being demanded.

What makes the case of the West very interesting is the fact that it was not only in the ethnic minority area that a new state was being demanded. There were also demands for the new states from right among the majority ethnic group.

¹Ibid., p. 13.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., pp. 16-17.

We refer to the demand for "a Central Yoruba State, which would cover the Provinces of Oyo and Ibadan, and for an Ondo Central State, which would cover the Ondo Province only."¹

More importantly, although each of the Provinces contained at least "85 per cent Yoruba," they did "contain the main strength among the Yorubas of the NCNC opposition to the Action Group."²

So, then, political opposition was not confined to minority ethnic areas. This immediately, and quite strongly, suggests to us that the demands for new states in that Region were coming from areas in which the petty bourgeoisie was in political opposition. It suggests, further, that there is necessarily no correlation between the demand for new states and minority ethnic group membership. This indeed is why members of the petty bourgeoisie, who may originally come from minority areas, no sooner are they allowed into the groups with access to the state, than they cease to actively support demands for a new state. A case in point was the Oba of Benin in 1953 who, upon being offered the position of "Minister without Portfolio" in June 1955 accepted it "'in the best interests' of his people" and thereafter "ceased to be connected with the Opposition and . . . [also] from now on actively to campaign for the [Midwest State] Movement."³ It would appear then to be the case that

¹Ibid., p. 28.

²Ibid.; emphasis added.

³Ibid., p. 12.

in the Western Region, demands for new states came from areas in which the petty bourgeoisie found itself without access to the state. Ethnic considerations appear secondary and relatively unimportant here.

The findings of the Commission in other Regions parallel those in the West. In the Eastern Region the Commission heard demands for "four different states . . ."¹ Here, however, the states demanded were all in non-Igbo areas. These areas were the stronghold of first the UNIP which had broken off from the ruling NCNC during its 1952 crisis, and later the AG which came to absorb the UNIP. The basis for the demands for states was a certain "fear of being over-run, commercially and politically, by the Ibos . . ."² It was alleged against the NCNC Government that it "paid no respect to the Opposition, nor for that matter to Parliament or the electorate at large."³ Charges of economically and socially discriminatory acts and also political intimidation were alleged against the Government.

Although in the East there is a clear coincidence of demands for new states and minority ethnic groups, we still think that more important is the fact that most of the petty bourgeoisie from the area found themselves largely without access to the state. The 1952 crisis in the NCNC had left the

¹Ibid., p. 36.

²Ibid., p. 37.

³Ibid., p. 38.

party truncated in the East and what was lost formed the opposition party. This opposition predominantly, but not exclusively, comprised the rising petty bourgeoisie with origins in minority group areas. And as Nigerian politics went, this opposition had little or no chance of gaining power. We suggest therefore that this fact should be given more weight than the purely ethnic one. As in the West, it is the active role and prominence of opposition areas in the demands that we think should be considered more important.

The most celebrated--certainly the most associated with violence--case of the demand for state creation was that of the Middle Belt in the Northern Region. The parallels with demands in other regions are notable. Here, as in the East and West, the demand was headed by those of the petty bourgeoisie who had no access to or control over the state, principally the UMBC. As in the East, there is some coincidence between the UMBC's area of support and minority ethnic groups. But there is an important qualitative difference. Whereas in the East all fractions and strata of the governing class with or without access to the state were from the educated elite, the situation in the North was that the petty bourgeois elements with access to the state were based in the traditional elite while those without such access were based in the educated elite. This again is the result of differential impacts of the colonial education policy. Missionary influence (and therefore formal western education) reached the Middle

Belt region relatively earlier and deeper than was the case in the upper northern stretches of territory, in the Muslim regions. Thus we find that all of the six founders of the Birom Progressive Union (BPU) which was the first organization to articulate the demand for a separate state were all connected with Christian Churches and were employed in the modern economic sector.¹ So also were the educated elite an important force in the UMBC, and in the Middle Belt area generally. It is for the reason of the more far-reaching effect of education on the evolution of economic and political groups in the Middle Belt area that one can see why the Wilkin Commission described it as at "least a part of the Northern System . . ."² By the latter term is meant that area in which the traditional elite was maintained and strengthened by deliberate policies of the colonial government.

Although the first articulation of the demand for a Middle Belt state goes back to 1949 it does not appear to have been a strong desire so long as the educated elite could reach a sort of modus vivendi with the traditional elite which would allow the former access to state apparatuses. The position then seemed to be one of 'a state if necessary but not necessarily a state.' Supporting this view is the fact that shortly

¹The BPU represented a minority ethnic group in the North. It was an active organization within the Non-Muslim League which, in 1950, became the Middle Zone League. The latter joined in 1955 with the Middle Belt Peoples Party to form the umbrella organization, UMBC. See Sklar, Nigerian Political Parties, pp. 345-350.

²Report of the Commission, p. 56.

after its formation in 1955 the UMBC went into an alliance with the NPC, thus providing its members some access to state apparatuses. Two UMBC officials "accepted appointments in the regional and federal governments . . . [one] as Minister without Portfolio . . . [and another] as Parliamentary Secretary."¹ The alliance later broke down in 1956 "on the ground that, contrary to their [UMBC] expectations, the alliance with the NPC had not been helpful to the cause of the Middle Belt movement."² But while it lasted, the UMBC felt (and this was part of its manifesto for the 1956 election!) that

the creation of a separate Region, though desirable, is for the present, unpracticable. We are of the opinion that with a reasonable number of representatives in the Regional Legislature we shall be in a position to take active participation in running the Government and that the interests of the peoples of the Middle Belt shall be adequately protected³

Although the language of this statement refers to UMBC presence in the legislature of the North, it is to be understood that mere presence there alone would not have encouraged in any active way UMBC's participation in Government. Much more important than merely being present in the legislature was to be part of the government. It was only with the breakdown of the alliance and the forging of a new one with the AG in 1957 that the UMBC renewed with vigour the demand for a Middle Belt State.

¹Nigerian Political Parties, p. 347.

²Ibid.

³Cited in Report of the Commission, p. 57.

The evidence presented to the Willink Commission as the basis for the demand for a Middle Belt State rested mainly on the attempts by the NPC to entrench the oligarchy of the traditional elite and its lack of respect for, and interest in, the further democratization of the political process in the Region. The Native Authority system was alleged to be a mechanism for intimidating and victimizing persons who opposed the traditional elite.¹ It was also alleged against the traditional elite that it used its political power to include "the children of those who criticised the Government or voted for opposition parties . . . in the tax rolls and their fathers thus forced to pay what amounted to a punitive tax."² The non-Muslims complained of being made subject to Muslim laws.³ Just as in similar cases in other Regions, the Middle Belt area also suffered denial of public services, projects allocations, for it had no effective representation in the Government.⁴ Equally, too, the NPC Government used its licensing and employment power discriminatorily against areas of UMBC support.

Much violence was associated with the demands for the Middle Belt State. There were riots by the Tiv, one of the

¹Ibid., p. 60.

²Ibid., p. 61.

³Ibid., pp. 66-70.

⁴Cf. J. M. Dent, "A Minority Party--the UMBC" in Mackintosh, op. cit., p. 475.

minority ethnic groups in the area in 1959, 1960 and 1964, each of which was very serious. For example, Dent, a former District Officer in the area, writes that the 1960 riots created a spectacle of "a whole countryside in arms."¹ The riots were violent physical attacks on NPC members and traditional authorities being used by the NPC. Although Dent suggests that the 1959 riots were begun by UMBC/AG members, he is specific that those of 1960 were not connected directly with any political party. During this latter episode, the

leaders were not people of any status in the community and generally were not UMBC officials. . . . The leaders were often ex-soldiers, and in other cases were ordinary farmers. There was practically no participation by educated Tiv people.²

The riots were in reaction to the pervasive and oppressive presence of the NA system and its use by the traditional elite to maintain their power position and to undermine their political opponents. Here, as in other Regions, the vicious attempts by the ruling political party to secure its political power had the effect of forging an alliance between other social classes and the opposition politicians of the petty bourgeois class.

In the sense that the use by the elements of the petty bourgeoisie which controlled the state of state coercive (political and economic) powers against their opposition in order for the former to maintain its power brought about an alliance between the latter and other classes in the areas for

¹Ibid., p. 496.

²Ibid., p. 495.

which state demands were made, it can be said that the movements for new states were popular. But even so one must not lose sight of the class content of these demands. In fact, the demands for the creation of new states are analogous to the demands for the political independence of the country. In both we find all emerging social classes closing ranks under the tutelage of the petty bourgeoisie. Each presents a vision of a gateway to the land of milk and honey. Thus when the 12-state structure came into place, satisfying the demands we have looked at, the Adviser on Civil Service matters to the Governor of South-Eastern State expressed high hopes reminiscent of national independence in 1960. He spoke eloquently of

restoring the dignity of man in the South-Eastern State, in raising his standard of living and well-being, and above all in enabling all ordinary citizens to carry out their lawful pursuits without let or hindrance, or discrimination or victimization (sic).¹

The same optimism and euphoria were expressed for Lagos State. There it was hoped that model civil service was to be established and a desire for "the elimination of bribery and corruption from Lagos State" was expressed.²

Finally, like the attainment of national political independence before it, the creation of new states in 1967

¹E. A. Udoh, "The Creation of the Administration for the South-Eastern State of Nigeria," Quarterly Journal of Administration, Vol. 11, No. 3, 1968, p. 147.

²A. E. Howson-Wright, "The Creation of the Lagos State Administration" in *ibid.*, pp. 153 and 155.

revealed the real class content of the demands as the states came to provide a means for accumulation for some among the erstwhile opposition politicians of the petty bourgeoisie. Thus in turn, the 12-state structure created new 'minorities' for whom the creation of yet more states became urgent business. We turn now to look at some of the evidence from the Irikefe Panel on the Creation of States.

When Lt. Col. Gowon, following the sentiments expressed during the 1966 ad hoc Constitutional Conferences, introduced the 12-state structure in 1967, he was still holding out hope that more states would be created. For example, in his speeches on March 31 and May 26, 1968, he referred to "the present minimum of twelve states . . ."¹ He was expected to announce plans for the creation of more states soon after the war, but nothing happened. The implied promise that more states would be created and the long delay in announcing any policy measure to that effect led to a building up of expectations and to an exacerbation of the demands for more states. There was forthcoming from the Federal Government only another promise that action would follow in 1974. It was not until 1976, under the Muhammed Administration that seven new states were created.

The delay in creating more states, however, had clearly served to knock the bottom off the argument that state creation

¹Faith in Unity, pp. 96 and 108; emphasis added.

had much to do with federal structural imbalances. Gowon had described the 12-state structure as "the only way of removing the major defect in the political structure of the country. Replacing the four former Regions with the new States is the only means of ensuring political stability and social and economic progress in the country."¹ The measure was also expected--and this follows logically from Gowon's view--to enhance national unity. Subsequent events later proved this perception to be unfounded. Demands for new states did not die down because federal structural defects were not presumably removed, nor did stability, economic and social progress follow from the creation of new states per se.

In its tour of Nigeria following its establishment, the Irikefe Panel on the Creation of States found a disturbing level of disharmony. It noted

the strength of ethnic loyalty, mutual suspicion and even hatred among the diverse people which make up Nigeria . . . the Panel . . . [seized] this opportunity to record its apprehension that the bonds of National Unity are in some respect still tender.²

Equally importantly, the Panel's recorded observation strongly suggests, as we have argued, that there was no logical relationship between ethnicity and the demand for the creation of new states. It noted that where it served the purpose of those making the demands for new states, ethnic or linguistic

¹Ibid., p. 96.

²Nigeria, Report of the Panel on the Creation of States, p. 9. This report is hereafter cited simply as "Report of the Panel."

arguments were often mangled to build their case. We quote the Panel:

We were to discover that in some areas history was distorted by people who were widely recognised as belonging to the same linguistic stock or ethnic group to convince us that they are not ethnically the same in their bid to get a state of their own. . . . We were indeed concerned with the depth of the bitterness and rancour amongst people who a few years ago welcome (sic) the creation of a particular state but who now have bitter memories of their association. It seems that some state governments far from integrating people have tended to divide them. Tribalism, a debilitating cancer of the First Republic is very much still alive with us. More minorities seem to have sprung up from the creation of 12 states than during the existence of the first four regions. Indeed, in some parts of the country what the Panel witnessed amounted to an attempt on the part of the minorities to tyrannize the majority.¹

From our point of view these points raised by the Panel underline the fact that ethnicity's role in the demands for new states was largely that of a convenient disguise for waging the state demands. In fact, the Panel saw ethnicity as a relatively unimportant factor. The Federal Military Government (FMG) agreed with it that ethnicity was "the least important of the criteria which formed the basis for the whole exercise" of creating new states. Furthermore, the FMG noted that "some of the more articulate demands for new states have come from the existing states with one ethnic group."² This was clearly the case in the former Western State (Yoruba) and the former East Central State (Igbo).

¹ Ibid., pp. 9-10; emphasis added.

² Federal Military Government Views, p. 11.

Some common patterns can be identified in the findings of the Willink Commission and the Irikefe Panel. A few examples from some states will suffice. As in the Willink Commission, it was found by the Panel that the matter of alleged social injustice by state administrations was fundamental in inclining groups to demand new states. The Panel notes that "Many of the petitions complain against the non-appointment of Commissioners, chairman of boards, etc., from particular areas. The case by implication is that through these appointments amenities would be attracted to the areas in question."¹ In the Rivers State, the proponents for a new state based their demand on lack of economic progress since the State came into being.² In the South Eastern (now Cross River) State the demands for a separate state were based on discrimination against their areas by the Esuene administration in allocation of amenities and distribution of scholarships; cultural degradation, unwarranted alienation of land and on lack of representation on public corporations and the Public Service Commission were alleged.³

The major demands in the former East Central State (ECS) that we consider here were the creation of two separate

¹Report of the Panel, p. 14; emphasis added. The Panel noted, however, that such appointments, even where they were made did not necessarily guarantee the flow of amenities. It drew examples from Rivers and the North West States. We shall comment on this below.

²Ibid., p. 107; emphasis added.

³Ibid., pp. 113-115.

states: Enugu or Wawa and Imo. While the demand for Imo State was apparently based on the question of bringing the government "nearer to the people"¹ that for Enugu State was based on inadequate representation of people from the area in the State Civil Service and on the alleged policy of "deliberate discrimination against these areas" by the Asika government.² There were other demands based on alleged exploitation of the areas in question by the ECS government.

In the former North Eastern State there were demands for three States: Adamawa/Sardauna, Bauchi and Borno. The demand for the last-named State was based simply on the large size of the North East State and the difficulty of administering such a vast region,³ while the demand for Bauchi State was based on the expressed desire of its proponents "to raise the standard of their people, on the need to rapidly industrialise the area, and as a respect to the wishes of the people who have craved for a state of their own,"⁴ and finally on alleged discrimination against their interests by the North East State Government.⁵ As in the case for Imo State, the one for Adamawa/Sardauna was based on bringing government closer

¹Ibid., p. 121.

²Ibid., p. 122.

³Ibid., p. 145.

⁴Ibid., p. 150.

⁵Ibid., p. 151.

to the people and on bringing about "even development and a fair distribution of social amenities."¹ One easily finds other states where the issues were similar. Many of these justifications for demanding new states repeat themselves. Thus we find alleged under-representation in State Civil Service as a basis for creation of a Zaria State in the former North Central (now Kaduna) State and the need for even development as part of the basis for the demand for Kabba State.² It is thus pointless to catalogue each separately. Suffice it to note on the one hand the similarities between the justifications for these demands as reported by the Panel and, on the other hand, between the Panel's findings and those of the Willink Commission.

The only major difference between the Commission's and Panel's work seems to be the fact that the Irikefe Panel had many more cases to deal with than the preceding Commission. It remains now to observe if most of those who spearheaded the demands reported on by the Panel were also--as we argued was the case in the Willink Commission Report--persons of the petty bourgeois class who were seeking access to and/or control of state apparatuses. In other words, since we already noted above the relative unimportance of ethnicity, it behooves us to indicate the relationship these people have to the state apparatuses during the old structure.

¹Ibid., p. 156.

²Ibid., pp. 164 and 171.

Elaigwu has indicated that in the case of former East Central State, the proponents for Enugu or Wawa State included people who previously held important positions: "C. O. Onoh (ex-Chairman of Nigeria Coal Corporation), D. C. Ugwu (former Federal Minister of State), A. Nwachukwu (former Federal Minister of Education), and T. C. Chigbo (ex-Deputy General Manager of the ENBC-ENTV)."¹ However, the Report of the Irikefe Panel is not as explicit in other cases as Elaigwu appears to be with regard to the East Central State. But it does give us important enough indications. For example, it noted "that some groups tended to reduce our assignment into a booty sharing exercise. This is true in an area where one of their strongest reasons for demanding more states is usually based on the grounds that an insufficient number of an ethnic group is represented in Government."² As we have already seen, this complaint was featured by those demanding new states in the East Central and South Eastern States. Obviously then, these demands were headed by those who lacked access to and/or control over any state apparatus. The same conclusion, by deduction from the evidence can be made about those who led demands for the creation of Oyo and Ondo States in the former Western State. Those making demands for Oyo State claimed discrimination against them "in the awards of contracts and in the civil service" while those for

¹Jonah I. Elaigwu, "Subnational Units and Political Development in New States: An African Experience" (Ph.D. thesis, Stanford University, 1975), p. 329.

²Report of the Panel, p. 10; emphasis added.

Ondo claimed that their superior educational attainment was not sufficiently reflected in the social and economic position the area enjoyed.¹

The above conclusion would appear, however, to be challenged by other indications from the Panel's report, namely, that in some states even those who had access to the old state apparatuses presented demands for new states. This, for example, was the case among "the protagonists of the Port-Harcourt state many of whom were Commissioners in the Spiff regime" in Rivers State.² South-Eastern State, East-Central and North-Eastern State were also areas in which the Panel encountered what it described as "the incredible volte-face of the many old top functionaries, men, who a few years before, were in the vanguard of the movement against a break up . . ."³ It would appear then that the demands for new states was not mainly spearheaded by those without access to the state among the petty bourgeoisie in each of the states; but that some of those who had such access were also involved.

This situation does not raise as much difficulty for our point of view as at first it appears to. One important explanation quickly comes to mind. It has to be recalled that

¹Ibid., pp. 78 and 82.

²Ibid., p. 14.

³Ibid., p. 15. See also Abdullamidi Babatunde, "Irikefe Panel: A Review of Evidence," New Nigerian, 5 February, 1976, p. 9 for even clearer evidence of the participation of top government officials in leading demands for creation of new states.

the 12-state structure was being administered under the military. This raises a case qualitatively different from what obtained during the First Republic. In that former period, what happened was that the Military Governor (or the Administrator, as in the case of the East Central State) more or less personified the state, a more extreme case of what we called feudalization of the state. He, especially under the Gowon regime (1966-1975), ruled by fiats and edicts. His Commissioners held office at his pleasure; they had no political roots which might sustain them in the event of conflict of views between the Governor and themselves. If the state apparatus was privately appropriated by the governing class during the First Republic, it was appropriated by the Governor/Administrator during Gowon's rule. To the State Military Governors and Administrator, the State appeared like a private kingdom,¹ and economic heaven for themselves.

¹As Mr. Ukpabi Asika reportedly told people in the East Central State, he was not put in power by them and so he owed them no responsibility. His attitude, which was typical among the Governors, is well illustrated by the following excerpt: "...that Asika Administration inflicted deep wounds on the people of the state is not in doubt. That the administration left many things undone is only true. And that the people had passed through an unbearable hardship with an 'I don't care' government since the end of the civil war is just a fair assessment." It was also alleged that Mr. Asika "winds the window glasses of his state car and reclines on the posh seat reading a novel as he visits the people. With this 'heaven can fall' posture, the government was far removed from the people..." See Martin Iroabuchi, "East Central State Today," Sunday Times, 31 August, 1975, p. 8.

It is also noted by Uti that the Governors "had virtually converted their states into private estates.... Mounting cries for the governors' removal had been intense but had been so flagrantly ignored that the governors became virtually

This was a fresh manifestation, albeit to a great extent, of the feudalization of the state. From here some of them attempted to launch themselves into stronger and lasting political positions which would see them make a smooth transition from the military to civilian era.¹ We have already noted in the preceding chapter the extent to which they used their position for private accumulation.

To be sure, those appointed to the government by the State Military Governors or Administrator benefitted much from their roles. Nevertheless the great concentration of power in the office of the Governor did not serve their best interests; they were too insecure. The only ones among them who had any kind of security of tenure were those who could claim personal or other relationship with the Governor. Formal and legal relationships had clearly become inadequate. Hence the very

untouchable." Edio Babarosa Uti, "Brig. Murtala Muhammed's Thirty Days," Times International, 1 September 1975, p. 3.

¹This appeared to be the purpose for which the Asika government in the former East Central State used N500,000 of public money in 1975 to launch what was called Otu Olu Obodo (roughly translated: A Society for Community Progress) which was "founded and Chairmanned by Mrs. Chinyere Asika, wife of the ex-administrator of the state, while the wives of all the state commissioners and permanent secretaries and other top government officials were members of the steering committee." Daily Times, 22 August 1975, p. 1. An inquiry report on the Otu Olu Obodo suggested that "concealed political motives" were behind its establishment by Mr. & Mrs. Asika, and that the organisation was used by the Asikas "as a machinery for intimidating many Government functionaries both at the State and Divisional levels." See East Central State of Nigeria, Government White Paper on the Report of the Administrative Board of Inquiry into the Otu Olu Obodo Women's Organisation (Enugu: Government Printer, 1976), p. 2; emphasis added.

high degree--more than usual--of sycophancy among state officials that characterized the period; such sycophancy afforded some measure of insurance, protection and job security. But at the same time it was a kind of humiliation for some of those who had to engage in it. Disaffection was bound to arise.

Under these circumstances, therefore, it is little surprise that top functionaries in State governments should join in the demands for new states. They may have greater security of tenure of office in new states if they are positively identified as having fought to bring them about.

They would also thus enhance their own social standing in the community. Where junior government functionaries joined in the demands for a state it was very likely with the expectation that in any new structure, they would gain higher positions since the precedent had been established--and maintained--that each new State government gives preference to the indigenes of that State in employment. The more the number of states created, the more the bureaucracy would grow and the better the employment and/or contract opportunities. The search for employment and profit was quite closely linked at this time with new states. Getting a new state was one sure way of channeling some of the revenue the central government was earning from oil into one's own area and from there into one's own pockets. The popular perception and the reality of it were as crude as that.

Given the foregoing, we would argue that the prominent role of people who already had access to state apparatuses played in demands for new states does not really pose any fundamental challenge to the hypothesis that demands for new states were spearheaded by those among the petty bourgeoisie in each state who lacked control/access to the state. It is an indication of changed historical conditions and circumstances. Accumulation and enrichment were still very much the objective. The situation, nevertheless, may suggest some slight modification of the hypothesis just mentioned. We would say now that the demand for the creation of states was spearheaded by those members of the petty bourgeoisie who (i) either lacked access to and/or control of the state, or (ii) those who felt insecure in their position of access and who felt that a new state would provide them better opportunities. The first part of this formulation reflects the substance of our findings on the situation through analysis of the creation of the Midwest State and the Report of the Willink Commission. The second part reflects the difference between those and much of the evidence from the Irikefe Panel. Nothing in either of them contradicts the main thesis of this study: that state creation in Nigeria is best understood as part of the evolution and consolidation of the governing class.

In this chapter the attempt has been made to show that those members of the petty bourgeoisie who lack access to the state apparatuses often led in the demands for new states.

This was indeed the case with regard to the finding of the Willink Commission and with the creation in 1963 of the Midwest State. We have seen, however, that some members of the petty bourgeoisie who were in government also championed the creation of new states. We have argued that this is understandable given their quest for greater opportunities and security of office. This quest for office by those who had none and the quest for higher and/or more secure office by those who already had some can be understood in its proper perspective when it is realized that such office is a vital means for the development of the economic interests of the incumbent. We tried to demonstrate this in the last chapter. In the following chapter, we examine some of the reasons put forward by the Willink Commission and the Irikefe Panel for their various recommendations.

CHAPTER VIII

ANALYSIS OF THE JUSTIFICATIONS FOR, AND THE CONTRADICTION IN, NEW STATE CREATION

In the last chapter we attempted to show that lack of access to the state by some members of the petty bourgeoisie inclined them to demand the restructuring of the state.

Obviously this view was rejected as the basis for creating states by the Willink Commission and the Irikefe Panel which have studied the question of new state creation at different times and in depth. In fact the Willink Commission which saw no need to recommend creating new states on the basis of evidence tendered to it across the country dismissed this point rather out of hand. The Irikefe Panel which recommended the creation of new states did so for reasons other than we are here suggesting. It appears necessary, therefore, to examine the justifications or reasons on which both the Commission and the Panel based their respective recommendations. Following this we shall also look at what appears to be a contradiction which has followed in the wake of restructuring the Nigerian state: the newly created states, unlike the old Regions, now appear beholden to the Federal Government. What does this mean in terms of social class formation? How

can we account for it?

ANALYSIS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

When the Willink Commission was set up in 1957, its terms of reference were as follows:

- (1) To ascertain the facts about the fears of minorities in any part of Nigeria and to propose means of allaying those fears whether well or ill founded.
- (2) To advise what safeguards should be included for this purpose in the Constitution of Nigeria.
- (3) If, but only if, no other solution seems to the Commission to meet the case, then as a last resort to make detailed recommendations for the creation of one or more new States, and in that case:-
 - (a) To specify the precise area to be included in such State or States;
 - (b) to recommend the Governmental or administrative structure most appropriate for it;
 - (c) to assess whether any new State recommended would be viable from an economic and administrative point of view and what the effect of its creation would be on the Region or Regions from which it would be created and on the Federation.
- (4) To report its findings and recommendations to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.¹

After its tour of the country and hearing of evidence the Commission recommended that no new states be created. What was the justification for this recommendation?

One evident point which emerges from the Commission's Report is that as far as it was concerned the reasons given to it by groups demanding the creation of new states were either weak, unjustified or both. In the West, for instance,

¹Nigeria, Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Fears of Minorities and the Means of Allaying Them, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1958), pp. 1-2.

it felt unjustified allegations against the Government of economic discrimination by those demanding the creation of a Midwest State. In addition the Commission was of the opinion that grievances against the Government were simply exaggerated. The Commission expressed similar views on the evidence presented to it both in the East and in the North. Even in those cases where the Commission agreed with the petitioners that there had indeed been some neglect by the Government, the Commission did not take such grievances seriously as the basis for creating a new states. As far as it was concerned such evidences of neglect by the Government did not show "deliberate and vindictive discrimination or even culpable neglect."¹ The Commission was quick to point out that uneven development was not a problem peculiar to Nigeria but a global phenomenon; as such it did not merit too serious a consideration.

The Commission was apt to express robust faith in its Report in the eventual triumph of political commonsense and of the forces making for greater democracy. After it accepted that some of the allegations of political manipulation and intimidation against the NPC Government in the North were not totally groundless, it expressed the view that "change is bound to come."² From its point of view, as the central government grew in importance, this "will reinforce

¹Ibid., p. 30.

²Ibid., p. 60

the ideals of tolerance expressed by the Northern People's Congress, because it will become to their interest to obtain every seat they can in the Federal as well as Regional Legislature; to do this they must contrive not to alienate their own outlying areas.. This we believe will constitute a far better safeguard for the position of minorities than the creation of a separate state."¹ It also expressed similar sentiment for the minority groups in the West.² In retrospect it may be said that the Commission ignored reality and sheltered behind faith.

On grounds of the above points, the Commission was unable to recommend creation of any states. It recommended, instead, constitutional safeguards such as a Police force "not subject to purely Regional control"; the designation as a special area for attention of the Delta areas of the country, requiring cooperation between the two southern Regions and the Federal Government; a declaration of special minority areas with Councils empowered to ensure that they receive adequate attention from the Regional governments and the inclusion in the Constitution of Human Rights bill.³ These proposals were based on the Commission's view that the Regional Governments were already moving along the right path. All that was needed, it thought, were a few technical adjustments.

¹Ibid., p. 73

²Ibid., p. 28

³Ibid., chapter 14

While some of the Commission's recommendations (e.g. special attention to the needs of the Delta provinces and the inclusion of a bill of Human Rights) are readily laudable, they failed to answer the needs which were expressed as demands for the creation of new states. They failed because, firstly, both the Commission and the Colonial Office which appointed it had no proper conceptualization of the problem to begin with. The obsession was very strong that demands for new states were purely minority ethnic phenomena. But as we have shown in the preceding chapter, it clearly was not a minority ethnic affair. When the Commission stumbled on an important clue, namely; the demands for Central Yoruba and Ondo Central States, it failed to recognise it. It duly noted that these demands were coming from areas of political opposition but it thought that "for the Opposition to ask for a separate state would make nonsense of parliamentary democracy."¹ What the Commission did not appreciate was the extent to which what was going on in Nigeria was not the practice of liberal democracy with which its members were no doubt familiar. It had simply assumed that Nigeria was, or would quickly become a liberal democracy. The robust faith in the gradual unfolding of democratic forces which the Commission expressed was totally unfounded and was brutally proved incorrect nine years later. Understandably, there appears to have been no analysis made by the Commission of

¹Ibid., p. 28.

the material basis for this so-called democracy--we say understandable because one can hardly expect the Colonial Office to have taken this approach. But had the Commission done so it would probably have discovered that opposition and governing parties in Nigeria at the time were different beasts from what such parties were in Britain. Nor did the Commission realise that there was no historical precedent of liberal democracy in Nigeria, that if anything the practice of, and the consequences from, colonialism were no testimonies for liberal democracy since colonialism was based on force.

Secondly, the Commission's assumption that the phenomenon of uneven development which was one of the grievances brought before it was simply part of a general, global phenomenon appears to us rather facile and not very helpful. As we have attempted to show in chapter five, uneven development in Nigeria was at least partly induced and not just the unfolding of purely economic forces. It clearly reflected the pattern of the use of public services and distribution of amenities by those who controlled or had access to the state for political purposes. It is also a consequence of their method and means of accumulation. We do not, of course, want to suggest that uneven development is not a global phenomenon; the point is rather that in Nigeria there were certain political forces which exacerbated the problem and to which the Commission appeared blind.

The third reason for the Commission's views was its apparent readiness to accept with little doubt the reports of the Regional Governments on how they were attempting to grapple with issues relating to particular areas where state demands were emanating from. Conversely, it appeared not to have granted the same generous disposition to the groups arguing for new states before it. This conservative bias by the Commission appears to have been in-built in its terms of reference. Consider, for example, that it was asked to consider the creation of states only as a last resort, only if there is absolutely nothing else that could be done to ameliorate the condition of the soi-disant minority groups. Such a term of reference seemed to have effectively guided the Commission to want to consider only the kind of safeguards it recommended. In the event, it merely played into the hands of the Governments and dominant political parties of the day who, even with the best intentions in the world, were obliged by the intricate and inseparable relationship between the acquisition and retention of political power and economic construction, to flout time and again the democratic process upon which the Commission placed so much hope. For these reasons, it could hardly be seriously argued that it did discover or ascertain the facts on which minority fears were based.

Like the Willink Commission before it, the Irikefe Panel also displayed a lack of understanding of what we

consider to be the basic forces that were making for continuous and increasing demands for the creation of new states. Unlike the Commission, it of course recommended that a number of new states be created. But this is not the point. After all when the 12 state structure came into being in 1967 it was not so much because the Gowon regime which brought it in was reacting to the basic and fundamental causes. Rather, it was reacting only to the psychology of the time; it appeared to have been treating the symptoms of the disease, not its cause. So too we see the recommendations of the Irikefe Panel. To illustrate, we have to analyse the reasons it gave for those recommendations.

When the Panel was established in August 1975, its terms of reference were as follows:-

- (i) To examine the question of the creation of more States in the Federation and, should the Committee find the creation of more States necessary and desirable to:
 - (a) advise on the delimitation of such States;
 - (b) advise on the economic viability of proposed States;
 - (c) advise on the location of the administrative capitals of the proposed States, and
 - (d) examine and advise on all other factors that may appear to the Committee to be relevant, so as to enable the Government to take a decision which will ensure a balanced and stable Federation.
- (ii) To receive and examine written representations from individuals, groups, organisations or associations who may have views on the desirability or otherwise of creating States in particular areas.¹

¹Nigeria, Report of the Panel on the Creation of States, (Lagos: Cabinet Office, 1976), p. 1.

After an extensive tour of the 12 states, the Commission recommended that some new states be created. It was on the basis of its recommendation that the Federal Military Government created seven additional States in 1976. These recommendations were based on some ten principles, some of which had to do with the need to preserve the federation; the viability of and the simultaneous creation of new states; the need for peace, harmony and stability; and the bringing about even development and bringing government nearer the people.¹

Since this study takes the Nigerian federal state as given we need not here discuss the Panel's view on the need to preserve the federation. We wish here to comment only on three of these principles, namely: bringing government closer to the people; enhancing peace, harmony and stability; and the need for even development. We shall consider them together since they are interrelated.

A very important question here is whether the creation of more states per se will fulfill any of these commendable principles put forward by the Panel. One cannot answer unequivocally. Therefore it is necessary to look back at Nigeria's history in search of acceptable answers.

In view of the large size of some of the old states (e.g. former North Western and North Eastern States) it would appear that creating more states there, as indeed recommended and implemented, would bring the government

¹Ibid., p. 55.

closer to the people. However, this answer is superficial because it presumes that state creation is the only way to bring government closer to the people. But it is not. One can think, for example, of using the local government system to achieve the same purpose. Local government system¹ was part of the colonial structure. It was a mechanism of control through which the colonial administration, through the Resident and District Officer maintained the hegemony of the colonial state. It was necessarily unrepresentative and undemocratic. When, in the early 1950's; the emergent Nigerian petty bourgeoisie went into dyarchy with the metropolitan bourgeoisie (limited self rule), the former moved quickly to attempt to democratise and make representative these local administrations.²

That the local government system failed is now obvious.³ Reasons for its failure include lack of qualified staff, and the permeation of local governments (or Native Authorities, as they were called in the North) of party political rivalries. It has already been shown in preceding chapters that such rivalries in Nigeria were accompanied by some dire consequences. In addition, most of the local

¹Cf. N. U. Akpan, Epitaph to Indirect Rule, (London: Frank Cass, 1967).

²This process has been described for the Western Region by M. J. Balogun, "Decentralization Under Civilian and Military Regimes: The Pattern in Western Nigeria, 1952-73", Studies in Comparative Local Government, Vol. 8, No. 1, 1974, pp. 50-58.

³See O. Fadahunsi, "The Politics of Local Administration

government councils were poor because they depended on the goodwill of the Regional Governments for much of their funds. Consequently, they had become ineffective in the discharge of their obligations to the public.¹

To remove some of the above ills of the local government system, the Federal Military Government has moved to reorganise and put it on a better footing.² Unlike previously, it will now take active part in these local governments. The bulk of their funds is now to come from the Federal Government and their officers are to be paid fairly good salaries. There was an attempt to circumvent party political manipulation and control of the Councils by organising the elections into them on non-party lines.³ At the time, the Federal Government and the Panel considered the local government system insufficient as a means of bringing government closer to the people. Hence the creation of the

in Western Nigeria 1958-1968", Quarterly Journal of Administration Vol. 9, Nos. 1-2, 1977, pp. 9-113.

¹See Western State of Nigeria, Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Civil Disturbances which occurred in Certain Parts of the Western State of Nigeria in the Month of December 1968 and Other Matters Incidental Thereto or Connected Therewith, (Ibadan: Government Printer, 1969), p. 90.

²Federal Republic of Nigeria, Guidelines for Local Government Reform, (Kaduna: Government Printer, 1976).

³A report in West Africa described the new system as "something of a revolution in most parts of Nigeria." West Africa, No. 3105, January 10, 1977, p. 53.

states. It seems that one has the best of both worlds now since this reformed system is combined with newly created states.

If the local government system can be considered to be one alternative to state creation as a means of bringing government closer to people, it remains to be seen how the Panel justified the exercise since that alternative was not deemed viable.

There are two points the Panel brought up here. One was that bringing government closer to the people meant greater and more even development. This, it thought, did not have much to commend it. As it noted:

While we agree that the presence of government is often followed by the provision of certain facilities like a secretariat, medical facilities, water supply schemes, we are not sure if these in themselves constitute the decisive factors in the visible economic and social progress which the country has achieved over the last ten years.

Furthermore, the Panel noted that a number of the already existing states could hardly raise the revenue they need from internal sources and were therefore very dependent on the Federal Government for their revenue. (See table 12). In 1973-74, for example, it would appear that only Lagos State raised more money per capita (N11.8) internally than it received from the Federal Government (N8.0). Benue

TABLE 12

PER CAPITA STATE GOVERNMENTS REVENUES BY SOURCES: 1973-74-1975-76 (N)

	1973-74			1974-75			1975-76		
	Total	Federal	Internal	Total	Federal	Internal	Total	Federal	Internal
1. Benue Plateau	5.0	3.8	1.2	7.8	6.2	1.6	74.1	72.0	2.1
2. Kano	4.5	4.5	1.0	5.7	4.5	1.2	10.7	17.3	3.6
3. Kwara	6.6	5.3	1.3	10.6	8.6	2.0	17.4	15.0	2.4
4. North Central	6.2	4.0	2.0	8.7	7.2	1.5	15.0	12.0	3.0
5. North Eastern	3.9	3.3	0.6	5.4	4.4	1.0	14.0	9.5	4.5
6. North Western	4.2	3.4	0.8	5.6	4.7	0.9	11.0	8.3	2.7
7. East Central	7.4	4.0	3.4	10.8	7.2	3.6	23.3	13.0	5.5
8. Rivers	17.0	14.6	2.4	50.0	44.0	6.0	57.6	51.6	6.0
9. South Eastern	8.2	5.2	3.0	10.3	7.5	2.8	22.4	17.0	5.4
10. Lagos	18.8	8.0	11.8	21.7	7.7	14.0	33.2	16.4	16.8
11. Mid-Western	30.8	27.2	3.6	46.5	38.7	7.8	48.0	41.5	6.5
12. Western	4.4	3.0	1.4	8.6	5.6	3.0	21.0	14.2	6.8
All States	7.4	5.5	1.9	11.4	8.6	2.8	15.4	21.1	4.4

Source: Adapted from Nigeria, Report
of the Panel on the Creation
of States, Table 6.

Plateau raised N1.2 per capita from internal sources while it received N3.8 from the Federal Government. In that year it appears that the States most dependent on the Federal Government were North East and North West. They raised from internal sources only N0.6 and N0.8 per capita respectively while the Federal Government transferred to them N3.3 and N3.4 per capita respectively. In 1975-76 the States were able generally to raise more money from their internal sources but this hardly affected their dependence on the Federal Government. Whereas Benue Plateau was now able to raise about N2 per capita internally, it received some N72 per capita from the Federal Government. Lagos State received nearly as much per capita from the Federal Government as it was able to raise internally. North East and North West States had also improved on funds they could raise internally over 1973-74.

How much revenue each State Government received from the Federal Government has varied over the years.¹ In the period covered in table 12 the criteria for revenue allocation from the Federal Government included inter alia, considerations of "population, derivation /and/ equality..."²

¹See Adebayo Adedeji, Nigerian Federal Finance: Its Development, Problems and Prospects, (London: Hutchinson Educational Limited, 1969), pp. 252-255.

²Federal Republic of Nigeria, Recurrent and Capital Estimates of the Government of Federal Republic of Nigeria 1978-79, (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1978), p. xxii.

The derivation criterion is the consideration given the state in whose area of jurisdiction the source of the revenue is located. It helps to account for the fairly consistently high revenue per capita which the Federal Government has returned to Rivers and Midwest (now Bendel) States where most of Nigeria's oil comes from. In 1973-74 they received from the Federal Government N14.6 and N27.2 per capita respectively. In 1975-76 they received, respectively, N51.6 and N41.5 per capita. In any case, with regard to most other states the Irikefe Panel was correct when it observed the crucial role played by national oil revenue: "Perhaps, if the financial position of the country (thanks largely to oil revenue) is not as strong the stories about the success of the 12 states might have been different."¹ Because of the kind of projects considered developmental, and the dependence of the States the Panel attached little importance to this particular development interpretation of bringing government closer to the people.

There was a second justification of the creation of new states which the Panel was more enthusiastic about. It was the interpretation that it would allow greater penetration into the society by the government. As it wrote:

Extensive governmental penetration in itself has a political value. Government representatives would be capable of transmitting and disseminating government intentions in the field, and it is also possible for government itself to be

¹Ibid., p. 64.

fully informed about the dreams, aspirations, and the problems of the people no matter how isolated they may be. If government penetrates to all remote areas in the country its presence and its activities would make the people become aware of the existence of the government. If this is the case then government will... have no need to depend on the political good will of recognised local authorities.¹

It seemed to have been this point that finally swayed the Panel to recommend the creation of new states.

In analysing these justifications, one finds none of them particularly inspiring. Take the first one about development. The kinds of projects enumerated above quite often have class biases to them. The most obvious kinds of development that followed on the heels of newly created states were the ones that favoured the administration. The new state capital is built or given a facelift. Quarters for civil servants are built. Roads into the capital are paved. Add to these the construction or improvements of airports to facilitate travel by officials. The spectacular improvement of Calabar since the creation of the Cross River State; or what is going on now in Owerri since Imo State came into existence are being repeated in many parts of the country. It is only in places such as Kaduna, Enugu, Ibadan, Port Harcourt and Lagos with their long established infrastructures that this kind of development is less obvious.

¹Ibid.

Outside of these capitals, life goes on virtually as before for the peasants. In fact, some of the development projects instigated by the governments now supposedly closer to them work against their interests.¹ This is the case because in official conception, development is still an activity which is planned at the State capital, by bureaucrats, and virtually imposed on the peasantry. Idode has shown with regard to Bendel, that attempts by the bureaucracy at stimulating rural development are plagued by lack of funds and bureaucratic squabbles, and that what little activity takes place there encourages the continuous

¹A clear example here would be the Igwu River agricultural project in Igbere, Imo State. The former ECS government, together with the World Bank, were going to develop the river for swamp rice production. In a Deed of Conveyance concluded between the ECS government and Igbere Community, the former was going to take over the project in perpetuity. A Legal adviser for the Community later discovered that the Deed dated 30 October, 1976 did not follow normal procedure. One of the signatories for the Community, a Chief, said he signed because a lot was promised him in return; the others simply did not understand the legal implications. When Imo State came into existence it wanted to hand over the project to the World Bank because it lacked the funds to continue. (Letter from Ministry of Agriculture to Barrister O. K. Ogwe, dated 8 October, 1976.) It was then that the World Bank's Deputy Project Manager started seeking to regularize its "entry into Igbere land." The Bank would, among other things, give credit to farmers, who in order to repay the loan, "must sell their rice harvest to the project." It would also hire their labour. (Letter to Barrister Ogwe from the Deputy Project Manager of the World Bank, dated 4 May, 1977.) In the event, the question of the alienation of land was overtaken by the Land Use Decree which vested all rights to land in the state. (See Nigeria, Official Gazette, Vol. 65, No. 14, 1978 in which appears the Land Use Decree of 1978.)

I am indebted to Barrister O. K. Ogwe for opening his personal files for me and for spending time discussing the Igwu River project with me.

evolution of capitalist farmers.¹ Idode's finding is not peculiar to Bendel State; it is rather a general phenomenon.

The Panel was not unaware that the 12 state structure had facilitated the emergence of a fresh crop of nouveau riche in the country. As we argued in chapter VI, it was the emergence of local capitalists that is equated by the Nigerian petty bourgeoisie with development. This, precisely, was the argument made before the Panel by proponents for new states. The Panel observed that: "There are too many mushroom wealthy men around State capitals for one to make any acceptable refutation to the State development thesis."² However, it did try to make a refutation when it argued, correctly, that

what is generally confused with development is raging inflation, conspicuous consumption and an excitement of wants which are not likely to be fulfilled given the best will in the world. It is debatable that the mythical common man's lot is appreciably better and, even if it is, that it was due to the creation of States.³

Thus questioning the plausibility of the development argument as basis for creating more states, the Panel leaned instead on the creation of more states as a means of enhancing government penetration of society which, it hoped, will

¹See John B. Idode, "Bureaucracy's Role in Rural Development in Nigeria: The Experience of Bendel State", Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Carleton University, 1979.

²Report of the Panel, op. cit., p. 17.

³Ibid., emphasis added.

have some salutary effects.

This is where a historical analysis of state-society relationship in Nigeria would have been useful, but the Panel does not seem to have done any that is penetrating. Otherwise it would have found that given the prevalent and deep-rooted 'development' mentality in Nigeria, the creation of more states would always be tantamount to playing into the hands of the rich and powerful at the expense of the poor and weak. That is, it would have found that instead of by-passing the local influential authorities as it hoped will happen, the exercise would be more likely, under prevailing circumstances, to encourage the emergence of a coterie of such authorities, at the expense of the 'common man'. After all, the new states were going to continue--and have done so--much as did the older ones, who continued much as did the Regions. There appears to be, therefore, no historical basis for the argument that greater government penetration will have generally salutary effects on the minority of the population. In effect, it seems to us, the Panel's point that government penetration of society was desirable still hands the developmentalists the same opportunity it had denied them by examination of their own argument.

The argument advanced by the Panel that as the government 'penetrates to all remote areas in the country its presence and its activities would make the people become aware of its existence' appears from our point of view, to

rest on a questionable paradigm. That paradigm is the one most commonly used by the modernization school of thought and its political culture variant.¹ From within this paradigm is posited the existence of participants in parochial political culture who are hardly aware of the existence of government other than the immediate and traditional structures with which they are familiar. Among others, Almond and Verba say that this parochial political culture characterizes new nations.² The Panel, apparently, believes this kind of political culture to characterize many remote parts of Nigeria; thus it speaks of the need of making such areas aware of the presence and existence of government.

The implicit suggestion that there existed hitherto remote areas in Nigeria where the existence of government, Regional or local, was not known appears highly questionable. A more plausible interpretation of peasant behaviour is that in many remote parts--even in not-so-remote ones--the peasants did not identify with the government; that they perceived it as remote and foreign. Remote and foreign here refer not to the physical location of the government but to the roles (or lack of same) it plays in the well-being of these peasants.

¹A good example here would be the work of Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, The Civic Culture, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963). The book was written with a view to understanding the content of democracy so as to aid the developing countries in acquiring same (pp. 4-5).

²Ibid., p. 26.

For it cannot be shown that activities of government did not reach the remotest corner of the country in search of surplus from the peasants. Either through agricultural extension services, the encouragement of co-operatives and self-help activities or simply through the drive to collect taxes, government had reached the remotest corners of the land. For obvious reason, however, none of these governmental activities enamoured the peasants. This is because, as we commented upon earlier, such activities either only aided the richer peasants who were frequently the beneficiaries of government agricultural programmes,¹ or were simply perceived by most peasants as mechanisms by which government takes surplus from them but returns nothing or very little to them by way of amenities.²

In this light, then, one should perhaps be speaking not so much of government penetration of remote areas as of the intensification of government activities in those areas. By extending the apparatuses of the state through the exercise of state creation, one is thus aiding the further evolution of nouveau riche, for they depend on government activities, assuming a continuation of past trends. The composition and activities of the Local Government Authorities already seem

¹See also Idode, op cit.

²Dupe Olatunbosun, Nigeria's Neglected Rural Majority, (Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1975), passim.

to indicate that this process may continue unabated. For even at this level it is the petty bourgeoisie who have made their way into power.¹ In the Bende Local Government area of Imo State, for example, of the twelve elected and three nominated members, there are two each of lawyers, contractors and traders, four teachers, while the remaining five consisted of a pensioner, a nurse, an insurance broker, an engineer and a postal agent.² In Bende and other rural Local Government areas, some of the members are absentee members who live and work in urban centres and who took the position because of expected immediate benefits (monetary), or because it would serve them as a launching pad into national politics. Involvement of the local people has been minimal. This is perhaps the weakest part of the attempt to bring government closer to the people. In practice 'the people' turn out to be the petty bourgeoisie with no serious attempt made to involve the farmers (or workers in the urban areas) more substantively than in having them cast ballots and go through the motions of democracy.

On the developmental plane, there appears to be little at the moment that will justify the argument that government is now closer to the people, unless by this one

¹See report of the kinds of people who were elected in West Africa, No. 3105, 10 January, 1977, p. 55.

²This was the standing as at September 1978 when I was in the field for research. I am indebted to Barrister E. E. Ukaegbu of the Bende Local Government Council, for all assistance rendered.

means the setting up of new state capitals and the construction of infrastructure for them which invariably follows. It may even be argued that many people now find employment in the construction activities thus engendered. This is quite true, but it hardly constitutes a justification for the exercise. The state governments and the local governments give the appearance of earnest interest in tackling the agricultural production and industrialization problems in the country. But this has been to little avail. In agriculture, for example, the state governments seem to be rigidly following the Federal Government's approach to the solution of problems there. This approach is to package and deliver to the rural areas agricultural inputs and methods of production, the lack of which it believes to be at the root of the problem.¹ To the extent that this calls for increased activity by the bureaucracy then the creation of many more bureaucracies could mean greater efficiency since it would relieve some pressure on the older ones. But this is only to skirt around the issue since, in any case, state creation has really meant the burgeoning of bureaucracy in the country. While this would facilitate the employment of recent university graduates, its maintenance and support will definitely call for increased exploitation of the peasantry, especially when the oil resource begins to dwindle. Moreover,

¹See Federal Republic of Nigeria, Third National Development Plan, 1975-1980, (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Economic Development, 1975), pp. 65-66 and also Federal Republic of Nigeria, Guidelines for the Third National

it is arguable that the bureaucratic approach is the best way to improve production in agriculture.¹

The foregoing all come to this: that the creation of more states is neither a meaningful way to bring the government nearer to the people since it has not been followed by increased democratization and the involvement of the local population; nor does it in any meaningful way enhance the kind of development that would benefit more generally all sections of the society. The Panel appears to us to have been unwarrantedly generous in supposing that by recommending the creation of more states it would help the cause of even development.

This brings us, finally, to the consideration of how the creation of more states could enhance the cause of harmony, peace and stability. We have noted in chapter VII the Panel's observation about the weakness of the bonds of national unity and the discord created between different groups in the fight for new states. No doubt this situation led the Panel to the view that if more states were created harmony would return. However, it does not necessarily follow that creating new states will bring harmony in its wake. The Panel's view here appears to us little different from Gowon's measure in 1967. We have already described

Development Plan 1975-1980, (Lagos: Government Printer, 1973), pp. 12-14.

¹Idode, op cit., maintains, with reason, that it is the wrong method.

this as focusing on the symptoms of the disease, not its cause. Just as the Panel noted that those who in 1967 rejoiced that a new state had been created for their area had later become leading proponents for yet more new states, so it may be expected that in a few years a fresh clamour of demands will be heard. In fact, there already is talk of demanding the splitting into two each of Imo and Anambra States as a means of attracting more and more federal revenue for those areas. When these kinds of demands gain momentum it may be expected that their proponents will, like their predecessors, exploit real and imaginary ethnic differences. This is not part of a recipe for peace and harmony or stability and unity.

Perhaps only in one sense can it seriously be said that the creation of states has helped the cause of unity. The threat of secession from any of the states is highly unlikely now.¹ Before the 12 states were created it was possible for the Regions to threaten secession when they were not getting their way. At the moment, however, it

¹Jonah I Elaigwu, "Subnational Units and Political Development in New States: An African Experience", Ph.D. Thesis, Stanford University, 1975, pp.331-332. Elaigwu believes the nature of conflict in the new states is different from the old. This is hardly the case. In both the four regions and the 12 states, we see the cause of conflict as having its basis in the intricate relationship between economic and political power. It is this that dictates how dominant groups at any one time see the claims of other groups for power. This would be the case whether one is examining intra or inter-Regional/State conflicts.

should be difficult for anyone, or a combination of any of them to do so. It is rather difficult to see how any of the states would attempt to do so, seeing that they each have limited economic bases, and that those now in power in particular states may not want to give up their positions even for an Eldorado if this means that they would be uncertain of remaining in positions of guaranteed access to the state. The larger developments on the continent are instructive in this respect. Before independence African nationalists assailed colonial boundaries for being artificial and divisive. There was talk of redrawing the boundaries and building continental unity. But once these leaders climbed into the saddles of power they quickly moved to invest the same boundaries with near-divine sanctity and, for the glorious vision of a United States of Africa, they offered an apology in the form of the Organisation for African Unity (OAU). All came to enjoy the power and none appeared willing to give it up for the cause of continental unity.

The burden of our argument in analysing the basis for the recommendations of the Willink Commission and Irikefe Panel has been that they do not really come to grips with what we contend to be the real forces that are pushing developments in Nigeria in the direction of creating more states. We do not mean thereby to suggest that the creation of states has been totally useless exercise. We would contend only that it does not hold out the hope for the general population of the country as their proponents would

lead one to believe. If the exercise holds out any promise, it is to the petty bourgeoisie. For this class the proliferation of state capitals and bureaucracy concomitant with state creation provides seats of political power, which power can easily be turned to purposes of accumulation along the lines suggested in chapter VI. It would appear that given this pattern of accumulation which is now clearly established--there is a deep feeling in the Nigerian society that any fight against corruption is, from the start, a losing proposition¹--and the dominant role of the state in the economy, the creation of new states was inevitable. Related questions of ethnicity only added urgency to the situation. For those who so desired, it also provided a convenient ideological grip. Clearly, the states have come to stay. In so doing, however, they have brought with them some serious contradictions.

CONTRADICTIONS OF CREATION OF STATES

When the question of the creation of new states entered the realm of public debate in the fifties, it was simply assumed that the new states would have the same power as did the old Regions. In fact, when the Midwest was created in 1963 it assumed similar powers and even

¹As one of the major national dailies put it in an editorial, "The most regrettable aspect of this unhealthy moral tone of our society is...there are enough Nigerians in and out of public service who are determined to preserve the cesspool of corruption..." Daily Times, 13 September, 1978, p. 3.

structures as did the old Western Region from which it was excised. And in the 1967 12-state structure, each state was "created with exactly the same powers and functions as the former Regions."¹ The former Military Governor of Benue-Plateau State is quoted as saying that the States were almost completely independent of the Federal Government:

In fact, the federal government doesn't know what we are doing, in that they don't direct us with reference to what we should be doing...The allocations are given to you. But when making your own budgets, you don't have to submit it to the federal government. We are completely autonomous. The federal government reads of Benue-Plateau State budgets in the newspapers as anybody else does. The states are completely autonomous.²

However, the situation in which the relative economic and political strength of the regional governments was matched by the weakness of the federal government has dramatically been reversing itself. This process began in the early years of the military interregnum, especially after the need arose for the federal government to flex its muscles against the trend toward secession by the former Eastern Region. (We shall return to the theoretical implication of this development in our conclusion). It has

¹J. H. Smith, "The Creation of State Administrations in the Former Northern Region of Nigeria," The Quarterly Journal of Administration, Vol. 17, No. 3, 1968, p. 124.

²Cited in Elaigwu, op. cit., p. 179.

proceeded apace since then, although it appeared to have been temporarily checked by the lethargy and indecision which characterized Gowon's rule from 1970 to 1975. But even then it had proceeded so far as to cause Chief Awolowo to write:

Indeed it appears to me that the system we are now operating is a Unitary Constitution with heavy devolution of functions to the so-called State Authorities which are becoming more and more Provincial Authorities, with Governors a little higher in administrative status than the French Prefects. In the context of Nigeria this kind of arrangement has little chance of success under a civilian setting: With politics at its best, it would groan poignantly, and at its worst, it would suffer nervous breakdown.¹

Awolowo also characterized the states as simply "inflated local councils."² While the Chief may have been exaggerating this characterization for effect, there is no doubting that the new states do not enjoy as much power vis-a-vis the centre as did the old four Regions. Herein lies one of the contradictions of the creation of new states: the more states created the greater has been the trend toward centralization.

Any plausible explanation of the situation at the concrete level has to take into consideration the nature of military rule itself, the effect of the civil war, the

¹Daily Times, 22 August, 1975, p. 7.

²Ibid.

resource bases of the new states and the oil industry and, not least of all, the attempt by the centre to enhance the further evolution of what may become a national bourgeoisie, a class which may have been incubated by the old Regions and parties. We shall comment briefly on some of these developments.

It was already becoming increasingly clear that if capitalist development was to advance in Nigeria beyond the import substitution stage, a stronger central government than what had existed hitherto 1966 would be required. As Williams and Turner have said, "The development of capitalist production required a centralized authority and rational administration. There was a clear contradiction between the politics of commercial capitalism in Nigeria and the policies for the development of stronger basis for capitalist production."¹ About the positions of the central and regional administrations in the First Republic we have already said something in chapter V. The three (later four) Regions could proceed as they had done to build bottling plants, breweries and cement factories for their own markets. But in order for the more basic industries to be established and for greater opportunities for local accumulation to be provided, decisive action by the Federal

¹Gavin Williams and Terisa Turner, "Nigeria" in John Dunn, ed., West African States: Failure and Promise, A Study in Comparative Politics, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1978), pp.149-150.

Government was necessary. However, rivalry between the various regional authorities (as a result of the feudalisation of the state) made this well nigh impossible, for it virtually paralysed the federal state. This is part of the reason why the proposed iron and steel industry saw very little progress until of late.¹ There was no agreement between the Regions on where it was to be located. Domestic uncertainty, rivalry and instability militated against any serious attempt to relentlessly pursue policies and programmes which may have resulted in a stronger capitalist base being established.

Domestic uncertainty had become quite endemic in Nigeria when the 'January boys'--a common appellation for the officers who triggered the January 15, 1966 coup--struck. One of their vowed purposes was the establishment of a strong central government.² Even after General Ironsi quickly displaced the 'boys', his regime moved to establish a unitary government. But so strong at this time was the resentment against any centralizing tendencies, especially in the North, that this move became a nail on Ironsi's coffin.³ Such a move was perceived in the North as

¹A Ministry of Information statement outlining briefly the efforts by the Federal Government to get the steel industry off its feet was published in Nigerian Herald, 15 March, 1976.

²See A. H. M. Kirk-Greene, ed., Crisis and Conflict in Nigeria: A Documentary Sourcebook 1966-1969, Vol. 1, (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 125.

³See, for example, St. Jorre, The Nigerian Civil War (Toronto: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1972), pp. 55-63.

detrimental to their opportunities of employment and existence.¹ Ironsi failed.

It seems now that what the Army failed to achieve by direct administrative fiat has been accomplished by the creation of new states and the Federal Government's role in the civil war. The creation of states in 1967 with very little political bargaining between the Federal Government and other interested parties² had the effect of disuniting the regional power blocks who hitherto had stood together in opposition. Timing appeared to be an advantage the Federal Government had for on the eve of Biafra's independence declaration the initiative in Nigeria was in its (FG) hands. For all intents and purposes the old Nigeria had collapsed; the politicians knew it. They were therefore willing to allow the Federal State much of the power it needed to rescue them out of the looming crisis. The situation allowed the Federal Government to quickly take those decisions which the feudalisation of the state had not allowed, including decisions about some aspects of the revenue from oil while the fact that all but one of the Military Governors was an Army Officer subject to commands from the Supreme Military

¹See Northern Nigeria, Nigeria: The Realities of Our Time (Kaduna: Government Printer, 1967), p. 5.

²The promulgation of the decree creating the 12 states "was not the culmination of lengthy preparation and detailed negotiations." J. H. Smith, op. cit., p. 121.

Council in Lagos facilitated centralization.

Even more important in its effect was the fact that none of the states--except Rivers and Bendel where the oil industry was based--had a particularly strong economic base. As table 12 shows, many depended on the Federal Government for revenue. And he who pays the piper calls the tune. The Federal Government is able to assume centre stage and to maintain it partly as a result of the huge amounts of revenue it has earned from increased oil exports. (See table 13 below.)

TABLE 13

NIGERIA'S PETROLEUM (CRUDE) EXPORTS 1973-1975

YEAR	QUANTITY (Thousand Tonnes)	VALUE (N million)	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL EXPORT
1973	94,302.2	1,893.5	83.1
1974	96,437.0	5,365.7	92.6
1975 ^a	81,658.0	4,560.9	92.7

a - Provisional

Source: Central Bank of Nigeria, Annual Report and Statement of Accounts For the Year Ended 31 December, 1975, p. 99; adapted from Table 48.

In this situation the states have become the channels through which it spends this revenue. Thus the state have become beholden to it, unlike the position enjoyed by the former four regions. Add to this situation the fact that the Federal Government in 1973 took from the States the power

the former Regions (through the Marketing Boards)¹ had to fix prices paid to agricultural commodities producers and that it has revised the prices payable upward, thus leaving the state governments with even less revenue, it becomes clearer why the states have increasingly become more dependent on the centre. Also higher education is now a Federal matter. Douglas Rimmer's conclusion that "Financial resources and political power have shifted to the centre... the States have been instruments of the centre rather than its constitutional peers" is essentially correct.²

All this appears to have placed the Federal Government in an appropriate position as a nursery for what may become an emerging national bourgeoisie. Not only is the central state now the major market through which foreign transactions are negotiated and transmitted, it is also the dispenser of the largest contracts. Consequently it is in a good position to encourage the emergence of such a national bourgeoisie. We are here unable to state categorically that this class is already strongly established. To do so would require more research. It is in that state's new rôle as a nursery for the emergent bourgeoisie that,

¹As of 1977 the States Marketing Boards were abolished and replaced by boards for each commodity or a group of commodities; the board's jurisdiction is national now.

²Douglas Rimmer, "Elements of Political Economy" in Keith Panter-Brick, ed., Soldiers and Oil, (London: Frank Cass, 1978), p. 153.

following the Indigenization Decree and its accompanying paraphernalia, the Federal Government has begun banning the importation of some items--textiles and shoes, for example. Presumably this is to enable Nigerians to go into the manufacturing of these items locally. The measure would also check further proliferation of the comprador bourgeoisie. This is obviously a far cry from what obtained during the First Republic. Then the Federal Government was so weak that both by commission and omission it played consistently into the hands of foreign capital; nothing that may be meaningfully described as elements of a national bourgeoisie existed then, as they do now. How successful the federal state's attempts will be in laying further foundation for a national as opposed to a comprador bourgeoisie is yet to be seen. For sure, the bourgeoisie which has emerged from the process we have tried here to analyse is still largely comprador, especially because of the Indigenisation Decree.

If the central government's new initiative has been less than successful it is partly a reflection of the inability of the rising bourgeoisie to step up and play its role. It is a bourgeoisie that is yet unsure of itself and which retains its petty bourgeoisie timidity. It is yet unable really to establish itself strongly in the economy. Having been incubated under the leadership and tutelage of the Regional and State governments it now apparently wishes the Federal Government to do its chores for it.

The biographical and generational proximity between this emergent national bourgeoisie and the comprador bourgeoisie on the one hand and the petty bourgeoisie on the other inclines us to the view that perhaps the former has yet to displace the latter as the governing class. This can, of course, only be a temporary situation. The power and influence of the petty bourgeoisie have not completely waned. In fact the 1979 elections should shunt these bourgeois fractions into the political arena. They were already beginning to make themselves felt in the Constitution Drafting Committee in which they were well represented.¹ The strong inclination, and fresh rationale, for the continued adoption of the capitalist approach to development in Nigeria may be attributable to the fractions of the bourgeoisie. Prior to 1979 it had been forced to organise in a clandestine manner by the ban on party politics. Just how active at this it had been was indicated by the fact that no sooner the ban was lifted in September 1978 than their political parties were announced--Chief Awolowo's Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) was the first on the scene.² It should be interesting to see how the contradic-

¹See the very insightful article, "The National Bourgeoisie Comes of Age: The Politics of Transition to Civilian Rule in Nigeria", Positive Review, No. 1, 1978, pp. 7-9.

²It can be argued that Chief Awolowo started preparing his political platform back in 1968 when he

tion between the national and comprador bourgeois fractions expresses itself.

To this emergent national bourgeoisie it may fall to grapple with the second contradiction resulting from the creation of new states. This contradiction lies in the fact that although one of the reasons given for the creation of states was the need to build unity, a measure of disunity has accompanied it. True, the threat of secession is now fairly effectively checked. The states, however, have also come to disallow or place restrictions on the movement of people and/or other factors of production. The most notorious cases were those in which states created out of the former Northern Region were reluctant to hire for employment persons from the former Eastern, Western or Midwestern Regions, and the former situation in the Rivers State where persons from the former East Central State were not very welcome. To some extent all the states engaged in this restrictive exercise. The situation prompted Professor Aluko to comment that

What is worse is that the present 12 state structure does not seem to be uniting Nigeria more than before. When there were three regions, the ethnic and sub-ethnic groups were more mixed in the respective regional civil services, schools, colleges, cabinets, parliaments and private employment. Today 'statism' has taken over.

published his The People's Republic. This work contains the basic policy proposals which the UPN has espoused-- integrated rural development, full employment, free education and health care.

It is virtually impossible for a non-native of a state to hold administrative, teaching, political or even commercial positions of any consequence in the state, unless he is an employee of the Federal Government and is seconded to the state, or he is an employee of a foreign-owned enterprise. At best he can hold appointment on contract, pending his displacement by an indigene.¹

Of course this situation did not just arise with the creation of new states. Its basis goes back, in fact, to the regionalization of the civil services in 1954. From then on each Region hired mainly its indigenes for employment. The creation of 12 and then 19 states has only exacerbated the problem. It is not very surprising that this should have happened. Aside from the fact that there already was a precedent, the fact that state creation proponents were often persons to whom access to previous state apparatuses had been denied meant that they would rush to take up any new positions. Also the bitterness and rancour which were excited in the process of previous association was quite likely to incline the new powers-that-be to want to exclude their erstwhile associates. Not to be forgotten, of course, is the fact that by engaging in this kind of activity the new group that takes office is better able to satisfy its clients. More than this, it can ascertain that offices are filled by persons the new group can easily influence so as to ensure that contracts and other opportunities for employment and accumulation

¹Sam Aluko, "Nigeria: The Issue of States," Africa, No. 44, April 1975, p. 23.

remain in its grasp.

One of the reasons the situation seemed to have got out of hand was the inability and/or unwillingness of the Gowon regime to bring it under some control. One of the consequences of the excessive latitude--for all their military training and discipline--which the Military Governors acquired in the latter days of Gowon's rule was that they tended to ignore Federal policies, and little was done from the centre to discipline them or to correct any anomalies. (Thus the issue of 'abandoned' properties in Port Harcourt was allowed to continue festering until it was tackled under General Muhammed's regime.¹

Perhaps it is over the compartmentalization of states and the concomitant restriction of manpower movement that the first serious clash of interests between the rising bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie will occur, especially if it impinges on the openness of the national market. If it successfully establishes itself in industry as the oil revenue may help it to do, the bourgeoisie is going to have to assure that there are as few hindrances as possible to the maintenance of a national market. On the other hand, the petty bourgeoisie

¹This matter was settled simultaneously with the creation of new states. The Federal Government direct the payment of N500 a year in lieu of rent for each abandoned house and the selling off of the buildings to the indigenes of the state in which they were located. Other Nigerians could bid for the buildings but it appeared clear that priority went to indigenes of the states they were located in. See the speech by General Muhammed in which these measures were contained: Daily Times, 4 February, 1976, p.3.

will continue to rely on the constituent state apparatuses to anchor itself. In this case it may not take too kindly or readily to the initiative of the bourgeoisie. At the time of writing, however, this borders on the speculative; the national market as such does not appear to be hampered seriously at the moment. What is immediately clear is that the protectionism of the state governments, if allowed unchecked, will not be conducive to the creation of lasting national harmony and greater stability.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The process by which new states have been created in Nigeria and the circumstances under which this has happened suggest some rather interesting points. It is a process that has often been confusing and unclear in its direction. What is more, indications are that this process has not exhausted itself: more cries go up for further restructuring of the state. It may be expected in some instances in the future that the politicians may find this to be a convenient promise to gain votes. This was already evident from the 1979 general elections.¹ Rather than speculate here on what the future may hold for further state creation, we shall restrict ourselves to a few remarks on some points of interest from our analysis of the process.

Marx remarked that the historical process does not always unfold in a manner easily recognizable. Probably because of this the process may appear as recumbent both to its participants and observers, thus inclining them to grasp for familiar themes as they attempt to shape or explain the process.

¹The National Party of Nigeria (NPN), the Nigerian People's Party (NPP) and the People's Redemption Party (PRP) reportedly promised to see that new states would be created. West Africa, No. 3228, 28 May 1979, p. 925.

Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. And just when they seem engaged in revolutionizing themselves and things, in creating something that has never yet existed, precisely in such periods of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service and borrow from them names, battle cries, and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in this time-honored disguise and this borrowed language.¹

This appears to us quite applicable to the history of state creation in Nigeria. In recounting this history, names of minority ethnic groups have been invoked, but our analysis of the process of state creation revealed that ethnicity was only a part of the issue--and a relatively small part of the explanation. To base an explanation of the process of state creation on ethnic conflict ignores the demands for new states among the Yorubas and the Igbos in the old Western Region (later Western State) and the East Central State.

Among those who have made the history of Nigeria some, notably Dr. Azikiwe and Chief Awolowo, have attempted to interpret this process of state creation. But their efforts have been, we would suggest, notably deficient. In part this may be a function of their close involvement in the process itself, an involvement which makes it difficult to consider the problem in all its ramifications. Part of the reason

¹Karl Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte" in Lewis S. Feuer, ed., Marx and Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1959), p. 320.

may also be that they too often adopted a traditional approach to federal states, seeing them as a means for creating ethnic balance. But such an approach, we argued, is based on a concern for relations between central and regional levels of the state. It does not deal adequately with the question of creating more states which in Nigeria was shown to be a matter of relations within the Regions or States. Azikiwe and Awolowo do not seem to have sufficiently recognized this. It should not be ruled out that in part also, their emphasis on ethnic conflict as the basis for federalism represented a means for gaining and retaining electoral support.

When in 1943 Dr. Azikiwe called for the restructuring of the Nigerian state his main concern appeared to be to prevent any one region from being so large as to pose a threat to others. Looking back on this stance, Azikiwe was to say in his lecture at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, in May 1974, that his approach then "was political, and not sociological . . . I did not necessarily overlook the tribal factor but, in my innocence I minimised it. . . . Since then tribalism has displaced patriotism as the centre of political gravity . . ."¹ Having apparently lost his "innocence" in the course of a long and often turbulent political career, he was later to advocate that tribalism (or ethnicity) should become, in the interest of successful federalism, the basis

¹Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, "The Need for More States," Sunday Times (Lagos), 19 May 1974, p. 5.

for regional political structures.¹ By 1974, Zik had perfected this tribalism theme as the basis for federalism into an art (or should we say, science), for he then proposed the creation of 22 states in Nigeria.²

A couple of years after Dr. Azikiwe's first proposal, Chief Awolowo argued that Nigeria should be divided into units closely paralleling the ethnic groups.³ In making this proposal, the Chief was clearly taking ethnicity into account. As he wrote then: ". . . the present three Regions were constitute [sic] without regard to ethnological factors. . . . There is no justification whatsoever for this arbitrary grouping."⁴ Two decades later he was still arguing that states be created in Nigeria using as a basis "the ten major national groups . . ."⁵ In our view the opinions of the two leaders did not seem to have addressed the problem at its roots. Nor do we think that the sizes of the old Regions was central to the issue of creating new states. It may

¹See Nnamdi Azikiwe, Tribalism: A Pragmatic Instrument for National Unity (Enugu: Eastern Nigeria Printing Corporation, 1964), and his "Essentials for Nigerian Survival," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 43, No. 3, 1965, pp. 456-458.

²Sunday Times, 19 May 1974.

³Obafemi Awolowo, Path to Nigerian Freedom (London: Faber and Faber, 1947), pp. 47-55.

⁴Ibid., p. 53.

⁵Obafemi Awolowo, The People's Republic (Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 241. Similar theme echoes in his Thoughts on Nigerian Constitution (Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1966). In this work Awolowo suggests the creation of 18 states. See pp. 100-104.

indeed have been desirable to reduce the size of the North by creating a Middle Belt State as was demanded by the UMBC and supported by the NCNC and the AG. This, in any case, would only have dealt with a part of the problem. New states were also being demanded in the East and the West which were smaller than the North. Besides, it is not quite clear that the latter Region's greater size always translated into commensurate political or economic gains for it. Professor Dudley seems to think that it did. He cites in support of his view the fact that the bulk of the expense for the 1962-68 Development Plan was made in the North as a result of the decision to build the Kainji dam instead of developing the natural gas resource in the south.¹ While this view appears likely, it presumes that all the important decisions about capital accumulation are made by Nigerians only. Foreign capital may well have influenced the decision not to develop the natural gas wells. We have no proof to support this here but it is remarkable that gas from the wells is still being flared. Adejuyigbe has tried to demonstrate that the North was not really disproportionately favoured in the distribution of resources, neither did it impose its views on the country as was often alleged. His conclusion was that "there is not much substance to the allegation that the

¹B. J. Dudley, "Federalism and the Balance of Political Power in Nigeria," Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies, Vol. 4, 1966, pp. 21-22.

Northern Region dominated the federation . . .

On our part, we are not dismissing the fact that fairly balanced (i.e., not lop-sided) regional structures are likely to facilitate more harmonious relations at the federal centre. What we would suggest, though, is that the emphasis which the NCNC and AG leadership placed on relations at the federal level appears to have had remarkably little to do directly with the demands for the creation of new states. It is true that proponents for new states often hold that their demands, if met, would help the cause of harmony and unity in the country. But the emphasis of their demands was at the regional, not federal level. Again, while indeed the dispute at the centre over the 1963 census figures² and over the 1965 elections were causes of political instability which reflected regional imbalance, it is doubtful that they were of greater magnitude to sources of instability within the regions. For example, there had been serious riots and deaths in the Northern Region in 1959 and 1960,³ and in the Western Region in 1962.⁴ None of this

¹Omolade Adejuyigbe, "The Size of States and Political Stability in Nigeria," African Studies Review, Vol. XVI, No. 2, 1973, p. 181.

²See S. A. Aluko, "How Many Nigerians: An Analysis of Nigeria's Census Problems 1961-1963," Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 3, No. 3, 1965, pp. 371-392; and I. I. Ekanem, The 1963 Nigerian Census: A Critical Appraisal (Benin City: Ethiope Publishing Corporation, 1972).

³See J. M. Dent, "A Minority Party--the UMBC" in John P. Mackintosh et al., Nigerian Government and Politics (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1966), pp. 486-490.

⁴Ibid.; see the chapter on "The Action Group."

was directly the result of unbalanced federalism. They were related, instead, as we have tried to argue, with more fundamental causes of the demands for new state creation in the country; namely, lack of access to the state apparatus and victimization by those who had such access or control.

Another instance when concern for federalism as such came to the fore in the question of new states was during the Ad Hoc Constitutional Conferences of September called by Lt. Col. (later General) Gowon to help determine the future of the country in the throes of the 1966 crisis. Here Regional delegates from the West, North and Midwest strongly suggested that state creation might be necessary to bring back some political sense into the country. These delegations were being cautious about the proposal. The North supported it on the condition that it was evident that "the majority of the people directly concerned express such a wish."¹ But it clearly recognized that the creation of states seemed necessary "to allay the fears of domination by sections of the country . . ."² The Eastern delegation was not opposed to state creation as such, but it was more cautious than the others. It did not think that the creation of states at that immediate point was desirable because it would not provide the immediate "sense of security" which was then, from its

¹A. H. M. Kirk-Greene, ed., Crisis and Conflict in Nigeria: A Documentary Sourcebook 1966-1969, vol. 1 (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 224.

²Ibid., p. 226.

point of view, imperative.¹ Later on, in October, the Eastern Region was less equivocal when its Consultative Assembly showed support for the simultaneous creation of states in all regions.²

Of course, like the Azikiwe and the Awolowo proposals, these advocates for state creation had their sight trained at what they believed to be the best model of federalism. These proposals were borne of the belief that the crises were primarily the result of regional imbalances,³ and the multi-ethnic structure of Nigerian society. It was this belief, coupled with the hope of undercutting (then) Lt. Col. Ojukwu in the East, that led Gowon to create 12 states on May 27, 1967. As he said then, "the creation of states" is the "basis for stability. This must be done first so as to remove the fear of domination."⁴

We are suggesting here that some appreciation of the nature of class formation and the roles of the state in Nigeria is important in an explanation for the process of state demands and state creation. This requires taking a historical approach to the problem. We have tried to show

¹Ibid., p. 224.

²Ibid., p. 257.

³Eastern Nigeria, January 15 Before and After, vol. 7 (Enugu: Government Printer, 1966), p. 5.

⁴Faith in Unity (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, n.d.), p. 49.

what social classes evolved as a result of the restructuring of the pre-capitalist social formation... It is suggested that due to the nature of the peasantry and the fact that the working class is not yet fully proletarianized these two classes--the peasantry much more than the working class, of course--were apt to be politically neutralized through patron-client linkages with the class that was dominant at independence. The relative economic weakness of the petty bourgeoisie and the dominance in the national economy of foreign capital meant that this class had to look to the state as a mechanism which it could manipulate to help it accumulate. The state could play such a role because of its involvement in the economy. It was through the agency of the state, as we tried to show in chapter VI, that those who acquired access to it were able to begin to accumulate capital. We have tried to show that it was in the struggle for access and control of the state by elements within the petty bourgeoisie that one can seek an explanation for the restructuring of the Nigerian state.

Our analysis suggests two related points of some interest: the role of force in the accumulation process and the consequent instability, and the nature of the post-colonial state in Nigeria in the period under consideration here. It was suggested that primitive accumulation, the characteristic element of which is force, was a large element of the accumulation process. Primitive accumulation is

described by Marx as entailing not only brute force but also the use of "the power of the State . . . to hasten, hot-house fashion, the process of transformation [of pre-capitalist modes of production] into the capitalist mode, and to shorten the transition." In this process force becomes "itself an economic power."¹ Such appears to have been the case in the process we have been considering. Some of its consequences were the fragmentation of the state by the petty bourgeoisie, the increasing instability of the state, increasing demands for the restructuring of the state, and its eventual collapse in 1966.

Those elements of the petty bourgeoisie who were successfully accumulating capital were those who controlled or had access to the state. What is often little realized is the extent to which the state and those who controlled it became virtually fused. It may be said indeed that from 1957 onwards several state levels of the Nigerian state system were virtually appropriated by those elements in the dominant class organized in the NPC, AG and the NCNC in the North, West and East. We have spoken of this as the feudalization of the state. Even the centre appeared to have become the private preserve of the NPC and the NCNC which formed a coalition government there throughout the period under consideration. The state of affairs, in particular between

¹Karl Marx, Capital: A Critical Analysis of Capitalist Production, vol. 1 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1965), p. 703.

1960-65, suggests to us a certain lack of, or at least questionable degree of, relative autonomy of the Nigerian state. It is this that explains the fact that the political struggles within the class that controlled it quickly became reflected in the state itself. It is this also which explains the fact that it was frequently difficult to tell in this period just where the effective power of the state lay: in the regions or at the centre. With virtually no relative autonomy from the elements of the class which controlled it and with every movement in that class causing ripples in the state structures, it is little wonder that the state collapsed in 1966. Before this time it was virtually paralysed, unable to overcome the forces pulling it in several directions. The January 1966 coup was a direct response to this state paralysis.¹

One of the important consequences of the coup was that it allowed the Nigerian state to regain some degree of relative autonomy. This took the form of the attempt by the Federal Military Government to bring about a stronger central government and emasculate to some extent the regional state apparatuses. The process was by no means straightforward as the state went from one crisis to another, culminating in a civil war. On the eve of the tragedy which their use of state power for private purposes had precipitated, the

¹For details of these discussions, see Eastern Nigeria, January 15 Before and After; John de St. Jorre, The Nigerian Civil War (Toronto: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd.); and Kirk-Greene, op. cit., to name only a few.

governing class appeared prepared to allow the state to rescue it.¹ Perhaps the choice of Gowon as Head of State at this time is instructive. He was very likely not to arouse to any great extent the suspicion of the elements of the dominant class whose control over the state was being curbed. Although Ojukwu refused to recognize Gowon as Head of State, his (Ojukwu's) posture seemed to have been purely legalistic, for his argument was mainly that Gowon should be replaced by someone like Brigadier Ogundipe whose military rank was higher than Gowon's.² In any case it was under Gowon that it appears that some measure of relative autonomy attached to the state, but not for too long. No sooner the war was over than the Military Governors and Administrator attempted once more to feudalize the state. Between 1970 and 1975 it appeared that Nigeria had returned to the status quo ante bellum. Once more, the state was paralysed. Once more a coup d'état seemed to have saved the day.

What is remarkable about the military interregnum is that it appears to mark the first time when one can ascribe any degree of relative autonomy to the state. We may suggest that this explains why the Federal Government was able to follow through with the creation of new states. The two

¹ Apparently it was the civilian "federal government [that] handed over power to the army to stabilize the situation." C. Odumegwu Ojukwu, Biafra, vol. 2 (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1969), p. 9.

² Ibid., pp. 11-13.

instances (i.e., in 1967 and 1976) when several states were created coincided with moments of some degree of relative autonomy of the state. These are quite different conditions from those in which the Midwest was created in 1963. The creation of the Midwest appears more like the result of a ganging up against the AG by the NPC and the NCNC, especially since, as we saw in chapter VII, the NPC and NCNC would not allow a similar restructuring in the North and East where the demands for it were just as clear and genuine. It also appears remarkable that just as the feudalization of the state during the First Republic had led to the political harassment of those who demanded creation of states, so the process repeated itself when, during the military interregnum, feudalization of the state was once more observable. In the latter period as in the former the powers-that-be attempted to stay the Federal Government's hand in creating more states. Hence Gowon reneged on his promise to create more states at the end of the war.

If the example of Nigeria, especially during its First Republic, is anything to go by, it would appear to question the extent to which relative autonomy may be said to attach to post-colonial states. In these post-colonial social formations the relationship between the state and the governing class is often so close that, as many scholars have observed, the state seems to serve the governing class as an instrument for accumulation. It is precisely because

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of this relationship that, in the Nigerian case and at the particular historical period in question, the state seemed to have lacked any clearly observable degree of relative autonomy vis à vis the governing class. This is an alternate view to that of Alavi and Saul (see chapter II). For Alavi, the post-colonial state is not the instrument of either the foreign bourgeoisie or the locally dominant classes; instead it mediates between their interests. Saul attributed some autonomy to the state personnel. The Nigerian example during the First Republic (1960-1965) appears to contradict these views. For one thing, the foreign bourgeoisie was effectively, if not physically, represented in the Nigerian state and in the decision-making circles. The role of foreign planners in the economy was already pointed out. The heavy dependence of important elements of the petty bourgeoisie and the evolving comprador bourgeoisie on foreign capital seemed to have assured the interests of the foreign bourgeoisie. It was only during the military interregnum when we have suggested some measure of relative autonomy attached to the state that it (the state) made any attempt to mediate between the local and foreign capitalists. This was when the Indigenisation Decree was promulgated and measures banning the importation of some textiles and footwear were announced. We may finally point out that if at certain historical periods the state can be completely independent as in Marx's analysis in the Eighteenth Brumaire,¹ then it seems to us quite conceivable that there

¹Marx, in Feuer, ed., op. cit.

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¹Marx, in Feuer, ed., op. cit.

may also be exceptional periods when this autonomy may be unobservable. To suggest this should by no means be seen as denying that ordinarily relative autonomy attaches to the state.

This study has sought to show how intricately related are issues of state creation and class formation and consolidation. In turn, these issues are inseparably related to the capitalist approach to development in Nigeria. Hence the drive to create local capitalists and the consequences it has had for fierce competitions for access to state apparatuses. It may then be asked whether Nigeria's continued commitment to the capitalist approach to development will affect either the future of states already created or lead to the creation of yet new states.

As was seen in a preceding chapter, the CDC had proposed for Nigeria an ideology of mixed economy after it rejected socialism as a national objective on the grounds that the achievements of socialist countries have not been better than those of bourgeois countries. The CDC's views on this matter were subsequently entrenched in the new Constitution. In it Nigeria is committed to capitalism, with a touch of welfarism thrown in for good measure. The state, it recommends, is to "operate or participate in . . . the major sectors of the economy" but this "without prejudice to the right of any person to participate . . . within the major sector . . . [and] to engage in any economic activities

outside the major sectors of the economy."¹ It goes on to enjoin the state to promote "a planned and balanced economic development"; to ensure that national resources are used for "the common good" and that "all citizens" have food and shelter and entitlement to "reasonable national living wage, old age care and pensions, and unemployment and sick benefits"²

These stipulations provide amply for the emergent bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie. What they hold for the workers and peasants are at best questionable. One needs only to recall here that the existing system of national wage settlements has not made for any remarkable improvement in the lot of the workers. As for the peasants, they have consistently been left outside any attempts by the state to provide social amenities. For sure, however, this approach to development will ensure continued (complete and/or partial) proletarianization and pauperization of the peasantry. In addition, it will produce a further swelling of the ranks of the lumpenproletariat, the group Marx appropriately referred to as "the 'dangerous' classes" because from among them were "vagabonds, criminals, prostitutes."³ This will have serious consequences for a country which already has a disturbingly high degree of armed robbery.

¹Federal Republic of Nigeria, The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1979), p. 8.

²Ibid., p. 9.

³Marx, Capital, p. 602.

One central point which has consistently come up in issues about state creation and which was obvious both in the findings of the Willink Commission and the Irikefe Panel is that of even development. Proponents for new states always argued that if met, their demand would enhance the even development of the country; or they alleged that whichever government they lived under discriminated against them in location of development projects. It is probable, no doubt, that it was to check this situation for which it was provided in the 1979 Constitution that the state shall ensure planned and even development. Keeping in mind our earlier argument that what development means for the governing class is their own capital accumulation and that this certainly helped to induce uneven development, we may go on to argue that even if this were no longer to be the case, the chosen path of capitalist development cannot change the pattern of uneven development. On the contrary, it can only enhance, not change or reduce it. For as Ernest Mandel has argued, correctly in our view, "unequal development between regions and nations is the very essence of capitalism, on the same level as the exploitation of labour by capital."¹ Mandel argues that uneven development is not necessarily the result of factors found in

¹Ernest Mandel, Capitalism and Regional Disparities (Toronto: New Hogtown Press, 1973), p. 5. This pamphlet is a translation of Mandel's original article in Socialisme, No. 17, April-May-June 1969, pp. 28-40. A more concrete and very interesting study of this problem of uneven capitalist development is Michael Hechter, Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development, 1536-1966 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975).

pre-capitalist social formations; it is associated with rates of profits and movement of capital. (Indeed, it was to this factor that the Willink Commission alluded, rather somnolently, when it observed that uneven development was a global phenomenon.)

The argument may be demonstrated. One only needs to look at the pattern of development in advanced capitalist social formations. The presently leading capitalist nation, the United States, is not evenly developed. The same is true of Canada, with its perpetually depressed Maritime region. At present one is witnessing in Canada the movement of capital from Montreal to Toronto and Calgary. Europe has its Portugal and Spain which do not have the same level of economic development as, say, France or Germany. Italy has its depressed southern region while in Britain, Scotland and Wales--not to mention Northern Ireland--appear like poor cousins to England. With these examples in mind, it is difficult to see how Nigeria, following the same development path as these countries, can hope to avoid uneven development. What is more, opportunist members of the bourgeoisie or petty bourgeoisie--or even other persons--may portray such uneven development in Nigeria as a function not of the very economic and political forces which the Constitution approves but of ethnic machinations. In this instance, as in earlier ones, the phenomenon of uneven development will again be a basis on which a separate state (and with it 'even development') is demanded.

If we are correct in positing that the basic forces making the demands for the creation of new states are to be located in the nature and consequences of colonial capitalism and the social class situation to which they gave rise, it is reasonable then to suggest that perhaps the only effective check on the situation would be one that negates capitalism. This, of course, is assuming that it is undesirable to create a separate state virtually for every clan in Nigeria. The attempts at substitution of Nigerian capitalists for expatriate ones is no strong answer to the consequences of colonial capitalism; it only exacerbated the demands for the creation of new states since such states provide incubation grounds for local capitalists. The nationalists would, of course, argue that it is better to have local than to have foreign capitalists. This would be true if it is simply capitalism that one wants. However, when this economic arrangement is doing very little for the working man and the farmer and when it seems only to enhance uneven development for which the creation of more and more states cannot provide an effective answer, the need for an alternative becomes much more obvious, even imperative. Consider also that by pursuing capitalism Nigerians may be increasing their dependence on external capital. New states have been created and more may yet come, and some of them are going to be perpetually economically depressed. Such continually depressed states or regions would become suppliers to other states of cheap labour, not much more. Industries will

hesitate to locate in them, preferring to go where the external economies are greater. In this situation if the demands for the creation of new states are not intensified there may at least develop fights among the states over the distribution of national revenue and federal government subsidies.¹ These two things may, of course, happen simultaneously. Questions such as these can hardly be effectively dealt with under the capitalist approach to development, based as it is on the continuous enrichment of a bourgeois class and the increasing exploitation of labour. The unevenness of development engendered by the capitalist process appears even more stark in the periphery.

Given past and present conditions of the class situation, it may be speculated without prejudice to the immediate questions of class formation and separate state demands, what future there is in Nigeria for socialism. In fact these issues are all linked in the same bundle insofar as the demand for new states is indeed a question of development. And to discuss development without direct references to the basic political issues of class formation and struggle is to play the ostrich which buries its head in the sand. After all, even the matter of common good which the Constitution enjoins the state to seek is very much a political question involving the relationships between social classes.

¹The allocation of revenue from federal sources has always been, and may continue to be, a source of contention between Regions and the federal government and among the Regions themselves. See, for example, Adebayo Adedeji, Nigerian Federal Finance: Its Development, Problems and Prospects (New York: Hutchinson Educational Ltd., 1969), pp. 231-255.

Happily, the question of socialism has found its way into the arena of public debate in Nigeria in a more meaningful sense than as 'African socialism' to which we already alluded. From Chief Awolowo's thought on the matter, through the debates that ensued when the CDC was doing its work and subsequently, there appears to be a discernible small but qualitative move away from African socialism. Although Chief Awolowo appears to recognize antagonism between classes in his advocacy for a socialist state, he errs, in our view, in his belief that these antagonisms are easily reconcilable. His emphasis on harmony and love rings hollow when set against the notion of class struggle as the motor of economic and political development.¹ It was also remarkable that this question of socialism made its way into the deliberations of the CDC where its sub-committee on national objectives recommended--though it was not eventually adopted--"that the ideology that is most relevant to our society . . . is that of socialism . . ."² There was also Comrade Ola Oni's unsuccessful attempt to establish a socialist party following the lifting of the ban on political activities in 1978.

¹On Awolowo's socialism, see his The Peoples Republic (Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1968), pp. 170-197. Another Nigerian advocate of socialism who quotes Awolowo with approval is Akin Omoboriowo in his Nigeria and Social Reform (Ibadan: African Press Ltd., 1978).

²Federal Republic of Nigeria, Reports of the Constitution Drafting Committee, Vol. II (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1976), p. 36.

As may be expected, the debate of the merits of socialism in Nigeria has produced not only some able defenders of the status quo but also confusionists. Among the latter is Dr. Dayo Olaoye who rejects both socialism and capitalism (for being alien to Nigeria) and instead "submits that Nigeria's politico-socio-economic ideology be called RAMATISM."¹ The defenders of the status quo include Chief Jerome Udoji who characterized socialism as an attempt to redistribute poverty while capitalism (or mixed economy) is, in his view, an attempt to distribute wealth.² On the same side as Chief Udoji is Alhaji Shehu Malami who staunchly defends mixed economy ("the attraction of better remuneration and profit") as Nigeria's path to the rosy future.³

Any serious consideration of the possibilities for socialism in Nigeria will have to take into account the present class situation. It has been shown that the peasantry is very attached to land and tradition and is susceptible to patron-client relationships with the governing class. So too

¹S. Dayo Olaoye, A Nigerian Ideology (Lagos: Bisco Communications Co., 1977), p. 15. This writer finds nothing different in "Ramatism" from capitalism (p. 18) except that the appellation does honour to the late General Murtala Muhammed.

²He made the statement during a nationally televised debate in Nigeria in September 1978. The subject of the debate was the relevance to Nigeria of capitalism and socialism.

³Alhaji Shehu Malami, Nigeria's New Constitution: Speeches and Memoranda (Lagos, n.d.), p. 9. For a socialist critique of Alhaji Shehu's views, see Akin Oyeboode, "Where Shehu Malami Erred," Sunday Times, 7 March 1976, p. 5.

is the working class, or at least a good part of it. Then there is the dominant class which easily tries to displace all questions of class struggle into ethnic channels hoping that ethnic consciousness will mask its exploitative relationship with the workers (and farmers. The susceptibility of the working class to patron-client relationship with the exploiter class, their links with the peasantry and the tendency on the part of some of its leaders to aspire to (petty) bourgeois status combine to incline this class toward economism. As Lenin has argued, while workers should and must struggle for better pay and better working conditions the attempt should be made to link these issues with questions of political power.¹ It appears to us, though, that in the Nigerian situation, especially given the state's attempts to control the wage level and the constraints this puts on workers, economism may already be a progressive step if it helps to eat into the very high profits of foreign enterprises.

(Barclays Bank Nigeria's 1977 pre-tax profit increased by 69 per cent over 1976, "from N20.6m to N34.45m and after tax by 96 per cent, from N10.3m to N19.2m.")²

Further radicalization of the proletariat and frustration of the wants of the peasantry may be expected if

¹V. I. Lenin, What's to be Done? Burning Questions of our Movement (New York: International Publishers, 1969).

²West Africa No. 3158, 23 January 1978, p. 155. In the face of such profits the Federal Military Government continued to hold down workers wages "in the interest of the economy." Daily Times (Lagos), 1 March 1979, p. 32.

current developments continue. Low wages, high cost of living and inflation may force workers into strike positions. The state may then clamp down on the workers' demands in an attempt to ensure stability and reassure foreign capital and the local private sector. However, revenue from oil may help the state to ameliorate the situation by allowing it to meet some of workers' demands. In any case the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie are not going to allow any overt class struggle to develop. They may be able to check the emergence of such a situation or anything remotely similar to it by increased authoritarianism, by adopting a measure of populism, by appearing radical, or even by a judicious combination of all these at once. The latter appears to be the present posture: some radical pronouncement on African policy, rhetorical and ritualistic pledges to help the mythical common man, some commitment to urban housing and increased food production. All these elements were present in the platforms of the political parties that contested the recent general elections. The elements of the emerging bourgeoisie that are represented in the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) which is now assuming national power seem to have time on their side because oil revenues may allow them to implement some of the populist policies. A certain discernible tendency to bourgeois aspirations which appears widespread in the society--many people still think they or their children will make it to bourgeois/petty bourgeois status--easily swings popular opinion to the

side of the bourgeoisie when its authoritarianism is seen as helping to minimize so-called social nuisance. Such was the case in 1978 when the Federal Government banned university student organizations (in particular the National Union of Nigerian Students, NUNS) because the students actively demonstrated against some government policies in education. The widespread materialism in the society also plays into the hands of the emergent bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie. It permits peasants and some workers to perceive them as the successful 'sons and daughters'.

It would appear then that any immediate prospects for socialism in Nigeria are rather bleak. This, of course, is not because no serious class contradictions exist in the society. But for these class contradictions (such as between the peasantry and workers on the one hand and the exploiting class on the other) to lead toward a movement for socialism they also have to be subjectively perceived by a significant proportion of those who are their victims. In other words, some degree of consciousness to transcend them must also exist. In our opinion this is hardly the case at the time of this study, even if some movement in this direction cannot be totally denied. Worsening conditions for the exploited classes may further this development in the longer run. At that point the multi-ethnic nature of the society may still pose some obstacle. It may still be easy for those opposed to such development to appeal to workers' and peasants' ethnic

sentiment. However, to call attention to these obstacles must not be seen as a suggestion that Nigeria could never be socialist. Our sympathies notwithstanding, a realistic appraisal of the current situation, at least in the light of this study, inclines us to what may appear as a pessimistic view. What happens in the future will greatly depend on changing national and international economic and political circumstances and how these affect, and are in turn affected by, the contemporary class situations. Such dialectical changes are not often amenable to accurate speculations or predictions.

To summarize, we have tried to argue that the restructuring of the Nigerian state is best explained by struggles for access to, or control of, the state by the petty bourgeoisie which became the governing class at the time of independence. This class needs such access because the state was instrumental to its accumulation of wealth and capital. From among the elements of this class which first acquired such access or control, a bourgeoisie began to evolve. Those who lacked such access or control demanded or supported the creation of new states to allow them better accumulation opportunities. In chapters III and IV we tried to show how this class evolved and what its characteristics were. We tried to show in chapter VII that it was indeed mainly those who lacked access to the state who supported the demands for state creation.

It has been our view that the colonial state in Nigeria shaped the post-colonial state and that the latter continued much as did the former. While it was suggested that the colonial state showed some degree of relative autonomy vis à vis the different elements of the British bourgeoisie or their representatives in Nigeria, it was also pointed out that it was still the instrument of that bourgeoisie as a whole. The post-colonial state appeared to have lacked any appreciable degree of relative autonomy, hence its inability to perform its functions fully during the First Republic and its eventual collapse in 1966.

This study has attempted to look at the question of the restructuring of the Nigerian state from a fresh perspective. For a long time this question has been examined either from the traditional approach to federalism or from purely ethnic point of view. The use of class analysis, despite the difficulties this entails for establishing class relations in the periphery, made possible a critical analysis of the reports and recommendations of the Willink Commission and the Irikefe Panel which have previously studied the problem. We suggest that they either failed to find the facts or they did not appreciate the ramifications of such facts even when they found them. Indeed the basic forces making for state creation may have been contained to some extent by the creation of 19 states out of the original 3 regions. We doubt, though, that even development will now necessarily follow, or that

demands for the creation of new states will cease. Indeed, as the new states come to be seen more and more as means of gaining access to revenues from the Federal Government the creation of additional states may be demanded. In other words, the process of state creation is likely to continue even though the context will have changed. The creation of new states and the weakening of the powers of accumulation previously enjoyed by the old regions means that the Federal Government may become the major force in the process of capital accumulation. And although capital accumulation will continue to go on through development planning the question remains whether private accumulation is secured or whether it will be diverted into conspicuous consumption. It is quite conceivable that the creation of new states will transform these states more into avenues of conspicuous consumption for those who control or have access to them. This would leave the Federal Government a much greater role in capital accumulation and development planning. In that event the gravitation of the nascent bourgeoisie to the federal centre appears logical. A stronger role for the Federal Government in capital accumulation and development planning augurs well for the eventual challenge of the dominance in the national economy of international capital. But that can only be if and when conspicuous consumption is controlled and the state moves into those sectors of the economy where foreign capital remains dominant.

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