

BULLETIN

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The Militarization of Africa

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Introduction

Daniel Volman

After the Cold War, it was widely expected that the process of militarization that had developed when the continent was treated as a battlefield in the global superpower rivalry would be quickly reversed. Africans, it was hoped, would be among the principal recipients of the anticipated “peace dividend” as money was redirected from military spending to economic development. And the international community would come together to help Africans resolve existing conflicts and prevent violence and warfare from breaking out in the future.

Instead, the dynamics of conflict in Africa evolved in unexpected new directions. Old conflicts continued in Sudan, Angola, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. New internal conflicts—particularly the collapse of Somalia and the civil war in Rwanda that culminated in the genocide of 1994—broke out. And African troops invaded other African countries, igniting the border war between Eritrea and Ethiopia and the plunder of the valuable minerals of the Democratic Republic of Congo by the armies of no less than five of that country’s neighbors.

For their part, the leading members of the international community—and especially the United States—pursued an increasingly erratic and confused approach to the escalating violence in Africa. In some instances, the Western powers intervened directly in African conflicts, as the United States did in Somalia, France did in Rwanda and in Côte d’Ivoire, and Britain did in Sierra Leone. But more often the major Western powers have done whatever they

could to avoid any substantive military involvement in African conflicts. The Bush Administration’s successful effort to ensure that U.S. troops would play only the most minimal role in the current peacekeeping operation in Liberia is just the most recent, and most inexcusable, example of this. At the same time, certain parts of the African continent have acquired a new strategic significance for the United States because of their oil resources and, even before the events of 11 September 2001, because of their importance as battlefields in the new global war against terrorism.

This issue of the *ACAS Bulletin* is devoted to an examination of several aspects of the continuing militarization of Africa. In separate articles, Daniel Volman and William Reno analyze the development and impact of U.S. national security policy toward Africa. They discuss the Bush Administration’s view of U.S. security interests in Africa, the evolution of American military activities in Africa, and the consequences of these activities for African security and for U.S. policy goals. Herbert Howe appraises the evolution of the Nigerian military under civilian rule and looks at the role of the military in domestic politics. Finally, Eric Reeves examines the continuing peace talks aimed at reaching a negotiated settlement of the war in southern Sudan and assesses the consequences of the collapse of the peace process.

Bush Administration Policy Toward Africa

Daniel Volman
African Security Research Project

The purpose of this paper is to stimulate discussion of the national security aspects of the Bush Administration's policy toward Africa. This policy, and the viewpoint that forms its basis, can be expected to dominate U.S. policy for years to come and to define the agenda for U.S. relations with Africa far beyond the President Bush's current term in office. This paper will examine five central issues with major implications for African security, survey current U.S. actions, and outline the likely course of future policy.

THE WAR ON TERRORISM

The Bush Administration has responded to al-Qaeda activities in East Africa and the Horn by providing counter-terrorism assistance to a number of African states and by conducting its own counter-terrorism operations in the region. U.S. military forces are engaged in surveillance operations aimed at monitoring and interdicting possible terrorist travel routes at sea and suspected terrorist activities in the region, particularly in Somalia. After 11 September 2001, the Pentagon received permission from Djibouti to establish the headquarters for the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (its regional counter-terrorism command center) in that country. In addition, C.I.A. operatives are working out of Djibouti, from where they directed the flight of the Predator drone aircraft that was used to fire the missiles that killed an alleged al-Qaeda leader and four others in Yemen in November 2001.

With American support, eleven East African countries—Burundi, DR Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Seychelles, Tanzania, and Uganda—met in Ethiopia in July 2003 to approve a plan for regional cooperation, including intelligence sharing and improved monitoring of borders, financial transactions, and trade. To enhance the counter-terrorism capabilities of states in this part of Africa, the administration has begun spending \$100 million redirected from other programs in the FY 2003 budget to provide U.S. training of police and customs officers in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Djibouti, and Ethiopia. The administration has requested funding in the FY 2004 budget for more than a dozen countries, including Botswana, Chad, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, and South Africa.

The American-led war on terrorism will be a prolonged campaign of military, diplomatic, and economic activities throughout the world and Africa will be an important theater in this war. East Africa and the Horn will continue to be the focus of U.S. concerns. But in the coming years, both active military operations and counter-terrorism assistance will be expanded and will be extended into additional countries. This will inevitably entangle the United States in the internal affairs of a number of unstable countries. This, in turn, will encourage local support for Islamic extremist movements, promote greater anti-American sentiment, and provoke popular

discontent with governments that align themselves with the United States. By undermining the stability of these countries, the war on terrorism will increase the threat to U.S. interests in Africa and lead to deeper involvement in the future.

THE WAR IN SOUTHERN SUDAN

The Bush Administration has devoted considerable attention and energy to efforts to help end the war in southern Sudan. This is due, in part, to the emergence of an unusual coalition of powerful political groups with a special interest in the country. It is also the result, in part, of the administration's growing strategic interest in the country's oil resources and its desire to gain access for American oil companies to Sudanese oil (currently prohibited by U.S. law). Along with these factors, since 11 September 2001 the administration has sought the cooperation of the Sudanese government in the war on terrorism; Sudan's response has been generally positive and the Sudan government has actively assisted U.S. counter-terrorism activities.

There has been significant progress in the efforts by the United States and other parties to achieve a negotiated settlement to the civil war in Sudan. Vital issues remain unresolved, however, particularly the division of political and financial control over the country's oil resources. The United States will continue to press for a negotiated settlement of the civil war and for the country's cooperation in the war on terrorism. Whether the United States can pursue both of these objectives simultaneously remains to be seen; it will certainly make accomplishing either task more complicated.

OIL SUPPLIES

The Bush Administration's energy policy (based on the May 2001 report of the president's National Energy Policy Development Group, known as the "Cheney Report" because the group was chaired by Vice President Cheney) calls for the United States to become increasingly dependent upon imported oil. The administration, furthermore, wants to have access to as many different sources of oil as possible (to reduce America's dependence on Persian Gulf oil) and will promote the diversification of oil sources throughout the world, including sources in Africa. By 2015, West Africa alone is expected to supply 25% of America's oil imports, up from 14% of total imports in 2000. Therefore, as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Walter Kansteiner put it, "African oil is of strategic national interest to us and it will increase and become more important as we go forward."

To protect America's national security interest in African oil, the Bush Administration has worked to build and expand its relationship with the militaries and political leaderships of oil-producing African countries and to prepare U.S. troops for future military operations in Africa. It is doing this through three main channels: the sales of arms to selected African governments, military training and education programs both in Africa and in the United States for African troops and officers, and military exercises and other operations designed to enhance the ability of U.S. troops to conduct military operations on the continent. In addition, the Bush Administration is planning to redeploy American troops into parts of Africa, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia as part of its ongoing effort to expand U.S. military presence in these vital oil-producing

regions; possible hosts for American troops include Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Senegal, Ghana, Mali, and Kenya. Special attention is being given to Nigeria, Angola, and Algeria since these are three of the most important oil-producing countries in Africa.

For the time being, the U.S. government will rely on its friendly African states to increase oil production and to ensure that the United States enjoys uninterrupted access to oil supplies. The U.S. government will seek to avoid the necessity of direct military intervention in Africa, if only because it has so much unfinished business in the Middle East (continuing operations in Afghanistan, the crisis in Israel/Palestine, and the war with Iraq) and in other parts of the world (e.g. Venezuela, Colombia, and the Philippines) to absorb its attention. In the longer term, however, the United States may decide to use military force to make sure that African oil continues to flow in the event that insurgencies, civil wars, other internal conflicts, proxy wars, or conventional wars between African states threatens to disrupt it. Washington is already committed to use military force to ensure the steady flow of Persian Gulf oil under the "Carter Doctrine." As African oil supplies become ever more vital to the United States, the prospects for American military intervention in the event of some future crisis are certain to become greater.*

CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND PEACEKEEPING

The Bush Administration has expanded a variety of existing military training and education programs initiated by the Clinton Administration in the wake of the Rwandan genocide of 1994. In addition to the International Military Education and Training program, these include the African Crisis Response and Training program

(ACRT), the African Regional Peacekeeping program, and joint military exercises conducted with in African countries with local troops. The principal objective of these programs is to enhance the capability of African military forces to conduct peacekeeping operations and provide humanitarian relief in times of crisis. The African countries that have benefited from these programs, however, have used them to pursue their own goals. In addition to strengthening their military relationships with the United States, African governments have used their enhanced military capabilities to bolster counter-insurgency efforts, repress internal dissent, intervene in the internal affairs of other countries, and make war on their neighbors.

The Bush Administration is presently in the process of transforming the ACRT program into a new, more "robust" program. The transformation process began in December 2001 and continued through March 2002; in May 2002, the administration inaugurated a new program of military assistance and training, to be known as the African Contingency Operations Training Assistance (ACOTA). Along with training in traditional peacekeeping techniques, ACOTA will include training for offensive military operations—including light infantry tactics and small unit tactics—to enhance the ability of African troops to conduct peacekeeping operations in hostile environments; under ACOTA, African troops will also be provided with offensive military weaponry, including rifles, machine guns, and mortars.

These programs have increased the capability of African military forces to play an important role in peacekeeping operations in Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Burundi, on the Eritrean-Ethiopian border, and

elsewhere in the continent. At the same time, however, they have also made it easier for the United States—the world’s hyper-power—to abrogate its responsibility for taking the lead in international efforts to resolve African conflicts and for making sure that sufficient resources are provided to make such efforts effective. The U.S. government can continue to leave African conflict resolution to Africans themselves and hope that, with limited American involvement, they can prevent conflicts from escalating into violence that directly threatens U.S. interests—particularly in the vital oil-producing states—and thus risks leading to U.S. military intervention. But it remains to be seen if this strategy can work indefinitely, given that conflicts in Africa will continue and that even more countries will experience violence in the future.

The most recent example of the dilemma facing the Bush Administration came in August 2003, when 2,200 Marines and 2,100 Navy personnel on board a three-ship amphibious assault naval task force equipped with jet fighters and helicopter gunships arrived off the Liberian coast to provide support to the Nigerian-led West African peacekeeping force. The United States introduced the resolution in the U.N. Security Council that authorized the peacekeeping operation in Liberia and is providing \$10 million in funding to the ECOMIL force, in addition to the costs of its own operations. However, President Bush has made it clear that the mission of the U.S. troops is to serve as a rapid response force to respond to challenges to the West African peacekeepers and that it will not be deployed to provide security or humanitarian relief. And he has insisted that the U.S. troops will be withdrawn by 1 October 2003, when a new U.N. force is scheduled to arrive. Given the limited number of West African troops in Liberia at

present and their inability to control continued violence throughout the country, this seems a recipe for a disaster along the lines of the disastrous unilateral American intervention in Somalia in 1992. Rather than helping to calm the situation on the ground, U.S. troops could easily find themselves engaged in combat against disorganized gangs of well-armed young men and children.

HIV/AIDS AND AFRICAN SECURITY

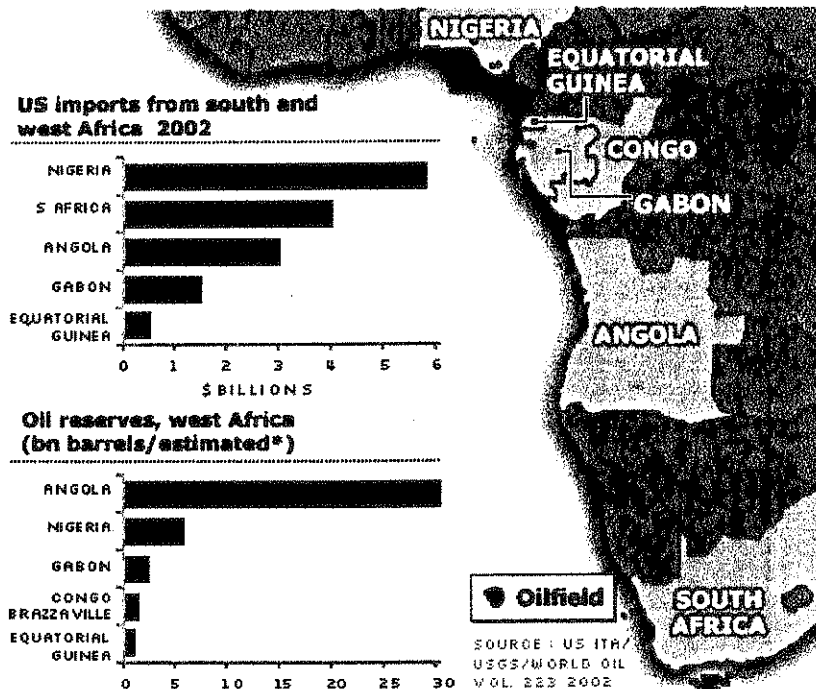
The U.S. government is increasingly concerned about the impact of AIDS on the economic and political stability of African countries. In September 2002, the Central Intelligence Agency released a report by the National Intelligence Council, entitled The Next Wave of HIV/AIDS: Nigeria, Ethiopia, Russia, India, and China, which focused on these “five countries of strategic importance to the United States.” According to the report, “the disease is likely to negatively impact almost all sectors of society by 2010. AIDS will take a heavy economic toll by robbing the countries of many key government and business elites and by discouraging foreign investment, although the oil sector is unlikely to be hurt significantly.” The report went on to note that “the further deterioration of already weak government institutions by the escalating HIV/AIDS crisis could leave Nigeria and Ethiopia seriously weakened states and is likely to reduce their ability to continue to play a regional leadership role,” and that “rising social tensions over AIDS and related economic problems could exacerbate regional and ethnic tensions within Nigeria and Ethiopia while leaving both governments less able to manage the problem.” Moreover, the report concluded, “HIV/AIDS probably will complicate staffing in the military officer corps of the two countries as it has in other African

states. Ethiopia is more likely to suffer military manpower shortages through the lower ranks, however, because it has a much larger army and smaller population than Nigeria, which plans to reduce the size of its force.”

In response, President Bush declared in his State of the Union Message on 28 January 2003 that the United States would provide \$15 million to fund AIDS-related projects throughout the world over the coming five years, much of which will be spent in Africa. It is still unclear how much of this money will constitute new funding, which national or international projects or agencies will receive it, and where it will be spent. But it does signal that Bush Administration officials are increasingly concerned about the impact of AIDS on American interests in Africa. The disease is now seen as a special

type of national security problem for the United States and, consequently, will get more attention and action than it otherwise would receive.

*Considerable controversy has been provoked recently by the suggestion that the United States might establish a military base in São Tomé, conveniently located right in the midst of the strategic Blight of Benin oil-producing region. While the United States might be interested at some point in the use of military facilities in São Tomé, possibly to station ships with pre-positioned stockpiles of heavy weaponry for American forces, the Pentagon has no plans at the current time to develop bases in West Africa.



U.S. Intervention in Africa: Reluctant Interventionists?

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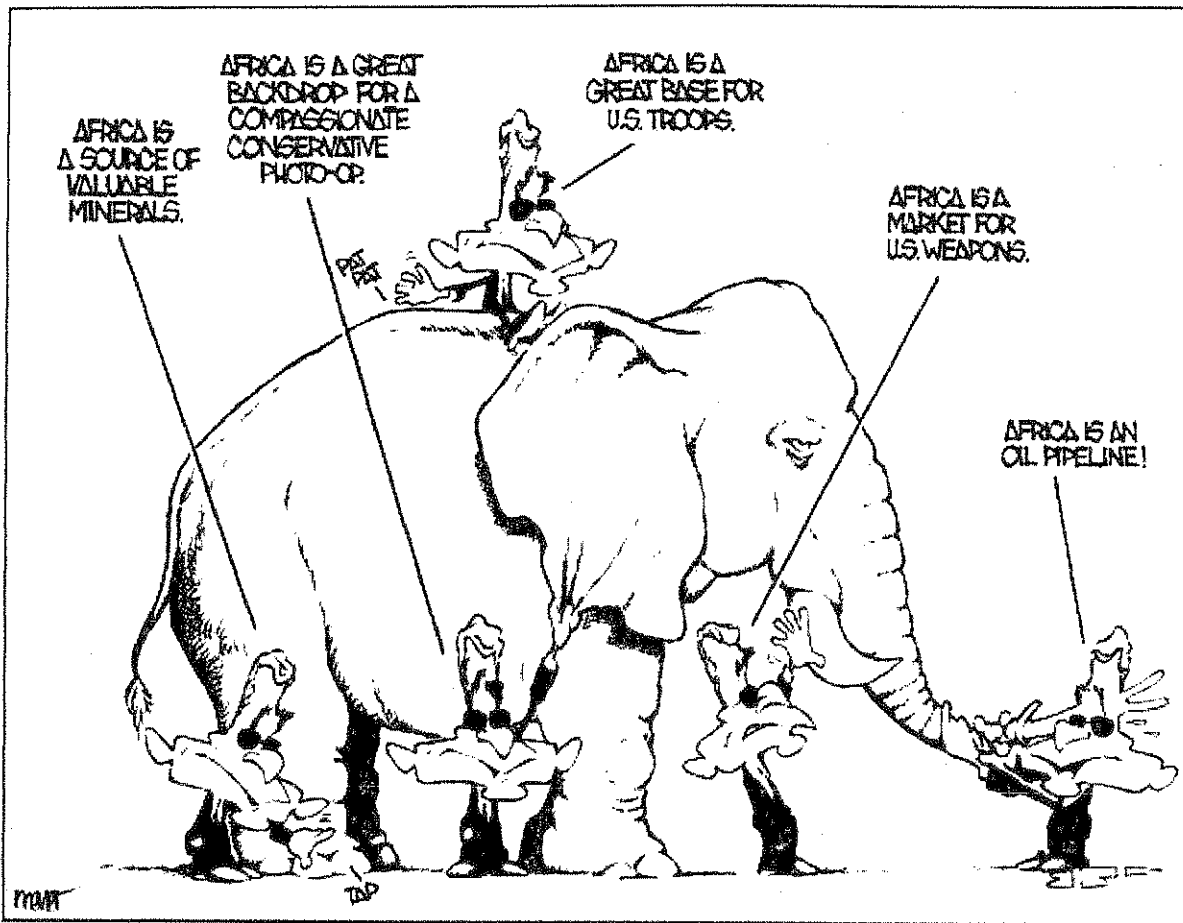
After opposing the U.S. invasion of Iraq, British and French officials pleaded with Washington to intervene in Liberia's latest slide to chaos after fourteen-years of war. The Bush Administration sent a 31-person assessment team to Monrovia in July, and after much public equivocation from administration officials, 150 Marines arrived in mid-August. The stay was not meant to be long. Bush declared "we'll be out of there by October the 1st"¹. The 9 September news that as many as 33 Marines based at Monrovia's international airport had contracted malaria gave a convenient excuse to evacuate some U.S. soldiers just as West African soldiers with U.S. logistical support began to encounter armed rebel units in nearby towns.²

In contrast to wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, U.S. armed intervention in Africa appears to be multilateral in approach and small in scale, designed to facilitate others' execution of this task. Along with U.S. diplomatic and logistical assistance, these few U.S. soldiers support the several thousand peacekeepers from other West African countries that began arriving in August. White House and State Department officials also pressured Liberian president Charles Taylor to leave for exile in Nigeria in mid August to make way for an interim government. By October, the United Nations, will take responsibility for a force that eventually could include as many as 15,000 troops.

Why is U.S. intervention apparently so limited? U.S. intervention in Liberia, as

elsewhere in Africa, occurs in the shadow of the deployment of over 200,000 U.S. troops in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Persian Gulf. This perception is illusory, however. Impact should not be measured solely in dollar figures, bases, or troop deployments in conflict zones. U.S. military trainers, demining experts, and providers of arms are active throughout the continent. These personnel maintain contacts with a wide array of African military officials. Equally important, U.S. personnel become familiar with local languages, bureaucratic cultures, and individuals. The goal is two-fold; to act as an inexpensive force multiplier to help local forces maintain stability in states where government bureaucracies are weak or under threat from insurgents, and to provide U.S. military personnel, mostly Special Operations Forces (SOF) with activities "that provide SOF with immersion training in the customs and language of foreign nations."³

This new approach reflects a broader strategic context that "America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing states", where clandestine commercial and political networks use disorder to conceal their activities.⁴ *The Washington Post* reports that al-Qaeda operatives used Liberia as a base for money laundering⁵ and UN investigation into Charles Taylor's support for insurgents in neighboring states underlined the threat that Liberia's disorder had regional and international implications.⁶



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The lack of a large-scale U.S. military force in Liberia conceals an ad hoc style of intervention that relies much more on indirect tools such as tacitly backing local armed groups and foreign soldiers to fight targets of U.S. ire, dependence on U.S.-trained regional military forces and private corporate military service companies to shape local situations, and cultivation of personal diplomacy and relations with individual African leaders that Washington officials think can operate as regional enforcers of order.

This strategy is not a creation of the second Bush administration. U.S. military training programs in Africa gathered steam during the second Clinton term. They eschew

significant U.S. military operations in African countries, in contrast to the British intervention of 1,000 troops in Sierra Leone in 2000 and the French deployment of 4,000 in Cote d'Ivoire in 2002. These large-scale interventions are fraught with problems that serve as warnings to policy makers in Washington, and shape this alternative strategy.

U.S. AVOIDANCE OF LARGE-SCALE INTERVENTION

U.S. officials are trapped between humanitarian and strategic urges to do something about the problems a failed state like Liberia poses and the immense resistance in Washington to engagement in

countries of almost no economic or strategic significance to the United States. Sub-Saharan Africa is not seen in Washington as central to the war on terror because it remains removed from the threat of Militant Islam, at least for now. Africa therefore lacks the justification for costly preemptive war and large-scale intervention that the Bush administration used in regard to Iraq and Afghanistan.

Washington shrinks from large-scale intervention in Africa for good reason. Recent international efforts to suppress disorder in failing states and respond to humanitarian crises offer a scene of non-African governments (now multi-lateral instead of rival colonial powers) reoccupying African states, building them up (now with greater local participation) to be handed to African leaders. First, this includes instituting “democracy”, defined as the restoration of order and institution of multiparty political competition with regular, usually internationally monitored elections. The second task is “good government”, defined as the construction of institutions able to provide order and basic services to citizens. Third is “economic liberalization”, which reorganizes economies along market principles of limited state intervention and management. Significant elements of this vision appear in International Monetary Fund and World Bank programs in Africa and energize many Washington think tanks.

Do international interventions, financial and military, in troubled states restore an order stable enough to sustain formal democracy? This effort starts with re-professionalizing armies, usually through comprehensive programs to disarm militias and parts of national armies that have become embroiled in factional fighting, then reintegrating them into a single armed force. The record is

poor in Sierra Leone and Liberia. Peace treaties in both countries featured provisions to re-build armies, only to see them fragment again and become instruments of ambitious contenders for power, an experience being repeated in Congo. A private company, Executive Outcomes (EO) did bolster the capabilities of Sierra Leone’s army in 1995-96, but this created tensions with parts of the military that were sidelined. Training had no lasting positive impact. 89 days after EO left the country the army mutinied and joined with rebels to impose a nine-month reign of terror until a Nigerian expeditionary force kicked them out in 1998. Even though soldiers were to be participating in a UN-sponsored training and reintegration program, they rebelled one day after the departure of the Nigerian force in 2000, only to be chased out again, this time by a British expeditionary force that remains in the country.

Democratic elections are a cornerstone of international mediation of conflicts. Most, however, follow deeply flawed negotiations. Sierra Leone returned to war after the 1996 Abidjan agreement and the 1999 Lomé agreement. Each agreement insisted on a place for rebels and army factions in peacetime governments at the insistence of outside mediators. In Sierra Leone, this resulted in the inclusion of the insurgent’s primary organizer of diamonds-for-arms transactions—as head of an agency charged with administering the country’s diamond resources! Liberia’s strongest warlord used intimidation to get himself elected president in 1997 and became a major factor in destabilizing the region. Somalia’s factions attend nearly continuous peace negotiations for the last decade. Some critics suspect that Ethiopian sponsors of some of the talks recognize that negotiations often offer factions incentives to keep fighting in hopes of improving their bargaining positions.

Foreign armies have withdrawn from Congo's conflict, but manage to find ways to perpetuate their influence among local factions.

Supporters of comprehensive peace deals tout the experience of Mozambique in the early 1990s. There, however, RENAMO rebels had no remaining external patron to whom it could turn to overturn the peace agreement. In fact, according to the political scientist Roy Lichlider, rebel-government negotiations usually fail, and especially so in failed states where there is no viable power structure or institutions for participants into which to integrate. Lichlider finds in his study of the termination of 91 internal conflicts between 1945 and 1993 that 76 percent ended when one side won. Of the remaining 26 percent that ended in negotiated settlements, half collapsed, returned to war, and ended with one side triumphant.⁷

If outsiders are willing to force an agreement, then stay to guarantee its provisions, a "peace settlement" can be imposed. Sierra Leone, for example, continues with its unusual, but locally accepted trusteeship under the direction of the former colonial power. Even so, January saw the flight of a militia leader from the capital to neighboring Guinea, followed by what appeared to be staged riots in that country's capital. After reducing the initial deployment of 1,000 in 2000 to defensive forces and military trainers, Britain added 300 members of the Royal Gurkha Rifles in March 2003 to protect Sierra Leone's government from its own army and dissident rebels. Sierra Leone's "solution" relies on this open-ended British willingness to maintain a costly presence in a part of the world in which it has no evident strategic or economic interests.

UN peacekeeping cost an average of one billion dollars a year in Sierra Leone between 1999 and 2002. Even with this expenditure and the presence of over 10,000 peacekeepers, rebel forces took over 500 hostages in 2000. Subsequent British military intervention in support of the UN operation and the difficulties of fielding a competent Sierra Leone army has led British officials to talk of a decade-long stay.

Somalia, a two billion dollar operation, showed that even if foreign soldiers intervene for ostensibly altruistic reasons, there is no assurance that local people will accept them. Kosovo reinforced this point as Kosovo Liberation Army fighters threaten NATO attempts to mediate conflict in neighboring Macedonia and maintain their influence in new police and security forces, despite the presence of 45,000 foreign troops.

Economic revival is a faint promise. Sierra Leone's and Liberia's economies struggle along at about half to a third of their peak national incomes in the 1970s. Côte d'Ivoire's economy has lost a generation of progress, even if the country were to be peacefully unified now. It has proven difficult to revive effective state institutions capable of providing public services and promoting commerce. Sierra Leone's government collected only \$10 million in internal revenues in 2000, compared to about U.S. \$250 million in the mid 1970s. In 2001 Mozambique's government accepted twice as much in foreign aid as it collected in domestic revenues. Corruption continues to be a serious problem too. Little of Angola's oil wealth goes to postwar reconstruction, and instead disappears into off-budget accounts and is mortgaged to obtain private loans.

The fear is that effective reform requires dismantling these states altogether and rebuilding them, which means that local elites would have to give up their main avenues for the corrupt acquisition of wealth. This would likely require very long-term direct outside control over the state, an effective re-colonization, and as Sierra Leone shows, would be opposed by those whose interests were served by continuing violence. Even supposedly friendly forces may reject such interference. Agents of trusteeship, as U.S. officials recall from Somalia, are likely to find themselves caught in battles between factions of an elite on whose behalf and for whose state they are supposedly acting.

THE ALTERNATIVE: LOW INTENSITY INTERVENTION

Low intensity intervention provides an alternative policy to buffer U.S. officials from some of the dangers of a more vigorous and overt style of intervention. It is less costly, both in financial and political terms, more flexible in adapting to local political conditions and cultures of targets of influence, and shifts policy initiatives more toward U.S. government executive agencies, reinforcing presidential control over policy.

In 2002, U.S. military forces or private contractors in the United States and overseas trained soldiers and police and facilitated weapons purchases in 44 of Sub-Saharan Africa's 47 countries. Only Somalia (which has not possessed a central government since 1991), Liberia, and Equatorial Guinea were not involved in these training programs, though the recent deployment of U.S. troops there may put Liberia in the training column.⁸ Military training, along with material support to friendly governments in the form of arms sales and in some instances, de-mining, conforms to

the broader outlines of President Bush's strategic policy since the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks: "I have set a clear policy in the second stage of the war on terror: America encourages and expects governments everywhere to help remove the terrorist parasites that threaten their own countries and the peace of the world. If governments need training or resources to meet this commitment, America will help."⁹

The largest components of military training operations in Africa include Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET), counter-narcotics programs and de-mining exercises under Department of Defense purview and International Military Education and Training (IMET) and the Foreign Military Financing (FMF) arms acquisition program covered under State Department funding. Total personnel figures are uncertain, especially given the involvement of Special Forces soldiers as trainers and the existence of covert programs. This is especially the case for operations under the heading of anti-terrorism assistance and monitoring of borders. Nonetheless, the financial commitment is not large; IMET was estimated to cost about \$80 million for the 2003 fiscal year to train soldiers and law enforcement officials from 133 countries in the United States and overseas.¹⁰

These programs provide platforms for outside contractors and sources of finance to bolster the impact of training. For example, a de-mining program and Special Forces training in 1996 targeted key Rwandan military officers who officials in Washington wished to cultivate. As late as September 1996, Rwandan officials were involved in an IMET program, a month before Rwandan forces invaded Zaire (Congo). Both programs made use of outside contractors; Ronco, a de-mining firm, for example, could present itself as a

humanitarian operation separate from U.S. officialdom, yet employ military experts who coordinated Rwandan soldiers' training with these weapons and other military techniques.

This does not mean that the U.S. government supported the Rwandan invasion of Congo and subsequent Rwandan policies. It does, however, fit with the underlying conviction of many in the Clinton administration that humanitarian operations in the aftermath of the 1994 Rwanda genocide were not solving security problems in that region. They wished to obscure the closeness of their ties to post-genocide Rwandan authorities, and to avoid antagonizing U.S. allies that objected to this stance. Nor did these programs radically change the capabilities of Rwanda's army. Nonetheless, Rwandans invaded Congo with a conviction that the United States would not object, at least not vigorously, and that their ties to the United States could be used against regional and non-African state officials who protested Rwanda's invasion of a neighboring state. This is not influence that is easily attached to a dollar figure. It shows that especially in small states or very weak ones (although Rwanda is small though not especially weak) training and the solidification of contacts between U.S. officials and foreign officials can be used as powerful force multipliers. This approach, however, does not always produce results that Washington intends, a problem that appears with distressing regularity.

Smaller programs, especially those training anti-narcotics and customs agents, financial regulators, and develop local intelligence agencies are difficult to track, especially given the covert nature of some of them. In spite of this, some of these programs leave visible traces. Intelligence training in the 1980s in Afghanistan and Pakistan provides

a precedent. Supposedly covert aid to anti-Soviet fighters was effective in raising the cost of the Soviet's intervention in Afghanistan, though it was a policy that famously included Osama bin Laden among its beneficiaries. Unlike the U.S. effort in Afghanistan, however, FBI and DEA training aims to bolster the capacity of existing states to root out networks that U.S. officials fear could harbor terrorists or destabilize local allies, not provide aid to an insurgency. FBI officials warn: "If organized criminal enterprises with roots everywhere in the world are allowed to grow and migrate beyond their borders, they will inevitably invade the United States."¹¹

This author's more recent field encounters in Africa and reports from other field researchers shed some light on the nature of very small-scale interventions. U.S. financial experts, for example, help local officials in some Sahel countries identify Islamic religious schools that receive foreign, particularly Saudi funding, a practice that is increasingly common across parts of Africa where state education systems have broken down. Encounters with U.S. military personnel in Kenyan airports and far-flung regions of that country suggest that small numbers of people can be used to reinforce surveillance of traffic from neighboring countries, including Somalia, and the collection of local data with very little expense and the commitment of very few U.S. agents.

Such activities highlight classic tactics of force multipliers. To the extent that U.S. trainers and advisors can gain the goodwill and the information available to local counterparts, valuable expertise and intelligence can be transferred to the "donor". Information about the movements of Somali smugglers and radical Saudi religious organizations address concerns that

are central to U.S. security. More direct efforts to collect this information and influence the movements of these people in foreign countries would be exceedingly expensive, require politically controversial deployments, and likely damage U.S. relations with local governments. A far more subtle and indirect approach of training and cultivation of personal ties likely produce superior results at far lower cost.

UNANTICIPATED CONSEQUENCES

Fairly effective in the short-term, these aid and training programs generate numerous longer-term consequences, some of which directly damage U.S. interests and generate local opposition against U.S. policies.

In most immediate terms, the appearance of U.S. trainers can offend local sensibilities. Despite the reputation of Special Forces soldiers for cultural sensitivity, local observers often blame U.S. agents for the policy failures and unpopular actions of their own governments. Anger at what deejays consider the overbearing attitude of U.S. military advisors as a staple of Nairobi drive-time FM radio talk shows. Call-in guests, most of who are from among the normally very pro-Western Kenyan elite, denounce the apparent readiness of Kenyan authorities to ban flights from Somalia under pressure from the local U.S. embassy and U.S. officials. Ill-concealed advice from FBI agents in the Kenyan investigation into the bombing of a Mombassa hotel and attempt to shoot down an Israeli passenger airplane causes many to complain of U.S. arrogance, especially in the context of U.S. policy toward Iraq and the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Slights against Nigerian national pride are a staple of the frequent Nigerian newspaper

reports of U.S. training exercises with Nigerian troops. Nigerian government officials generally are reluctant to discuss these matters, generating further suspicions that the U.S. exercises secret influence over Nigeria's military and trains it to go into harm's way to serve U.S. interests. Such criticisms have appeared concerning the deployment of Nigerian troops in Liberia, along with U.S. advisors. This deployment is precisely the sorts of missions envisioned in the State Department's Africa Regional Fund, which provided for Special Operations Forces' training, equipping and deployment of two 800 person Nigerian battalions for peacekeeping in Sierra Leone in 2000.¹² ACOTA (African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance) according to State Department "will provide the basis for lethal peace enforcement training," a description that applies to the current operation in Liberia.

These problems suggest that no U.S. intervention into the security affairs of African states will go unnoticed among local citizens. Many have complaints about the conduct of their own leaders. The apparent close ties between them, and especially between the coercive agencies of the state and U.S. trainers, risks encouraging citizens to attribute bad policies, and even unrelated unpleasant developments to poorly concealed but still shadowy U.S. influence.

Do citizens have good reason to suspect that U.S. agents and policies could make their lives worse off in some ways? The extensive reach of IMET programs ensures that some will associate U.S. trainers with militaries that have extensive records of human rights abuses. These programs include those in Angola, Guinea, Burundi, Rwanda, Congo, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, and Eritrea, all of which appear in State Department Office of Human Rights

reports as states that engage in the systematic violation of human rights. While it may be the case that outside training can mitigate those abuses, this goal may come into conflict with the urgency of securing cooperation from corrupt or repressive militaries to tackle problems of cross-border smuggling, infiltration of terrorists, or simply the wish to remain on good terms to get access to local intelligence.

The militaries of each of the countries in this list also were involved in cross-border or internal wars, some of which were aiding insurgents in neighboring states. Bolstering the capabilities of these militaries may add to destabilization that threatens already weak states and helps create the conditions of state collapse that Washington cites as a reason to avoid large-scale operations in the first place. The association of U.S. military aid to Rwanda and its invasion of Congo noted above stands as an example. U.S. aid to Guinea's military, and by extension, to a proxy rebel army that Guinea's military supported to oppose Liberia's Charles Taylor, may have helped remove Taylor from Liberia and keep him preoccupied with ensuring his own survival, instead of interfering in Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire, as he had done in the past. But with Taylor gone, these armed groups remain. Some have begun to align with dissident factions in Guinea's military, a worrisome development in light of uncertainties concerning succession of the current president who is ill with cancer. Not to be outdone, other irregular forces and their patrons in the military offer the president a private army to deal with dissidents.

An excessive focus on targeted military training also can contribute to the weakening of the overall coherence of militaries, even as it strengthens elements within them. As

noted above, EO made effective fighters out of some armed Sierra Leoneans in the mid-1990s, but at the cost of the ire of those who were left out, especially if they harbor grievances against the president who made the deal for training in the first place. The focus on English language training intended to cultivate personal contacts and put in places "people who can talk to Uncle Sam"¹³ also may be a factor in exacerbating divisions within some militaries. This may have been the case in Guinea. U.S. military contacts and proficiency in English suddenly gives some officers in Senegal's military access to prestigious overseas postings in peacekeeping forces in Africa and further afield.

These strategies for influence also have a domestic impact in the United States. Some officials in Washington, especially in the White House, prefer them because they minimize political fallout associated with larger-scale interventions. They avoid the deaths of U.S. soldiers in little known or unpopular operations. The "Black Hawk Down" incident in Somalia in 1993, resulting in the deaths of 18 soldiers, taught policy makers that such operations are difficult to justify to a wide audience and will face stiff Pentagon opposition.

Small-scale operations have added advantage of management through executive agencies. They still require Congressional appropriations, but some such as intelligence cooperation, are classified, and their extent and nature can be concealed. Since they generate very little debate in media or before Congress, presidents are left relatively free to design policies that suit their interests. The nature of these programs allows executive agencies to avoid some Congressional efforts at oversight. The "Leahy Law," named after its sponsor, Vermont Senator Patrick Leahy, attempts to

guard against human rights abuses by military trainees. It requires that State Department and Department of Defense military assistance and training programs exclude known human rights abusers. But operations that are presented as de-mining exercises, or that are covert, can more easily avoid scrutiny from Congress. Nor is that scrutiny any guarantee that trainees will not violate human rights standards in the future.

Despite these shortcomings it is likely that U.S. intervention into the affairs of African militaries, para-militaries and security forces will continue. Threats to the United States from Africa are not particularly great at present in official discourse and in the eyes of most analysts. This is not to say that the U.S. government should abjure any interest in knowing what goes on in African countries or refrain from any contact with African militaries. In those instances in Africa where states have failed, real dangers may exist. Rather, this survey intends to stress the costs of proceeding with current policy. In particular, it points to problems associated with the level of secrecy and the nature of these contacts. Secrecy might enhance efficiency or it may provide refuge for foolish policy, shielding its authors far too long from the costly consequences of their actions. But if one believes that government left unquestioned never tells lies or covers up mistakes can remain at ease. Recent developments in Iraq, however, suggest it is time for closer scrutiny.

¹ Bill Sammon, "Bush Promises Marines to Leave Liberia by Oct 1," *Washington Times*, 19 Aug 2003.

² "Liberia: Marines Contract Malaria," *New York Times*, 9 Sept 2003.

³ Department of Defense, United States Special Operations Command, *Special*

Operations Forces Posture Statement, 14 July 2003, 41.

⁴ *National Security Strategy*, Sept 2002, 1.

⁵ Douglas Farah, "Al-Qaeda Tied to Africa Diamonds Trade," *Washington Post*, 30 Dec 2002,

⁶ United Nations, *Report of the Panel of Experts appointed pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1408 (2002), paragraph 16, concerning Liberia*, (NY: United Nations S/2002/1115), 25 Oct 2002.

⁷ Roy Lichlider, "The Consequences of Negotiated Settlements in Civil Wars, 1945-1993," *American Political Science Review*, 89:3 (Sept 1993), 681-90.

⁸ Department of State, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, *Foreign Military Training and DoD Engagement Activities of Interest: Joint Report to Congress*, May 2003.

⁹ Mike Allen, "Inaction Is Not an Option: Bush Offers Military Aid in Continuing Terror War," *Washington Post*, 12 March 2002.

¹⁰ Interagency Working Group on U.S. Government-Sponsored International Exchanges & Training, *FY 2002 Inventory of Programs*, www.iawg.gov.

¹¹ Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, *International Training Program*, www.fbi.gov/hq/td/academy/itp/itp.htm

¹² Douglas Farah, "Pentagon Role in Africa May End," *Washington Post*, 3 July 2001.

¹³ Field encounter with a civilian U.S. trainer, Mali, July 2002.

The Nigerian Military

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INTRODUCTION

Is the Nigerian military emerging from a past that saw it stage some six coups, help “militarize” the country’s society, and field sometimes less-than-professional units in Liberia and Sierra Leone? President Olusegun Obasanjo, elected in May 1999, has made the “re-professionalization” of the armed forces a top priority and his government has instituted several promising reforms. A more professional military, one that refrains from coups and that displays operational competence, would bode well for Nigeria and the West African region.

But critics question whether Obasanjo’s reforms will succeed. They ask whether the government has done what’s necessary both in terms of carrots and sticks—to discourage the military from once again seizing power and re-instituting repressive officer rule? Other observers wonder whether the armed forces (and police) can maintain stability in a country of over 120 million people and troublesome political violence.

This paper sketches the history of armed rule in Nigeria, Obasanjo’s reform program and the obstacles it faces, and then speculates about the political future of the Nigerian military. It argues that political democratization faces difficulties when improving civil-military relations because of (a) a vexing choice between military reform and domestic stability (b) a lack of existing democratic institutions and (c) a continuing

political culture that includes corruption, some continuing rule by force, and both civilian fear and ignorance about the military. That said, the Nigerian government has made some significant strides towards professionalism that outside countries should encourage.

BACKGROUND

Military rule has proven the norm in Nigerian politics, with officers governing it for 29 out of its 43 years of independence.¹ As discussed below, civilian pressures upon the military helped encourage coups.

Nigeria experienced its first military overthrow in January 1966, following the largely incompetent and often corrupt civilian administration of Sir Tafawa Balewa (1960-1966). Leaders justified the initial coups as temporary interventions to assist civilian society in removing whatever rascals and in ensuring that elections occur. Indeed, General Olusegun Obasanjo in 1979 voluntarily stepped from power after overseeing successful civilian elections. Nigeria’s Second Republic lasted until a 1983 coup. Yet Generals Ibrahim Babangida (1985-1993) and Sani Abacha (1994-1998) attempted to institutionalize military rule, in large part because of their *rentier* views of the state.² Most officer-rulers came from the north: Obasanjo is one of three southerners ever to govern Nigeria and he is a born-again Christian in a country that is about 50 percent Moslem.

Officer rule undermined hopes for democratic civilian institutions and rule of law, resulting in what numerous observers term "the militarization of Nigerian society." A few examples: General Aguiyi-Ironsi, Nigeria's first ruling officer in 1966, forbade parties and warned trade unions and ethnic associations away from any political activities. The regime of Murtala Mohammed in the mid-1970s stated that courts could not review some government decrees. Special Military Courts (SMCS) and edicts became the country's lawmakers. The Abacha government in 1994 removed any right of the judiciary to question government actions. Most of Nigeria's ruling officers have been linked to political murders, although no conclusive legal findings have occurred. Worldwide condemnation of the Abacha's hanging of playwright-activist Ken Saro-Wiwa in 1995 spotlighted how Nigeria's non-accountable regimes relied upon the rule of force.

Khaki rule contained several paradoxes and ironies. Military governance hurt the military institution as rulers sought to maintain their personal power. The armed forces have an unquestioned hierarchal structure to protect the interests of the nation: officer rule in Nigeria, however, was often capricious and it siphoned off state resources to meet ruling generals' personal, political, and economic needs. Arguably, military rule was not rule by or for the military, but by a few politically and financially driven officers.

HOW "MILITARY RULE" HURT THE MILITARY

Several decades of authoritarian personal rule, mostly by army generals, gravely weakened the armed forces' chain of command, equipment, training, and standard of living.

As military rule centralized and safeguarded the ruler's control, a tradeoff between operational effectiveness and political reliability occurred. Power centralization often emphasized personal, ascriptive qualities (the donor's and recipient's ethnicity, region, or religion, for example) often at the expense of proven merit of personnel and equipment. Distribution of resources started at the top, with the head of state bestowing favors and it worked downward through the ranks, as ambitious officers built their own power bases.

"Godfather" favoritism was a hallmark of the military's personal rule and it corroded the chain of command. It included the "jumping" of junior over senior officers and the economic *embourgeoisement* by active-duty officers (General Sani Abacha placed \$100 million in Swiss bank accounts *before* becoming head of state). Jumped officers, some of whom became state governors, could reverse roles and exercise effective authority over their "superior" officers, thus mocking the standard chain of command. Politically-driven promotions lowered overall morale and distracted officers away from their primary duty. Permitting active-duty officers to engage in business probably garnered political support, but the inherent conflict-of-interest sometimes compromised operational capabilities. The establishment of Presidential guards, created and funded by the head of state and distinct from the military's chain of command, angered officers who resented these non-accountable competitors for funds, mandate and status.

The reverse of jumping occurred when generals removed, fired, reassigned or killed officers upon becoming head of state or following coup attempts. The Murtala Mohammed government in 1975 purged 205 army officers including all officers at Major-

General (or equivalent) level and above and the other services were similarly strapped. Adebajo writes that Babangida “shuffl[ed] even the most senior officers around like a pack of cards.”³ Removals weakened confidence in the chain of command and often removed well-trained officers.

Training suffered as rulers worried that field exercises could cloak an actual coup. Abacha forbade any field training exercises of more than company (about a hundred men) between 1995 and 1998. President Babangida grounded the some eighteen MiGs in the late 1980s because he feared future air force strike against his authority. The MiGs have not flown for the past fourteen years. Rulers’ fear of decentralized military capability and a greater risk of coups helps explain why Nigerian Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOS: corporals and sergeants of various grades) lacked the small-unit leadership capability that exists in most professional militaries: a few companies of well-led-and-trained soldiers could tip the balance against an unpopular government.⁴

Centralization and its offshoot of non-accountability greatly facilitated the spread of corruption; corruption certainly had occurred during civilian rule; but the extreme non-accountability of officer rule further exacerbated it. Equipment procurement provided “backhanders,” or kickbacks of 10-30 percent, to godfathered officers, but the purchases sometimes met few defense needs of Nigeria. The military purchased heavy conventional equipment, e.g. 300 tanks,⁵ but often not the more necessary counterinsurgency capabilities, e.g. spotter planes, airborne or special operations capabilities. Maintenance requirements often went unanswered but exacted a later toll (six hundred poorly-maintained bombs exploded in Lagos in early 2001; about one thousand

civilians died from the immediate eruption or from the ensuing panic).

Non-accountability also hurt the living conditions of junior officers and enlistees. Some battalion commanders reportedly deposited (parked) unit payrolls in private banks and skimmed off the interest for several months before releasing the funds. Allocated funds for barracks, medical care, and pensions often went astray. General Alli recalls about the barracks that “One would think that they are barracks for incarceration of inmates, instead of [for] soldiers who have given their today for...the country.”⁶ About medical services, Alli notes that they “are inadequate in all units...[and] this has compounded soldiers’ problems of poor salaries, [and] unhealthy and poor sanitation in the barracks.”⁷ The nonpayment of pensions has been an ongoing national scandal.

Deficiencies in chain-of-command, equipment, training and standard of living often didn’t appear obvious to outsiders until Nigeria’s involvement in ECOMOG throughout the 1990s, first in Liberia and then Sierra Leone. Adebajo, Howe, and others have documented this.⁸ By the decade’s end, Karl Maier wrote that

“The armed forces are [equally] in shambles. Up to 75% of the army’s equipment is broken or missing vital spare parts...The air force has 10,000 men but fewer than twenty functional aircraft...Pay is terrible, the barracks are often the equivalent of decrepit slums, and moral and discipline are woefully low.”⁹

OBASANJO'S "RE-PROFESSIONALIZATION"

The government of Olusgun Obasanjo has worked to "re-professionalize" the once-proud Nigerian military (the executive has pushed security reform much more than the National Assembly). Elected in May 1999, this retired general focused on military reform in his inaugural speech:

"The incursion of the military into government has been a disaster for our country. The *esprit de corps* among military personnel has been destroyed...a great deal of reorientation has to be undertaken...to ensure that the military submits to civil authority and regains its pride, professionalism, and tradition."¹⁰

Trying to change decades of questionable appointment-promotion patterns, military procurement, training, and standards of living suggest the metaphor of turning around an aircraft carrier with the added difficulty that the affected officers might stage a coup to stop the course correction.

Has the Obasanjo government accomplished its goals over three years? Partly. To its credit, it has increased civilian control, helped to demystify military rule, raised government spending, and increased training.

Civilian superiority over non-military affairs has progressed: officers are discouraged from considering the military as a springboard for political or economic aggrandizement. Obasanjo cashiered some 94 political officers as his first act as president and perhaps several hundred subsequently. Their departure helped re-establish traditional chains of command and focused officer attention upon purely military affairs. Obasanjo has recently appointed several Chiefs of Staff who appear loyal to

civilian authority. He also placed more civilians than ever previous into his own office and into the Ministry of Defense: civilian Ministers of State exist for each of the services. A Due Process system has seen increased civilian scrutiny by the executive over military budgets. Some reforms have occurred within the pension system. The National Assembly, which formally holds the military's purse strings, established seven defense subcommittees that have held budget hearings, called witnesses, and visited military bases. A newly emboldened press ran series of sometimes praising but often-stinging assessments of the armed forces.

The president helped demystify the military by establishing the popularly named "Oputa Panel," which featured hundreds of officers and civilians testifying to an amazed nation *via* live television about the venality and incompetence of officer rule. The often-dramatic hearings clearly refuted the once-popular assumption that officers could act more effectively and less self-servingly than civilian politicians.

The government increased military spending. Budget figures are often unreliable, but the *Military Balance* reports an upward turn, from \$338 million for 2000 to \$529 million for 2002.¹¹ Much of the budget increase has targeted recurrent (mostly personnel) needs, but the government has purchased a limited amount of new materiel (Mi-35 attack helicopters) and has reconditioned some existing tanks. The democratizing government has also received some free equipment from the U.S., including two (of a planned seven) buoy tenders to patrol against oil smuggling ("bunkering") and to guard fishing areas. Some private companies reportedly have provided significant funding to the Nigerian military for increased operational capability.

The nation's military stepped up its training, in the classroom, in the field, and especially from overseas. Obasanjo turned to the U.S. to provide advice on military administration as well as operational training. The two governments paid for Military Professional Resources, Incorporated (MPRI), a private U.S. firm that has some seventeen retired U.S. generals as employees, to advise and offer seminars on a wide range of administrative issues for the past three years. The U.S. also provided Special Forces ("Green Beret") infantry training-and-equipping of five Nigerian battalions (3900 men). This training contrasted sharply with the virtual ban during the Abacha years. The U.S. also provided International Military Education Training (IMET)—an especially popular program—to some 60 Nigerians yearly between 2000 and 2003.

Some improvements have occurred in the soldiers' standard of living. Much, however, remains to be done, as a threatened strike by some soldiers in early 2002 indicated. Minister of Defense T.Y. Danjuma pushed for greater barracks improvements and did gain an increased construction budget. Pay has increased significantly, although inflation has lessened the benefit, and the government is working to fix a pension system broken by shoddy banking practices and overall mismanagement. Western observers believe that soldiers are receiving pay and other benefits more promptly than before 1999.

OBSTACLES TO MILITARY REFORM

Military reform has proved difficult, given a stability-reform dilemma heightened by widespread violence, a lack of accepted national institutions, and the carryover of several cultural tendencies.

Stability-Reform Dilemma

Liberalization or democratization can encourage increased violence following long periods of political repression, as Huntington and others note.¹² Stability of the state will remain Obasanjo's *sine qua non*, despite his clear desire for military reform.

Post-1999 violence had killed about 12,000 civilians between 1999 and 2003—the country's most violent period since the civil war. Several different factors, e.g. local divisions, poverty, ethnic affiliation, or religious fundamentalism sometimes intertwined to precipitate individual clashes. Much of the fighting occurred in Lagos or in the northern cities of Kaduna, Kano, and Jos. The oil-rich delta, bitter about its decades-long poverty, has seen several ethnic groups (including Ijaw, Ibibio and Itsekiri) fighting each other and sometimes government forces, while also targeting the oil company's installations and personnel.

Organized militias, usually professing loyalty to ethnic, regional, or religious appeals, have instigated or exacerbated this violence. The most important groups were the Bakassi Boys in at least three southeastern Ibo states, Egbesu in the largely Ijaw Niger Delta, the Odua Peoples' Congress (OPC) in the Yoruba Southwest, and the Yan Daba boys in the Hausa north.

Irregular forces are not new to Nigeria, but their size, firepower and public acceptance appear unprecedented. U.S. sources in 2002 believed that the Bakassi Boys could quickly call upon ten thousand fighters whereas other groups could rely upon another ten thousand. The potential numbers could be much higher, given Nigeria's economy: "How many unemployed 16-40 year-old males are there in Nigeria?" a Western

diplomat rhetorically asked when asked about the militias' possible strength.¹³ Some groups in the delta possess automatic weapons, RPGs (rocket-propelled grenade launchers), and powerful speedboats: analysts believe that groups sometimes have greater firepower than nearby army or navy units. These militias oftentimes have also enjoyed considerable popular backing, in part because of an often-inept police force. Criminals or unemployed youth sometimes have piggybacked on militia-sparked chaos to commit their own violence.

The post-election surge of violent groups required an immediately deployable military, yet security reform requires some temporary weakening of the military to render it more effective in the long-run. Needing soldiers for regional (Sierra Leone and Liberia) or domestic policing, Obasanjo is reluctant to make many such changes.

Re-professionalizing could require cashiering or reassigning of undesirable officers. It could also involve inquiries into, or increased control over, questionable administrative practices, such as procurement backhanders or payroll diversions. Training—very necessary, given its limited availability until recently—would pull units away from policing political violence. Reform may also suggest downsizing of redundant personnel levels so that the government can direct more money to equipment and training.

Removing or reassigning officers could cause problems. The departure of competent, though overly political, officers deprives the forces of needed competence. Forced removal also may spark political resentments, as ethnic or regional groupings see the number of their high-ranking officers as reflective of the group's political status. Many northerners interpreted a southern,

born-again Christian's cashiering of mostly northern (and oftentimes, Moslem) officers as a political insult after the 1999 election injury. The feeling ran deepest in the northwest, where anti-Obasanjo sentiment is relatively high. The Arewa Consultative Forum decried the actions as evidence of the north's "further marginalization,"¹⁴ but they failed to trigger any noticeable military unrest. Firing of officers not only deprives the armed services of their capabilities but also might encourage them to provide their expertise to ethnic or religious militias.

Inquiries into past misdeeds can prompt a possible violent backlash from once privileged, but now fearful, officers. Heightened administrative reforms could produce violence or declining morale, especially from a possible "Second Eleven," once-junior officers whose services the new government needs but whose expectations of enriching themselves were sidetracked by the new reformist government. Again, many of these officers came from the north.

The Oputa Panel effectively demystified officer rule, but Obasanjo took some pains not to provoke still-powerful officers and former rulers. The Panel did not receive arrest, subpoena, or punishment powers. Obasanjo initially mandated it to examine deeds dating back only to 1994, therefore excluding the still-powerful Babangida as well as Obasanjo's initial rule during the 1970s but public protest prompted the government to expand the time period back to 1966, when military rule began. The Panel began with only two weeks notice and various legal injunctions (and, perhaps, government temerity) have prevented it from releasing its report publicly (it completed the report in May 2002).

Violent incidents at Odi (Bayelsa state,

1999)) and Zaki Biam (Benue state, 2001) point up the stability-reform dilemma and Obasanjo's primary desire for security. In both towns, local militias fired upon policemen and soldiers subsequently intervened. The army virtually razed Odi village and killed some civilians and at Zaki Biam it rounded up and executed some 250 young males—two weeks after a local militia had brutally slaughtered nineteen soldiers. Strong Nigerian and international protest achieved little result, although the U.S. suspended its IMET and the Excess Defense Articles (EDA) programs.

Obasanjo largely defended his military's action and refused to have the responsible soldiers identified and held accountable, probably because alienating the armed forces might have weakened their willingness to intervene in future situations. A high-ranking non-Nigerian diplomat believes that "military loyalty would have severely declined [and that] Obasanjo couldn't have stopped the [military] reaction even if had wanted to."¹⁵ A few observers speculate that Obasanjo himself had ordered the revenge killings and therefore eschews investigation of the incident (no evidence of such presidential orders has appeared).

The government has only slowly shouldered the Herculean task of cleansing the Nigerian stables of endemic corruption. Some observers wonder about a possible *quid pro quo*: in return for officers remaining politically inactive, has the government quietly decided not to prosecute corruption in the military?

Downsizing is often a hallmark of military reform but it may threaten stability. It physically depletes the forces of manpower while dumping young men with the skill of weapons handling onto an often-dismal job

market: recruitment by a militia or criminal gangs could follow their departure.

Security concerns helped prompt a government's *volte face* on personnel downsizing. The government, which in August 2000 had announced plans to cut the military personnel by 40 percent, reversed its position in late December. Skeptics immediately raised security concerns. The *Daily Mail and Guardian* argued that "Nigeria cannot afford to make the cuts too deep since there is a strong possibility of conflict both at home and abroad...quelling the [domestic] upheavals has required the deployment of soldiers."¹⁶ And, that the country faced "social consequences of releasing such a large number of people trained in the use of lethal weapons into a society rife with violent crime."¹⁷

Presidents' inviting of foreign military reformers sometimes embitters local militaries. This certainly occurred in Nigeria.

Turning to the U.S. attracted some limited materiel and training but it also triggered military skepticism about Obasanjo's judgment (and, implicitly, loyalty), and temporarily raised a coup possibility. General Victor Malu, Chief of Army staff, argued that the American MPRI and Green Berets could gain sensitive knowledge about Nigerian security in effect, that President Obasanjo had invited spies that they could use later in offensive operations. Malu also felt that the American training would provide little value to an already-skilled Nigerian military and that the U.S. had no right to vet Nigerian trainees for human rights violations (Malu and the other service chiefs publicly voiced other complaints, including Obasanjo's supposed lack of budgeting for the military).

Continued officer criticism could have

undermined support of the civilian government, not only within the armed forces—where Malu enjoyed significant, but not overwhelming support—but amongst civilians as well. Malu's anger evoked sentiments of Nigerian pride amongst those, regardless of region, who worried about Obasanjo's growing cooperation with symbols of non-African power, be they the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, or the Pentagon.

The Chief of Army Staff publicly criticized Obasanjo's policies for several months until the President cashiered Malu and the two other Chiefs of Staff in April 2001. The nation held its breath—could another coup occur?—until Malu gracefully accepted the denouement and resigned. The crisis may have represented a blessing in disguise, as it showed the ascendancy of civilian control over the once-dominant armed forces. The absence of pro-Malu protests by soldiers or civilians after the firing suggested public acceptance of Obasanjo's action.

Lack of National Structures

Post-repressive states, *ipso facto*, lack established national democratic structures and this absence can hurt civil-military relations. An empowered legislature or civil society may help defend the military against idiosyncratic personal rule, publicize the armed forces' ethos and needs to the general public, and demonstrate effective civilian administration to a coup-prone military.

Nigeria lacked established institutions and specialized knowledge, the National Assembly being a case in point. Many legislators had little knowledge of their overall responsibilities—understandable, considering that Nigeria's last legislature had convened in the early 1980s. The new

government's branches sometimes did not understand the specific responsibilities they had *vis-a-vis* each other; squabbles over the respective powers of the executive and legislature were endemic. The National Assembly submitted three Articles of Impeachment against Obasanjo during the first term. A virtual gridlock of legislation occurred.

Western advisors on legislation relate numerous stories of earnest assemblymen asking about basic procedure and responsibilities. Some of the problems were temporary (legislators not realizing that they could publicly question appointed officials, that they could visit military bases, or that they could hold closed hearings on especially sensitive topics). Yet the Assembly's extensive turnover following the 2003 elections further weakened any of its knowledge about the legislative process and security affairs. Only some 25 percent of the members of the Assembly gained re-election.

Corruption has proven widespread in both the Assembly's Senate and House, with Senate Presidents and House Speakers being found guilty of a wide range of abuses. For example, Salisu Buhari, the House speaker, retired following his admission that he had lied about his formal qualifications. In August 2000, the Senate impeached its President, Chuba Okadigbo, for corruption and mismanagement.

The Assembly's formal record of military oversight appeared negligible by 2003. The subcommittees apparently had not sponsored or passed any legislation relating directly to military affairs ("they have not initiated a single bill on the defence and security sector," Said Adejemobi wrote in 2002, "neither have they been engaged in any serious debate on the sector"¹⁸). Overall, the

Assembly passed fewer than thirty bills between 1999 and 2003.

Cultural Carryovers

Formal institutions can change quickly, from officer rule to popularly elected civilian government for example, yet habits and values remain entrenched and hinder the reform process. Continuing into civilian rule was a continuing reliance on force (“militarization”), extensive corruption, strained civil-military relations, and a lack of civilian knowledge about security.

Various observers believe that Obasanjo used his security forces as his primary method of resolving, or quelling, political disputes (and that this reflects Nigeria’s lack of peaceful mechanisms of conflict resolution). The BBC suggests that Obasanjo’s “answer to the massive communal and religious unrest across the country has been to use the army to control localized disturbances”¹⁹ (some experts believe that Obasanjo recently has exercised more caution when deploying his soldiers domestically).

A possible result of Obasanjo’s service career—an imperious personality—has angered some officers and legislators. *Africa Confidential* writes that “Obasanjo is not easy to love; he comes across as aloof, arrogant, and—having done the job before, starting as military leader from 1976-1979—in no need of advice.”²⁰ Obasanjo reportedly confronts officers, including Chiefs of Staff, by rhetorically asking, “What was your rank when I was last Commander-in-Chief?” His apparent attitude that the executive was superior to the legislature helped to slow legislation, including the military’s budget.

Nigeria’s culture of corruption encouraged

some legislators to emphasize their own needs over those of state security. Some legislators apparently sought membership on the defense subcommittees to gain access to defense contracts. One impassioned insider fumed, with some exaggeration, about members of the security subcommittees in 2002: “Nobody knows anything and they’re...more concerned about what’s coming into their pockets...some of them act as subcontractors to specific military purchases which they [members of the Assembly] themselves approved.”²¹

Officer rule for its twenty-nine years soured civil-military relations. “Bloody civilians” is how numerous officers viewed the outside world whereas numerous Nigerians (especially in the 1990s) saw soldiers as “mad dogs” or “zombies.” This mutual antipathy would continue to hurt military reform as some civilians, including legislators, opposed raising military budgets and as officers appeared initially reluctant to assist the new regime. The Assembly reportedly refused to permit uniformed officers to enter the Assembly in 2000 as committee staffers. The armed forces continually invoked “secrecy,” hardly surprising given the non-accountability of previous regimes. The chiefs of staff initially refused to testify before the Assembly about the budget and the Ministry of Defense stated that its own internal investigation into the Ikeja blasts (which had killed a thousand civilians) was closed to the public.

Civilian fear of military repression, a result of past rule, hindered security reform. The fear that what had occurred six times, i.e. a coup, could occur again encouraged some legislators to refrain from aggressive oversight. Following the horrendous Ikeja explosions in January 2002, both the Senate and House voiced outrage, held a moment of

silence in their chambers, and then promised to investigate, to determine culpability, and to make recommendations. But by the end of 2002, the Assembly had not held any hearings or made public its written report. Why the inaction over clear derelictions of duty that cost the lives of a thousand innocent civilians? "Because many heads [in the Assembly] would roll," argues one highly placed expert.²² The Assembly additionally did not demand the release of the armed services' internal report on Ikeja.

Civilian control requires civilian knowledge of the military, yet ignorance about military matters was manifest in part because of widespread civilian dislike and fear of the military. By 2003, the seven subcommittees had no more than five members total who had served in the military. Nnamdi Eriobuna, a medical doctor who once chaired the Senate Defense Committee "humbly admitted that he has little or no knowledge at all about defence and security matters and his only qualification for that appointment was his party affiliation."²³ A close observer of the Assembly lamented (again with some probable exaggeration) "[They] don't research, don't ask what are they're going to see [when on fact-finding trips], what sort of equipment or ammunition. [They] won't read reports. Nobody asks relevant questions. None of them are interested in the soldiers' standard of living or the military's capabilities."²⁴ The Assembly has had few, and sometimes no, staffers with security expertise. Several respected retired officers, including General David Mark, served in the Assembly but declined to serve on the defense subcommittees.

The Assembly's ignorance of security matters reflects those of the larger political culture. The absence of knowledgeable

academics or defense reporters, non-governmental organizations, or think tanks (where independently-minded former soldiers could provide advice) contributes to the Assembly's dearth of expertise on security matters. None of Nigeria's forty-some universities offers defense studies²⁵ and the National Institute For Policy and Strategic Studies acknowledges the "total absence of research output from the Institute for almost ten years."²⁶

A final cultural carryover is what both Nigerian and non-Nigerian security analysts term the "lack of a maintenance culture" within the military.²⁷ Much of Nigeria's equipment is inoperable, as Maier noted above. The Obasanjo government has made some improvements in this area.

CONCLUSION

Nigeria's military has improved since 1999, but how lasting this new foundation is remains to be seen. Incomplete but promising changes have occurred within the chain-of-command, training, equipment, and standard of living. Critics of Nigeria's armed forces sometimes overlook the services' remaining loyal to the national government while policing domestic political violence—despite the military's mixture of sub-national and religious loyalties. The military has not committed any grievous human rights violations in two years—despite being deployed in some highly contentious situations. Additionally, the armed services provided widely praised, impartial security during the 2003 national elections. Some 1,500 Nigerian soldiers are serving with ECOMIL (Economic Community of West African States' Mission in Liberia) and the UN and other international organizations increasingly may tap Nigeria's improved force for peacekeeping duties.

The already-mentioned governmental carrots and sticks deserve significant credit, but additional factors—remembrances of officer rule, foreign attitudes, and Obasanjo's political acumen—have aided security reform. Past military rule, especially under Babangida and Abacha, has curtailed the chances of coups and has focused soldiers' attention on operational matters. Interviewed officers agree that "military rule was the worst thing for the military" (as well as for their own futures often, given godfatherism and jumping).²⁸ AfroBarometer polls have consistently indicated an overwhelming rejection by Nigerians of khaki rule. In 2000, for example, the figure was about 90 percent.²²⁹ Widespread, and often armed, domestic opposition would have greeted a coup during Obasanjo's first years.

Foreign attitudes towards praetorianism have benefited the government. The Africa Union is moving towards a policy (established in the last years of the OAU) of not recognizing militarily seized regimes. Several Nigerian officers mentioned to this author the West's possible refusal to aid such governments as a contributing reason why officers have not overthrown Obasanjo. Western officials reportedly have warned high-ranking Nigerian officers against future praetorianism.

In Nigeria, often-unseen personal actions may prove more important than relations between nascent institutions. Obasanjo has derided the legislature (and the salons have returned the compliments), but he maintains reasonable relations with former-but-still-powerful rulers. *Africa Confidential* writes of "the Abuja-Minna axis," wherein Obasanjo in the capital of Abuja, stays in regular contact with former Generals

Abdulsalami Abubakar and Babangida in their hometown of Minna and appoints them as personal envoys to foreign countries (Ghana, Zimbabwe and Sudan).³⁰ J. 'Bayo Adekanle notes how former officers have large business enterprises³¹ and it certainly is conceivable that the reformist government has passed government contracts to them and received political support in return.

Several serious questions remain, despite the beginning of reform. Will Nigeria experience more coups (something which would suggest that much of the current re-professionalism is chimerical)? Civilian actions traditionally have influenced whether officers seize the statehouse.

The military is powerful, but it usually is reactive. General Babangida, who seized power in a 1985 coup noted the military's reactive role: "We in the military waited for an opportunity..." "We don't intervene when we know the climate is not good for it or the public will not welcome it. We wait until there is frustration in the society... And then there is a demonstration welcoming the redeemers."³² Officer and civilian anger with the present government eventually could supersede the already-fading memories of military rule.

A moribund economy, a gridlocked and corrupt government, and widespread violence have prompted previous coups. The government has not achieved an economic turnaround. While Obasanjo handily won the 2003 election and few rumblings of discontent have emerged from his military, the government has not raised the average Nigerian's standard of living: some 70 percent of all Nigerians live below poverty (an income of one dollar a day) and recent price hikes (oil being the most noticeable) have hurt the government's standing (Maier

notes that “Historically, even small price increases proved the surest route to domestic unrest”³³).

Executive-legislative gridlock has restricted the passage of legislation that, if continued, could make the hierarchally-based military appear more administratively effective than disputatious civilians. Significant bitterness, in both the north and the delta, have further heightened anger against the new government

Domestic violence, which is stoked by the faltering economy, continues. Delta unrest proves economically punishing: in April 2003 fighting shut down 40 percent of the nation’s oil production (oil revenue accounts for some 80 percent of government revenue and ninety-five percent of its foreign exchange). Heightened violence and deployment, in the delta and elsewhere, could encourage a coup’s likelihood. Officers would necessarily become more involved in domestic politics and civilian groups would see the army in partisan terms—as either political protectors or opponents of their viewpoints.

Yet, the public by late 2003 seemed in no mood to seek a man on horseback. The April elections were certainly flawed, but most observers believe that a majority of Nigerians voted for Obasanjo. The president has replaced possible opponents within the officer corps with apparently loyal personnel. Retired officers in Nigeria have never instigated a military coup. And, remembrances of iniquitous military rule remain strong in the minds of civilian and officer alike.

Two final questions. Officers have not toppled the civilian government but is their loyalty to Obasanjo—the person who may

have appointed or promoted them—rather than to the impersonal constitution and civilian rule? This question achieved importance after then Chief of Defense Staff Ibrahim Ogohi reportedly stated that the military would remain loyal to President Obasanjo (regardless of the constitution, presumably) should the Assembly vote for the President’s impeachment.

Finally, how reasonable is it to apply Western concepts of military professionalism to sub-Saharan Africa? Western militaries became professional only after a long time period, during which both a strong national political consensus and a durable economy developed. Nigeria lacks these two apparent preconditions. Furthermore, the Nigerian military has almost always served partisan political motives, dating back to the colonial period when it served Britain’s needs and it has governed Nigeria for during much of the post-independence period. Obasanjo’s military reforms are welcome, but they do face significant obstacles.

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¹ Numerous scholars have discussed the causes of this praetorianism. Robin Luckham’s *The Nigerian Military: A Sociological Analysis of Authority and Revolt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971) thoroughly examined Nigeria’s first decade of civil-military relations.

² Julius Ihonvbere, “A Critical Evaluation of the Failed 1990 Coup in Nigeria,” *Journal of Modern African Studies* (29, 4), 1991, p. 604.

- ³ Adekeye Adebajo, *Liberia's Civil War: Nigeria, ECOMOG, and Regional Security in West Africa* (New York: International Peace Academy and Lynne Rienner, 2002), p. 51.
- ⁴ Major Gideon Orkar, who in 1990 led an unusually violent and nearly successful coup attempt, mentioned Babangida's centralization of power and the Presidential Guard specifically as two of his major grievances.
- ⁵ This figure includes T-55s, Vickers-MK 3 and Scorpion light tanks.
- ⁶ M. Chris Alli, *The Federal Republic of Nigeria Army: The Siege of a Nation* (Malthouse: Lagos, 2001), p. 315.
- ⁷ Alli, p. 315.
- ⁸ Herbert Howe, *Ambiguous Order: Military Forces in African States* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2001).
- ⁹ Karl Maier, *This House Has Fallen* (New York: Public Affairs, 2000), pp. xxii, 291.
- ¹⁰ President Obasanjo's inauguration speech reprinted as an advertising supplement in the *Washington Times*, 30 September 1999, p. 3.
- ¹¹ The International Institute of Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 2002-2003*, London., p. 327.
- ¹² Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order In Changing Societies*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 363.
- ¹³ Interview, Abuja, November 2002.
- ¹⁴ IRIN, "Nigeria Focuses on Changes in the Armed Forces," 19 July 2001.
- ¹⁵ Interview, Washington, September 2003.
- ¹⁶ "Nigeria To Cut Back Military," *Daily Mail and Guardian*, 24 August 1999.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁸ Said Adejemobi, "Governance and Accountability of Security Forces in Nigeria," paper presented to a conference on "Building Peace and Security in Nigeria, organized jointly by the Centre for Democracy and Development, Center for Global International Studies and the Center for International Policy, Washington D.C. 16-18 September 2002. p. 15.
- ¹⁹ "Profile: Olusegun Obasanjo," *BBC News*, 6 February 2002.
[Http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/world/africa/1804940.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/world/africa/1804940.stm)
- ²⁰ "New Parties, New Plots," *Africa Confidential*, February 2002.
- ²¹ Interview, Abuja, October 2002.
- ²² *Ibid.*
- ²³ Adejumobi, *op. cit.*
- ²⁴ Interview, Abuja, November 2002.
- ²⁵ Interview with Sunday Ochoche, October 2002.
- ²⁶ "No Research From NIPSS, In 10 Years," *Daily Trust*, 12 September 2003. Adebayo Olukhosi writes, "what is really crucial is the need for the rapid acquisition of expertise by civilian politicians and technocrats in military science...for the defence of elected civilian rule." Adebayo Olukhosi, "Economy and Politics in the Nigerian Transition, (II), *Democracy and Development* (2, 4), September-December 2000, p. 26.
- ²⁷ Interviews, Abuja, November and December 2002.
- ²⁸ Interviews, Abuja, October and November 2002.
- ²⁹ "Afro-Barometer Results," Globalbarometer.org/afrotables.htm.
- ³⁰ "Generals On the Hill," *Africa Confidential*, 2 May 2003.
- ³¹ J. Bayo Adekanye, *The Retired Military As An Emergent Power Factor in Nigeria* (Ibadan: Heinemann, 1999).
- ³² Maier, p. 59.
- ³³ Maier, p. 41.

Consequences of Failure: The Face of Resumed War in Southern Sudan

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The prospects for peace in Sudan have increased significantly with the September 2003 talks at Naivasha (Kenya); the international community appears in the end game to have committed the necessary diplomatic resources to make a final agreement possible. But intransigence on the part of various factions in Khartoum's National Islamic Front regime continue to threaten the Machakos/IGAD peace process. Were these talks—representing the best chance for peace in a generation—to collapse, the result would certainly be renewed war, and very likely the most destructive fighting in the 20-year history of the conflict.

A formal peace agreement may very well come in October 2003. If it does not, however, then it is fundamentally important that responsibility for the squandering of this historic opportunity be appropriately assigned. For no new peace process for Sudan could ever begin without a clear understanding of why Machakos failed. All too accustomed to success in shopping for new diplomatic peace forums, the Khartoum regime simply must not be allowed to walk away if it collapses the Machakos process, not without clear and forceful consequences. Indeed, the most appropriate set of consequence under present circumstances would be a full-scale international effort to force the demise of the National Islamic Front regime through concerted and comprehensive economic sanctions, and to provide a robust military response that would insure continued humanitarian

assistance to the south and other marginalized areas of the country.

Diplomatic attention for much of the past year has rightly been on the peace process emerging from the apparent breakthrough represented by the Machakos Protocol of July 2002. But the Naivasha talks (September 2003) are the last possible venue for progress in the Machakos process, and as of this writing the talks continue to confront a series of difficult issues, including security arrangements, wealth- and power-sharing, as well as the status of the three contested areas (Abyei, the Nuba Mountains, Southern Blue Nile). An agreement may be reached, but failure remains a distinct possibility. Moreover, it should be recalled that the National Islamic Front regime has never abided by any agreement it has signed in its fourteen years of existence—not one, not ever.

Because the Naivasha talks may fail, and because the Khartoum regime may very well renege on any peace agreement, the international community is morally obliged under present circumstances to recall the nature of the war that was largely suspended by virtue of the cessation of hostilities agreement of October 15, 2002. This agreement has created a distance in time that apparently already partially obscures what would be the realities of renewed fighting in Sudan. It is thus appropriate, as the Machakos process is in its final stage, to recall fully why peace is so urgent, and how violent any renewed war will be. For there

are only two outcomes in Naivasha: peace or war. It is extremely unlikely that the SPLM/A will agree to a continuation of the present "no peace/no war" status, given Khartoum's serial and highly consequential violations of the October 2002 cessation of hostilities agreement.

What will resumed war look like?

THREATS TO HUMANITARIAN AID

Most ominous are the threats to humanitarian aid that will immediately come into play, given how Khartoum has consistently conducted war in the past. The regime's weapons are many in this arena and it is important to recall how they have been deployed in recent years.

A. Interdiction and prevention of humanitarian aid

During the terrible 1998 famine in Bahr el-Ghazal, Khartoum banned, from February 4 to March 31, all relief flights into all areas of the province not controlled by the regime. This was a major contribution to catastrophe. In the end, perhaps as many as 100,000 human beings died in the famine. Impeding humanitarian aid during this crisis continued a war strategy that has been aptly described by Human Rights Watch: "The government's counterinsurgency plan in Bahr el-Ghazal, the Nuba Mountains, and elsewhere is to attack civilians as a means to destroy the rebels' social base, displacing, killing, or capturing civilians and stripping them of the meager assets that provide the means of survival in a harsh land" ("Famine in Sudan, 1998," New York, 1998, pp. 1 - 2).

More recently, the UN estimated in early July of 2002 that the number of civilians being denied humanitarian relief by the

Khartoum regime was 1.7 million. Even more recently, on September 27, 2002, Khartoum imposed a blanket ban on all humanitarian relief flights by closing air space over both Eastern and Western Ekuatoria. The number of people who were then beyond the reach of humanitarian assistance was estimated at over 3 million.

There have been numerous other occasions on which Khartoum has used the denial of food and humanitarian aid as a weapon of war. The people of the Nuba Mountains were denied all food and other aid for over a decade; Southern Blue Nile was similarly beyond the reach of the UN's Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS) until very recently. If war resumes in Sudan, we can be sure that Khartoum will again institute humanitarian flight bans, will create gratuitous bureaucratic hurdles and delays for OLS, and will deny humanitarian access to specific locations for military purposes.

B. Military assaults on humanitarian relief efforts

Khartoum has regularly engaged in aerial bombings of known humanitarian relief sites in southern Sudan. Indeed, so relentless were the bombing attacks on humanitarian efforts in southern Sudan that during the summer of 2000 the UN was forced to suspend all flights for over a week.

Examples of what led to this extraordinary action include the dropping of shrapnel-loaded barrel bombs on Mapel (August 7, 2000); Mapel was at the time a site of operations for Medecins Sans Frontieres/Doctors Without Borders, the International Rescue Committee, and Save the Children/UK. The clinic of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) at Chelkou was also deliberately bombed on July 14, 2000. On July 26, 2000

Khartoum again bombed the ICRC, this time at Billing. In Billing, ICRC pilots on the ground, who had an approved flight plan from Khartoum, heard the bombers coming and desperately spread out a large Red Cross flag on the ground. It did no good. The bombs fell anyway. Other attacks occurred at Maluakon (July 28, 2000), where a relief worker was injured during the bombing, and Akuem (also on July 28, 2000).

The UN recorded at least 33 separate bombing incidents (and a total of over 250 bombs) in July 2000 alone, and reported that aid compounds, as well as OLS and Red Cross planes had been specifically targeted. When the bombing of humanitarian relief sites continued with the same intensity in August, the UN took the unprecedented action of grounding all its humanitarian aircraft flying into southern Sudan.

The attacks on humanitarian relief have been a constant feature of Khartoum's war effort. An especially brutal example from last year is the attack on Bieh in the oil regions of Western Upper Nile. On February 20, 2002 Khartoum's helicopter gunships attacked a UN World Food Program center during an actual food distribution (UN workers were terrified eyewitnesses). One account of this unspeakably barbarous act comes from the Los Angeles Times:

"On Wednesday afternoon, two helicopter gunships hovered above 4,000 people lined up for rations of beans, vegetable oil and corn porridge for their children. As soldiers in one helicopter kept guard, their comrades in the second aircraft fired at least five rockets into the crowd, according to [UN] World Food Program spokeswoman Laura Melo. A soldier in the second helicopter reportedly fired his machine gun indiscriminately at women, children and aid

workers." (Los Angeles Times, February 22, 2002)

The Los Angeles Times continued:

"World Food Program chief Catherine Bertini said its aid distribution had been approved by the Sudanese government. She called Wednesday's attack [on the Bieh food distribution center] 'an intolerable affront to human life and humanitarian work.' 'Such attacks, deliberately targeting civilians about to receive humanitarian aid, are absolutely and utterly unacceptable.'" (Los Angeles Times, February 22, 2002)

But there have been a great many "Bieh's"; and despite such UN protestations, we may be sure that attacks of this nature will resume with any new outbreak of fighting.

C. Intimidation of humanitarian relief efforts

It is likely that a highly sophisticated dual-use radar system (military/commercial) has now been installed at Khartoum's main southern garrison town of Juba. The system, manufactured and installed by the British-Italian firm Alenia Marconi, will offer significant new aerial surveillance possibilities (Alenia Marconi has already installed a system at El Obeid, site of Khartoum's major forward military air base). Indeed, the system will almost certainly make possible the interdiction of any humanitarian flight into southern Sudan (these flights are conducted by means of slow-flying propeller aircraft). Every single pilot interviewed in southern Sudan and Lokichokio (Kenya) by this writer in January 2003 expressed extreme apprehension over the implications of an operational Alenia Marconi system. The pilots indicated that if this system permitted Khartoum to scramble any form of MiG

military aircraft from Juba to threaten planes in flight, they would cease to fly altogether.

There is no reason to assume that Khartoum will not engage in precisely such tactics of intimidation, given the regime's past record.

FIGHTING IN THE OIL REGIONS

In addition to augmenting its forces through massive oil-funded military manufacturing and imports, Khartoum has also mobilized large numbers of new troops. Moreover, Khartoum's armed forces have had the highly significant advantage of continuous redeployment over the months of the cease-fire agreement, even as such redeployments are clear violations of the October 15, 2002 cessation of hostilities agreement. All this will permit—depending on the nature of fighting in Darfur province—many points of attack: toward Yei from Juba, where redeployments have been concentrated; toward Rumbek from Wau, which has also seen major augmentation of military forces; perhaps towards Kapoeta from Juba and garrisons on the east side of the Nile.

But the major strategic goal of Khartoum will be to consolidate its control of the oil regions of Western and Eastern Upper Nile. It is no accident that this is where fighting has been most continuous, even after the October 15 cessation of hostilities agreement. Khartoum's large-scale January 2003 offensive in the oil regions of Western Upper Nile—using both regular and militia forces—is the best portent of what we will see with resumed war. Khartoum's heavy militarization of the oil road from Bentiu to Leer will continue, with a link-up to Adok on the Nile. (Aerial photography reveals that Khartoum's military presence at Adok has tripled since the October 15 agreement.)

Indeed, far from dismantling the garrisons constructed along this road after the October 15 cessation of hostilities agreement (dismantling required by the February 4, 2003 "Addendum" to the October 15 agreement), Khartoum has continued to build additional garrisons. Malaysia's Petronas, now the dominant partner in this Block 5a concession area, has begun active drilling and has expanded road construction—the latter again a clear violation of the February 4 agreement. (Earlier reports on construction violations along the Bentiu-Leer oil road came from the Civilian Protection Monitoring Team under its previous leadership.)

Similarly, the escalating fighting in Eastern Upper Nile has been directly related to oil development by the Chinese "Petrodar" operation. One regional source reports that Chinese nationals are actively participating in military actions (as was reported by Amnesty International in Western Upper Nile). The role of oil development in Eastern Upper Nile has been deliberately obscured by the present incarnation of the Civilian Protection Monitoring Team, but a resumption of full-scale fighting will quickly reveal the direct link between such development and Khartoum's conduct of war.

This link between oil development and scorched earth military tactics directed against civilians and humanitarian relief efforts in Western Upper Nile has of course been fully and authoritatively documented by numerous human rights and other reporting organizations. These include the last three UN Special Rapporteurs for Sudan; reports from Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch; the Harker Report commissioned by the Canadian Foreign Ministry; the reports from Christian Aid ("The Scorched Earth: Oil and War in

Sudan,” March 2001) and the European Coalition on Oil in Sudan (“Depopulating Sudan’s Oil Regions,” May 2002); the extremely powerful indictment offered by Georgette Gagnon and John Ryle in their October 2001 report (“Report on an Investigation into Oil Development, Conflict and Displacement in Western Upper Nile, Sudan”); the report from Medecins Sans Frontieres/Doctors Without Borders (“Violence, Health, and Access to Aid in Unity State/Western Upper Nile, Sudan,” April 2002); and many others.

What this well-established history of militarized oil development suggests is that the civilians of both Western and Eastern Upper Nile will be relentlessly destroyed and displaced. The means will include helicopter gunship attacks, Antonov bombing attacks, militia and regular forces burning villages, killing, raping, abducting, looting cattle and destroying foodstocks. Humanitarian relief will be severely attenuated if not halted altogether because of insecurity on the ground in the oil regions.

The oil road leading west from Bentiu is likely to see especially intense renewed fighting. Particularly ominous in this connection is the reported reconciliation of militia leaders Paulino Matip and Peter Gadet. Matip and Gadet are Khartoum’s two most powerful and ruthless militia leaders operating west of Bentiu, but they have been fiercely at odds. If this reported reconciliation proves true, it would greatly heighten the threat to the civilian populations west of Bentiu, which have already suffered terribly as a consequence of Khartoum’s January 2003 offensive in the region.

All must understand that control of the oil regions, and increasing oil production and revenues, will be Khartoum’s most urgent

strategic goal in resumed war. There is no reason whatsoever to believe that such war will be any less destructive of civilians in the oil regions than previous reports have established. And though reporting on Eastern Upper Nile has been much less than that for Western Upper Nile, the inevitable escalation of fighting in the east will oblige a much fuller survey of the ensuing civilian destruction and displacement.

If the international community behaves at all responsibly, those oil companies presently complicit with the Khartoum regime in the oil-driven destruction of southern Sudan will be held accountable. China National Petroleum Corp., Malaysia’s Petronas, India’s Oil and Natural Gas Company, and Austria’s OMV should all face international boycott, directly or indirectly, and they should confront the prospect of capital market sanctions in the US and the European Union. India’s rapidly increasing role in Sudan’s oil development should be especially highlighted.

**INCREASED ASSISTANCE TO THE
MANIACALLY DESTRUCTIVE
LORD’S RESISTANCE ARMY,
OPERATING IN SOUTHERN SUDAN
AND NORTHERN UGANDA**

Khartoum admitted that in July 2003 that its army officers have been aiding Joseph Kony and his terrorist organization, the Lord’s Resistance Army. The Lord’s Resistance Army is notorious for its extraordinarily brutal tactics, for kidnapping and enslaving civilians (especially young girls and boys), for human mutilation and maiming, and for widespread pillaging and destruction. Khartoum’s admission that its army officers have been supporting the LRA was forced by the recent upsurge in reporting on activities of the terrorist organization, including especially authoritative accounts

from the Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative.

To be sure, Khartoum preposterously denies any knowledge of aid from its military officers to the LRA, but simple logic makes clear the absurdity of such a claim. It has long been the case that the Ugandan government has accused Khartoum of supporting the LRA, and that this has been a major source of tension between Khartoum and Kampala. How likely is it that, given the large bilateral stakes in the issue, Khartoum would allow major military aid to the LRA to go undetected? Especially when the accusations concerning such aid are of longstanding? The LRA has always been considered by Khartoum as a means of destabilizing civilian life in both northern Uganda and southern Sudan, and thus as a lever by which to pressure Kampala into abandoning the SPLM/A. This critically important and viciously deployed military tool is not going to be left to free-lancers in Khartoum's military forces.

Moreover, the scale of the aid suggests how unlikely it is to have gone undetected by Khartoum's notoriously efficient military security forces. The UN's Integrated Regional Information Networks reported from Kampala (June 19, 2003):

"A statement issued by the Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative (ARLPI) leaders said that since the second half of 2002, 'members of the Sudanese Armed Forces have been delivering truckloads of military assistance to the LRA in Nsitu,' including 'arms, ammunition and other items.' The accusation was based on testimonies from 'six different returnees from the LRA' who had come out of the bush under amnesty in the months between February and June, the statement said."

How likely is it that "truckloads" of military assistance to a terrorist organization that is a major source of tension in a key bilateral relationship would go undetected? We may be sure that if war resumes, and the LRA seems to be a useful military tool, additional "truckloads" of military equipment will flow to Joseph Kony and his fellow brutal thugs.

REPRESSION AND GROSS HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN THE NORTH OF SUDAN

Despite the unconscionable elimination of a UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Sudan, the recent sharp upsurge in reports of repressive measures and human rights abuses in Khartoum and elsewhere in northern Sudan will only continue to grow. If peace talks have broken down, there will be even less to restrain Khartoum in its vicious tyranny. What Foreign Minister Mustafa Ismail recently euphemistically referred to as the regime's "previous shortcomings" will be on massive display: torture, disappearances, barbaric imposition of the shari'a penal code, denial of political freedoms, press censorship, arbitrary detention, extrajudicial killings. The fate of civilians in Darfur province, where there is presently a very significant insurgency campaign by the newly named "Sudan Liberation Army/Movement," will be especially harsh, and we may expect to see much greater civilian destruction and a savage effort to impose military governance.

It should also be noted that Khartoum's profligacy in military spending has left the regime without the resources to respond to domestic crises of the sort represented by the severe flooding in Kassala province (August 2003). These perversely misguided spending priorities give all too clear a sense of how much suffering renewed war will inflict on the people of northern Sudan.

CONCLUSIONS

These are the inevitable consequences of resumed war in Sudan, and of course the scale of destruction and suffering by civilians can only be partially suggested in any such account. But if we cleave to the most terrible statistics of this war, if bear in mind it has been the engine for the deaths of well over 2 million human beings and the displacement (internal and external) of 5 million more, we may catch at least a glimpse of the consequences of a collapse in the Machakos peace process.

Responsibility for any such collapse simply must be assigned with historical authority and clarity. There can be no casual assertion of a "moral equivalency" between Khartoum and the SPLM/A, no ignorant claim by those such as US special envoy for Sudan John Danforth that "neither party was really interested in peace." Khartoum's behavior, and in particular its heretofore categorical refusal to negotiate a final peace agreement on the basis of the Nakuru Draft Framework presented by the Machakos mediators in July 2003, must be seen for what it clearly is: an intransigent refusal to deal seriously with the key issues that remain outstanding more than a year after the signing of the Machakos Protocol (July 2002).

At the same time, it must be remembered that as terrible as their suffering has been, the people of southern Sudan show no sign of surrender, as anyone who has traveled recently to southern Sudan can attest. Indeed, this is a statement of fact so obviously true, and yet evidently so far beyond articulation by various members of the international community, that we can only marvel at the paradox. But this sense of the marvelous is likely to be short-lived. If war should resume, such a morally incomprehensible silence will be of little

significance—other than as symbol of the international failure of will that led to the resumption of Sudan's unfathomable catastrophe.

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Recent ACAS Action Alerts

Dear ACAS members,

From time to time we send ACAS members and friends alerts on various issues of real concern to Africans and Africanists. We reproduce here the last two alerts.

Meredeth Turshen and Michael West

Statement on Rwanda-Uganda Relations

Dr. Tajudeen Abdul-Raheem

General-Secretary, The Global Pan African Movement

24th March 2003

The Global Pan African Movement has noted with growing dismay and alarm, the rapidly deteriorating relations between Rwanda and Uganda, again in the Congo. The ugly clouds of war gather apace over the two countries, amidst acrimony, accusation and counter accusation. It is not alarmist to speculate that their proxy war in the DRC may soon give way to direct confrontation across their borders.

We call upon the governments of Rwanda and Uganda, in the name of the African People, to exercise maximum restraint, step back from the precipice, and invest in a peaceful resolution of whatever differences they may have.

The people of both countries, just like the rest of the Great Lakes Region and the entire continent have for far too long suffered and been buffeted by all manner of calamity, crisis and conflict – including genocide and war. They should not be made to suffer the afflictions and trauma of yet another senseless war.

We urge both governments, in their involvement in the Congo, to be guided by the Lusaka Agreement and all other related multi-lateral agreements. The legitimate security concerns of both countries in the Congo must be taken care of. At the same time and most importantly, the fundamental interests and well being of the Congolese people must be respected.

This is not the time to fight one another. It is rather the time to work towards consolidating an East and Central African Political Federation as a building block in our new Africa Union. The attack on Iraq is dominating the attention of the powers that be internationally while Africa is consumed by its own unjust wars. Friends of Africa should not turn their eyes away. Even if they do they do not owe us a living. We owe it to ourselves and the generations to come.

Therefore we call upon all the people of the region, in their Churches, mosques, ancestral shrines, Trade unions, Students and Youth groups, Women, professional Associations, business groups, Parliamentarians, political parties, NGOs and civil society organisations to use all the

pressures, influence and other leverage they may have on the leadership of both countries to persuade them to "give peace a chance".

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Letter from ACAS Executive on Iraq

Following the Iraq Resolution passed by the membership at the 2002 ACAS meeting, the Executive approved sending the following message

Dear ACAS Members,
Jan Burgess, editor of ROAPE, has asked us to respond to this urgent message.

Nelson Mandela has spoken out against an attack on Iraq in no uncertain terms. He has said that he will go to Iraq in an attempt to stop the war if the UN asks him. It is almost midnight and a request from the UN has not materialised. So we must ask him ourselves. War seems inevitable, but Mandela's intervention could stop it. Below is a letter which you can cut and paste and send to him - or write your own. His email address is NMF@NelsonMandela.org And please forward this email.

Dear Madiba,

You have condemned an attack on Iraq in no uncertain terms. I understand that you are so opposed to the war the US now yearns to wage that you are willing to go to Iraq in the hope that your presence there will stop it. I hear that you are waiting for the UN to ask you to do this. It is close to midnight and we, the people of the world who oppose this war, the people who the UN should be striving to save from the scourge of war, cannot wait in the hope that that request materialises. So we are asking you ourselves. Your presence in Iraq, if possible along with other Nobel Peace Prize winners such as Jimmy Carter and Mikhail Gorbachev, who have also spoken out against an attack on Iraq, would surely stop those who would shed the blood of children for oil.

If I had the power to stop this war by going to Iraq, I would go. But I don't. You do. Please use that power for the sake of the Iraqi people, for all our sakes. The world needs some "Madiba magic". It is our last chance for peace.

With respect, in hope,

ACAS Events at the 2003 ASA Annual Meeting

The 2003 annual meeting of the African Studies Association will be held at the Sheraton Boston (1-800-325-3535) from Thursday, 30 October to Sunday, 2 November 2003. Register now at the pre-registration discount rate (available to 15 September). Book hotel now at the pre-registration discount rate (available to 30 September). Book travel with Association Travel Concepts for ASA discount rate. Check ASA website for details (www.africanstudies.org).

ACAS Meetings:

ACAS Business meeting: Friday, 31 Oct, 7:30-8:45 am

ACAS Membership meeting, Friday, 31 Oct, 5:30-7pm

PRELIMINARY AGENDA for ACAS Business/Membership Meetings

1. Co-Chairs' report on past year's activities (Turshen and West)
2. Budget report from ACAS Treasurer (Peterson)
3. Bulletins – editors' report (Volman and Bush)
4. Elections (NB: We desperately need a membership secretary)
5. NSEP – update (David Wiley)
6. Panels for 2004
7. Other business

ACAS officially sponsored panels at 2003 ASA Annual Meeting (thanks to Carol Thompson, Bud Day and Marnie Lucas):

Friday, 31 October 2003—3:15-5:15 pm—Session VI-Z32

Roundtable on Privatization as Development in Africa: What Illusions? What Realities? What Alternatives?

Chair: Carol Thompson, Northern Arizona University
M. Anne Pitcher, Colgate University
Eric Otenyo, Illinois State University
Meredeth Turshen, Rutgers University

Saturday, 1 November 2003—11:15-1:15 pm—Session VIII-Z28

Roundtable on US Wars: Impacts on Africa

Chair: Warren Day, Northern Arizona University, and Horace Campbell,
Syracuse University
Alfred Kagan, University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign
Henry H. Bucher, Austin College

**ASSOCIATION OF CONCERNED AFRICA SCHOLARS
2004 Calendar Year Membership Form**

Special Offer: As part of our continuing effort to enhance member benefits, we have arranged for a special offer that includes reduced membership costs for ACAS (and thus issues of the ACAS Bulletin) and a discounted one-year subscription to the Review of African Political Economy (normally \$60/year). This offer is valid only for individual memberships and not institutional or overseas memberships/gifts. *Please be sure to include your e-mail address if possible for electronic action alerts.*

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available in PDF format at the ACAS website:**

Debating Oil Development in Africa (nos. 62/63)

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Women and War (nos. 55/56)

Crisis in Nigeria (no. 52)

Health and Political Violence (nos. 50/51)

*The "Ghettoization" Debate: Africa, Africans
and African Studies* (no. 46)

For full table of contents of issue nos. 44-61, see the ACAS web site.

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Forwarding and Address Correction Requested