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Sub-Saharan Africa Report

FOUO No. 774



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SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA REPORT

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CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

PATASSE'S ROLE IN ABORTIVE COUP DESCRIBED

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French No 262, Mar-11 Apr 82 p 45

[Text] For months, particularly since the withdrawal of David Dacko and the accession of Gen Andre Kolingba's government, Ange Patasse, Bokassa's former minister and prime minister, who went over to the "resistance" at the last minute, when the emperor's fall appeared inevitable, hasn't stopped proclaiming, with might and main, that power in Central Africa is rightfully his. The leader of the MLPC (Central African People's Liberation Movement) was basing his claim on the significant vote (38 percent) which he garnered during the rigged election of March 1980, when Central Africa was under the yoke of Giscard's French protectorate.

As the days passed, Patasse's impatience grew and his ambitions became focused. Recently, he confided to whoever would listen that he would reach his goal by any means, including force. Given these circumstances, one can understand that the denials--after the fact--by his supporters, claiming that Patasse was not involved in the abortive 3 March coup, and presenting the head of the MLPC as the victim of a plot, are hardly convincing and weren't believed by anyone. It seems evident that a scant few days after his return to Bangui--where he had "exiled" himself following Dacko's fall--Ange Patasse crossed the Rubicon with the cooperation of his supporters on the Military Committee of National Recovery (former generals Mbaikoua and Bozize, who were, respectively, the ministers of justice and information, and who are now on the run).

The manner in which the attempted coup was led would have appeared ludicrous if it hadn't caused clashes, produced casualties (between 3 and 12 dead, according to official sources, and 30 wounded), and led to the arrest of several dozen persons--and above all else if Central Africa didn't so desperately need a minimum of stability to catch its breath after years of a destructive and ferocious dictatorship which led the country to ruin.

However, the insolent fashion in which the coup attempt was led, and the great presumptuousness shown by Bokassa's former prime minister, can only add to the suspicions that Ange Patasse was encouraged or manipulated by hidden interests (certain business circles, remnants of the former Foccartian organizations...) who are making every effort to attack the new French Government by putting it in explosive and embarrassing situations in those African regions that are under its sphere of influence.

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We know how much Ange Patasse has further added to the confusion by taking refuge in the French Embassy in Bangui (knowing full well that it had to offer him asylum) and by improperly claiming the backing of Lionel Jospin, a French Socialist Party leader. All this very nearly provoked a serious crisis between Paris and Bangui. But if it seems at this point that things have calmed down--a compromise could be found concerning the fate of Patasse--it will be more difficult to completely clear up the misunderstandings and doubts maintained, if not created, by the media, which in this affair, as in the one in Chad at the end of last October, have too often been lacking in discretion, at the least.

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CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

BRIEFS

FRENCH FINANCING AGREEMENTS--On 17 March in Bangui, France and the Central African Republic signed three financing agreements totaling 780 billion CFA francs concerning the infrastructure and agriculture sectors: work going on since 1973 on the Nola-Berberati-Gamboula and Berberati-Carnot-Baoro main roads, that is, more than 400 kilometers of roads, maintenance of the Bangui-Cameroon main road (Bossemebele-Garoua-Boulai sector); grants to agriculture (financing of the 1982 agricultural campaign and small-scale developments in rural areas). [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1898, 26 Mar 82 p 857] [COPYRIGHT: Rene Moreux et Cie Paris 1982] 9434

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CHAD

ACYL AHMAT: CHADIANS ALONE CAN RESOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French No 262, 29 Mar-11 Apr 82 pp 18, 19

[Text] While in Ndjamenan efforts are being made to regroup and reorganize the fighting forces in order to crush the rebellion of Hissein Habre, the GUNT [Transitional National Union Government], which for too long a time in the past has left the field wide open for propagandists of the FAN [Northern Armed Forces], is making a concerted effort to make its position known abroad.

It is in this context that several GUNT officials have appeared before the Paris press--among them, during his briefing mission to French officials on 2 March, Chadian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Acyl Ahmat. He reaffirmed the grounds for the rejection by his government of the resolutions taken last February in Nairobi by a group of African states set up as a "permanent committee" on Chad--resolutions which run counter to those adopted by the last summit conference of the 50 African nations.

Responding to the question as to whether Ndjamenan foresees another call for Libyan troops or for those of another friendly country to help the GUNT crush the aggression of the FAN, the minister for foreign affairs confirmed that for the time being, his government intends to take its chances with the OAU. Acyl Ahmat declared: "We'll give the OAU time to get hold of itself and to find, with the agreement of the GUNT, a solution to the Chadian problem"; he noted that by OAU he meant all the member nations, and not a club of reactionary heads of state who do not honor the agreements of their peers and who are driven by the wish to bring Habre back onto the Chadian political stage.

Questioned as to whether he considered the decision to demand that Libyan forces withdraw from Chad a "mistake," the GUNT minister for foreign affairs took the opportunity to "put into perspective," with a good deal of humor, the distorted image created of him in the past by Radio France International and other Western media. "Time and again I was called a Libyan agent by Radio France International, which made much too much fuss about me and caused a good deal of trouble for the Chadian people. In some respects they de-naturalized me, wanting to make me more of a Libyan than a Chadian.... Knowing my country, knowing its internal contradictions, I am against the occupation of Chad by another power, no matter who it is. But I am very realistic. Libya is a brother country which helped us at the most difficult moment, and put out the fire that had been burning for 17 years.... In fact, I expressed

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opinion at the time that it wasn't opportune to demand the Libyan withdrawal when we were not sure of the promises made by others and were not ready to protect ourselves...."

Asked about France's position with regard to the GUNT and to the Chadian problem in general, Acyl Ahmat, who met Jean Pierre Cot, French minister for cooperation and development, and Guy Penne, presidential adviser for African affairs, in Paris at the beginning of March, was anxious to put an end to the criticism of Francois Mitterrand's government in this affair.

"First of all, I must eliminate a source of confusion," emphasized Acyl Ahmat. "I was with President Goukouni during his meeting with President Francois Mitterrand and French Minister for External Relations Claude Cheysson. Certainly we will never know exactly what occurred behind the scenes, but in my opinion things were clear. Basically, Francois Mitterrand told the president of the GUNT: 'There is no question of France's asking the impossible of you, demanding that you make the Libyans leave as long as you are not certain of your own security.' That is what I heard from the mouth of Francois Mitterrand. Therefore you shouldn't come and tell us that France's most authoritative voice pressured Chadian officials."

Concerning his meeting with the French minister for cooperation and development at the beginning of March, Acyl Ahmat stated: "Our position is clear. As for France, after the Socialist government came to power, it promised to assist the legitimate government of Chad. Now, if certain radio and press agencies are to be believed, France would have us reconciled with Hissein Habre. Yesterday (4 March), I told Jean Pierre Cot: 'There is no way France will get us to sit down at the negotiating table with Hissein Habre. We are in the midst of fighting, of stamping out the factional divisions that have killed the country. We aren't doing this so that we'll be obliged to recreate them or multiply them tomorrow.' The position of the GUNT therefore is clear, and Jean Pierre Cot's response seemed to me to be constructive. In my opinion, France hasn't changed its position."

As for the type of aid promised by Paris, the Chadian minister for foreign affairs limited himself to saying: "What I can tell you is that France has asserted, through its minister for cooperation, that it will continue to assist Chad."

Finally, pressed by questions about the intrigues of foreign intervention in Chad, Acyl Ahmat was led to answer: "The Chadian problem is above all a national problem. The disorganization for which the GUNT has been reproached is certainly not entirely foreign to the current situation. But I believe that Chadians have learned a lesson from this; they understand that their problems cannot be dealt with except by their own will. Whether it's France, the United States, or any other country, or even the OAU, no one can find a solution that excludes the Chadians. The problem is, above all, national. We are very aware of that, and the consensus is that everything must be done to pull Chad completely out of the deadlock and out of the war."

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CHAD

ACTIONS OF OAU PERMANENT COMMITTEE DENOUNCED

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French No 262, 29 Mar-11 Apr 82 pp 17-19

[Article by Ginette Cot: "After the Decree of Nairobi III"]

[Excerpts] Numerous voices have since been raised on the African continent to denounce the actions of the so-called "permanent committee."

The affair is too scandalous and the "strong-arm ploy" too obvious for the resolution-decree on Chad, pretentiously adopted in Nairobi on 11 February by a small group of OAU representatives and African states, not to be quickly and widely considered null and void, and to finally sink into oblivion. Since then, numerous voices have been raised on the continent denouncing the actions of this group--baptized without right or reason the OAU "permanent committee" for Chad--whose conclusions run counter to the decisions reached by the last general conference of African heads of state, which met last June in the Kenyan capital.

But without a doubt the decisive elements in the situation are the reactions and the spectacular mobilization registered in Chad even after the decree of the OAU "permanent committee"--which ordered the GUNT [Transitional National Union Government] to conclude a cease-fire and to begin negotiations with Hissein Habre, arbitrarily established a calendar for organizing elections and putting definitive institutions into place, and, finally, matched all this with the threat of withdrawal of the pan-African force. This should bring the pan-African organization to its senses and nip in the bud the "plot" of those who use its name or act in its name, the better to betray its decisions.

Those who counted on possible defeatist reactions from a people crushed by war and eager for peace wasted their time. Far from spreading the division and dismay hoped for by their instigators, the Nairobi decisions were greeted across the country as an insult and a challenge to the dignity, pride, and sovereignty of an entire people. They resulted in a closing of the ranks of the GUNT, a strengthening of its support, a stiffening of the population's resolve to accept the challenge, and a revival of the courage and will of the combatants, who had been thought to be worn out after a short year of uncertain respite.

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That is the significance of the popular demonstrations of anger against the OAU and of support for the GUNT which occurred for several days in Ndjama and the countryside, as well as of the more organized and determined military offensive launched against the FAN [Northern Armed Forces] by the combatants of all the former factions united in the GUNT.

Indirectly, the Nairobi decree served to reveal several characteristic aspects of the Chadian situation that some people had preferred to ignore. They have been able to see how much the possibility of Hissein Habre's return to the political scene was feared by all Chadian peoples. They have been able to see that, far from being a "creation" of the OAU, as some experts claimed, the GUNT, at its beginning the fruit of a compromise expressive of the particular relations of forces on the spot, was truly representative of a national consensus. Finally, and above all, they could see the extent to which the hopes represented in the struggle led by the FROLINAT--even a FROLINAT long divided into factions--had spread, to the point of becoming an irreversible moral attainment.

True Friends

Also, the Chadian National Liberation Front, whose political reunification has been a fact since last May, has appeared these past weeks to be a force to be reckoned with--capable, as has been seen in the latest trial undergone by the GUNT, of turning Chadian politics in a more fundamental and progressive direction.

In any case, it should be expected that lessons will be drawn from the events occurring between the departure of the Libyan troops and the "treachery of the OAU." As President Goukouni Oueddei pointed out in a press conference in Ndjama: "All this has let us know who our true friends were and who our enemies were."

For its part, in a motion read during a public meeting in the Chadian capital on 16 February, FROLINAT condemned the resolutions of the "permanent committee" of the OAU and supported the GUNT, notably stressing: "We affirm the right and duty of the Chadian people, and of them alone, to deal with their problems in the way they see fit. We have no lessons in democracy to learn from regimes installed by coups d'etat, nor from those created by rigged elections..." In conclusion, the resolution added: "Recent political developments confirm our basic position, which is that the answer for the Chadian people lies in the search for an anti-imperialist, anticapitalist road."

As can be seen, we are far from the simple question of a power struggle or of an implacable hatred between two men, to which the Western medias have too often wanted to reduce the Chadian conflict.

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CHAD

BRIEFS

CLOSING OF CHADIAN REFUGEE CAMP--Some days ago, Cameroonian police took steps to ensure the final closing of the Chadian refugee camp in Kousseri opposite Ndjamena on the left bank of the Chari River. The some 20,000 Chadian refugees who were staying in the camp had a choice between returning to Ndjamena or being transferred to the Poli region, about 400 kilometers inside Cameroonian territory. Nearly 5,000 refugees accepted repatriation, while 2,500 were moved by road to Poli. Other refugees succeeded in going to Nigeria where a camp had been fixed up some months ago not far from the border, west of Kousseri. The Kousseri camp sheltered, it is believed, numerous supporters of Hissein Habre. This camp had been opened in 1980. Nearly 100,000 inhabitants of the Chadian capital, fleeing the fighting, had then crossed the Chari River by canoe to find refuge there. Since the cease-fire in Ndjamena, some 80,000 refugees have returned to their country. But nearly 20,000 refugees have obstinately refused to do so. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1898, 26 Mar 82 p 857] [COPYRIGHT: Rene Moreux et Cie Paris 1982.] 9434

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ETHIOPIA

BRIEFS

CUBAN TRADE MISSION ACTIVITIES--Addis Ababa 13 May (PL)--The Ethiopian minister of foreign trade, Wollie Chekol, received here a Cuban trade mission which held conversations with 18 Ethiopian trade organizations. In the meeting, attended by the Cuban ambassador in Addis Abeba, Buenaventura Reyes, they talked about the results of the work of the Cuban trade mission, headed by Octavio Martinez Hernandez, official of the department of Subsaharan Africa of the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Trade. They also dealt with future concrete working lines and trade prospects between Cuba and Ethiopia, and with the possibility of an Ethiopian trade mission visiting Cuba in the near future. The meeting between the Ethiopian minister and the Cuban delegation took place shortly after the signing of a memorandum on activities carried out by the Cuban mission which has been in Addis Ababa since 12 April and will also visit Mozambique. [Text] [PA131717 Havana PRELA in English 1239 GMT 13 May 82]

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GABON

MINING INVENTORY AGREEMENT SIGNED WITH FRANCE

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1898, 26 Mar 82 p 858

[Text] The Gabonese second deputy prime minister in charge of mines and petroleum, Etienne-Guy Mouvagha-Tchioba, and Robert Cantoni, French ambassador to Libreville, signed an agreement on 10 March in Libreville concerning the mining inventory along the Transgabonese Railroad.

This agreement, which involves the amount of 110 million CFA francs, is part of a vast program of air surveying, airborne geophysical reconnaissance and soil prospecting, spread out over some 10 years, at a total cost of 10 billion CFA francs. Besides France, the program will have the assistance of the EDF (European Development Fund).

The Gabonese deputy prime minister stressed, at the conclusion of the signing ceremony, the constant support given by the French Government to Gabon's economic development efforts.

The mining inventory program concerned by this agreement consists of three phases: the first is radar mapping of the entire territory carried out by Aeroservice Corporation (United States). The air survey operation has been completed and utilization of the results is in progress. For this program, financing by the Gabonese state amounts to some 1 billion CFA francs. Supervision of the work is entrusted to the company Sodeteg [expansion unknown].

The second phase involves an airborne geophysical reconnaissance. Work is anticipated for this year. The financing for this program totals 2 billion CFA francs, divided between the Gabonese state, 1 billion, and the EDB, 1 billion. As is the case for the first phase, supervision of the work will be provided by Sodeteg.

The third phase will especially concern soil prospecting. Three independent teams of geologists will be set up to cover 15,000 square kilometers per year. The National Geological Service, as indicated by the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum, will form one of these teams. Also, the support of the French FAC (Aid and Cooperation Fund) will permit the operation of a team from the Geological and Mineral Prospecting Office [BRGM], and Gabon will assume responsibility for setting up the third independent team of geologists.

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The agreement also states that the Directorate General of Mines and Geology will coordinate the work as a whole with the support of a nucleus of geologists financed by the FAC.

The total of the ground work amounts to some 10 billion CFA francs spread out over 10 years or so and covering half the national territory. The agreement signed at Libreville covers in part the 1981 BRGM campaign in Gabon and at the same time permits setting up the support nucleus in the Directorate General of Mines.

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GABON

CANADIAN INTEREST IN PROVIDING FINANCIAL AID

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1898, 26 Mar 82 p 858

[Text] In our issue of 12 March 1982 p 743, we pointed out that Georges Rawiri, first deputy prime minister and Gabonese minister of transport, recently visited Canada.

The results of this visit made it possible to strengthen economic relations between Gabon and Canada. Let us state today that, according to the official report of the visit, both parties "showed their interest in seeing Canadian firms take part in different projects in Gabon" and, in particular, in the construction of the Transgabonese railroad, as well as in the supply of equipment and services. Both parties welcomed the advanced state of negotiations concerning the electrification and water supply project in the rural areas of Gabon, as well as the project concerning the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation building. Both parties reaffirmed the very special meaning that they attach to the forthcoming completion of these two important projects. It was mutually agreed that a trade mission of Canadian businessmen would go to Gabon in the near future.

Mr de Bane, Canadian external relations minister, reiterated the Canadian Government's interest in providing financial support to Canadian businessmen wishing to set themselves up in Gabon as part of the industrial cooperation program of the Canadian International Development Agency [CIDA]. This agency is ready to assist in financing part of the rural electrification and water supply project, concurrently with the Association for the Expansion of Canadian Exports.

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GUINEA

BRIEFS

ATTEMPT TO ASSASSINATE PRESIDENT--[Editorial Report] Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 5 May 1982 carries on pages 22-24 a 1,600-word Sennen Andriamirado "exclusive" article in which he alleges that an assassination attempt was made against Guinea President Sekou Toure on either 8 or 15 April by an armed man who entered the presidential palace, killed a guard and injured several others and who claimed to be trying to avenge former Guinean Public Works Minister Kabassan Keita. The article goes on to say that Keita was sacked in March for alleged misappropriation of funds but claims that action was taken against Keita because he had accused others of misappropriation. Andriamirado claims that when meeting with "representatives of international creditors who had come to investigate the way in which their money was being used" in early 1982, Keita had told them "You are asking me for a report on the work! But nothing has been done! I have not seen much of your aid." Andriamirado concludes his report by discussing previous attempts on Sekou Toure's life.

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NIGER

STRENGTHENING OF SAUDI COOPERATION DESCRIBED

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1898, 26 Mar 82 p 851

[Text] Assessing his 4-day visit to Saudi Arabia on his arrival in Niamey on 17 March, President Kountche recalled that Saudi Arabia had promised Niger a contribution of some 19 billion CFA francs under the National Investment Fund [FNI] heading of the 1982 budget. This contribution will make possible the successful completion of equipment projects in the social field, such as village hydraulic work, health and educational equipment or the import of fertilizers.

Colonel Kountche stressed the role which Saudi Arabia is playing in Niger's construction of highway connections to other countries, in particular, in the financing, for 11 billion CFA francs, of the Niamey-Filingue highway. These contributions, President Kountche repeated, fall within the framework of "strengthening solidarity" and "strengthening a shared destiny" in the Islamic faith. The chief of state, who met the director of the Islamic Development Bank [IDB], Ahmad Muhammad, in Jiddah, remarked that this institution is interested in the development of Niger's highway network, in particular, the north-south trans-Saharan main road, two important sections of which remain to be asphalted (Zinder to Agadez and Arlit to the Algerian border).

The Nigerian chief of state indicated that the IDB intends to intensify its efforts to import cement and petroleum products into Niger and is studying its participation in the construction of a cement plant with a 250,000 to 300,000 ton capacity.

President Kountche also studied, with King Khalid and with the secretary general of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), Habib Chatti, the preparation for the Islamic organization's forthcoming ministerial conference. It was agreed that this would be held in Niamey 6 to 12 June.

Lastly, President Kountche indicated that the difficulties encountered during the construction of the Islamic University at Say (50 kilometers south of Niamey) had been overcome. A draft agreement for the completion of the third section of this university was to be signed on 17 March in Jiddah.

It is also noted moreover that besides the ministers of plan and of foreign affairs and cooperation, who accompanied President Kountche, the ministers of commerce, Hamid Algabit, and of mines and industries, Annou Mahamane,

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visited Saudi Arabia in the last few months. During this same period, it is noted, Niamey appointed a new ambassador to Jiddah, Salifou Soumaila, the former ambassador to Algeria.

For his part, the Saudi Development Fund's vice president, Muhammad al-Qusayr, signed an agreement in Niamey for a multi-annual loan to finance construction of the Niamey-Filingue highway.

On that occasion he announced that his country was studying the possibility of participating in the financing of the Kandadji dam.

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NIGER

MILITARY REGIME CAN BOAST OF GOOD RESULTS

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French No 1111, 21 Apr 82 pp 34-36

[Article by Siradiou Diallo: "The Discreet Charm of the Military"]

[Text] After the six other departmental capitals in the country, it is now the turn of Agadez, the old caravan city built at the gateway to the desert and the high place of Touareg country, to host this year's festivities marking the army's coming to power (15 April 1974). With its prestigious sultan's palace and its labyrinth of mud houses overlooked by the minaret of a famous mosque dating from the 16th century, the capital of Air will be the capital of Niger for a day. Artists, musicians and athletes from the four corners of the land will be pitted against one another in single combat witnessed, among other spectators, by the entire leadership which will come from Niamey for the occasion.

It will also be the time to draw up the balance sheet of 8 years under the military regime, a balance sheet of which a visitor landing at the Niamey airport will soon have a glimpse, beginning with the nearly completed highway taking him to the city. While one large international-class hotel, the Gawaye, has opened its doors a few months ago, a number of other projects are being completed: the Palace of Congresses, ministries, ONAREM (National Office of Mineral Resources), and so on. The frantic construction has reached such a point that the International Monetary Fund recently advised the government to exercise moderation. Nevertheless, without the drop in the price of uranium, the main export product, many other building projects would already have been undertaken.

The authorities are all the more determined to give the capital modern infrastructures because it had practically none. Ten years ago, Niamey looked more like a big village than a capital. But "those who set the prices, the mighty," the chief of state sighs with bitterness showing in his eyes, "deliberately broke our streak." Nor was the ambition of the Supreme Military Council (CMS), which ousted Hamani Diori, limited to embellishing Niamey. First and foremost, it wanted to rehabilitate the difficult economic situation inherited from the old regime. The officers wanted to put politics on the back burner and turn to what, in their eyes, is essential: development.

One can now say that in the main, they won their bet. Thanks to strict management and not hesitating to come down hard on all those who confuse public and

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personal finances, President Seyni Kountche succeeded in stabilizing the economic situation. In agriculture, for example, the food shortage was limited. Furthermore, national production during certain years actually covered all grain needs, an increasingly rare phenomenon in the Sahel. This result was due to a systematic policy of agricultural water projects, coordinated with action aimed at increasing the productivity of the soil.

Regarding livestock raising, the nation's herds, decimated during the great drought of 1972-1973, have been rebuilt. For certain species, the 1968 level has even been surpassed, thanks to a sustained effort on behalf of the development of pasture land.

Major sacrifices have also been made to modernize the road system. "Correcting the country's isolation is the top priority," we were told by President Seyni Kountche as he pointed to the huge map in his office. The fact is that Niger is totally dependent on its neighbors for its exports and imports. He therefore intends to cooperate with them in order to build accessways both to the Atlantic Coast, through Nigeria, Benin and Togo, and the Mediterranean, through Algeria. A hub of the major overland ways destined to serve as a bridge between Black Africa and Mediterranean Africa through the Sahara, Niger has taken its role very seriously.

With the completion a year ago of the famous "uranium road" linking Tahoua and Arlit, one can say that in their Nigerien portion, the branches of the Trans-African (Algiers-Mombasa) and of the Trans-Saharan (Algiers-Lagos) took a major leap forward. Likewise, in the east-west direction, from the border of Mali to the shores of Lake Chad via Niamey, Maradi, Zinder and Diffa, there remain only a few short sections that are not paved.

So many achievements in the area of infrastructures were possible only because of the resources derived from uranium. This tells the strategic role of this product in the country's economic development, as well as the impact of the drop in prices on the budget and financial balance. It was beginning in January 1980 that the world market collapsed, but Niger, which negotiates the sale price of the ore for the following year with its foreign partners each year, did not feel the effect immediately. At the end of 1979, the price set for 1980 with the 16 Western companies representing the nine countries involved in uranium mining was 24,560 CFA francs a kilogram.

For 1981, the world price fell to 16,500 CFA francs a kilogram. Great persuasive efforts were needed on the part of France, the majority partner, to make the others agree to raise it to 20,000 francs. For Niger, this still meant a loss of 8 billion CFA francs (160 million French francs). The price for 1982 recovered somewhat, moving to 24,000 CFA francs a kilogram, slightly under the 1980 level. Consequently, the investment budget for 1982 is only 26 billion CFA francs, the same sum as in 1981, compared with the 35 billion originally planned.

How can uranium prices be stabilized? That is the major question haunting all Nigerien leaders. While they are told that the fluctuations linked to the famous law of supply and demand are inevitable in a market economy, they agree out of courtesy, but without being convinced. They rather tend to think that

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the drop in prices results from a deliberate policy, that it is a matter of intimidating, if not punishing, a small country like Niger which refuses to give in to the dictates of the mighty.

Despite the many pressures used by diplomats and other special envoys from Western countries in Niamey, in fact, Col Seyni Kountche has not hesitated to sell his uranium to countries such as Libya, Pakistan and Iraq. In 1981, Qadhdhafi was even the second customer for Nigerien uranium after France. Tripoli bought 1,212 tons and Paris 2,293.3. To what uses are such purchases put by Libya, Pakistan and Iraq? "That is not our problem," the Nigerien chief of state immediately retorts, and he adds: "We are determined to sell our uranium to anyone who wants to buy it, just like our peanuts or early vegetables, provided they go along with the provisions of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna!"

And if one brings up the risk of proliferation of the atomic bombs, Colonel Kountche replies: "We sell only uranium metal, which is not what is used to make bombs. It is those who have the processing plants and the necessary technology who should be told not to sell. They are the danger, not us."

Likewise, the obstinacy of the Nigerien leaders in wanting to bring Kuwait into the capital of the latest uranium company encountered strong resistance on the part of the French partners. In October 1980, Colonel Kountche had to get angry and pound on the table in order for his interlocutors, led by Peckeur, head of the Atomic Energy Commission, Georges Besse, general director of COGEMA (General Nuclear Materials Company), and Panouillot, chairman of the board of directors of the Tassa-Ntagalgue Mining Company (SMTT), to agree -- probably against their will -- to allow Kuwait a share in the capital of the SMTT.

Precisely what is the policy of Niger's partners on uranium? Are they willing to find a price stabilization agreement? How do they set the prices? Is Niger to make agreements only with the companies, or with their home countries as well? These are questions of concern to Nigerien leaders, questions which Col Seyni Kountche will undoubtedly not fail to bring up with Francois Mitterrand at the time of the official visit which the French president is planning to make to Niamey in May. The Nigerien chief of state will also take advantage of the opportunity to ask for France's support in completing two major projects which the regime deems to have priority.

One of these projects is working of the SMTT deposit destined to produce 1,500 tons of uranium metal a year. With the construction of the ore processing plant, an electrical power plant and a mining compound that will be integrated into the city of Akokan, the undertaking represents an investment on the order of 100 billion CFA francs (2 billion French francs).

The Nigerien chief of state could also plead the case of the usefulness of the Kandandji Dam on the Niger River to his French colleague. This project would irrigate nearly 100,000 hectares of arable land, while producing 200 megawatts of electricity. Nigerien leaders attach all the more importance to the project

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because the Niamey region, supplied by the Kaindji Dam (Nigeria), suffers from a severe energy shortage. Furthermore, the country's oil bill is some 18 billion CFA francs. But given the high cost of the operation (over 100 billion CFA francs), certain backers, such as the FRG, are reticent.

Under such conditions and considering the country's poor economic situation at the present time, other projects like the Parakou-Niamey railroad will remain filed away. Awaiting the recovery which, for Niger, is closely linked to the relaunching of plans to develop nuclear energy in the Western world, the Supreme Military Council is concerned about the political situation, even though 8 years after his accession to power, Colonel Kountche seems to have the situation well in hand. Nor does he have anything more to fear from his predecessors. Released now, most officials from the old regime have turned to business, although a number of them were recently assigned to house arrest in their villages. Was this arbitrary? Not at all, the chief of state told us. "I have my reasons," state reasons difficult to explain.

As for former President Hamani Diori, he is still under house arrest in the villa occupied by the former president of the National Assembly, Boubou Hama, who died at the end of January in Niamey at the age of 73. Having totally regained his sight following an operation for cataracts 2 years ago, Diori reads, writes and listens to the radio, when not talking with his near relatives, the only persons authorized to visit him. But everything would seem to indicate that he will not be long in regaining full freedom of movement. "That would already have been the case, if it were not for the subversive action of Abdoulaye Diori," Colonel Kountche told us, before explaining that the eldest son of the former president is constantly in touch with Qadhdhafi in order to destabilize the regime in Niamey. Abdoulaye Diori, who vehemently denies this, is reportedly setting up commando operations from Libya in order to free his father.

In other words, despite the recent restoration of diplomatic relations between Niamey and Tripoli interrupted at the beginning of 1981, confidence is not total. Proof of this is the campaign of discredit now waged by Colonel Qadhdhafi throughout the Gulf countries, a campaign according to which the Nigerian chief of state reportedly belongs to a non-Muslim ethnic group which persecutes the followers of Muhammad! Consequently, no more aid must be given to him. But the leaders of the Gulf countries know what they are dealing with.

Nevertheless, in politics, the major concern at the moment revolves around the establishment of the development company, an original institution which, in the absence of a political party since the army's accession to power, is aimed at obtaining the effective, voluntary participation of the people in the task of national construction and whose two driving forces are the traditional youth organizations, the Samariya, and the cooperatives. What real power would the development company have? Could it not play the role of a parliament in which the needs, interests and aspirations of the people would be reflected. Certain official statements would indicate this.

But whether it be a question of this project or any others being put together in Niamey, things must be approached cautiously, for if, in 8 years, the face

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of Niger has changed, Col Seyni Kountche has not really changed his methods that much, still governing with a heavy dose of mystery. As a good staff officer, he prefers to surprise rather than to reveal his tactics and positions. Nevertheless, the Nigeriens are the rare Africans to enjoy the discreet charm of the military.

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NIGER

BRIEFS

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF MARKET FIRE--If you have not seen the Niamey market, it is too late! On the night of 30-31 March, those hectares of wooden and corrugated metal huts built in the heart of the capital were ravaged by a huge fire. An initial estimate placed the damage to goods and facilities devastated by the flames at over 5 billion CFA francs (including the road terminal). In other words, even if there were no casualties, the fire meant total ruin for thousands of families. What is worse, the country's commercial circuits will be disorganized for a long time to come because, as one Nigerien official explained, "when the Niamey market had a cold, all trade in the country sneezed. Now there is nothing left of it." To understand this, one has to have seen the hordes of jobbers and low-level government employees who would invade the market at 1800 hours on the nose, turning it into a restaurant. For 100 CFA francs, they could eat and learn where the goods smuggled in from neighboring Nigeria could be found. From live monkeys to tape recorders, one could find everything at the big Niamey market. A little of everything is right: Amidst the dusty bric-a-brac and an infernal amount of noise, Haoussa, Djerma, Peul and Songhai vendors served a motley crew. One would think that all the merchants in West Africa had agreed to meet for a daily fair. Of all that, nothing is left. [By M. K. N.] [Text] [Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French No 1111, 21 Apr 82 p 35] [COPYRIGHT: Jeune Afrique GRUPJIA 1982] 11,464

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NIGERIA

BRIEFS

INFLATION IN 1981--According to the BUSINESS TIMES of 22 March, referring to the latest figures published by the Central Bank, the rate of inflation in Nigeria for the first 9 months of 1981 was 21.9 percent. However, this rate could have diminished during the last quarter, as inflation is generally weaker at this time of the year, especially compared to the first quarter. The paper also indicated that for the same period, imports amounted to 8.3 billion naira (approximately \$13 billion). Sugar leads the imported food products, at more than \$550 million, followed by rice (approximately \$400 million). The final figures for 1981 will not be known for several months. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1898, 26 Mar 82 p 853] [COPYRIGHT: Rene Moreux et Cie Paris 1982.] 969

FAVORABLE BALANCE FOR FRANCE--The French-Nigerian trade balance for the 12 months of 1981 is clearly in France's favor for the first time since 1962. In fact, out of a total of Fr 17.6 billion in trade (Fr 843 million less than in 1980), France's sales amounted to Fr 9.243 billion, compared to 5.717 billion in 1980 (+ 62 percent), and its purchases to 8.357 billion, compared to 12.726 billion (-35 percent). Thus, while France had a deficit of 7.009 billion in 1980, its surplus in 1981 was Fr 886 million. This situation, whose development could be noted regularly throughout the year, results largely from the numerous contracts concluded by France that have increased its sales of machinery and equipment. It is also explained by a significant decrease in its purchases of petroleum. In fact, in 1981 they amounted to only 5.4 million barrels, at an average price of Fr 1,523 per barrel, while in 1980 they amounted to 10.9 million barrels, at an average price per barrel which was 37 percent lower, or Fr 1,112. This increase in the price per barrel explains why, although French purchases declined 50 percent in volume, they decreased only 35 percent in value from one year to the next. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1898, 26 Mar 82 p 853] [COPYRIGHT: Rene Moreux et Cie Paris 1982.] 9693

CRUDE OIL PRICES, SALES--In conformance with the decisions adopted at the special OPEC conference in Vienna on 19 and 20 March, Nigeria's petroleum production must be limited to 1.3 million barrels per day, and the reference price must be decreased from \$36.52 to \$35.42, effective immediately. The production ceiling is slightly higher than February's production, estimated at between 1.1 and 1.2 million barrels per day. As for the price, Bonny Light's principal competitor is North Sea petroleum, whose price Great Britain

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lowered to \$31 several months ago. There therefore remains a price differential of \$4.52 per barrel to Nigeria's disadvantage, which may turn away buyers of Nigerian petroleum in a market characterized by surplus production. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1898, 26 Mar 82 p 853] [COPYRIGHT: Rene Moreux et Cie Paris 1982.] 9693

LOKOJA HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT--We know that, partly because of the problem of supplying the future steelmaking complexes at Ajaokata, the giant Lokoja hydroelectric project decided on in September 1979 by General Obasanjo's military regime and then abandoned in 1980 by President Shogari's civilian regime has surfaced again, with its completion receiving priority from the National Electric Power Authority (NEPA) over other smaller projects--especially those presented by ICHF (Central Hydraulic Laboratory of France) (MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS 26 Feb p 621). The federal minister of mines and power, Alhaji Mohammed Ibrahim Hassan, spoke of it recently himself, and the governor of Kwara, Alhaji Adama Atta, mentioned it in a discussion with the head of state on 22 February. Two years ago the project, located at the confluence of the Niger and the Benue in Kwara State, was estimated at some 2.5 billion naira, or approximately \$5 billion. With 2,000 MW of power, it was supposed to be one of the largest in the country and was to be added to the Kainji, the first plant built, and to the Jebba and Shiroro plants, still in progress, as well as to various other thermal projects, for the production of electricity. The country's requirements are such (see MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS, 12 Feb p 372) that Minister Ibrahim Hassan has also announced a new 1 billion naira hydroelectric project with a 1250 MW capacity, which would be located in Gemba, in Gongola State. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1898, 26 Mar 82 p 853] [COPYRIGHT: Rene Moreux et Cie Paris 1982.] 9693

MORE ON OJUKWU PARDON--Lagos, 18 May (NAN)--President Shehu Shagari today got the approval of the National Council of State to grant pardon to Mr Chukwuemeka Ojukwu. A statement this evening from the executive office of the president, in Lagos, said that the exercise was in fulfilment of an undertaking given last year by the president to review the case of Mr Ojukwu. The statement said that the president had directed the police to issue a notice in the Gazette to nullify the taint of criminality on Mr Ojukwu's image by its wanted fugitive offenders notice. Earlier today, at the end of the meeting of the Council of State, Governor Abubakar Rimi of Kano had told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) that the president's proposal to grant pardon to Mr Ojukwu met no obstacles whatsoever. Mr Ojukwu went into self exile at the close of the Nigerian Civil War in 1970. He was military governor of the former eastern region and one of the leaders of the rebellion that led to the civil war which raged from 1967 to 1970. He was stripped of his military rank and dismissed from the Nigerian Army by the Gowon administration. [Text] [AB181824 Lagos NAN in English 1802 GMT 18 May 82]

SHAGARI CONSIDERS OJUKWU PARDON--Lagos, 18 May (NAN)--President Shehu Shagari today in Lagos submitted a memorandum to the National Council of States on the granting of pardon to Mr Chukwuemeka Ojukwu in respect of any federal offence he might have committed in relation to the civil war. Addressing a meeting of the council, President Shagari explained that it seemed prudent

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SENEGAL

SENEGAL'S POLICY TOWARD SAHARAN REPUBLIC RAPPED

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French No 262, 29 Mar-11 Apr 82 p 26

[Text] The conference devoted to the creation of a Pan-African press agency (PANA) will have been the first incident in a series which cannot avoid stirring up all those whose aim is to paralyze the OAU's activities. This incident, while foreseeable, was nonetheless surprising. In effect, by deciding to bar the Saharan delegation, led by Information Minister Mohammed Ould Salek, the officials in Dakar must have known they were jeopardizing the holding of the conference, whose importance, underscored by the Senegalese prime minister, needs no further proof. Neither could they be unaware that their undiplomatic gesture would sweep away the solidarity of the other African delegations present at this conference. This decision--which follows the direction desired by those who are working for the destruction of the continental organization--threatens to jeopardize the overtures Senegal has made toward certain African countries.

Begun by President Abdou Diouf, this policy had already enjoyed a certain amount of success and was looked on favorably by many countries, because it allowed Senegal not only to renew ties with countries like Angola and Algeria, but also once again to begin the inter-African dialogue on essential problems concerning the continent. The problem of the Sahara had, in principle, been partially settled by the decision to formally admit the SDAR [Saharan Democratic Arab Republic] to the OAU. To lose sight of this fact, or to want to completely deny it by trying to breathe life into the policies of the King of Morocco, whose negative performance is known in more than one African country, doesn't help either the OAU or Senegal!

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SENEGAL

BCEAO ISSUES ECONOMIC, MONETARY STATISTICS

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1898, 26 Mar 82 p 847

[Text] One of the latest economic and monetary statistics bulletins of the Central Bank of the West African States [BCEAO] was devoted to Senegal.

On the basis of the purchase price to producers for the 1980-1981 agricultural campaign, the value of the peanut harvest represented 9.6 billion CFA francs (a decrease of 8.2 billion), cottonseed came to 1.3 billion CFA francs (a decrease of 0.2 billion), and paddy to 2.5 billion CFA francs (a decrease of 2.5 billion).

At the beginning of the 1981-1982 campaign now in progress, purchase prices were raised, per kilogram and in CFA francs, from 50 to 70 francs for oil-mill peanuts, from 60 to 68 francs for cottonseed, and from 41.50 to 51.50 francs for paddy; the purchase price for food products--corn, millet-sorghum and beans--also having been increased.

The small amount of seed supplied to the oil mills is reflected in the drop in oil exports: 10,350 tons for the first 9 months of 1981 and 25,419 tons of oilcakes.

Exports of calcium phosphates in the first three quarters of 1981 reached 907,000 tons (as against 1 million tons for the corresponding quarters of 1980).

For the first 11 months of 1981, tuna fishing produced 10,118 tons delivered to local canneries.

During the first three quarters of 1981, Dakar international airport recorded 10,074 commercial airplane flights and passenger traffic involving the arrival and departure of 433,400 travelers.

At the end of June 1981, the general commodity turnover index of the major commercial enterprises was established at 202.5 as against 208.4 a year before, on the base of 100 determined for the year 1970.

On 30 September 1981, the general consumer price index for the African family was placed at 286.7, as against 263 at the end of September 1980; the increase was particularly noticeable concerning foodstuffs and maintenance products (on the base of 100 defined for the year 1970).

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The budget for fiscal year July 1981-June 1982 was fixed at 181.1 billion CFA francs (an increase of 43.5 billion over the preceding one); receipts include 54.1 billion CFA francs in foreign contributions (an increase of 37.1 billion) allocated to procurement costs fixed at 55.6 billion (an increase of 33.6 billion). On 31 October 1981, duties and taxes collected by the customs service totaled 44.8 billion CFA francs, of which 98 percent was from imports.

Foreign trade statistics go back to 1979, a year in which imports amounted to 198 billion CFA francs, as compared with 113.9 billion francs in exports; the deficit of 84.1 billion francs was appreciably higher than that of 1978 (68.9 billion).

At the end of December 1980, the outstanding foreign debt represented the equivalent of 187 billion CFA francs (an increase of 33.9 billion during the year); the available margin not yet deducted from funds obtained amounted to 132.9 billion CFA francs (an increase of 33.9 billion). During 1980, debt servicing (amortization and interest) required 32.6 billion CFA francs (an increase of 10.1 billion over 1979).

On 30 September 1981, notes and currency in circulation totaled 51.9 billion CFA francs (an increase of 8 billion at the end of September 1979). On the same date, demand deposits and fixed-term deposits in banks were registered at 121.7 billion CFA francs (a decrease of 4.5 billion). In comparison, savings funds represented 287 billion CFA francs (an increase of 32.5 billion), with public corporations accounting for some 54 percent of their use.

Also, on 30 September 1981, the Senegalese Treasury found itself in debt at the local level to the extent of 39.3 billion CFA francs (of which 23.9 billion were overdrafts from the issuing institute), as against a debit position of 23.8 billion a year before.

Over the year, the net foreign holdings situation had again strongly deteriorated. At the end of September 1981, the Central Bank and commercial banks found themselves with a foreign debt equivalent to 134.7 billion CFA francs, an increase of 50.3 billion over September 1980.

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SENEGAL

OPPOSITION SAID TO BE LARGELY DISCREDITED

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French No 1111, 21 Apr 82 pp 34-35

[Article by David Sharp: "Jawara Persists and Signs"]

[Text] The graffiti are still on the wall in downtown Banjul: "We have been playing dead for 15 years. Wake up!" Since the first "disturbances" in October 1980, no one has taken the trouble to remove them, a symbol, according to some, of the "passiveness of the authorities, who never react in time." Scarcely 9 months ago, on 30 July 1981, the awakening was cruel, costing at least 500 persons their lives and dealing a very harsh blow to the economy and the political traditions of this tiny nation (600,000 inhabitants).

Gambian journalist Rudolph Allen speaks of a "rebellion" as poorly organized as it was tragic and which was sometimes even almost unreal: "One day," he says, "I found myself facing a young thief who was threatening me with a play pistol he had probably stolen from a toy store."

With the exception of the British and Swedish tourists who rarely venture far from their luxury hotels (and whose number has dropped 44 percent since the "events"), everyone still lives with the memory of those nightmarish days, particularly the some 1,000 persons incarcerated after the abortive coup on 31 July. Many have been released, but there have been 84 sentencings so far, 16 involving the death penalty. In the list of conspirators are many members of the police Field Force. Some say the government can now count on no more than about 50 officers (out of 400).

The trials, all public, are far from over. They take place in the Law Courts which, like most administrative buildings in Banjul -- except for the Central Bank, which is air-conditioned and which has five floors -- are tiny and which have obviously known better days. On 25 March, a day like any other in Court 2, seven of the presumed instigators of the uprising appear at the same time, under the vigilant guard of Senegalese soldiers. Slumped in their seats in a corner of the dark room, manifestly bewildered by what is happening to them, they truly do not look like dangerous terrorists or agents of Tripoli (according to two witnesses, four Libyans reportedly participated twice in meetings held to plan for the abortive coup, meetings beginning in January 1981). These young people resemble much more the unemployed from the slums of Banjul and its environs, whose numbers are steadily increasing and who seem far more mobilized by Nigerian marijuana than by the works of Marx and Lenin.

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One remarkable fact: The judges and attorneys at these special courts are all foreigners, mainly Ghanaians, Sierra Leoneans and Nigerians for the most part. "A fine lesson taught by this African government! Without worrying about the price, it has called in totally independent magistrates to judge people who would have been summarily executed in other countries." The author of this praise, Attorney General Gyeke Dako (chief special prosecutor) knows what he is talking about: Attorney general of the Republic of Ghana between 1970 and 1978, he headed the trials of at least five groups of unfortunate plotters in his country. He points out one curious detail: The 16 convictions for treason handed down so far were based on a law inherited from British legislation and going back to 1351! This same law was just invoked against former vice president Cherif Diba, leader and one of the five deputies of the main opposition group in Parliament, the National Convention Party (NCP).

Are the special prosecutors subjected to pressure from the government? Absolutely not, claims Gyeke Dako, who underlines the "purely technical" nature of his intervention. Nevertheless, a rapid solution of the "Diba affair" (which could end in the death penalty for the accused) would help President Dawda Jawara and his People's Progressive Party (PPP), which holds 29 of the 35 elective seats in Parliament.

Presidential and legislative elections are in fact to be held on 4-5 May. While the state of emergency and the curfew remain in effect, the blue flags of the PPP are already waving nearly everywhere in rural areas, while the white flags of the NCP are conspicuous by their absence. "We wonder whether, under the current conditions, the opposition will dare raise its head," we were told by one student in Brikama, an immense conglomeration of hovels with corrugated metal roofing in southern Banjul. Our interlocutor calls himself a "conservative, which means totally opposed to the government." Like many of his comrades, he approves of the objectives, but not the strategy, of the authors of the 30 July 1981 coup. "Many of us learned from it. Next time, we will be better prepared."

It is a very different tune heard from the venerable *seyfo* (leader) El-Hadji Abu Khan, who for 45 years has presided over the destiny of the tiny village of Kuntair on the northern bank of the Gambia River. "No one here will vote for the opposition. All those who before did not want to hear about the PPP have been on the side of President Jawara since July." If this is the case, one wonders why Dr Mamadou Manneh, minister of planning and industrial development, feels obliged to tour the countryside not only flanked by an armed police officer, but carrying an impressive hunting rifle himself.

This is proof that the Gambian democracy, modeled after that of Great Britain, experienced a rude blow on 30 July 1981. However, one must add that the way in which the voting is conducted makes rigging very difficult and that the NCP seemed determined to present candidates in most districts. But the elections of 4-5 May will not thereby resolve the problems that caused many Gambians to kill one another nearly 9 months ago.

Facing a largely discredited opposition, Sir Dawda Jawara will very certainly emerge from the 4 May voting, the first since the official birth of Senegambia

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on 1 February, the victor. But, in office since independence (17 years), has he not watched his power dwindle? Will he have the energy and determination to undertake the essential changes?

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UGANDA

BRIEFS

U.S. JOURNALISTS ARRESTED, LASHED--Kampala, May 19 (AFP)--Uganda soldiers locked up two U.S. journalists for 48 hours and gave each of them 12 lashes before releasing them from a barracks north of Kampala, the two men said here today. The journalists, Chuck Powers of the LOS ANGELES TIMES and Robert Rosenthal of THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER, said they were detained on Monday when they went to interview the commanding officer of a barracks at Bombo, north of Kampala. They said they had introduced themselves with their press accreditations at the barracks' gates and were allowed inside only to find themselves arrested. They were subsequently accused of "infiltrating" the barracks and were locked up in a cell. Their driver was also detained. [Text] [AB191327 Paris AFP in English 1228 GMT 19 May 82]

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ZAIRE

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL OFFICIAL LISTS RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Brussels POURQUOI PAS? in French 18 Mar 82 pp 53-54

[Article: "The Crocodiles Are Living Well"]

[Text] Amnesty International's action can be compared to that of an antibiotic which acts specifically against certain viruses but encourages the resistance of other virus strains. Similarly, an Amnesty International campaign is able to moderate or terminate certain violations of human rights, but it prompts totalitarian or authoritarian governments to adopt new methods of repression.

This is the case in Zaire. The records published by Amnesty International, the mission of Messrs Stephen and Dottridge to Kinshasa, and the dialog initiated with President Mobutu have certainly led to an improvement--although slight--in the treatment of prisoners in official prisons. On the other hand, torture and poor treatment are continuing in detention centers and cases of "disappearances" are multiplying. Opponents of the regime, or those claimed to be, are thrown from helicopters in the sky or fed to the crocodiles.

Appalling--that is the word which Mike Dottridge, head of the Central African division of Amnesty International's world secretariat in London, uses to sum up the violations of human rights in Zaire.

The 28-year-old Englishman, who launched the Bokassa affair and contributed to the fall of the Central African tyrant, lists the "glaring and flagrant" abuses committed by the Mobutu regime:

-Detention of claimed opponents for months, indeed years, without charges or trial, especially in centers run by security forces.

-Banishment, in other words internal exile, of opponents or claimed opponents. Deprived of all civil and political rights, they are assigned to a village to live.

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-Incarceration of prisoners of conscience, following unfair trials.

-"Disappearance" of political prisoners.

-Application of the death penalty.

Mike Dottridge supplies the following details on the numerous Zairian security forces who have excessive power to arrest and imprison their fellow citizens and who consider incarceration a means of stifling internal opposition.

- 1) The CNRI [expansion unknown] (former CND [National Documentation Center]). Responsible for domestic security, this civil department has detention centers in Bukavu, Kinshasa, and Lubumbashi, as well as offices and branches throughout the country.
- 2) The SNI [expansion unknown]. This national investigation division is responsible for foreign security and monitors groups of opponents in exile. Its headquarters are in Kinshasa, but on occasion it uses the CNRI's detention centers.
- 3) The BSRS [Special Investigation and Surveillance Brigade] and the B2, a branch of the national security forces, have units throughout Zaire. Their prisons, located in a building on Avenue Dracaena (the Gombe district), enjoy a sinister renown.
- 4) G2 is the military division responsible for matters of intelligence and military security.
- 5) The Special Presidential Brigade, based in Camp Tshatshi in Kinshasa, runs the OAU #2 detention center, in other words, the OAU's second center.
- 6) In "areas of operation," the FAZ [Zairian Armed Forces] have local security divisions, called S2's.

Into the nets cast by all these dubious fisherman sometimes fall political opponents, or rebels, but most often suspects. In Mobutu's Zaire, participating in a demonstration on a university campus, going on strike, granting an interview, criticizing the regime, or reading a political tract is enough to make a citizen a prisoner. Thus, a doctor from Rwanda, Inkaka Sebera, was arrested in Bukavu and held in secret for a long time for having criticized the new law on nationality.

The treatment in detention centers and camps is deplorable. The cells are overcrowded and infested with insects and rats. The prisoners receive one meal per day at most: a gruel made of cassava leaves. There is one bottle of water for 12 prisoners.

When the families manage to find "their" prisoners and bring them food, it is almost always stolen by the jailers.

The Amnesty International representative describes the poor treatment inflicted on prisoners:

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"In most prisons and detention centers in Kinshasa, they use beating and starvation. The prisoners are regularly beaten about the face, the ears, and the chest. Many must wear tight shackles called 'krakras.' Torture techniques vary depending on the detention center. In some places they whip with ropes, in others they use electric torture; or they burn them with red-hot irons or beat the prisoner while he is hanging upside down or submerged in water for prolonged periods. The Zairian authorities deny the accusations of torture. But Amnesty International doctors have examined many freed prisoners who still bear the scars. Despite the promises of the government and the President, prison conditions in Zaire are such and remain such that about 100 prisoners die each year. In 1980 and 1981, efforts to improve the treatment in official prisons were agreed to, but living conditions in the camps and detention centers are still atrocious. There they die of starvation, sickness, poor treatment."

Mike Dottridge confirms this: "Twenty-eight prisoners accused of theft from stores belonging to the presidential family have been left without food for 6 months. It is their fellow prisoners who, by sharing their meager rations, have enabled these 27 skeletons to stay alive."

The Zairian regime is not content merely to imprison its opponents or claimed opponents. It also locks up their wives and parents.

Amnesty International cites many cases of wives, brothers, sons, or uncles incarcerated for no reason. Thus, Kibassa Maliba, the MPR [Popular Movement of the Revolution] Politburo member who drafted the "open letter" sent to President Mobutu by 13 members of Parliament, was thrown out of the single party, deprived of his civil and political rights, and imprisoned. He saw his brother Mbinga and his servant arrested and held in prison for months without charges or a trial.

On 25 September 1981, in the village of Abumbe near Ngovi-Swima, Kapokela Sango was arrested because of his connections with an armed opposition group. His aunt and uncle who came to visit him at Camp Mulimbi were imprisoned in turn and had to pay a ransom to recover their freedom.

The same thing happened to citizen Namulunga from Kamanyola. She was locked up in prison her husband had just escaped from. As for Zairian citizen Pinzi, she was imprisoned in the OUA #2 detention center with her 11-month-old baby. Her crime: being the wife of an African People's Party sympathizer from Kikunga.

A peasant named Simwami from South Kivu was apprehended by the security forces instead of his son Lwangila.

Lujo, the son of Zablon Rubaruba, one of the leaders of the Fizi Baraka guerilla group, is still in prison; he claims, however, to have no connection with these rebels.

These "blunders" occur not only in distant areas, where the Zairian Government's power is weak, but sometimes within several kilometers of the residence of

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the head of state. His military headquarters is close to the OUA #2 detention center, and the President's special adviser for security matters is kept informed of persons who are being held by the CNRI.

"In addition to these violations of human rights," says Mike Dottridge, "the increase in the number of 'disappearances' must be pointed out. Zairians are thrown from helicopters or into rivers where crocodiles are plentiful--a method which leaves no traces. In Zaire we are not faced with primitive barbarism but with a premeditated system.

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ZAIRE

'MANIFESTO' BLAMES SITUATION ON CORRUPT, BOURGEOIS LEADERS

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French No 264, 26 Apr-9 May 82 pp 18-20

[Article by Mariam Sysle: "The Prison"]

[Text] For the past few weeks, a document from a sector of the Zairian opposition has been secretly circulated in Kinshasa. It is believed that one or more of its presumed authors may have been apprehended during the recent waves of arrests.

Entitled "Manifesto of Congolese Patriots" and drafted, on behalf of the provisional committee of the Patriotic Front of the Congo, by active militants, the document makes a detailed analysis of the country's economic, social, political and cultural situation. It points up the underlying causes of Zaire's stagnation and emphasizes the overwhelming responsibility for the state of affairs of the parasitic group heading the country. At the same time, it warns against the elements of this privileged caste that rebel against the totalitarianism of the Mobutu regime, which gives them but little room, and whose objective is to gain control of the people's discontent and revolutionary struggle in order to gain power without changing anything in the neocolonial status quo.

At a time when Mobutu -- whom the West seems to have decided to accommodate, for the time being, at least -- believes to have regained a solid reputation, after his trips to Washington, Paris and London and after the escapade of his soldiers in Chad; and at a time, also, when the dictator is getting ready to organize, in the months ahead, another election farce which he hopes will make his people forget that his country continues to be a prison in which all dissent is stifled, it seemed to us fitting to publish long excerpts from that manifesto. An interpreter for the discontent, suffering and disillusionment of a people, the document allows us to hear a voice scarcely heeded in the foreign ministries and it demonstrates that despite the organizational splintering of the opposition, a concrete, courageous struggle is being waged in the field.

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"...The Congo, our country, is going through the most difficult period in its history. A profound crisis has hit all classes of the population, touching all aspects of life. The political class (in power) is now at the end of its rope. The discontent of the masses has reached its peak. At all levels, change is awaited. Economically speaking, bankruptcy is total." The 'Manifesto of the Congolese Patriots' emphasizes the failure of all plans of recovery implemented under the International Monetary Fund and Western capitals and enumerates the main manifestations of this crisis (increase in the foreign debt, deficit in the trade balance and negative balance of payments). "There is no price policy, no wage policy. The Congo is now nothing more than a field for speculation, a paradise for adventurers of all kinds who bring in and take out any kind of goods and set tariffs at will. Fraud is a legalized practice, inasmuch as its beneficiaries are in power (...)."

"In the face of declining living conditions,¹ the workers shirk their jobs and increasingly engage in strikes, thereby paralyzing the production structure. The workers' purchasing power has declined to such an extent that it poses a threat to the very physical health of the mass of wage earners. Led by puppets in the pay of Mobutu, the union can no longer contain the anger of the workers. For their part, the peasants engage in subsistence farming. This is a consequence of the 'policy' of low prices paid to agricultural producers. All this causes a rural exodus that is draining our rural areas of the young. The resulting drop in farm production makes it necessary to import basic food products (...).

"Crisis in production, financial crisis, commercial crisis and a crisis in food crops: This is the result of the country's dependency on other countries and its economic exploitation by imperialism. But all this is aggravated by the effects of a systematically inefficient management aimed at making the Zairian bourgeoisie richer, for its role is to maintain and promote the best conditions for imperialist exploitation in the country. The policy of looting could not have a better price (...).

"The world situation, semi-isolation, the fluctuations in prices of raw materials, the war in Angola and who knows what else: None of this can explain a situation that has lasted for 21 years(...). The Congo is, in fact, a country with vast resources, but it is less well off than many poor countries in the dominated world. Furthermore, the permanent nature of the Zairian crisis -- it covers the entire postcolonial history -- shows the inadequacy of circumstantial explanations."

Two Main Classes

The document then analyzes the social makeup of the nation today and the tribalist policies of the government.

"Based on a grouping of tribes aimed at setting up a state with colonial purposes, our society, which originally had no social classes, gradually became divided into two major classes (...)," the manifesto states. "At the top of the pyramid are the foreigners, representing the international upper bourgeoisie, and the comprador bourgeoisie. (....) The class of exploiters that

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we call the comprador bourgeoisie is itself made up of two main strata. The first, the presidential court, is made up of about 10 members of the family and clan of the president-dictator Mobutu Sese Seko. In addition to these are a few advisers, often from outside the family, clan and even region of the president. The second strata is the reigning brotherhood, which includes the members of the president's tribe, the elite from the neighboring regions (Upper Zaire and North-Bandundu), as well as a few prominent persons from the rest of the country, recruited for their competence or representativeness and who owe their 'professional' stability to their political allegiance, in exchange for the corrupting advantages of power. These two strata constitute the central core of the comprador bourgeoisie, thus labeled because it lives off the government apparatus and the services it renders to imperialism. Corruption and tribal relationships constitute the criteria for selection of the members of this bourgeoisie (...).

"At the bottom of the pyramid are the masses, whose vital force is made up of the working world, workers and the poor and average peasants. Soldiers, teachers, low-level government employees and health personnel are also part of the working world. In addition, there are in this strata related groups: those without jobs, artisans, the unemployed and young hoods, called *ballados*.

"Between these two poles is the national bourgeoisie, still emerging and establishing itself in opposition to the comprador bourgeoisie (...).

"This new stratum is made up of persons of note from the world of business (commerce, transport, the hotel trade, and so on). and their funds generally come from their past association with posts of responsibility in the government. This category of persons owing their rise in society to their competence or popularity is often checked in its ascent by the competition of monopolies and foreign trusts which hold the reins of the country's economy, as well as by the poor management of the Zairian economy and the tribalist policy of the government.

"All this explains the political opposition of this new national bourgeoisie to the presidential court. But it is a hesitant and tortured opposition, insofar as it aspires to become part of that court itself! These two strata (comprador bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie) have profound ramifications in society (...)."

Corrosive Movement

"This division of society into social classes with tribal affiliations at the highest level does not serve the country; rather, it only destroys and ruins it. Regarding the management of the country's different institutions, their officials, who generally benefit from corruption and their tribal affinities, enjoy one privilege: impunity, which grows as one comes closer to the dictator. Consequently, honest, competent citizens are excluded from management, or forced to 'degrade themselves' if they want to remain there. State management is impregnated with the doctrine of the Popular Movement of the Revolution (Mobutu's MPR), which embodies the negation of national values. Consequently, professors at the National University of Zaire meeting in Nsele on the occasion

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of a session of the Makanda-Kabobi Institute, labeled the MPR as a corrosive movement. (...)"

The document draws up a list of the afflictions from which the country suffers, pointing up the bankruptcy of education, which goes hand in hand with the inadequate health facilities, and describes the social and cultural climate reigning in Mobutu's kingdom.

"In public departments, officials desert their offices and make people pay for their services. Justice depends on who the client is and the press has become an agency reporting the statements of authorities. Authenticity has become a Zairian way of living Western culture in its most negative aspects. Far from promoting the country, the authors of authenticity cultivate the lower instincts and destroy the few values that were able to survive colonization.

"The power of money has a negative effect, even on family relationships. It kills all feelings and tends to make those relationships benefit certain individuals, those who have money, naturally. The value of the Zairian woman, hypocritically called 'Mommy,' is steadily degraded to the benefit of prostitution. (...) The trade union was unified, not to serve the working class, but to more effectively stifle its claims. The same is true of the objectives of the MPR youth organizations set up among students. (...)

"With respect to culture, there is total failure. Authenticity has been reduced to a rejection of borrowed names, the performance of folk dances. (...) Of our traditions, nothing has been retained but a few outward forms, lacking in original substance. (...) This is the result of the practice of *laissez-faire* and a total incompetence, now erected into a principle of resignation by government officials, resignation expressed in this governmental slogan: '*Moto na moto abongisa*' (Improving the situation is the business of every citizen). The government is not providence. (...)

"Politically speaking," the Manifesto continues, "there is a complete impasse. After the war in Angola, in which Zairian troops were broken up, and following the two wars in Shaba, which exposed the internal contradictions in Mobutu's army and the country, an effort was made to democratize the country through the establishment of a parliament whose members were elected. But the dictator did not take long to go back on a whole series of acts: refusal to authorize the formation of other political parties; sentencing of 13 people's commissioners, whose position was perfectly in keeping with the standards of the MPR, however; rejection of the principle of election to the MPR Political Bureau; and the creation of a Central Committee whose members are named and revoked by a decision made by Mobutu.

"Furthermore, the bloody repression continues in the underground dungeons in Binza and elsewhere. Hundreds of persons are rotting in the jails of the so-called national gendarmerie or those of several other security services."

NATO Intervention

"The country's entire policy is based on imperialist concerns. No coherent, systematic policy is possible under such conditions, if there is no filling

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of the holes so indispensable to a regime in constant crisis. What we are experiencing today is not a crisis, but the death throes of a system of looting."

The Manifesto of the Congolese Patriots also recalls the hard fight of the people of Congo-Kinshasa, first at the time of the Western conquest and throughout the colonial occupation, then after independence.

Beginning in 1955, the resistance which up to that time had mainly been expressed in peasant revolts, mutinies or fairly spontaneous strikes, assumed an organized political form, the document states. "Many political parties were created, leading to the imposition of independence on the colonizer. However, the assassination of Patrice Lumumba, a leader of the people's nationalist movement, and of his comrades in arms brought the objectives of the struggle into question and created the bloodiest conflict in our history. The resistance, mainly led by the leaders of the Congolese National Movement, founded by Patrice Lumumba, and the African Socialist Party (PSA), united with other revolutionary organizations in the National Liberation Committee (CNL), spread throughout the territory. It was a declared war on the lackeys of imperialism, successively represented by Kasa-Vubu, Ileo, Adoula, Tschombe and Mobutu. The resistance movement, strengthened by the vigorous action of patriot Pierre Mulele in Kwilou, won three-fourths of the country. The reactionary forces owed their salvation to the intervention, in 1964, of NATO troops headed by Belgium, with the logistical support of the United States. Between 1965 and 1967, the last elements of the CNL disappeared, surviving through the People's Revolution Party (PRP) of Kabila, in the jungle in the eastern part of the country."

Effective Struggle

For a decade, from 1965 to 1975, the Zairian people endured the dictatorship of the MPR without any organized, significant national resistance emerging. Nevertheless, the period was marked by peasant revolts, workers' strikes and student dissent movements. With the last two wars in Shaba waged by the National Liberation Front of the Congo (FLNC), the resistance regained its former strength, urging our fellow countrymen to show greater solidarity.

"But unlike the period of the preceding decade (1955-1965), the resistance turned out to be politically weak," the Manifesto states, going on to recall how the NATO forces renewed their "feat" of 1964 to save Mobutu twice from a certain end, in 1977 and 1978, at the time of the last wars in Shaba.

In conclusion, the authors of the Manifesto, who declare themselves to be "greatly concerned by the country's future," call on all the honest forces of the Congo (Kinshasa) to "become involved in the national liberation struggle, together with the mass organizations."

"The purpose of the National Front is to concretely organize our people in order to wage an effective fight against the comprador bourgeoisie and imperialism, its backer. The triumph of that struggle will lead to the establishment of a democratic, national government."

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FOOTNOTES

1. The decline in the workers' purchasing power brings us back to the crisis situation in 1929, the Manifesto states. Underemployment went from 50 to 80 percent of the adult population and the level of real wages went from a base figure of 100 in 1958 to under 17 in 1978.

Other sources claim it would be necessary to work for 50 years without interruption in order to bring Zaire back up to the level of economic development it had achieved by 1960.

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ZAIRE

'MANIFESTO' EXAMINES ROLE OF CATHOLIC CHURCH

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French No 264, 26 Apr-9 May 82 p 19

[Text] The Catholic Church, which is very powerful in Zaire, also attracts the attention of the authors of the "Manifesto of the Congolese Patriots."

"We cannot ignore the role played by religious organizations in the country, or more precisely, by the most powerful one among them: the Catholic Church of Zaire. During colonization, the latter was conspicuous by its unswerving support for colonialism, both material and spiritual. Consequently, it joined in a common cause with the trusts and colonial administration and in exchange, it enjoyed, in addition to the monopoly over education and the freedom to impose its religious training, solid material support. The Church was thus able to require taxes, requisition provisions and labor and recruit orphans for the church farms. It also served as the best agent for paternalism in the worker camps of the mining cities. (....)

"It was also entrusted with the entire ideological function of colonization and after 1960, that of neocolonization. It was and still remains the champion of the fight against nationalists. In the 1920's and throughout the colonial period, it constantly supported the fight against the messianisms from the Lower Congo and the eastern region of the country. This was the point of departure for the antinationalist struggle begun by the Church, for Kimbagu Simon died in prison, not for being an enemy of Christ, but of the colonial order. (....)

"Using the excuse of preventing communist influence in the Congo, the Catholic Church established a Christian union at the beginning of the 1950's. (....) The formation of lay schools during the same period gave rise to a noisy campaign against alleged communism by the Church, a campaign without precedent in the country's history."

Despite the statement favorable to decolonization made by the bishops of Belgian Africa on 29 June 1956 -- in so doing, the bishops were preparing for their future -- and the support expressed by the Church for the manifesto of African awareness which appeared that same year, the attitude of this religious institution was not to change fundamentally, the Manifesto says in substance.

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An anticommunist campaign was thus launched against nationalistic political parties, presenting in their programs the proposal of establishing a lay republic. "Patrice Lumumba was a victim, along with a number of his comrades in arms: Mpolo, Okito, Mbuyi, Nzujji, Massena, Tshimanga and Mulele, of this anticommunist fight. Another anticommunist campaign was begun in 1966 against the General Union of Congolese Students. But ironically enough, this campaign resulted in a ban on all other youth organizations -- including those of the Catholic Church -- and their replacement by the JMPR (Youth of the Popular Movement of the Revolution of Mobutu). (...)" Later, "the armed forces of the FNLC (National Liberation Front of the Congo) were in turn accused of being agents of communism in the pay of Cuba. (...) In the final analysis," the Manifesto concludes, "anticommunism on the part of the Church has no other objective than to prevent the Congolese people's fight against their oppressors. (...) It has been recently observed that the Catholic Church increasingly seeks to set itself apart from the government and even makes harsh criticisms of it. Unfortunately, these criticisms do not denounce foreign domination or exploitation. (...) As in 1956, the Church tries to gain control of the mass movement in order to divert it from the real fight against their exploiters."

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ZAIRE

COMPANIES HANDED OVER TO PRIVATE OWNERS

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1897, 19 Mar 82 p 801

[Text] Thirty-Eight Companies Transferred to Private Ownership

In our 19 February issue (page 568), we mentioned the decision of the Zairian Executive Council to transfer 38 public companies to private ownership. We have just received the list of these companies and are reprinting them as follows:

To Be Placed Under Private Management:

- 1) Cacaoza (Zaire Cocoa Plantations)
- 2) Palmeza (Zaire Palm Groves)
- 3) Butuhe plant and plantation
- 4) Ngweshe plant and plantation

To Be Privately Held:

- 5) SMK [Kisenge Mining Company] (Shaba)
- 6) Bolumbuloko Farm (Equateur)
- 7) Kabuluku Farm (Kasai-Occidental)
- 8) Wetshi-Ndjadi Farm (Kasai-Oriental)
- 9) Musoka-Tanda Farm (Shaba)
- 10) Mwene-Djamba Farm (Shaba)
- 11) Keyembe-Mukulu Farm (Shaba)
- 12) Majilajila (Bandundu)
- 13) former Materne Farm (Bas-Zaire)

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- 14) Ndjili Poultry Farm
- 15) Ngungu-Katuka Farm (Bandundu)
- 16) Boma Farm (Bas-Zaire)
- 17) Tshimbane Plantations and Plant (Bandundu)
- 19) Fumuputu HPK [expansion unknown] (Bandundu)
- 20) Zaire Cotton (Equateur)
- 21) Ndana Sawmill (Bandundu)
- 22) Boma Printing Company (Bas-Zaire)
- 23) Boma Hotel (Bas-Zaire)
- 24) Le Plateau Printing Company (Kinshasa)
- 25) Bergeto-Pofukin (Kinshasa)
- 26) Nicaise Bakery and Pastry Company (Kinshasa)
- 27) People's Economat
- 28) Solidus
- 29) Maluku Iron and Steel
- 30) ACA [expansion unknown]
- 31) Pigier School
- 32) ONP [National Fishing Office]
- 33) SONECA [National Editors and Typesetters Company]
- 34) Editions Lokole
- 35) Green Belts

To Be Privately Held and/or Managed:

- 36) STK [Kinshasa Transport Company] (Kinshasa)
- 37) OTCZ [Zaire Joint Transportation Office]

To Be Privately Held According to the Terms of the International Cooperative Agreement:

- 38) FORESCOM (Bandundu)

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