
RESEARCH PAPER

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Zimbabwe: Race and Nationalism
in a Post Colonial State

Brian Raftopoulos

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University of Zimbabwe
P. O. Box 880, HARARE

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I

Among the many paradoxes of the Lancaster House Settlement in Zimbabwe is that, even as the agreement formally ended settler colonial rule in the country, it provided the framework for continued white privilege, on the bases of persistent control of the economy by this elite, and through them, transnational capital. The consequences are that there are serious ambiguities in the discourses and practices of race and nationalism currently operational in Zimbabwean society. Thus, on the one hand, the currently favoured 'rationality' of market values, entrepreneurialism and other components of the high nostrums of capitalist ideology, resonating in the Structural Adjustment Programme, have given a renewed confidence to those forces unwilling to confront the structural causes underlying continuing racial inequality in this 'post-settler colonial society!'¹ This ideological trend has appeared more credible because of the growth of Black elite formation, already initiated, although in a proscribed form, during the colonial period. On the other hand the more general magnitude of economic and social differentiations between the major racial groups, and more particularly for the Black petty-bourgeoisie, the continued frustration of large sections of this class in their attempts to establish more permanent niches in the accumulation process, have made it difficult for the leadership to dispatch the question of racial inequality too hastily without severely damaging what remains of the self-respect of the 1980 agenda. As a result the policy of 'reconciliation' enunciated in 1980 is a cauldron of contradictions.

Yet because of the fractured nature of the Black petty-bourgeoisie, and its varying relations to both capital and the popular classes, the articulation of the race question has been differential. The responses can be listed as follows: The ruling elite have attempted, both to speak the language of unity through the policy of reconciliation, while chastising the white elite for their continued monopoly and control of the economy in the face of the growing frustrations of their majority constituency. This process resembles what Benedict Anderson has called a "blend of popular and official nationalism."² Within the black petty bourgeoisie in the private sector the response has been varied. One section has sought to articulate an indigenous programme, seeking a close alliance with the state, to actuate its accumulation strategy through positive state interventions. Another fraction has combined forces with sections of the white liberal intelligentsia, some of whom are remnants from the politics of 1940's and 1950's. Yet another group has found solace in the company of the rump of the former Rhodesian

1 Ibbo Mandaza (ed), Zimbabwe: The Political Economy of Transition; 1980-1986. Codesria 1986.

2 As Anderson has written, "...so often in the 'nation building' policies of new states one sees both a genuine, popular nationalist enthusiasm and a systematic, even Machiavellism, instilling of nationalist ideology through the mass media, the educational system, administrative regulations, and so forth." (p. 104) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*. London 1983.

Front, whose recidivist politics are thinly disguised behind the reinvigorated rhetoric around issues of legitimacy. It will be one of major tasks of this discussion to analyse the material basis of these different strategies and their accompanying articulations of race and nationalism.

Before proceeding with that analysis, however, it is necessary to interrogate some of the major attempts that have been made to articulate the relationships between race, class and nationalism in Zimbabwean. In the late 1960's a seminal Marxist analysis by Giovanni Arrighi.³ on the 'Political Economy of Rhodesia,' sought to periodise the changes in the settler colonial state in terms of changes in the relations between different sections of the capitalist class.⁴ In so doing he sought not only to understand the consequences of such changes for the accumulation process, but their effects on relations both between fractions of the dominant white elite and between the latter and the dominated classes amongst the blacks. Thus while Arrighi saw a communality of interests between the white classes as a whole in maintaining their economic position and avoiding "any sudden change in the economic base," he also examined the contradictions between settler and international capital over the creation of a black middle class and a more stabilised working class. From this position he assumed the possibility of "a coincidence of the interests of the Africans and international capitalism since both would benefit from greater racial competition in the skilled labour market"⁵

Building on Arrighi's analysis, Stoneman and Cliffe posed the question of the extent of the reassertion of international capital in the Zimbabwean economy since 1980, and whether this has been at the "expense of the settlers, or national industrial capital and with the unambiguous collaboration of the African petty-bourgeoisie?"⁶ They concluded that it is "not yet clear whether Arrighi's projected bloc based on the commonality of interests of the black petty-bourgeoisie and international capital has in fact emerged or whether there has been an alternative leaning of the petty-bourgeoisie more towards national capital."⁷

Common to the approach of Arrighi, Stoneman and Cliffe was to present the possibility

3 Giovanni Arrighi and John S. Saul, *Essays on The Political Economy of Africa*. New York 1973.

4 More recently Ian Phimister has produced a more comprehensive and detailed analysis of these changes in relations between the differing fractions of capital. However the debt of Arrighi is clear. See I. Phimister, *An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe*, Longman, London 1989.

5 Arrighi op. cit. p. 342.

6 Colin Stoneman and Lionel Cliffe, *Zimbabwe: Politics, Economics and Society*. Printer Publishers, London 1989 p. 6.

7 Ibid p. 194.

of class alliances between particular fractions of formerly antagonistic racial groups. Indeed there was already some evidence of such a process during the liberal experiment of the 1940's and 1950's and in the period of the 'Internal Settlement' during the late 1970's. Yet the persistence of structures generating racial inequality in the post-colonial period has meant that race as a "modality in which class 'lived', the medium through which class relations are experienced, the form in which it is appropriated and 'fought through"⁸ has continued to have an ideological and political affectivity in Zimbabwe. It is this continuation of the lived reality of race, which Stoneman and Cliffe have not explored sufficiently in their attempt to analyse the possibility of a more general convergence of class interest, between fractions of the white elite and sections of the subaltern classes, in a national project.

While the former analysts have posed the issue of nationalism, race and class in useful ways, a more recent analysis, fails to assess the articulation of race in anti-colonial ideology. Norma Kriger's⁹ much praised work concentrates on gender, lineage, generations, and intra as well as inter class conflict. Her analysis validly assesses the differential impact of settler colonialism and the liberation war on the oppressed in Zimbabwe. However while stressing differential responses and dispersed centres of power, Kriger underestimates the common issues which formed the basis for an hegemonic project, however problematic that hegemony might have been.¹⁰ Instead Kriger emphasises the coercive nature of the liberation struggle. In a critique of Kriger's treatment of various strata among the peasantry Manungo has observed that:

"Kriger treats these groups as if they had no history. Yet it is common knowledge that all these groups had experienced settler rule with all its oppression. They had been oppressed by a system which used race as a cover for exploiting them."¹¹

Kriger's project is subject to the more general critique of postmodernism's approach to nationalisms as mere myths of origins as an essentialist, coercive totalisation.' Aijav Ahmad's acute comments on this issue are appropriate:

"... one interrogates minority nationalisms, religious and linguistic and regional nationalisms, transnational nationalisms ... neither by privileging some trans- historical right to statehood ... nor by denying in the post-structuralist manner, the historical reality of the sedimentations which do in fact give particular collectivities of people real civilisational identities. Rather one strives for a

8 Stuart Hall, "Race Articulation and Societies Structured in Dominance", in *Sociological Theories: Race and Colonialism*. UNESCO 1980.

9 Norma Kriger, *The Zimbabwean War of Liberation: Struggles within the Struggle*. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 14 No. 2 January 1988.

10 As Daved Moore in a recent review of Kriger has noted: "...in spite of Kriger's careful elaboration of the ways in which 'youth' women, the poor and 'strangers' at times worked with the guerrilla soldiers to further their own agendas... against the immediate oppression of genontocracy, gender, economic stratification and generational geography, we see little in the way such macro-strategies might have linked up with larger ones of resistance against the state and even... imperialism. "Zimbabwe Peasants: Pissed on and Pissed off", *Southern African Review of Books*. September/October 1992.

11 R.D. Manungo, "The Peasantry in Zimbabwe: A Vehicle for Change", In Preben Kaarsholm (ed.) *Cultural Struggle and Development in Southern Africa*, James Currey, London 1991 p. 120.

rationality argued understanding of social content and historic project for each particular nationalism. Some nationalist practices are progressive; others are not." ¹²

It is not accidental that Kriger's critique has found a voice at this historical juncture. With the increasingly catastrophic results of the petty-bourgeoisie nationalist project in Africa, and the brutal destruction of attempted alternative to capitalism on the continent, the postmodernist aversion to grand narratives, so dominant in the West in the 1980's, has inserted itself into the study of African politics.

In contrast to the above position Ibbo Mandaza has stressed the importance and potentially unifying force of African Nationalism during the current phase of Africa's history. It is not that Mandaza has uncritically accepted the propositions of African Nationalism; for he has been a severe critic of the contradictions of African petty-bourgeoisie nationalist politics. ¹³ However he has insisted that race cannot be reduced to the singular logic of economic determination. Rather that because of this irreducibility of race to the unilinear determinancy of economic relations, the specificity of black nationalist struggles must be recognised as relatively autonomous factors in political struggles. In Mandaza's words:

"...both the left and the right in the Northern hemisphere have sought to recreate Africa in their respective images. For it is a feature of the current conjuncture that African (or black) struggles have seldom been conceded their own autonomy in a world so dominated historically and culturally by an aggressive and dominant northern hemisphere. This has given rise to a kind of white paternalism - left and right - which views as its major mission the need to patronise and even hegemonise the struggles of the oppressed and exploited peoples of the Third World. Likewise the objects and subjects of this paternalism, to survive and be able to mobilise international support in a world of limited friends and resources, Africans have invariably compromised the very issue upon which the struggle was based: black nationalism and the national question. The consequent de-emphasis on these key issues will have deprived the national liberation movement - particularly that which declared itself to be 'sole' and 'authentic' Marxist Leninist - of the means whereby it might build a broader nationalist coalition In pursuit of being seen as 'reasonable' and 'Rational' African leaders and their movements have had to pretend and speak tongue-in-cheek about an issue - racism - which is essentially a product of the history of the northern hemisphere." ¹⁴

Mandaza's analysis is important in Zimbabwean studies because it has avoided both a

12 Aijaz Ahmad, *In Theory, Classes, Nations, Literatures*, Verso, London 1992. p. 11. Ahmad's critique of both postmodernism and Third Worldism is brilliant.

13 See for example Ibbo Mandaza, 1986 op cit.

14 Ibbo Mandaza, "The One-Party State and Democracy in Southern Africa: Towards a Conceptual Framework", in Ibbo Mandaza and Lloyd Sachikonye (eds), *The One Party-State and Democracy: The Zimbabwe Debate*, S.A.P.E.S Trust, 1991 pp 31 - 32. Interventions such as this have earned Mandaza a rebuke from sections of the Western left. For example, Jean Copans, discussing the ideological differences among African intellectuals, observes that: "Perspectives can be very self-critical (Shivji) or, on the contrary, quite nationalist in tone (Mandaza)." The derogatory connotation of having nationalist inclinations are very clear. Jean Copans, "No Shortcuts Democracy: The Long March Towards Modernity", R.O.A.P.E. No. 50, 1991 p. 99.

reductionist conceptualisation of race,¹⁵ and a framework of plural determination that obscures the specificity of race in a particular socio-economic context.¹⁶ However his own conceptual framework has limitations which need to be addressed. Where Kriger concentrates on the primacy of difference, in responses to settler colonialism, Mandaza has, at many points, underestimated these differences and stressed the potential of a unified agenda amongst blacks. Such an approach leads him into a loose prescription on black control of the economy. Projecting an increasing alliance between international capital, on the one hand and an increasingly compradorian state and black petty-bourgeoisie on the other hand, under the structural adjustment programme he states:

"Such a development might indeed be an improvement on what has hitherto prevailed in Zimbabwe: i.e. the dominance of the former white settlers throughout the economy, in cohorts with international capital but with no commitment to the national project in Zimbabwe on the part of the most of them."¹⁷

This is a position which lacks a delineation of the class specificity of black control, and the possible beneficiaries of such control. When the trajectory of an argument is an unclearly defined 'national project', this kind of analytical slippage is always a possibility. What must of necessity be a 'bond of secular interest' is sometimes represented as a 'mystic unity of sentiments.'¹⁸ What is needed is a more concrete specification of race, class and nationalism in particular socio-economic and political conditions. In Hall's words we need

"to know how different racial and ethnic groups were inserted historically, and the relations which have tended to erode and transform, or to preserve these distinctions through time - not simply as residues and traces of previous modes, but as active structuring principles of the present organisation of society."¹⁹

II

It is not surprising that racial inequality has continued to be a problem in Zimbabwe. The economic structures that produced and sustained a white elite are, in their essentials, still prevalent. It is equally unsurprising that opposition to this continued inequality should be coming not only from a state, unable to meet the increasing

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- 15 Arnold Sibanda, "The Political Situation", In Colin Stoneman (ed.) *Zimbabwe's Prospects: Issues of Race, Class State and Capital in Southern Africa*, London. Macmillan 1988.
 - 16 Jonathan Moyo, "State Politics and Social Domination in Zimbabwe", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 30,2, (1992).
 - 17 Mandaza 1991, op cit pp 38-39.
 - 18 Sudipta Kaviraj, "The Imaginary Institution of India", in Preben Kaarsholm (ed) *Modernisation of Culture and the Development of Political Discourse in the Third World*, Occasional Paper No. 5. 1992. International Development Studies. Roskilde University. p. 57.
 - 19 Hall 1980 op cit, p. 339.

demands of the majority of its citizens, but from fractions of the black petty-bourgeoisie unable to make their fortunes on a sustained basis. Having occupied the structures of political office, the board rooms of the private sector remain an area rarely dominated by anything approaching a black 'national bourgeoisie.' Part II of this paper will therefore seek to analyse the current struggle over the economy in Zimbabwe.

Predictably for sections of the African petty-bourgeoisie, independence brought new openings for advancement and enrichment. This has been the case particularly in the State, which has offered, at the top electors of office, relatively high salaries, and opportunities to utilise the State as an accumulation springboard, often through graft and corruption.²⁰ In addition, as an important component of the changing financial system in the post-colonial period, there developed a growing number of black bureaucrats and financiers working under the protection of the state.²¹ Yet this financial elite promoted only minor changes in the financial structures of the economy, with their comprador status, in fact, depending on perpetuating the status quo. With the avenues of accumulation blocked in the productive sector by the dominance of the white elite and the limited size of the internal market, the route of financial speculation appeared the quickest avenue of enrichment for the emerging black elite. In this atmosphere it was not surprising that financial scandals in state owned banks and the stock exchange have become increasingly prominent. As Bond aptly summarised it:

"The class project of the financial elites was consistent with continued broad based racial discrimination against the petty-bourgeoisie and ineffectual, reformist state interventions."²²

As has already been observed, in the private sector as a whole, the African petty bourgeoisie has grown increasingly frustrated. During the colonial period, the few African businessmen that were operating in the private sector were active in the fields of retailing and transport. In agriculture, there were a limited number of small-scale farmers in the Purchase Areas. However, the ambitions of the aspiring black petty-bourgeoisie were seriously proscribed by the structures of the settler state. Firstly, the operations of most small black businessmen were limited to the "locations" and to some freehold plots adjacent to them. Secondly, African trading was increasingly made subject to discriminatory legislation. Further-more, in the area of finance, credit for blacks proved increasingly difficult. The Friendly Society movement, which developed in the late '1950s' and early 1960s, attempted to provide a mobilising force for African savings. However this project, in addition to others involving leading white liberals and future prominent nationalists ran aground, in the face of growing settler intransigence and what Bond has described as 'finance capital's failure to accomplish an urban revolution in consumption patterns by the early 1960's.' This blockage of the African petty bourgeoisie was apparent throughout the professions and became one of the formative grievances of the nationalist elite.

In the post 1980 period, while the Presidential Directive ensured the rapid

20 I have dealt with these issues on a more exclusive basis in B. Raftopoulos, "Beyond The House of Hunger Democratic Struggle in Zimbabwe", R.O.A.P.E. No. 54, 1992.

21 Patrick Bond, "Finance and Uneven Development in Zimbabwe", unpublished doctoral dissertation. Baltimore Department of Geography and Environmental Engineering, Johns Hopkins University. Chapter 8.

22 Ibid.

Africanisation of the public sector, no such instrument was utilised in the private sector for reasons that will become apparent later. Thus judging from recent statistics, the Black petty-bourgeoisie in the private sector continue to face serious constraints in moving into the top echelons of the occupational structure. A 1989 report on Black advancement in the private sector showed the following racial distribution at management level: Senior Management- 62.5% (White), 37.5% (Black); Middle Management - 35.5% (White), 64.5% (Black); Junior Management - 22% (White) and 78% (Black). Commenting on the pace of Black advancement, the author of the report noted:

One of the primary factors affecting the pace and nature of Black advancement in industry is the racial attitudes of White Management. There is still White management at all levels that believes Blacks are incompetent and cannot do the job. These attitudes reflect insecurity, but also feelings of superiority and inability or lack of desire to come to terms with the new social and political environment.²³

This problem is compounded by the fact that with the limited industrial expansion that has taken place over the last ten years, not many new top management jobs have been created.

Notwithstanding the denunciations of the Press and the Government on the obstacles to Black advancement in the private sector, the State has been very unclear about its long-term policy and strategy on the latter issue. The result has been a resort to intermittent "threats" to the private sector, outside of a comprehensive policy. The State petty-bourgeoisie, because of the policy of reconciliation, have hesitated in introducing any definitive policy, resembling the Presidential Directive in the public sector which effectively Africanised the latter within the first five years of independence. Where Black advancement has taken place in the private sector, it has done so mainly at skilled and middle management levels. Many white "workers" were either declassified through emigration (the highest average of economically active emigrants was in the production and related workers category, with an average of 1 124 over the years 1965-1985) or promoted into higher supervisory positions. In the alliance that constituted settler rule workers, supported by international capital, White workers as a force have become either redundant or expendable. In some cases, White-dominated unions simply dissolved themselves in order to avoid the leadership of Blacks, and to avoid their financial assets falling into the hands of Black workers. It is no accident, therefore, that the most vocal proponents of Black advancement have not been black workers, whose major grievances have related to the broader areas pertaining to the conditions of labour (i.e. wages, unions, etc).

Predictably, the most ardent advocates of Black advancement have emerged from the middle occupational groups. Moreover, even where Black advancement has taken place, there has been a significant amount of window-dressing appointments, which have, in turn, resulted in two major problems. Firstly, such appointments often lost credibility because of their ineffectiveness within the company. These employees entered the racist employment structures of capital, and have often been neutralised and absorbed. Secondly, those public servants who were poached by the private sector

23 B. Strachan, Report for the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries: Black Management Advancement in a Sample of C.Z.I. Member Companies 1989.

because of their assumed knowledge of the government machinery and government contacts, often lost credibility with the State itself. In addition, White employers began to develop their own linkages and lobby groups with the State, and have developed a decreasing need for such ex-State official intermediaries.

For those Blacks in top executive positions, the issue of Africanisation has, in most cases, been a mute point. Firstly, they are more interested in not disturbing the mechanics of accumulation in the economy than in eradicating racist occupational practices. (There is, of course, always a formal and indignant opposition to racism). Secondly, for the few who have been inclined to tackle the issue, their executive powers are often curtailed by the power of their White colleagues. In the final analysis, their own positions are partly dependent on the patronage of the White management.

Blacks in the private sector have also had problems in attempting to develop small businesses. The Government's attitude to the African entrepreneur has been characterised by an ambivalence and lack of forcefulness, because of several reasons. Firstly, the uncertainty of the State in defining its relationship with other private capital, that is transnational and domestic non-African capital. Moreover, the situation is exacerbated with the growing linkages and relationships between sections of the State elite and large capital. Secondly, Africans committed to establishing small businesses have, on the whole, lacked academic training and managerial expertise, and also have not been able to articulate their views from a strong lobbying position.²⁴ Moreover, credit facilities to aspirant entrepreneurs have been either limited, where the State has intervened through organisations such as SEDCO, or "largely inaccessible" in the commercial banking sector. As regards the latter, many small businessmen have alleged that, "race seemed an important consideration to the commercial banks..."²⁵ The problems of Blacks setting up businesses have been highlighted recently in a survey of small-scale metal-working industries. Out of 38 companies covered, most of which were established after 1980, 34(89%) were owned by Whites, four by Asians and "Coloureds" and two by Blacks. The survey noted that at independence and since 1980, there have been few Blacks who have accumulated sufficient capital and skills from previous employment, and also developed the necessary social networks in industry to go it alone and survive.²⁶ This has serious implications for Zimbabwe's Structural Adjustment Programme which places high hopes on the ability of new small-scale industries to create employment for the majority population.

There are a number of reasons why the State has been so diffident on the question of African advancement and more substantively African control of the Zimbabwean economy. Firstly, as has already been noted, there has been a great deal of policy and ideological confusion over the relationship between the public and the private sectors. The Government's rhetorical and contradictory commitment to socialism has meant a lack of encouragement, in policy support terms, for the growth of Black entrepreneurs.

24 H. Ndoro, *The African Entrepreneur in Southern Africa: The Case of Zimbabwe* (Unpublished Mimeo) Institute of Development Studies, U.Z. 1992.

25 Ibid.

26 C. Halimana, "The Role of Small Enterprises in Zimbabwe's Industrial Future", (unpublished mimeo) Institute of Development Studies, U.Z. 1993.

In a meeting between the President, senior economic ministers and an emerging businessmen's association, the Senior Minister of Finance, Economic Planning and Development responded to the continuous criticisms of emerging businessmen by stating that: "We were not trying to create a petty-bourgeoisie in this country!"²⁷ The same organisation was also attacked by the Minister of Industry and Commerce for a lack of loyalty to the Government. Secondly, the policy of Reconciliation and living with existing capitalist production relations has meant a reluctance to encroach on existing property relations. This factor has been exacerbated by the growing links between members of the State elite and the business sector. Thirdly, as has been noted for other post-colonial states, where a space or vacuum has formed between power and accumulation, indigenous business elites distinct from the bureaucracy have developed such spaces to strengthen the force of civil society. The Zimbabwean State has until recently been reluctant to see the growth of a Black business class who would have an accumulation base independent of the State, and through such a base present an alternative political force.

Then in December 1990, the Indigenous Business Development Centre (IBDC) was formed to press for more Black participation and control in the Zimbabwean economy. Prior to this, Provincial Development Associations in Masvingo, Matabeleland and the Midlands had been launched as vehicles through which the economic interests of the Black middle class could be effectively articulated. The IBDC has a membership of about 4,000 ranging from informal sector operators to parastatals. Moreover, the structures of the IBDC are now found at national, provincial, district and even ward levels. The IBDC boasts that it is the only "authentic" national businessmen's association, which also caters for the various lobby groups in business which make up its executive board, such as for example: the Zimbabwe National Farmers' Union, the Women in Business Group, the Zimbabwe Transport Organisation (bus owners), etc. According to the Secretary-General, from its inception, the IBDC has had the blessing of the Head of State, and it was their deliberate policy to launch the organisation with such high-profile support. The IBDC was also launched to coincide with the inauguration of the Structural Adjustment Programme and the Land Amendment Bill, both seen as opportunities to discuss the prospects for the growth of a Black bourgeoisie, under conditions in which the Black middle class has felt increasingly marginalised.

The State has shown a growing interest in this group after initial neglect, for two reasons. Firstly, the economic reform programme has given greater legitimacy to the quest for accumulation and the establishment of a Black bourgeoisie. Moreover, the World Bank itself, in a study of the construction industry, has called on the Government to "act to enhance the indigenous contracting sector by implementing an Affirmative Action Sub-Contracting Programme". In addition, aid organisations such as USAID are likely to show a keen interest in such organisations.

Secondly, the experience of the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) demonstrated the ability of an alternative party to mobilise frustrated and ambitious members of the Black middle class. Elements in the State are therefore keen to stay close to an organisation which is pressing forward its version of the national economic question, in tones that

27 Interview with the Secretary General of the Indigenous Business Development Centre in Harare on 25th March 1991.

appeal to sections of the state elite, in search of alternative avenues of accumulation. A leading spokesperson for this aspiring black bourgeoisie has been Vice President Joshua Nkomo, who recently warned that:

"In order to avoid a conflict between the blacks and the well-to-do who are mainly whites, Government has to deliberately assist the disadvantaged blacks."²⁸

Nkomo has been advocating a system of free-lease schemes to blacks instead of issuing title deeds at growth points and in urban areas. Commenting on the urban land question, Nkomo noted:

"As you know, Harare is owned by white people. We want to change that ... Government is working on a programme that will freeze the land they own in urban areas and the land council owns in urban areas in order to keep it for these young people."²⁹

Turning to the white farmers Nkomo was unrestrained:

"They are immigrants to this country and if young blacks remain at the stage where they are today they will say 'makabva kupi imi? Nyika ndeyedu' (where do you come from? The country is ours.) But it must be 'nyika ndeyedu tese, varungu nevanhu vatema,' (the country is ours, both whites and blacks)".³⁰

Moreover through his own business concerns Nkomo has demanded preferential treatment for black businessmen. Recently the Bulawayo Town Council has complained of attempts by the Vice President to arm-twist the entire council, following the failure by the Development Trust of Zimbabwe, a conglomerate of Black Businessmen of which he is co-chairman, to pay Z\$13.3 million for a number of industrial and commercial stands acquired in the city.³¹ At a meeting with Council, Nkomo delivered a lengthy speech in Ndebele, in the presence of white non-Ndebele speakers, detailing his 11 years in detention for the liberation of Zimbabwe.³² This act was a striking example of how the ideology of sacrifice is used by sections of the nationalist elite for purposes of post-colonial accumulation. Nkomo's criticisms have been levelled not only against White control of the business world, but also against Asian business practices,

28 Herald 13/2/93.

29 Horizon November 1992 p. 7.

30 Ibid.

31 Financial Gazette 28/1/93.

32 Ibid. At the same meeting one Councillor quipped: "I would also like to go to jail for 11 years and emerge with \$11 million".

connecting with an emerging grievance against Asian involvement in the informal sector.
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Thus the thrust of the Nkomo and I.B.D.C. intervention has been for greater 'indigenisation' (i.e. more Black control) of the economy. More specifically the indigenisation thrust has meant a clearance operation, to open up more avenues of accumulation for the black elite. Yet because of the structural problems of the Zimbabwean economy, namely the recurrent overaccumulation crisis and the limited and depressed internal demand structure, the room for the development of an accumulation base for the black petty-bourgeoisie in the productive sector is limited. As Bond describes this problem:

"The productive (especially manufacturing) circuit of the Zimbabwean economy was nearly completely closed to potential black entrepreneurs, thanks to the combination of general overaccumulation and the C.Z.I. members' monopoly power and privileged access to resources. The circulation of commodities, however, offered a residue of potential for mopping up the marginally increased post-independence effective demand (eg by hire purchase lenders), especially through geographical expansion. What with an expansion of state regional decentralisation initiatives, it was this latter route that led most directly to black petty-bourgeoisie accumulation, since white-owned monopoly capital was decreasingly interested in exploring a spatial fix into the poorer areas."³⁴

This structural problem has therefore meant an increasing conflict between an aspirant black elite and the existing white monopoly in the private sector. A Parliamentary Select Committee in 1992 noted the 'need for the prioritisation of the indigenous entrepreneur'³⁵ and the Government in 1992 set aside Z\$100 million for black business persons. Yet the potential for growth in this direction continues to be limited under the present accumulation regime, with the rocketing interest rates demanded by the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) further minimising the growth prospects of emerging business persons.

It might be thought that the crisis conditions created by the SAP could provide an opportunity for a potential alliance between fractions of white capital, the state and the

33 One respondent in a recent newspaper reported on the informal sector complained about the Asian community in the following terms: "In this country they don't mix: I have never heard of a mixed marriage between an Asian and a Black and they don't participate in national events. Now they want to move into the informal sector where we thought the black man could compete on a level field. I doubt whether they like this country and its people, they just want our money." Herald 27/1/93.

34 Bond 1992 Chapter 8. The refrain of the I.B.D.C. continued in December 1992: "Blacks, it appears still remain in the periphery of the economy and still concentrate on businesses such as retail outlets, bakeries, bottle stores, butcheries, while the major economic activities still remain the preserve of the whites and multinational companies. Few of the black have made it into mining manufacturing, wholesale or retailing where the money is." Daily Gazette 21/12/92.

35 Parliament of Zimbabwe, First Interim Report of the Select Committee on the Indigenisation of the National Economy. 1992 p.20.

black petty-bourgeoisie. After all, two years of rising interest rates under SAP have created extremely difficult operating conditions for local industries (leading in some cases to bankruptcy and closure) and local financiers, especially in the building societies. In addition the initial appeal of SAP to industrialists, in search of new markets, as well as foreign currency speculation and movement out of the country, though still attractive, was beginning to have its costs. There has been little evidence of such an alliance.³⁶ Instead what we have witnessed is the continued racism of many of the white elite in the private sector. In fact the racial polarities in Zimbabwe continued to be apparent in the 1980's in the form of the persistent unequal distribution of income, and discriminatory access to credit. This pattern was exacerbated by the speculative profits made from the stock exchange and real estate market during yet another period of overaccumulation in the economy during the 1980's.³⁷

Moreover, the link between international finance and the white business elite, present with its problems has continued. Leaders of industry have been aware of the usefulness of using the disciplinary measures of international financial institutions, like the World Bank and I.M.F., to keep a populist, if not socialist state, in check.³⁸ In addition the Commercial Farmers Union, still dominated by white farmers, has attempted to pressurise both Western Governments and the multilateral financial agencies, to stop the promulgation of the Land Acquisition Bill in 1992. Given the favourable approach of Western governments towards the 'White factor' in Southern Africa, outlined in the 1969 National Security Study Memorandum 39 and continued during the era of 'constructive engagement', this approach of the business elite was not surprising.

Even though multinational ownership of Zimbabwean industry declined from 25.3% in 1989 to 22.5% in 1991, with the fixed assets owned by local private individuals increasing from 50% in 1989 to 60% in 1991,³⁹ this localisation of ownership largely benefited

36 One example is the establishment of a building society in the very risky secondary mortgage market, involving a private computer company, a government bank affiliated company, two insurance firms with government shares, and three individual shareholders (Financial Gazettee 27/8/92).

37 Bond op cit Chapter 8.

38 Bond Chapter 12.

39 C.Z.I. An Update of the Ownership Profile of Zimbabwe's Manufacturing Sector, October 1991.

White capital.⁴⁰ It should also be noted that even though there has been some changes in ownership patterns control by foreign capital remains significant.⁴¹ This approach of foreign capital is consistent with the entire ethos of the era of Structural Adjustment Programmes. For the thrust of the latter is to integrate the economies of the 'developing' world more fully into the international economy, thereby undermining the economic, institutional and ideological base for a more domestically oriented, nationalist programme.⁴² It thus appears that Arrighi's postulate of a possible alliance between foreign capital and a black middle class continues to be elusive. After 13 years of independence the level of business participation by blacks in all sectors of the economy stands at about 2%.⁴³ Given this alarming persistence of racist practices in the economy even the pro-business weekly, the Financial Gazette has echoed Nkomo's warning of a 'Second Revolution'⁴⁴ An editorial comment warned:

"It is false security and foolhardy for the wealthy few from one section of the population to consider the rest of the population to be content with their misery. The hands of the impoverished are a living threat to the landed and propertied, particularly when it is clear they are from the same race.

It is in the interest of the propertied and the landed to engage in action to uplift and involve the marginalised within the mainstream of the economy."⁴⁵

Similarly drops did Huggins inton the illusive liberal dream of the 1940s and 1950s.⁴⁶ Yet the structural economic problem of the latter period have been heightened in the post-colonial era, and the renewed faith in economic liberalism in the 1980's and 90's has yet to prove its worth.

III

Having analysed the struggle over the economy, it is now necessary to trace the

40 Foreign controlled companies seeking to localise their personnel have already clashed with the government over the definition of localisation. A head of a foreign owned Insurance Company recently complained that: "We are very bitter... because even in the localisation process, government wants to choose the local partners for us. If by localisation they mean black businessmen buying out-foreign insurance companies, then they should not be ashamed to say so." Financial Gazette. 4/2/93.

41 Financial Gazette 28/1/93.

42 Manfred Beinefeld, "Old Recipes, "New Rhetoric: Structural Adjustment in 1990", Southern Africa Report Vol. 6. No. 2. November 1990.

43 Financial Gazette 25/2/93.

44 Daily Gazette 20/2/93.

45 Financial Gazette 25/2/92.

46 Huggins, in Gramscian tones, was much clearer: "One lesson which stands out prominently is that a ruling class which attempts to stay as a ruling class without surrendering any of its privileges to the vast bulk of the population, or which fails to adjust its ideas to conform with changing conditions does not remain a ruling class permanently, and its end is frequently violent." African Weekly 28/9/55.

articulations of race and nationalism at a political level. Although the struggles against settler-colonial racism provided a common denomination in the experience of the colonised, there were differences as well as common responses to such racist structures and practices. The common threads which came together in anti-colonial nationalism were binding, in those cases where, Basil Davidson has pointed out the, "social aspects of the anti-colonial struggle still retained primacy of influence over all those aspects concerned with nation-states self-identification."⁴⁷ On its own the common experience of racism cannot produce an unproblematic-national identity or an homogeneous national unity. Hobsbawm is correct when he observes that, "we cannot assume that for most people national identification when it exist - excludes or is always or even superior to, the remainder of the set of identifications which constitute the social being. In fact it is always combined with identifications of another kind, even when it is felt to be superior to them."⁴⁸ We need, in other words, to specify those particular conjunctures when national identity operates as a binding and mobilising force, subordinating other loyalties, attachments and identities.

If the hegemony of nationalism is provisional and problematic even during the anti-colonial struggle, its force of influence confronts even greater obstacles in the post-colonial period, when the state displays an increasing inability to carry out the socio-economic agenda of the independence struggle. Under such conditions in a 'post settler-colonial state,' even the continued domination of the economy by the white minority is insufficient, on its own, to provide a consensus on the 'national question' amongst the subaltern groups. This is mainly because of two factors: firstly the growth of class differentiation amongst the black population, and specifically the growth, albeit stunted, of a black petty-bourgeoisie with varying strategies to deal with white economic dominance. Secondly, the increasing recoil of the mass of the population, especially in the urban areas in the case of Zimbabwe, from nationalist organisations into more particularistic, localised organisational forms. Both these issues will be dealt with at greater length in this section.

Istvan Meszaros has reminded us that in capitalist societies the large vested interests of the ruling class act as a powerful force for unification among its various strata. By contrast,

"the internal stratification of the subordinate class tends to intensify the contradiction between immediate and long-term interests, defining the latter as merely potential (anticipated hypothetical etc) whose conditions of realisation necessarily escape the immediate situation."⁴⁹

This dilemma emerges very clearly in discussing the strategies of the subordinate classes in dealing with post-colonial problems in Zimbabwe, at a political level. Firstly it is interesting to note the varied responses of the political parties to the white elite. For the ruling party, ZANU (PF), the policy of Reconciliation was in part a plea for the whites to loosen their domination of the economy and to allow blacks a fairer slice of the national cake. "Surely" said Mugabe in 1980, "this is now the time to beat our swords

47 Basil Davidson, *The Black Man's Burden: Africa and the Curse of the Nation State*. James Currey. London. 1992, p. 214.

48 E.J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780. Programme, Myth Reality*. Cambridge University Press. 1991, p. 11.

49 Istvan Meszaros, *The Power of Ideology*, Harvester, Wheatsheaf London 1989, p. 263.

into ploughshares so that we can attend to the problem of developing our economy and society." However, persistent racial inequalities have placed this policy under great strain, and forced a section of the black petty-bourgeoisie in the form of the IBDC, to pressurise the state into taking positive action on their behalf. Moreover, as we have seen in the activities and interventions of the Vice President, Joshua Nkomo, there is increasing frustration on the part of the governing elite, with the economic intransigence of white capital. However the great difficulties in embarking on alternatives to a Structural Adjustment Programme, has meant, in political terms, the increasing loss of national sovereignty accompanying the latter programme. This in turn has meant that any attempt to challenge the existing ownership structure of the economy will face severe constraints, even in terms of the class project of the black petty-bourgeoisie. As a result even though the government has threatened and cajoled the white elite over several issues, most notably the land question, the political centre of gravity of the ruling party itself, has steadily moved to the right through its successive compromises with white economic power.

For other fractions of the black commercial and professional class, in opposition to the ruling party, alliances with different sections of the white elite have been formed. Those parties that made up the failed Internal Settlement in 1978, finding themselves unable to expand beyond their small ethnic-bases have rejoined forces with rebel leader Ian Smith, himself a politically isolated figure. Thus in 1992 the United Front was formed composed of: Sithole's ZANU (Ndonga); Muzorewa's UANC, Ian Smith and the rump of the Rhodesian Front, known since 1985 as the Conservative Alliance of Zimbabwe (CAZ); a splinter group from Tekere's Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM); and an even less memorable party called the National Democratic Union (NDU). Brandishing little more than Cold War⁵⁰ rhetoric, this group has been 're-united' more through desperate isolation than by the growth of any substantive support.

In addition as the leading nationalist parties have lost some of their allure, liberalism, and more specifically white liberals, have resurfaced after years of marginalisation by the more recalcitrant forces of white settlerism, and African Nationalism. From the late 1940's into the 1950's, during the period of 'Partnership' in S. Rhodesia, and before the substantive emergence of African nationalist parties more educated Africans were prepared to co-operate with sympathetic whites. With the loss of popularity of the ruling party from the mid '1980's particularly in the urban areas, the liberals have found a more receptive, though still limited, audience. In May 1992, a group known as the Forum for Democratic Reform was launched, led by people from the professions, the self-employed and the Church. These occupational groups closely resembled those that supported liberalism during the 1940's/1950's.⁵¹ The Blacks in the Forum represent that segment of the petty-bourgeoisie unable to press their economic and political demands either through lobbying the state, like the IBDC, or through mobilising a particular ethnic base. Marginalised from the ruling power bloc, they have sought an

50 Returning to Zimbabwe in January 1992 after 8 years of self imposed exile, Sithole commented: "Zanu (Pf) has misled Zimbabwe exactly in the same way that the Communist Party misled the 15 Soviet republic for 72 years and the Eastern European Countries for 50 years." *Financial Gazette* 16/1/92.

51 Ian Hancock, *White Liberals, Moderates and Radicals in Rhodesia 1953 - 80* Croom Helm. 1984, p. 34.

alliance with similarly marginalised white liberals, seeking a re-entry into policies with a more legitimate force than the Internal Settlement alliance. As the Secretary General of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions has noted:

".. the Forum is really the work of white liberals and their black middle class allies ... The Forum's key issues so far have to do with the concerns of the urban upper and middle classes They talk very little of the problems of hunger, inadequate, shelter poor access to education, unemployment and land distribution, which really interest the masses."⁵²

At one level this liberal opposition has attempted to construct a new emphasis in politics through the incorporation into its discourse of such elements as democratic accountability, anti-corruption, judicial independence, and anti-statism.⁵³ This emphasis has emerged due to a number of factors: the inability to say anything new, in liberal terms, on the economy, because of the adoption of the S.A.P. by the government; the ruling party's abuse of certain tenets of liberal democracy; and the revived ideological vigour of neo-liberalism at an international level. At another level the politics of this opposition has, for the most part, been based on a crude ideological proposition, namely; that a crisis in state legitimacy and in the economic conditions of the majority of producer will necessarily translate itself into a change of the latter's political allegiance. This assumption is symptomatic of the opposition's inability to penetrate the rural areas, where the majority of the population make their living. For such a penetration would require a greater organisational rigour and a less elitist ideological position. Moreover, central to this problem has been the continued inability of white liberals, to produce a politics which can articulate a more inclusive 'US' extending beyond sections of the urban elite. Hall has written that 'the true ventriloquism of populist politics' is to construct the varied identities of people into a

"composite political identity so that the divisions of class and interest or the divisions of role and person count for less than the unity, the undifferentiated, unclassed unsexed, unraced unity of 'the people'"⁵⁴

A leading spokesperson of the Forum has recently attempted to conjure up such a composite political identity in the following terms:

"And yet, and yet ... there is a remarkable phenomenon under way on this beautiful and seemingly bewitched Zimbabwe of ours. It can best be described as a spontaneous unity whose warmth, like the heat in your healthy compost heap, spreads, breaking down the old organic matter into something sweet and clean, providing nurture for new growth. You must surely have noticed, wherever you turn, that Zimbabweans whatever their political affiliations, race or creed are 'spontaneously' agreeing with each other. Many of them want to join hands and try to do something to arrest the destruction (to stop the whole heap from going up in flames?) before it is too late. What is new is that this is a natural development."⁵⁵

The metaphor is instructive, a natural organic oppositional unity emerging from the soil

52 Africa South August 1992, p.9.

53 The Forum for Democratic Reform: A Blue Print for Zimbabwe: Discussion Paper, 1992.

54 Stuart Hall, "The Battle for Socialists; Ideals in the 1980's", Socialist Register 1982. Merlin Press, London 1982, p. 15.

55 Diana Mitchell, "New Order Politics in Zimbabwe The Way Ahead", The Zimbabwean Travellers Times June/July 1992.

of discontent 'undifferentiated, unclassed ... unraced' And yet, and yet ... the liberal populist hope remains illusive. As we have already documented, the structural constraints which confronted the politics of 'partnership' in the 1950's are even more evident in the 1990's. Allied to this structural problematic is the fact that the paternalism which was the characteristic feature of white liberal politics during the colonial era, has continued to be a feature of white liberal involvement in the post-colonial period. This paternalism is operational across an entire spectrum of activity, ranging from the modality of political involvement in the Forum, to the colonial style propagation of a charitable ethos towards issues of structural poverty.⁵⁶ The welfarist activities of NGO's in this regard have contributed to such an ethos.⁵⁷

It should be noted however, that liberalism, as an ideology, has infused not only the blacks in the Forum, but in varying degrees, the entire spectrum of the nationalist petty-bourgeoisie. What Marks and Trapido have written about black nationalism in South Africa can also be applied to Zimbabwe. That is, that 'despite strong Africanist underpinnings' nationalism has in general expoused the liberal values of multi-racialism.⁵⁸ For example in the early 1960's after the major split in the Nationalist movement, ZANU accused ZAPU of being influenced by white liberals, and strongly criticised 'multi-racialism.'⁵⁹ Moreover this critical attitude deepened during the years of the liberation war. Yet the intensity of this critique has always been conjunctural. Excluded as one of the authentic six liberation movements during the 1960's and 1970's, shunned by the more established Solidarity Organisations in the West, and closely associated with the more Third Worldest perspectives of the Chinese revolution, ZANU's Africanist critique of White liberalism was intensified. Yet the changed conditions of the post-colonial settlement and the balance of forces that have resulted from it, has created

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- 56 As an example, a well advertised campaign for a Trust known as 'Making Up the Difference' stated its objectives as threefold: - To provide short term relief to victims of drought and famine in Zimbabwe. - To develop programmes and plans to alleviate the negative impact of physical, social, economic and other changes that take place due to drought. - To undertake benevolent work for the relief of poverty, sickness, distress on misfortunate without restrictions based on race, tribe, belief, place or origin. The campaign was to be very profitable for the advertisers who were to earn Z\$1,4 million from the exercise. A public outcry about this use of such a large sum for advertising led the trustees to suspend their Z\$1,4 million advertising campaign. Daily Gazette 30/10/92.
- 57 A Danish NGO in Zimbabwe, in a critical observation on the activities of other NGO's in the food relief exercise during drought lamented the "proliferation of NGO's wanting to donate food and shameless search for public mention. Since July (1992) hardly a day has passed without public television or newspapers reporting excessively on this or that group or NGO donating some clothes, a few sacks of dried fish or maize, some bottles of cooking oil etc. No doubt the goods handed over at formal and pompous ceremonies will benefit the people receiving them. However, the ethic involved in this type of 'welfarism' - more often than not involving white people - could be questioned." M.S. Zimbabwe Annual Report 1992.
- 58 Shula Marks and Stanley Trapido (eds). The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism. Longman, London 1987, p. 1.
- 59 See David Moore, "The Contradictory Construction of Hegemony in Zimbabwe: Politics, Ideology and Class Formation in the Formation of a New Africa State", D. Phil Thesis, York University, 1990, p. 89.

in many respects, the most superficial forms of multi-racialism. This has meant, despite formal political equality, the *de facto* recognition of existing race and class divisions except for a level of increased mobility for sections of the black petty-bourgeoisie.

There remains a tension in African Nationalism in Zimbabwe, between the accommodationism showed to the white elite, and the need to address the growing problems of the African majority. Put in other terms this is a tension between the attempts to include the former settler elite in the process of nation building, while attempting to confront the enduring racial inequalities in the society. Thus far the racial inequalities remain a feature of Zimbabwe's political economy, and racism continues to permeate a variety of areas in Zimbabwean society.⁶⁰ We have already noted discriminating practices in the private sector. In the field of education a dual structure of educational provision is re-emerging: while there were three high fee paying private schools in the country in 1980, by 1991 the number reached fifty-two, dominated by children from the white elite and a small percentage from the black middle class.⁶¹ In an era when the virtues of private enterprise are sung with less apologies, by both a state S.A.P., and opposition parties trapped even further in the idioms of capital accommodation, the broader social aspects of the anti-colonial struggle have been further marginalised.

In the case of the majority of working people a growing disillusion with the state has not led to a mass affiliation to opposition parties. There has certainly been a growth of membership in opposition parties, though for the most part these have not grown beyond small ethnic bases. The politicisation of ethnicity has, as in other African states, been an unfortunate part of post-colonial politics in Zimbabwe. The war in Matabeleland in the mid 1980's has left a legacy that has yet to be dealt with in Zimbabwean politics. In his study of a Kalanga family, Werbner describes the role of the 'pungwe' during the reign of the Fifth Brigade:

"If the pungwe had taught some people the lessons of nationalism, the revival of the pungwe was political education of another kind entirely; it was a parody further alienating the people from their own state and raising their consciousness of quasi-nationalism and their awareness of the role of their own state in the polarisation of Shona and Ndebele."⁶²

A more recent report on developments in Matabeleland notes that in the face of growing

60 For example an article in the independent press supporting Paul Johnson's call in Spectacular calling for "... a new form of imperialism: altruistic, internationally supervised, efficient and tough minded." See Brian Latham, "Africa in need of new imperialism?" Financial Gazette 28/1/93.

61 Kuzvinetsa Peter Dzvimbo, "The Transition State and the Dialectics of Educational Transformation in the Third World: The Case of Zimbabwe", International Studies in Sociology of Education Vol. 1. 1991.

62 Richard Werbner, Tears of the Dead. The Social Biography of an African Family. Baobab Books. 1991, p. 169. This issue was the subject of a number of articles in the 'independent' press. For example, Welshmen Neube, a Professor in the Faculty of Law at U.Z., wrote: "Until the government comes out clean and carries out an honest investigation of what happened during those dark and sad years and also accepts liability of compensating the dependents of the survivors, the grievances of the affected people will not disappear. They simply cannot be washed away." Financial Gazette 15/10/92. See also Jonathan Moyo, Sunday Times 29/11/92.

discontent in that region, fuelled by the effects of the S.A.P., there are more and more voices demanding the "acceptance of 'ZANU-style' regionalism and tribalism as a reality of modern-day politics in Zimbabwe." ⁶³ In the area of cultural organisations, a similar trend can be observed in the area of cultural production. As Kaarsholm has written:

"Recently, after unity, and with the increasing political frustration in Matabeleland at the outcome of ZAPU's integration into national government, Ndebele ethnic organisations, cultural nationalism and ideas of federation and possible alternative affiliations into parts of South Africa have been gaining new ground. The revival of local Ndebele Nationalism wants to secure a better deal for people in the region whom they claim have been betrayed by a centralist Zimbabwean state, dominated by 'the Shona'" ⁶⁴

It is clear however, that this disillusion with the ruling party and other political parties, is not confined to Matabeleland. A recent study of households in a high density suburb in Harare, known as Kambuzuma noted the following patterns of membership of social organisations in that area.

TABLE I

	Women		Men	
	1991 N = 99	1992 N = 98	1991 N = 86	1992 N = 86
Religious Groups	25	28	7	8
Burial Society	18	19	18	18
Social/Sport	3	3	1	2
Political	4	4	0	1
Trade Union	1	3	5	6
Professional Group	2	2	2	2
Cooperative	2	1	0	0
	55	60	33	37

Source: Nazneen Kanji And Niki Jazdowska: the Gender-specific Effects Of S.a.p. On Households In Kambuzuma: Unpublished Report. february 1993.

From the table it can be seen that for women religious groups (including women's groups and mothers' unions) were the most popular form of organisation, followed by burial societies. For men, burial societies were the first preference, followed by religious groups. It is not surprising that most workers in an urban community should turn to organisations like the church and burial societies which offer them either emotional or material support, or both. Moreover in the case of many though not all, burial societies

63 Horizon March 1993.

64 Preben Kaarsholm, "Si ye pambili - Which Way Forward? Urban Development, Culture and Politics in Bulawayo from the 1990's, Paper presented at Conference on 'Symbols of Change' Evangelische Akademie, Berlin 7 - 10 January 1993.

participation has been based, historically or an ethnic affiliation. Even during the formative years of the growth of nationalism in the late 1950's the importance of burial societies was undeniable, as the table below illustrates, looking at social organisations in two townships:

TABLE 2

	1957/58		1958/59	
	HARARI	MABVUKU	HARARI	MABVUKU
Burial Societies	28	1	41	1
Political & Semi-Political	22	2	9	2

Source: Compiled From The Annual Reports Of The Director Of Native Administration 1957/1958 And 1958/1959

The relationship between participation in ethnically based burial societies (or other organisations) and nationalist parties has not been seriously analysed in Zimbabwean historiography. However it is clear that affiliation to one did not by definition preclude belonging to the other. Particular historical conditions of membership need to be more closely analysed. Ranger's warning that there is nothing 'inevitable, natural, (or) unchanging' about tribal identity is a necessary reminder against any hasty conclusions concerning ethnicity.⁶⁵ However, in the post-independence period there has been a growing disillusion with nationalist parties. Such forms of organisation serve as 'a compensation against the weakness or the incapacity of state institutions unable to protect citizens and advance their interests.'⁶⁶ It is of course premature to generalise from the figures on Kambuzuma suburb, and certainly the rural areas still represent a stronghold for the ruling party, though not unproblematically so. Nevertheless the Kambuzuma study does present some important indicators of a possible under trend: interestingly the growth of trade unionism continues to be a serious problem. At present the labour movement represents only about 20% of the workforce,⁶⁷ and within the labour movement, indications are that specific company based workers committees are more influential than national trade union bodies. The *Worker*, complaining about the lack of democracy in unions observed that: 'In most cases, the major problem has been that unions are not transparent. Leaders have turned unions into personal institutions in which they are not answerable to anyone but themselves.'⁶⁸

The point of analysing these contradictory, loyalties in the nation is that they have a significant effect on the ways in which the race problem is understood and confronted. Thus it cannot be assumed that nationalism has some predetermined unity or essence.

65 Terence Ranger; *The Invention of Tribalism in Zimbabwe*. Mambo Press; 1985, p. 19.

66 Davidson op cit, p. 225.

67 *The Worker*, March 1993.

68 *Ibid*.

Even though racial domination was the major feature of settler colonialism, the contradictions and fault lines within the dominated formation cannot be reduced to a single site of resistance. The ability to confront racism most effectively during the colonial period, depended, in large measure, on the extent to which nationalist movements could both deal with the cleavages of African society and connect with existing strands of resistance. This requirement is no less important in the post-colonial dispensation.

IV

Mandaza in a recent critique of Basil Davidson's, has written:

"Precisely because of the ever-present danger of ethnic conflict in Southern Africa, nation-building - as the process of reconciling the (petty-bourgeoisie, middle class/compradorian) representatives of the various 'ethnic' or 'tribal' groups - will become a central feature of the political process in the post-colonial state. It is sheer self-indulgence to dismiss nation-building exercises in Africa." ⁶⁹

There is an element of truth in this proposition as evidenced in Joshua Nkomo's recent frenetic attempts to combat a regional challenge to his leadership in Matabeleland, ⁷⁰ by members of the petty-bourgeoisie who have been marginalised by the 1987 Unity Accord between PF ZAPU and ZANU PF. Yet Mandaza's assertion still begs one of the major questions raised by Davidson, namely the ability of reconciling factions of the petty-bourgeoisie to sustain an hegemonic project in the form of the nation-state. It is clear that it has become increasingly problematic for the African petty-bourgeoisie to carry out this project. Even at a symbolic level attempts to develop national unity have run into serious problems as can be seen over the issue of defining 'national heroes.' Decisions over who qualifies as a national hero, as well as the grading of heroes into a hierarchy of national and provincial heroes, has caused major problems. The project, according to one observer, 'became unravelled over precisely those political and socio-economic divisions that make new nations so fragile.'⁷¹

In this problematic process of nation-building, the 'white factor', in the post-colonial period, has had contradictory effects. On the one hand the legacy of white control of the economy has provided a continuing source of grievance for nationalist discourse. On the other hand the increased differentiation among the black majority, has meant that the corporatist grievances of the black petty-bourgeoisie against the obstacles to their accumulation ambitions, has been insufficient to provide a renewed hegemonic national project.

69 Ibbo Mandaza, "Southern Africa in the year 2000. Issues on the Post-Colonial State; Democracy and Human Rights, Peace and Security; and Regional Cooperation and Economic integration", paper presented at the SAPES Trust Fifty Anniversary Annual Colloquium, Southern Africa in the year 2000, Harare, 14-18 March 1993.

70 Horizon, March 1993.

71 Norma Kriger, "In Search of a National Identity: The Politics of War Heroes, Southern African Research Program. May 1990.



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