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Beyond The House of Hunger: The Struggle for Democratic Development In Zimbabwe.

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BEYOND THE HOUSE OF HUNGER: THE STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT IN ZIMBABWE

by

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An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Canadian Association of African Studies Conference held at York University, Toronto, in May 1991. The author Brian Raftopoulos, is the Deputy Director of the Zimbabwe Institute of Development Studies. However, the views and opinions expressed in this paper are entirely his own and do not necessarily reflect those of the institute.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CODESRIA	Council for the Development of Economic and Social Research in Africa
GFCF	Gross Fixed Capital Formation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOZ	Government of Zimbabwe
IBDC	Indigenous Businessmen Development Centre
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MIGA	Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OPIC	Overseas Protocol Investment Code
PF-ZAPU	Patriotic Front - Zimbabwe African People's Union
PSIP	Public Sector Investment Programme
SEDCO	Small Enterprises Development Corporation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VIDO	Village Development Committee
WADCO	Ward Development Committee
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front
ZIPA	Zimbabwe People's Army
ZUM	Zimbabwe Unity Movement.

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"I leaned back against the msasa tree and lay still, trying not to think about the House of Hunger where the acids of gut-rot had beaten into the base metal of my brains. The House has now become my mind; and I do not like the way the roof is rattling".

DAMBUDZO MARECHERA : THE HOUSE OF HUNGER

SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

As the first decade of independence drew to a close in Zimbabwe, there were increasing indications, particularly in the urban areas, of growing disillusionment with the operations of the Zimbabwean State. In September 1988, University students took to the streets in protest against what they saw as the growing tide of corruption within the State and Party machinery. In the following months, a major expose' in a national newspaper, *The Chronicle,* catalogued high-level corruption in the State involving the illegal sales of motor vehicles. Also in 1988, Parliamentarians, usually noted for their sycophancy, apathy and empty cant, spoke out in a brief but vigorous flurry of criticism against nepotism and corruption. In April 1989, just over a year after the signing of the Unity Accord between ZANU (PF) and PF-ZAPU, a new challenge to the Government emerged in the form of the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) with the latter campaigning basically on an anti-corruption and anti-one-party state platform. As the country moved into the last quarter of 1989, students again demonstrated in early October following the detention of the president and secretary-general of the Students' Representative Council. Finally, between April and June 1990, the State had to confront a protracted series of strikes in the public sector. The reaction of the State to these developments was at one level to reveal an aggressive stance. In 1988, response to the students' demonstrations, students and lecturers were threatened with detention, hastily arraigned before the courts on charges that could not stand the tests of judicial demands, and a Kenyan lecturer was deported. The State's response to the 1989 student protests was even harsher, leading to student detention and the summary closure of the University of Zimbabwe on 4 October 1989. Two days before the closure, the president of the Students' Representative Council strongly attacked the State, noting that, "the institution of Government has thus been rendered completely disreputable and hence the incumbents have lost legitimacy" (Mutambara 1989). In an allied move, the Secretary-General of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions, Morgan Tsvangirai, was also detained by the State authorities because of his criticism of the closure of the University as "a clear manifestation of rising State repression, which has already been felt by various sections of society" (The Chronicle, 7 October 1989). As regards the opposition party, ZUM, several of its members were detained, and the operations of the party made difficult.

Yet there has been more to the State's response to criticisms than coercive interventions. As a result of struggles between sections of civil society and the State, as well as conflicts within the executive, legislature and judiciary wings of the State, and the highest organs of the ruling party, there have developed important arenas of democratic debate and participation in Zimbabwean society. There still exists a substantial degree of Press freedom in which regular debates and criticisms of the Government can be found. Alongside State-influenced papers, can be found an important array of privately sponsored monthly magazines, such as Moto, Parade and SAPEM, as well as a weekly newspaper, The Financial Gazette. Regular discussions and debates are held in fora organised by intellectuals and attended by enthusiastic audiences. When this is added

to regular elections which have on the whole been "free and fair", it can be seen that there is a vibrant struggle for democracy in Zimbabwe. An important basis of this struggle has been the growth and expansion of the Black petty-bourgeoisie which has developed after a decade of experience in public sector management, the large formal business sector and the emerging business sub-sector. Emerging from the experiences has been an increasing desire to become established, private businessmen. The basis of the tendency has been the limits on capital accumulations in the State, continued White control of the economy, and the proclivity for macro-economic policy to favour the monopolistic sector of the business community. Moreover, as large sections of the Black petty-bourgeoisie have found themselves excluded from the benefits of the post-colonial policy of "Reconciliation", demands have grown for more active participation not only in the economy but in the political process. These demands have resonated both amongst the petty-bourgeoisie in opposition, and within the State and Party structures.

Moreover, even as the State has lost legitimacy amongst sections of the urban population, it has retained a popular presence amongst the majority rural producers. Nevertheless, it is not a support base it can take for granted in the absence of a substantial land reform programme. In addition, in terms of an overall alternative within Zimbabwe, the rightist drift of ZUM brought little hope of confronting the existing inequalities in the society. Thus as the united ZANU (PF) party takes the country into a Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) seeking, in the words of the Senior Minister of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, to "shift quite decisively away from a command economy to one which promotes free markets and private enterprises *(The Financial Gazette,* 28 March 1991), there do not appear to be easily identifiable alternatives in Zimbabwe.

There has therefore been an ambivalence on the part of the State on the question of democratic participation and development. On the one hand, the desire to remain accountable to the agenda of the liberation movement, however nebulous the precise content of that agenda, has not been a fiction. Moreover, there has been a certain sensitivity to debates and discussions going on within civil society about such issues. On the other hand, an aggressive, heavy-handedness has been shown against certain groups in the national body politic, attempting to assert their autonomy from a certain definition of the "national interest" in ways considered adventurist and without a viable programmatic alternative. At its worst, the latter reaction has been characterised by authoritarian prescriptions.

This ambivalence can be explained at several levels. On the positive side, firstly, the continuing debates within the ruling party over such issues as ideology, the one-party state and the ESAP. As an example of one trend in the debate, a recent, under-reported speech by the Minister of State for the Public Service, Eddison Zvobgo, reflects not only the new mood of deregulation in the State, but the class formation and aspirations of sections of the ruling elite, as they seek to renegotiate the relationship between the State and private business interests developed over the last 11 years. It is worth quoting the Minister at length:

> Economic adjustment must be viewed as a matter of life and death. These must be no doubt as to the only ideology that works. Everyone must embrace pragmatism. What does not work must be discarded. What works must be improved. Poverty - self-inflicted through ignorance, laziness or lack of skills - must be something to be ashamed of. Wealth, honestly and lawfully accumulated, must be worthy of praise.

> It is also true to prosper, our people must be subjected to less and less Government as they become truly self-governing. I further submit that for SAP to stand a chance, we, your elected Government, must be more and more prepared to dismount from the backs of the people. We must let the people go". *(The Financial Gazette,* 30 May 1991).

Those amongst the leadership and the mass membership, who still adhere to some version of the socialist vision are likely to be at loggerheads with such a view. Moreover, the struggles are likely to continue, in view of the increased marginalisation of working people that is likely to ensue from the SAP. Secondly, pressures from non-party organisations like the student movement, the labour movement and debates amongst intellectuals have not been without effect on the democracy debate, broadly defined. Thirdly, post-1989 international relations have at one level increased the pressure for a liberal political pluralism.

On the negative side, it is clear that the above trends have taken place within a national and international political environment that has moved decidedly to the right. The alternatives to capitalism and, more specifically, some form of adjustment programme prescribed by the dictates of the West, have become increasingly remote. Thus one of the primary functions of a dominant ideology, namely the displacement of questions and alternatives to the dominant discourse, has become increasingly operative. Under such circumstances, the inability of existing capitalist structures in Africa to deliver little more than highly uneven growth in the interest of the few, may well add impetus to an already apparent authoritarian strain, in a leadership increasingly under pressure to maintain popular support under growing crisis conditions.

In attempting to examine these issues, three broad questions need to be considered.

- What factors have affected the organisation and mode of struggle of political and social forces in post-1980 Zimbabwe?
- What forms have these struggles taken?
- What are likely to be the determinants, at both a national and international level, of the political economy of Zimbabwe in the near future?

Before turning to these issues, there is a need to make some general comments on the current debates over the State and civil society in Africa.

SECTION II

THE STATE, CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRACY

The dismal record of "post-colonial" states, both "conservative" and "radical", a less messianic concern with certain popular classes, and a more critical perception of liberation movements, have necessitated a closer examination of the totality of the State, the constitutive forces of civil society and the struggle for democracy. Post-colonial states unable to sustain not only hegemonic projects but even more confined corporate efforts, because of their inability to consistently deliver the goods to their various constituents, have sought security in repressive regimes. Moreover, the deconstruction of nationalism and the nation has revealed a less unified anti-colonial experience, which has had its effects in post-colonial attempts at mobilisation (Chabal 1986).

Thus as post-colonial states have failed to carry out their major tasks of consolidating nation states, unifying the various social and political forces through democratic structures and an accountable state, and providing effective economic strategies for growth and redistribution, the role attributed to the State has "changed from the prime mover of development to that of its main obstacle" (Doornbos 1990, 183). Under such conditions, issues concerning democratisation and the critique of the one-party state have become central to the development process, and can no longer be submerged under the rhetoric of "developmentalism". Yet it is this very area of the nature of the social forces capable of carrying out alternative democratic strategies that constitutes a major problem area for radical theory and practice. The first problem to be faced in discussing the social forces in civil society in Africa is the problem of their production and reproduction in conditions of underdevelopment. This problem becomes particularly acute in conditions of ecological disaster in which the material basis of survival is being eroded. The second problem relates to the manichean opposition that is often posed between the State and civil society, in which the former is seen as the sphere of oppression and coercion, and the latter as unproblematically, the arena of choice, voluntary action and freedom. This can often lead to analysis of the post-colonial State as monolithic and to a romanticisation of social movements, under conditions in which coercion may have been one of the integral principles of civil society. Mamdani has criticised such a dichotomy among certain North American Africanists, writing that while State-centred theorists "see in civil society nothing but an ensemble of 'particularisms'" their society-centred counterparts "tend to glamorise civil society and present it as non-contradictory" (Mamdani 1989, 23).

Amongst the African Left themselves, there has been a vigorous debate about the relationship between the autonomous forces of civil society and the State. Shivji has criticised large sections of the Left in Africa for their "entrist" position on the post-colonial state and ruling party. That is, he has criticised the belief that the Left can enter either the post-colonial state or party and attempt to change these organs from within. According to Shivji, this strategy is based on an unscientific understanding of the class nature of such post-colonial institutions, and the end result is that the Left itself is captured by such institutions. He, therefore, advises the Left to work for the creation of autonomous organisations for working people in civil society (Shivji 1988, 1990).

Shivji's criticisms are an important reminder of the structural imperatives underlying the activities of the State. However, they underestimate the contradictions within the State and present the latter as something of a monolith. In addition, while this critique points to the importance of the development of autonomous, non-state organisations of working people, the analysis fails to delineate the type of relationships that such movements could establish with the State under particular conditions. This, in turn, can lead to an underestimation of State power and the role of sections of the petty-bourgeoisie as well as an idealisation of these autonomous organisations (B. Raftopoulos 1989, 6-7).

In a similar vein, the Social Movements project being carried out by CODESRIA has been criticised for underplaying the pivotal role of the African petty-bourgeoisie as the logical inheritor of State power, underestimating the marginalised status of the popular classes, and developing a romantic, apocalyptic vision of popular democracy (Mandaza 1990, 27). The point of such critiques is neither to reassert an elitist conception of change, nor to underestimate the struggles of popular classes and organisations. It is, however, to place such struggles within the context of the limiting pressures in which they are forced to take place. It is, moreover, to remind ourselves of what Eric Hobsbawm has written about class relationships:

> Class is not merely a relationship between groups, it is also their existence within a social, cultural and institutional framework set by those above. The world of the poor, however elaborate, self-contained and separate, is a subaltern and therefore, in some senses, incomplete world; for it normally takes for granted the existence of those who have hegemony, or at any rate, its inability for most of the time to do much about it. It accepts their hegemony, even when it challenges some of its implications, because, largely, it has to. Ideas, models and situations in which action becomes possible tend to reach it from outside if only because the initiative that changes conditions on a national scale comes from above, or because the mechanisms for diffusing ideas are generated outside. (Hobsbawm 1984, 39).

To the extent that civil societies exist in African social formations, the petty-bourgeoisie constitute on important element in this arena. Clearly, the petty-bourgeoisie, through their monopolised access to education, their limited access to colonial State structures, their experiences in leading oppositional organisational structures during anti-colonial struggles, their ability to articulate an inclusive national political discourse, and because of the structural and organisational weakness of the other oppressed classes, are in the best position to assume the reins of State power in the post-colonial period. However, in the post-colonial period, the petty-bourgeoisie develops serious problems in its attempts to extend its hegemonic rule over society. This is because, while hegemony is ethical-political and cultural, "it must also be economic, must necessarily be based on the decisive function exercised by the leading group in the decisive nucleus of economic activity" (Gramsci 1982, 161). Thus while the petty-bourgeoisie is able during the anti-colonial struggle to exert a cultural political and ethical hegemony, this influence is eroded during the post-colonial phase due to the fact that the petty-bourgeoisie does not control substantive social property of its own in the area of the economy. It is, therefore, extremely prone to utilising the State as a basis for accumulation and class formation.

In addition, because the colonial State inherited at independence was built largely on the basis of coercion and a command relationship with civil society, the petty-bourgeoisie, because of the problems of accumulation in the economy, the lack of democratic structures, and weakness of civil formations and popular organisations, tends

to use the State increasingly as a basis for corruption, internecine struggles, and as a coercive force against the unsatisfied demands of the popular classes. Under such conditions, the world-view of sections of the State petty-bourgeoisie becomes increasingly factional, with the dominant class displaying a decreasing ability to incorporate the interest and demands of the direct producers, and conversely showing an increasing inability to make sacrifices of a corporate nature. Given that the post-colonial State is thereby so embroiled in the factional struggles and ambitions of the petty-bourgeoisie, and therefore lacks the level of autonomy which can pretend to a certain universality of outlook, struggles develop within the State. In such struggles, the State is not simply an external force that confronts civil society, it is at the same time a locus of conflict of forces whose springboard is sometimes civil society. Here State power not only places formative pressures on and brings into existence certain elements of civil society, it also manifests the balance of forces emerging from the latter (Mamdani 1990, 7-8); Kaviraj 1990, 12). In Southern Africa, the specifities of the "post-white settler colonial state" provide the trajectory for the democratic struggles in the region. These specific issues include the pervasive legacy of economic power of both the White community and international capital, and the aspirations and expectations of the various sections of the dominated classes, developed during the nationalist independence struggle and which take on new features in the post-colonial period (Mandaza 1991,46).

SECTION III

THE PETTY-BOURGEOISIE, THE STATE AND THE STRUGGLE FOR HEGEMONY

ZANU (PF) came to power in 1980 with a substantive national support base, but also against a background of serious divisions within the Nationalist Movement, as well as a differentiated experience of the liberation struggle. The hegemony of the Nationalist Movement was, therefore, always problematic and a process that was not established once and for all, but had to be, and still has to be fought for and reaffirmed on a continual basis, amidst contradictions and contestations. In this respect there has been some important recent work deconstructing the experiences of the liberation struggle and nationalist ideology. Kriger (1988) criticises Ranger for not integrating issues of "gender, lineage, generation and intra as well as inter-class conflicts" into his concept of an inclusive peasant consciousness. Kriger's own argument points to the contradictions of colonial society amongst the oppressed which were revealed by the coercive reality of the liberation struggle, and which fragmentation provided the differing modalities for experiencing the liberation war in Zimbabwe. Similarly, Sylvester (1990a) talks about the experience of the anti-colonial struggle producing "a plurality of differences which have not been fully neutralised, coopted or destroyed". More specifically, Sylvester summarises her argument as being that Zimbabwe experienced four "simultaneous revolutions" which, while they affected certain aspects of consciousness, social structure, state and economy, failed to provide an hegemonic discourse that would sufficiently integrate the concerns of these "competing centres of force".

The problem with both Kriger and Sylvester is that they stress differences without a strong conception of articulation, and theorise competing centres of power without a sufficient conception of hegemony. Against Kriger's view, it is necessary to point out that social groups have several sets of interests which are often contradictory and even mutually exclusive. Zimbabweans may have followed their class, gender and generational interests during the war, while still contributing to the hegemony of nationalism. As Hall (1988) has reminded us, the achievement of hegemony "never has only one character, only a predominant tendency; it is always "destruction and reconstruction ..... or what Gramsci elsewhere calls "revolution/restoration"! Moreover, interests themselves are not statically ascribed to particular positions within a social structure but are constructed historically through the ideological process, in which an important element in Zimbabwe has been the formative influences of nationalism. In Sylvester's case, the attempt to select only certain elements of the liberation struggle (ZIPA and March 11th Movement) as anti-passive revolutions, fails to understand the nationalist struggle as a whole as an anti-passive movement, however contradictory and fraught with tensions. Perhaps more important than explaining the failure of movements such as ZIPA, is to explain the more lasting resonance of "old guard" nationalism and its ability to mobilise people for political action, by providing them with elements of a world view that makes "good sense" of prevailing social relations.

While it is important to demystify the nationalist discourse and point to its contradictory elements, it is unwise to underestimate the contradictory unity of the discourse

particularly in former settler societies, where the broad struggle against racist structures still has a popular resonance. The experience of "nation" is constructed out of a conception of organic unity which purports that what people share as a nation is more important than the conditions that divide them by class, gender or generation. Such experiences of nationality and nation "are made in the active elaboration of a national tradition, a making of a usable past that underlies their claims to political recognition, autonomy, sovereignty or independence" (Suny 1990, 9). These ideological trends develop from specific lived experiences of community, with attachments to particular places, extending through experiences of communities in struggle, under attack, and reaffirming and extending the existence of such communities through involvement in collective institutions and movement (Williams, 1989). While this process was experienced unevenly during the entire anti-colonial struggle, the dominance of nationalism as an organising framework should not be underrated.

From Growth with Equity to Structural Adjustment

Given the contradictory and in some respects fragile unity of the Nationalist Movement, the new Government in 1980 faced a daunting prospect in attempting to consolidate and develop the support of the popular classes as well as attempting to placate the persistently predatory aspirations of capital. In consequence, the new Government initiated the policy of "Reconciliation", a necessary acceptance of existing production relations in the face of the balance of social forces in the country and the region. Through this policy, the State sought both to ensure a continuity of production structures, as well as initiating the process of ameliorating the conditions of the working people. In policy terms, the strategy of "Growth with Equity" was the economic expression of the politics of Reconciliation. Faced with the dilemma of a support base eager to gain greater access to production assets and social services, and an apprehensive White minority who needed reassurances and guarantees, the Government sought through "Growth with Equity" to provide a high rate of growth which would permit a certain level of mass social expenditure without adversely affecting the livelihood of the minority group. Thus the policy called for high growth rates to avoid a zero-zum predicament (Mkandawire 1985, 247).

Hence the new Government set out to build its hegemony in a situation where it had no fundamental control over the productive forces in the country, and therefore had to rely on the investment decisions of private capital, both local and foreign, to provide the economic growth necessary to initiate its policy programmes. Furthermore, the Government's economic strategy exposed the serious contradictions inherent in attempting to reconcile the demands of capital accumulation with the desire for political legitimacy. For in courting the approval of capital, the Zimbabwe Government initiated a series of policies that were not beneficial to the popular classes. Thus the Government faced the central dilemma of a welfarist strategy, namely how to reconcile growth with a more equitable distribution of resources, and initiate change without serious destabilisation.

The Transitional National Development Plan predicted a growth rate of 8.2% between the years 1982-1985. The basis of this optimistic figure was the brief economic boom of the immediate post-independence years of 1980-81, and the naive belief in economic recovery in the West. In reality, however, the expectations had an extremely fragile basis. For the 1980-81 boom was based more on increased consumer demand,

stimulated by minimum wage increases, and the using up of excess production capacity than on any sustained new investment input. In fact, a major structural feature of the economy has been the decline of gross fixed capital formation. The latter reached its peak of 28% of GDP in 1975, but experienced a drastic decline towards the end of the 1970s such that by 1980, it was 15.3% of GDP. Between 1983 and 1986 gross fixed capital formation averaged about 13% of GDP, while net investment averaged 3.6% of GDP. Thus the post-independence period has been characterised by a continuous decline in the share of the private sector in gross fixed capital formation, and by an increase in the share of the public sector. The effects of this low level of gross fixed capital formation have been exacerbated by the asset structure of such capital formation. That is, in the private sector investment has mainly been concerned with replacement by relatively modern and capital-intensive machinery and equipment; while in the public sector the concentration has been on large civil engineering projects and buildings. Thus investment has not favoured the expansion of new productive capacity (Government of Zimbabwe/ILO 1989).

After the boom years of 1980-82 in which the State was able to initiate, in a substantive manner, its welfarist programmes particularly in health and education, a period of decline set in. When the low level of gross fixed capital formation was combined with decreased export earnings, the adverse effects of destabilisation and drought, the result was a reduced gross domestic product which averaged 3.2% per annum between 1980-87, falling short of the projected 8% annual growth rate. The Budget deficit grew rapidly in response to the Government's social expenditure programmes and the provisions of emergency drought relief. In the face of a deepening recession, the Zimbabwe Government turned to the IMF in 1982. The conditionality of the IMF included a devaluation of the Zimbabwe dollar, and a reduction of Government subsidies and the overall Budget deficit. The Government also liberalised the capital account in an attempt to attract investment. In the event, the Government's commitment to its social expenditure programme and its provision of drought relief meant that it was unable to comply with the IMF's deflationary programme. Moreover, a dramatic increase in net investment abroad led to a Government-imposed embargo on further remittable surpluses abroad. In February 1984, the IMF programme collapsed.

The continued problems of low investment in the Zimbabwean economy have been compounded by the speculative nature of existing investment. Fast profits from investment in real estate and the Zimbabwe Stock Exchange have directed investment away from production into speculation. Moreover, the major banks in the country have been extremely reluctant to provide investments for new productive ventures (Cokorinos 1990, 12-13). When allied to the investment problem, the rapid growth of unemployment, and pressure from capital within the country and international finance organisations, led to the State's introduction of further measures to attract foreign capital.

Thus in April 1989, a new Investment Code was initiated which restated certain measures that were already in existence, but in addition introduced four new changes. These included: The establishment of an Investment Centre to streamline the process of approving new investment proposals; narrowing the definition of a foreign company, thus reducing the number of firms subject to the additional controls applied to foreign firms; allowing selected new investments to repatriate up to 100% of profits subject to

the suitability of each case, and the signing of MIGA and OPIC investment guarantee protocols.

After the collapse of the IMF programme in 1984, the Government's economic policies were characterised by a mix between an orthodox economic programme and a political commitment to expenditure on social services and the continued, though declining, provision of subsidies (Bratton & Burgess 1987, 204; Lehman 1990, 66). On the basis of this "home-grown" adjustment programme, the State was able to restore a balance of payments surplus, reduce the debt servicing ratio from 40% to 25% and generate an average growth rate of 4.2% from 1985-1990 (Cliffe 1991, 28). Yet even with such a relatively successful programme, developed despite the imperatives of the IMF and World Bank, the Government of Zimbabwe announced a major economic structural adjustment programme in January 1991. The programme predictably includes: a deregulation of price and wage controls; the elimination of subsidies; a reduction of the Budget deficit through the reduction of social services and introduction of cost recovery measures; and a trade liberalisation programme phased over five years (Government of Zimbabwe 1991).

Thus the State has moved from a welfarist economic strategy to a Structural Adjustment Programme, which, if carried out comprehensively, is likely to seriously undermine its past reformist strategy. Furthermore, the decline in social service delivery will probably remove an important platform for mobilising popular support. If this strategy is combined with a land reform programme which does not deliver the goods, the long-term support base of the Government could be seriously eroded. Yet in full knowledge of the deleterious political effects of such a policy, the adjustment programme has not so much been sold to the Zimbabwean population, as imposed as the only practical alternative, by the State and business elite. The reasons for the decisions are varied. Clearly, as Cliffe (*Ibid*, page 28) has noted, the World Bank's influence has greatly increased in Zimbabwe. Secondly, this growing influence itself reflects the changed international balance of forces in which socialism no longer appears to be a viable alternative, at least not in what used to be its really existing forms. The failure to develop alternative socialist policies was recently noted by President Robert Mugabe at the Central Committee meeting of ZANU (PF) in March 1991. He admitted that, "we have not in our possession as a party, a clear definition of socialism as we would want to see it applied in our society". Continuing, President Mugabe observed that, the "sheer weight of capitalism could very well set us off course, even though our socialist commitment might in theory continue" (*Financial Gazette,* 28 March 1991). In the current environment in which the political centre of gravity has moved to the right not only in Zimbabwe, but in most of the Southern African region, the Structural Adjustment Programme is being presented as a necessity, in the full confidence that no viable radical alternatives are being presented by any organised social forces in the country. We shall have more to say on this later.

However, it is also necessary to reiterate what was noted earlier, namely, that the SAP, amongst other issues, remains a matter of serious debate within the ruling party. Yet, in terms of the specific content of policy issues, certain State structures tend to lead the Party. With neither a strong independent research nor financial capacity (notwithstanding the Ministry of Political Affairs), the Party has not been able to develop a strong policy formulating base (Moyo, 1991). There is a strong impression that economic policy formulation has been centralised within the Presidency, and the senior echelons within the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, and

Industry and Commerce. A wide range of Party and Ministry officials, for example, appear to have been marginalised in the formulation of the SAP. In general, the party cadres at the middle level tend to be utilised more as mass mobilisers and implementors, than as effective contributors to policy formulation. Moreover, as Moyo (*Ibid*) observes, "many professionals of middle-class background find themselves marginalised from inner party politics by the 'mobiliser' social force and, at times, by high-ranking party leadership". The Party thus retains a middle-level functionary cadre with greater political than policy skills. Another dimension of the problem relates to the relationship between the State and the private sector. The internal brain drain from the public to the private sector has for some time presented problems in terms of the State's capacity to deal with the private sector (Raftopoulos *et al* 1986). If conditions in the public sector continue to deteriorate, the effects of the SAP are likely to increase the loss of professional and skilled personnel to the private sector, both to existing and new enterprises, as well as to the NGOs. This will, in turn, reduce the ability of the State to manage the SAP, and in general to cope with the increasing strength of the private sector. Already, the preparations and information campaigns by employer organisations with regard to SAP have overwhelmed the efforts of the Government and taken the initiative from the State. The Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries (CZI) has also used this opportunity to reassert its central role in industry, after the high-profile interventions during the last six months of the newly formed Indigenous Business Development Centre. (More will be said of this below). The State's lack of consultations with groups other than employers' organisations has been a glaring deficiency. The growing confidence of the White business elite has become apparent on a daily basis. The close cooperation between employer organisations and senior State officials has been hailed by the business sector. Never in the last 11 years has the private sector been more confident of its relationship with the State than it is at present. The technicist confidence of SAP discourse, currently the preferred medium of intervention for the White business elite, has provided the double-speak necessary to attempt to camouflage the continued growth of substantive economic power amongst a minority class. As devaluation of the Zimbabwean dollar increases, access to foreign bank accounts means access to foreign exchange in times of scarcity. The result is increases in wealth for considerable sections of the elite, and a smaller section of the growing Black elite, who are linked to foreign capital or act as local agents for foreign concerns. It is important to note, in addition, that for the White elite, SAP is also a cultural issue. Still relatively isolated in their exclusive social world, behind the high concrete walls surrounding their homes, SAP, like their satellite dishes, provides more contact with a Western ethos in which they feel most comfortable. It is the possibility of a break in such links that provides for them a terrifying prospect.

We have now to ask to what extent the Government's Reconciliation strategy and its attendant economic policies have benefited the African petty-bourgeoisie. Predictably, for sections of this petty-bourgeoisie, independence has brought with it new openings for advancement and enrichment. This is particularly the case in the State, which has been effectively Africanised, and which has offered, at the top echelons of the public service, relatively high salaries and opportunities to use the State for accumulation purposes. Thus sections of the State petty-bourgeoisie moved into positions with highly differentiated salary structures inherited from the settler state. Accompanying such positions has been the entire ethos of suburban lifestyles and the structural pressures for further acquisition and accumulation engendered by the dominant capitalist relations of production. However, as has been noted, one of the major consequences of

Reconciliation was a "reconciliation with capital" (Sibanda 1988) and, more specifically, an initial acceptance of White control over the private sector. Given this lack of control over the private means of accumulation, sections of the petty-bourgeoisie, as in other Third World formations, have used the State as a means of accumulation through corruptive practices. The first quarter of 1989 thus proved for Zimbabwe yet another political trauma. The Sandura Commission, set up by the President to investigate direct car sales to individuals by Willowvale Motor Industries, became a household name in the country. Five Ministers - two Political Affairs, Higher Education, Industry and Technology, and Defence - and the Governor of Matabeleland North resigned as a result of the Commission. President Mugabe was clear in spelling out some of the implications of the Sandura findings. In a statement issued after a Central Committee meeting on 23 March 1989, President Mugabe declared:

> We must now admit we are reaping the bitter fruits of our unwholesomeness and negative behaviour. Our image as leaders of the Party and Government has never been so badly tarnished. The public are crying for our blood and they certainly are entitled to do so after watching our actions and conduct over the nine years of our Government (The Herald, 23 March 1989).

The saga of the Commission's proceedings contained all the ingredients of an epic tragedy: an heroic liberation struggle, the transfer of power, the making of individual reputations within the broader framework of social transformation; and then the antithesis, of the corrupting influence of power, the untidy, grubby manipulations of accumulation, the trial, exposure and, in one case, suicide. To many analysts, this process represented the almost ineluctable logic of the propensity of the political elite to accumulate at any cost; the ubiquitous neo-colonial denouement of the predictable petty-bourgeoisie project.

For weeks, crowds would converge on the legal arena to witness certain members of the leadership confronted with their misdeeds. As the events unfolded, what was indeed a tragedy began to take on the less dignified features of farce, as leading figures uttered one unceremonious untruth after another, much to the disdain of an incredulous crowd. As the unsavoury details became more apparent, the indignities of dishonest leaders were manifested through arrogance, contempt for the due process of law, intimations of being above the law, and a clear disdain for public accountability. In a fit of frustrated rage, one Minister rebuked the eager audience-participants with the sarcastic outburst: "One fool at a time."

One could speculate that for the court audience and most of the reading and listening public, Willowgate was something of a cathartic experience. As people watched, listened and read about the details of leadership corruption, each appeared to confront publicly what many had been talking about in the street, bars, buses and homes: namely, whatever hopes of radical transformation that might have been fostered in the past appeared to have run aground. Equally, or perhaps more importantly, was the feeling of people witnessing their own insecurities in Zimbabwean society at the highest levels of the political machinery. For in truth, it must be said that, not surprisingly, there was an ambivalence in the critical attitude of the "povo". On the one hand, a clear and understandable desire to partake of the commodified milieu of Zimbabwe's dominant capitalist economy, and an ambiguous envy and admiration for those most able to enjoy the exploitative relations of the market and a privileged access to the State. On the other hand, a sense of grievance at the growing polarities of privilege and the abuse of power by leaders who, week after week, mouthed the benefits of less acquisitive forms of

existence. The sum total of the critical posture was not so much an anti-capitalist protest, but a more limited questioning of the procedures of distribution within the "acceptable" limits of capitalism.

However, one of the most disturbing features of the Sandura Commission revelations was President Mugabe's pardon for the guilty Ministers concerned. The President appeared to downplay the seriousness of the crime of perjury committed by senior State officials, and more seriously appeared to place the latter above the full consequences of the law. This brought the contradictions of the application of the law under popular scrutiny and added to the uneasiness concerning the State's actions, and the partiality of the law. A second important feature of the Sandura findings was the evidence of growing linkages of members of the State elite and businessmen in the private sector, in a web of corrupting practices.

Turning to the African petty-bourgeoisie in the private sector, there is evidence of growing fustration amongst this group. 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 seriously proscibed by the structures of the settler state. Firstly, the operations of most small black businessmen were eliminated from the towns and confined to the "locations" and to some freehold plots adjacent to them. Secondly, African trading was increasingly made subject to discriminatory legislation (Wild 1989). The stifling of African petty-bourgeoisie aspirations was apparent throughout the professions and became one of the formative grievances of the nationalist elite.

While the Presidential Directive ensured the rapid Africanisation of the public sector, no such instrument was used 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 (Strachan, 1989).

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 declassed 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 in Zimbabwe, namely the White agrarian bourgeoisie, the petty-bourgeoisie and 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, therefore, 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 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. Moreover, 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 (Ndoro 1989). 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 ....." (*Ibid*). 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 (Halimana, forthcoming). 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. 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!"[4] 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 (B. Raftopoulos 1990). 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 (Bayart 1986, 116). 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.

Yet, recently, existing and aspiring Black businessmen have become more aggressive and more organised in lobbying for their programme. 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 more 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 Act, 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.

Clearly, the organisation is attempting to mobilise both well-known existing businessmen such as Machipisa, Mucheche, Boka, as well as emerging or aspiring

businessmen. Moreover, some of the top positions of the organisation (e.g. president and vice-president) are filled by ex-civil servants, who have gone into business but remain members of the ruling party and retain close links with Party officials at the highest level. The policy issues being discussed with the State include the pace of Africanisation in the economy, security requirements for borrowing by leading financial institutions, and the possible impact of Trade Liberalisation on the future of Black businessmen *(The Financial Gazette,* 23 November 1990).

On the latter issue, particularly, the IBDC has expressed fears of further marginalisation by existing monopolies. In line with these issues, the IBDC has set itself the following institutional programme. To establish or to press for:

- a National Economic Reconstruction Fund (NERFUND);
- a Business Extension and Advising Services (BESA);
- a National Business Research and Industrial Development Institute (BRIDI);
- an Affirmative Action and Marketing Bureau (AAB);
- an Office of Unfair Trade Practices;
- a Mergers and Monopolies Commission; and
- unlisted Securities Markets (IBDC Programme 1991).

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" (World Bank, 1991, 59). 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 appeal to sections of the State elite, in search of alternative avenues of accumulation. For their part, the IBDC are likely, in the medium term, to exert all their energies into lobbying the State and attempting to strengthen linkages with the latter in the absence of a more effective means for pressing their demands. Whether or not the IBDC deteriorates into yet another vehicle for compradorial aspirations remains an open question.

Thus while the policy of Reconciliation has opened up certain opportunities for sections of the petty-bourgeoisie, especially in the State, those opportunities have been proscribed and curtailed by the settler factor and international capital. Moreover, the force of capital has been clearly apparent in the political arena where the ruling party elite have been quicker to reconcile with the settler elite than the nationalists in opposing parties. After the estrangement of PF-ZAPU from ZANU (PF) in the early 1980s, in a series of bitter encounters, it took until December 1989 for the two former liberation movements to seal their unity pact through a congress. In the meantime, the Government has been at pains to reassure the settler constituency about its continued commitment to Reconciliation. Thus, when in August 1987, the State terminated the 20 Parliamentary seats reserved for Whites by the Lancaster House Agreement, an

announcement was made in October of the same year, in which 11 of the vacant 20 seats were reallocated to representatives of the White community in industry, agriculture and commerce.

It was not that the 20 White reserved seats could, in themselves, have prevented the Government from introducing any substantive legislation. For the constraints against introducing a comprehensive radical programme were located in the powerful settler and international economic forces facing such a possibility: the Lancaster House Agreement reflected this balance of forces. Rather the reallocation of 11 of the 20 formerly reserved seats to privileged economic interests reflected the continued and, in some ways, growing strength of capitalist structures in the country. Such a recognition gave a greater credibility to the representatives of privilege at a time when they were recovering from the initial defensiveness they displayed in the immediate post-independence period. That there was a growing self-confidence and recalcitrance in the settler community as a whole was apparent from the 1985 elections in which the former Rhodesian Front, now Conservative Alliance of Zimbabwe, were overwhelmingly returned by the White constituency. Overall, the White community has benefited from the removal of the reserved seats clause, in that it contributed to a certain depoliticisation of their power profile and fed a more heightened technical discourse on the economy in more conventional World Bank terms.

In summing up this section of the discussion, a few points need to be made. Firstly, the policy of Reconciliation and the post-colonial state which ensued from it was a result of a particular balance of forces in Zimbabwe and the Southern African region. Moreover, this balance of forces imposed certain pressures and constraints on policy options which worked in favour of a continuation of capitalist relations, of production. Secondly, in the context of such a set of social relations, sections of the petty-bourgeoisie have gained access to certain avenues of accumulation, most importantly through the mechanisms of the State. In important ways, the Unity Agreement between ZANU (PF) and PF-ZAPU has been an important political step forward for Zimbabwe. However, given the events of the first ten years of independence, there is a real danger that the arguments for unity will be used to cloak the consolidation of fragments of the petty-bourgeoisie and to police the development of democracy in the country.

The One-Party State Debate

Criticism of the policing of democracy through the mechanism of the one-party state began in the early 1980s in Zimbabwe, and has been continued vigorously since then. Starting with a series of critical articles in magazines like Moto, and well attended debates organised by groups such as the African Association of Political Science (Zimbabwe Chapter) and a tradition of grassroots-based democratic theatre of discussion (Kaarsholm 1990), the debate reached new heights in the wake of events in Eastern Europe in 1989, and the particular articulation of the problem through ZUM, and through the student and trade union movements. Explicit in all these debates and critical interventions has been a challenge to a particular conception of unity demanding the articulation of differences through a one-party state machinery. From radical critiques stressing the petty-bourgeoisie avarice of such a project to liberal demands for a plurality of political participation, the message has been that the definition of national unity and participation in the "imagined community" of the nation has become an increasingly contested arena of articulation.

The 1987 Unity Agreement between ZANU (PF) and PF-ZAPU was born out of a recognition that neither party would proceed on a national level on their own. The 1980 and 1985 elections confirmed the regional domination of each party and the militarist approach adopted after the conflicts in Matabeleland in the early 1980s proved a myopic project. The pact has thus brought to a close, provisionally, the open political fighting between the two parties, even though unity remains fraught with problems of regional balance, compounded by continued ethnic rivalry within the majority Shona leadership and their respective support groups. Subsequently, the unity pact, backed by dominant electoral support, provided the ruling party with what it perceived to be a *de facto* acceptance of a one-party state. The President led the debate with a series of well-worn arguments about unity, and the African tradition in settling internal disputes. In reality, the push for a one-party state in Zimbabwe, as in most other African states, has been an attempt to consolidate the domination of the State by sections of the petty-bourgeoisie, particularly in the face of growing opposition within the country.

The rhetoric of the one-party state argument attempted to conceal the persistent and extended disunities and cleavages that characterise Zimbabwean society. The analysis of the Black petty-bourgeoisie in the private sector has already revealed the growing frustrations of this class. When these thwarted aspirations were added to the growing problems of unemployment, decreased earnings and the housing and transport crisis of working people, it provided a sufficient basis for the formation of another party. Into this breach stepped the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM), led by the former Secretary-General of ZANU (PF), Edgar Tekere. ZUM campaigned on two issues that continue to be of concern to all classes in the country, namely the one-party state and corruption in the State, and articulated these issues in a manner that tapped into the popular reservoir of opposition to these issues. In the event, the 1990 elections proved an extremely worrying event for the Government. The ruling party election campaign was often conducted through crude advertisements, and in a few instances, violence. However, President Mugabe was also very concerned to lobby and reassure the various interest groups amongst the electorate. Deeply concerned about urban discontent with the policies of the Government, President Mugabe held a series of consultative meetings with nurses, teachers and the ZCTU, promising improvements to the groups of workers, as well as promising more progress on Black advancement. Despite such meetings, the election results confirmed the urban swing to ZUM with the latter winning 30% of the urban votes. While ZANU (PF) won 116 of the 119 seats contested, with ZUM winning two seats and ZANU (Ndonga) one, the "protest vote" for ZUM was significant. Similarly, in the Presidential election, while Robert Mugabe received 2,026,976 votes, Edgar Tekere won 413,840 votes. Given the lack of a strong party structure, and a more credible leadership, ZUM put up a creditable performance. As one commentator noted, ZUM had "exposed armed emperors, broken the new taboo on organising against the family and given anti-party sentiments representation" (Sylvester 1990, 400).

Yet it is clear that ZUM did not provide a credible alternative to ZANU (PF). Its lack of an alternative economic programme was always apparent, stressing a rightwing pro-market liberalisation programme. The Government's 1991 Structural Adjustment Programme has subsequently taken the wind out of ZUM's economic sails. Moreover, ZUM did not address their programme to the rural areas, where the Government's record on improvements could not be ignored. As a result, ZANU (PF)'s strength remained in the rural areas. The demise of ZUM since the 1990 election has exposed its weakness in both policy and structure. Having done itself no credit by allying with

the Conservative Alliance of Zimbabwe, the former Rhodesian Front, it has since failed to tackle the substantive issues effecting working people and has been unable to develop a greater constituency amongst the latter. The limitations of its project have thus been exposed.

Apart from ZUM, the student movement's activities from 1988 expressed strong opposition against the one-party state and corruption. Demonstrations on and off the campus of the University of Zimbabwe strongly condemned the ruling party in a language that shattered the mould of reverence to leadership. In this vein one document declared in 1989: "That one fought for this country does not justify them to loot, plunder and wreck the economy of Zimbabwe, let alone stifle people's democratic rights." Apart from the heavy-handed treatment of the students by the riot police, the Government hastily passed the University of Zimbabwe Amendment Act in December 1990, granting more power to the State and University authorities to deal with dissent on the campus. The Act has been severely criticised for reducing the autonomy of the University by granting authoritarian powers to the Vice-Chancellor and Government authorities. Despite the protests of students and, for the first time, a demonstration by 200 academic staff, the Act was gazetted in 1991.

Amongst academics and students, the ruling party has lost a great deal of legitimacy. It is not only that the attacks on academic freedom and open debate have been condemned; it is also that the material position of staff and students has been eroded since 1980. This has, unfortunately, left academics open to the largesse being offered by dubious donor agencies for research into democracy. Thus for some of the "retreating intellectuals", to use James Petras' phrase, democratisation focusing on a narrow set of formulas and structures has become a major theme.

Significant in the one-party state debate has not only been opposition from groups outside the ruling party, but the criticisms from within ZANU (PF) itself. During Central Committee meetings, in both August and September 1990, legislating for a one-party state was strongly opposed by many members, including Senior Ministers (EIU Country Report 1991, 10). The former President, Canaan Banana, argued for the continuation of a multi-party system because of his belief that "no generation has the right to make immutable decisions for future generations" (Banana 1990, 21). The issue of democratisation was also raised with reference to inner party democracy during the course of the preliminary party elections in February 1990 to elect candidates to stand for Parliament in the 1990 national elections. The preliminaries, the first of their kind since 1980, produced some serious challenges to senior Party officials with the constituency members asserting their right to choose members representative of their interest. This democratic process unnerved many of the Party leadership, and also led to a series of blatant ethnic rivalries, most notably in Mashonaland Central. Two weeks of exciting political activity ended with "tears, joy, ..., fights, regionalism, feasting ..... and finally, dictatorship prevailed" (Parade, April 1990, 18).

The one-party state issue has displayed the vibrancy of debate in Zimbabwe, which has ensured that any attempt to arbitrarily impose a one-party machinery on the society will be met by serious opposition from groups in civil society and within the ruling party itself. Moreover, contradictions amongst the petty-bourgeoisie, a central feature of contemporary Zimbabwean politics, over the accumulation process, are likely to continue to produce ethnic and ideological divisions which will make it difficult for a section of the petty-bourgeoisie to impose its one-party state project. There is no doubt,

therefore, that those in ZANU (PF) advocating a one-party state have had to take heed of the varying shades of internal opposition on this issue. The lifting of the State of Emergency in 1990 also provided a more relaxed atmosphere for such dissent to manifest itself. Nevertheless, it must also be emphasised that the demise of the Cold War and the changed balance of international forces provided the critique of one-party dictatorships with a new generalised force. Along with this, the loss of legitimacy of vanguardist nations of a sole and authentic party or liberation movement has also undermined the grand assertions of the one-party state trajectory. Without this force of international pressure, it is unlikely that the internal opposition forces would have had a similar effect.

For the time being, the one-party state debate has been put to one side. In the meantime, however, the office of the Executive Presidency, legislated in 1987, has been strengthened in relation to other State institutions and civil society. The extent to which the one-party state issue is raised in the future will depend on the outcomes of the overall process of the struggle for democratic development within the country. The results of this process in turn will, amongst other factors, depend not only on the contradictions amongst the petty-bourgeoisie, but on the extent to which progressive sections of that class are able to form alliances with the majority amongst the popular classes. The success of such alliances will depend, firstly, on the conditions for mobilisation and organisation; and, secondly, on the ability to depart from and break down old moulds of mobilisation to produce more democratic forms of participation. It is appropriate, therefore, to turn to the problems of labour and the land to assess the strength and potential of the largest sections of the popular classes.

SECTION IV

LAND, LABOUR AND THE POPULAR CLASSES

Labouring Under Independence

Historically, the labour movement in Zimbabwe has been weak, characterised by divisions on racial lines; sectionalism; low national density; political factionalism; elitist and undemocratic structures. The conditions under which such weakness developed included the rural-urban totality of the proletarian process, the acute devaluation of African labour power, and the extreme differentiation of the labour market and occupational structure (Wood, 1988). On the attainment of independence, workers used the new environment as an opportunity to vent their grievances. During the first two years of independence, the economy witnessed a spate of approximately 200 countrywide strikes, covering all economic sectors. The strikes were an accumulated expression of anger at the wage levels, discriminatory practices and repressive labour dispute mechanisms that had been inherited from the colonial period. More than that, however, the extent of industrial action also indicated the levels of expectations and very real will for change amongst workers. The labour movement, plagued by a legacy of problems, proved unable to fully connect with the rhythm and intensity of the strikes. Workers themselves, not surprisingly, concentrated their activities on the immediate issues at hand, with little or no long-term conceptions of their actions. Even as the capitalist production relations in the economy threw up the potential for struggle, the ideological conceptions of this struggle were largely short-term and defensive. The State may have been alarmed at the extent of the strikes, but could not have been surprised at this expression of frustration. The major objectives of the State under these conditions were to bring the strikes to a halt, resume existing production levels, establish communication links with the workforce, and reassure the employers that while the State was eager to rectify the injustices suffered by labour, it was not in any mood to carry out a radical deconstruction of the settler colonial relations of production.

The outcome of such struggles has been that the post-colonial state has sent contradictory and increasingly disturbing signals over the maintenance of minimal reformist propositions on the labour question. Included in the immediate post-1980 labour policy, spurred on by the 1980/81 strikes, was the introduction of minimum wage legislation, an Employment Act that attempted to curb the arbitrary retrenchment of labour by employers, the introduction of shopfloor workers' committees, State involvement in an attempt to "build up" the ZCTU, and the introduction of a Labour Relations Act to guarantee certain fundamental rights of workers. Coinciding with the period of immediate post-independence euphoria, the explosions of labour unrest were able to exploit the temporary receptiveness of the State to labour issues. This receptiveness however, was always ambivalent, and as the divisions and lack of centralised authority of the unions became more evident and the employers recovered from their initial defensive stance, the changing balance of forces produced less than sympathetic State responses. The use of the State's coercive machinery against striking workers characterised its commitment to gradual reformist labour policies within

existing production structures. Accompanying this, intermittent accusations from the highest levels of State and Party have been made against "selfish" and "irresponsible" workers, whose role in the struggle has been brought into question, and whose "privileged" position *vis-a-vis* the peasantry has been invoked: a latter-day nationalist rendition of the labour aristocracy thesis.

For the labour movement the task of becoming more effective has centred around three issues: Developing on autonomous position from the State without sacrificing the opportunities to use the State to advance the interest of labour whenever possible; developing broader alliances with other sections of the popular classes disadvantaged by the policies of the post-colonial State; mobilising membership from the workplace by providing effective union leadership on issues affecting workers.

The Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) was initiated by ZANU (PF) in 1980 in order to create a central trade union body more amenable to a corporatist solution to labour issues. Prior to the formation of the ZCTU, five trade union centres, namely the National African Trade Union Congress (NATUC), the Africa Trade Union Congress (ATUC), the Trade Union Congress of Zimbabwe (TUCZ), the Zimbabwe Federation of Labour (ZFL) and the Zimbabwe African Congress of Unions (ZACU) had already combined to form the United Trade Unions of Zimbabwe (UTUZ). The latter organisation, in seeking recognition by the new State, saw the request fall on stony ground. In a letter from the Joint Chairman and Joint Secretary of the interim committee of UTUZ, to the Minister of Labour and Social Services, the unionists complained bitterly about the State's negative attitude towards their attempts at a confederation of labour:

> We are, however, surprised and, indeed dismayed that, in spite of the fact that you Comrade Minister are aware of our efforts, and the stage already reached in this direction with the holding of an Inaugural Congress under consultation approved by your Ministry, you have deemed it fit to disregard this genuine effort, and have encouraged the creation of another National Trade Union Centre, completely ignoring the UTUZ, which was, and in fact is, the major representative organisation in regard to unifying the trade union body.[2]

Moreover, in a letter from the Acting General Secretary of UTUZ to the Director of the International Labour Organisation in December 1980, the former commented on the Coordinating Committee chosen to form one national trade union centre, in the following terms:

> Unfortunately, the committee personally invited by the Minister contained no less that eight people who had not worked in industry or represented a trade union movement as such, but were appointees of the political party in power. These, along with six other people who were not representative of the trade union movement as a whole, left only six places for the genuine trade union representatives and leaders of properly registered trade unions under the auspices of the Industrial Conciliation Act of this country.

Thus the Zimbabwean State, reluctant to have to deal with a labour confederation formed independently of the State and whose political affiliations were more towards ZAPU and ZANU (Sithole), went ahead with its own creation. The labour movement, for its part, too weak and divided along regional and political lines, was unable to prevent the formation of the new centre. During the early and mid-1980s, the imposed leadership of the trade union struggled for credibility amongst workers. Moreover, its

lack of a democratic base and dependence on outside funding, compounded by the State's delay in the introduction of a check-off system, led its members into a series of corrupt practices which left a blemish on the record of the movement (Government of Zimbabwe 1984). During this period the State, at its worst, was disdainful of the role of the trade union movement, exemplified by the manner in which the 20 seats formerly reserved for whites were reallocated in 1987. As we have already observed, while representatives of capital were invited to participate in a form of sectoral interest representation, in the case of labour not even a formal pretence was made to include representatives of the labour movement within this interest group machinery. The State felt strong enough to dismiss labour to the sidelines, "speak" for the labour movement annually through the announcement of the minimum wage and through the Labour Relations Act, and effectively make striking an unlawful activity, backed if necessary by the coercive arm of the law.

By the late 1980s relations between the State and the labour movement began to change. The labour movement, having removed the more corrupt elements in its leadership, also applied itself more carefully to democratic accountability. Moreover, cracks in the State's attempted corporate strategy were becoming increasingly apparent. While minimum wage legislation has improved the purchasing power of agricultural and domestic employers, for workers in commerce and industry the minimum wages, at 1989 prices, have dropped to 13% below their 1980 purchasing power level (Tsvangirai, 1990a). This decline, however, must be assessed along with the phenomenal increase in social expenditure since 1980. Significantly, the drop in purchasing power has also affected the professional groups such as nurses and teachers, who in 1990 conducted the longest strikes in post-independence labour history. Along with other urban groups, these professionals have also suffered from the housing and transport crisis and the escalating cost of living. As one observer put it, teachers have found themselves "slipping in relation to other occupations which they have always considered less desirable than teaching" (Ndlovu 1990, 22).

The growth of union activity in the public sector reflects the change in employment patterns over the last decade. While in the formal productive sector only 20,000 to 30,000 new jobs have been created annually, in the areas of public administration, education and health employment grew from 128,200 in 1980 to 220,300 in 1989. Moreover, hitherto, public sector unionism has not been significant in the overall labour movement, largely because under existing legislation trade unions have not been allowed to exist in this sector. However, the erosion of professional status and earning power has been an important recruiter of these sections of the labour force to union activity. There is an interesting parallel between the condition of professionals in the 1940s and their position in 1990. As Ian Phimister has written about the forties:

> At the very moment that the number of black entrepreneurs, teachers and other professionals, skilled artisans and semi-skilled operatives was growing, their position relative to other classes and groups was under assault from inflation (Phimister 1988, 265).

However, while in the 1940s this loss of status pushed elements of the petty-bourgeoisie to invest their previously elitist demands with the broader social content of nationalism, the trajectory of the current professional involvement in broader struggles is still ambivalent. While there is definitely an opportunity for the growth of a broader labour movement composed of a wide cross-section of occupational groups pushing at the very least for more welfarist policies, there is also the danger, and in the short-term the more

likely prospect of professional workers supporting more individualist programmes promising the return of elite status and greater social mobility. The support of sections of the professionals for ZUM thus had more to do with bread and butter issues than opposition to a one-party state. Such a development could cause further divisions in the labour movement, particularly given the inability of the current industrialisation process to create large numbers of jobs in the formal sector. In recessionary periods unions are known to follow more defensive strategies catering for their own particular interests. The prospects are interesting, but by no means guaranteeing a general movement to the Left.

The autonomy of the ZCTU has been further demonstrated by the increasingly critical position of the movement on economic and political issues. The movement criticised the new Investment Code in 1989 claiming that it demonstrated "much more pertinently than ever the Government's avowed commitment to capitalism" (ZCTU 1989). At the May Day 1991 celebrations the ZCTU, adopting the theme "Liberalisation or Liberation", attacked the Government's Structural Adjustment Programme, noting that the policies would increase the hardships up to poor (The Herald, 2 May 1991). On the political level, the movement has expressed opposition to the Government's treatment of the student movement in the latter's struggle against Government corruption and the one-party state. Links between the student and labour movements have begun to grow, although they still remain tenuous.

Beginning its post-independence history from a weak, divided and dependent position, the labour movement has grown in stature and independence. The ZCTU is now affiliated to by 29 unions with a membership of about 200,000 workers; if one adds to this the membership of the Organisation of Collective Cooperatives of Zimbabwe (OCCZIM) whose membership numbers 250,000, then that raises the strength of unionised labour to 450,000 (Sachikonye 1990, 8). Naturally, this growing strength and autonomy of the labour movement has not gone unnoticed by the State. Dismissive in their attitude to the ZCTU's request for Parliamentary representation in 1987, ZANU (PF) made strong attempts to persuade the movement to give it unqualified support in the 1990 elections. While the courtship of the labour movement continued with the appointment of one of the vice-presidents of the ZCTU as Deputy Minister of Labour, Manpower Planning and Social Welfare in the post-1990 election Cabinet, for the most part the movement has resisted this recent attempt at cooptation by the State. As a general position, the ZCTU declared a position of neutrality in the last general elections (Tsvangirai 1990b, 28). Sachikonye *(op. cit.)* has clearly summarised the breakdown of the State's corporatist strategy:

> From about 1987 onwards, one could speak of a growing polarisation between State and Unions as the contradictions engendered by an austerity programme characterised by static employment and wage levels, higher prices and tighter controls on the labour process festered. The critique by Unions of State economic and social policies gets sharper. The orientation and performance of labour relations officers is questioned. More recently the terms on which the State intends to liberalise the economy are sharply attacked. At the same time, stoppages over wages and working conditions in a number of industrial sectors illustrate the sharpening contradictions within the labour process. Finally, when the ZCTU Secretary-General condemns the State's handling of the student demonstrations at the University and hints at a Union response he is detained. The limits of what has been termed "corporate paternalism" are demonstrated.

As the blocks of the State corporatist strategy have crumbled, the new adjustment programme, with its attendant liberalisation of labour relations, has initiated a new

emphasis by the State on attempting to control unions through the market mechanism. By this is meant that the process through which formal bargaining rights and power granted to unions have limited economic impact, since the restrictions under which they have to operate render them relatively ineffective (Valenzuela 1989, 448). It remains to be seen how effectively the unions will be able to operate under these conditions.

Even as the labour movement has made important strides over the last ten years, it still faces enormous problems in mobilisation, organisation and engaging in the process, with other classes, of challenging the Structural Adjustment orthodoxy. A recent study of five trade unions in Zimbabwe noted that:

> Half of the number of workers we interviewed did not know anything about unions at all. Of the other half, many of them were members of the union some time in the past but resigned because they said they no longer had confidence in the union, or that the unions are powerless, or that they were useless anyway (Peta et al 1989, 9).

Hence apart from the structural constraints of the economy and the problem of certain aspects of State policy and legislation, unions continue to face obstacles such as lack of education of members and leaders, and a serious inadequacy of means of communication, to develop a public sphere through which working people may come to recognise themselves, their problems and their common interests.

However, one of the most fundamental issues that will determine the trajectory of the labour movement will be its ability to deal with the rural-urban linkages of the labour force, and hence the land question. As has been well illustrated by other scholars, the result of the cumulative effects of land expropriation, labour migration and changed cropping systems is that the wage relation has become a critical factor in the survival of rural households. In order to avoid exposure to hunger, rural households have been forced to rely on diversified income sources. One of the most important and reliable of such sources has been the remittances from urban wage employment (Jackson *et al* 1987). Urban wage earners in turn faced with low wages, inadequate pensions and welfare payment, and a risk of unemployment, continue to retain their access to land as some guarantee against unemployment, old age and retirement (Bush and Cliffe 1984; Potts and Mutambirwa 1990). Therefore, a fundamental aspect, not only of the cost of reproduction of labour power, but also of the mobilisation of labour, relates to the Land Question. There are signs that the leadership of the labour movement are beginning to take the rural-urban alliance more seriously and linking such an alliance to future political strategy. The Secretary-General of the ZCTU observed in an interview that:

> The workers will always have a role, since they are the producers. They should not advocate workerism because 80 percent of our population are peasants. What they should do is to try and link up workers and peasants into strong structures to advance their interests. That's the only way we can draw the ruling party away from the right wing and convert it to our own purpose (Tsvangirai, 1990c).

Tsvangirai's statement expressed very clearly the labour movement's dual strategy of establishing an autonomous presence while wringing as many concessions as possible from the State and ruling party.

In the mobilisation of workers the major problem of worker consciousness is raised especially within the context of the rural-urban totality we have been discussing. In the discussion of worker consciousness in both the liberal and certain strands of the radical historiographic traditions, the grand trajectory of proletarianisation and progress has raised the "modernist spectre of backwardness" when discussing rural linkages (Ferguson 1990, 618). Cheater's (1988) critique of such models in the Zimbabwean

context, though ending up in a retreat into relativism, does make important points about the problems of applying linear models of proletarianisation to Zimbabwean workers. For any strategy to successfully mobilise "workers- peasants" the idea of placing such producers on a linear continuum of consciousness will have to be shelved. As Ferguson has warned, it is the complex reality between the "stick figures" of migrant labourer and permanent urbanite that needs to be understood more clearly (*op cit*, 620). It is this reality that raises major strategic and organisational problems not only for the labour movement in Zimbabwe but for any force on the Left envisaging a peasant worker alliance.

Democratisation and the Land

Even as the legitimacy of the ruling party has been eroded among the petty-bourgeoisie and labour in the urban areas, the support for ZANU (PF) in the rural areas has still remained relatively strong. This was evidenced in the 1990 elections when ZUM made no inroads at all into the rural support of the ruling party. Thus the peasant support that was mobilised to a significant extent during the war was consolidated through several policy measures designed to improve the livelihood of the rural population. These measures included rural resettlement; a rapid expansion of education and health facilities; provision of agricultural State services such as extension, credit and marketing services; and an expansion of physical infrastructure such as road and water supplies linked to a policy of growth points and district service centres (Wekwete 1988). Notwithstanding these interventions the Land Question remains a fundamental problem in Zimbabwe.

The current status of land ownership in the country stands as follows: Large-scale commercial farmers 11.5 million ha; small- scale commercial farmers 1.5 million ha; communal area farmers 16 million ha; and resettlement land brought by the Government 3.9 million ha (Parade, October 1989). While in 1980 commercial farming, including settler farmers and multinational-owned agro-industries, occupied 42% of the land, by 1989 the 4, 319 registered commercial farmers owned 29% of the land (*Ibid*). The resettlement programme has been relatively limited. By 1985 only 35,000 families, of the targeted 162,000 families set in 1982, had been resettled. The First Five-Year National Development Plan (1986-90) set a new resettlement figure of 15,000 families per year. By the beginning of 1989 only 16,000 more families, over the 1985 figure, had been resettled (Moyo 1990a, 14). The other aspect of Government policy, namely support for communal area farmers, has led to high increases in production, but this success has not been across the board. Variations in agro-ecological zone infrastructural development, ratios of arable to grazing land, population densities and quantities of remittances to rural families have accelerated the process of differentiation in the communal areas (Sunga *et al* 1990). To a great extent, poor and middle peasants are forced into selling their labour power, as they face extreme pressures in meeting the reproduction costs of the family from their own subsistence production. Moreover, women face the brunt of this hardship, for while they constitute the majority of the communal farmers, few have powers with regard to land use rights *(Ibid).* The production boom in the communal areas has, therefore, not been an homogeneous process. For the majority of communal area farmers, land productivity for most crops and livestock remains well below the level attained by large-scale commercial farmers.

Moreover, less than 25% of communal area farmers have contributed to the increased performance (Moyo 1990b).

It is clear, therefore, that to date the post-colonial State's agrarian policy for the majority producers has been confined to an incremental set of measures, defining the Land Question largely in terms of resettlement and increases in State services. The concern with continuity of production and the need for foreign exchange, so often argued by white communal farmers, has kept attention focused on immediate balance of payments problems, rather than long-term structural considerations (Moyo and Skalnes 1990, 10). The Structural Adjustment Programme is likely to strengthen this perspective.

Continuing hardships, inequalities on the land and escalating unemployment brought the Land Question to the fore once again through the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 11) Bill brought before the legislature in December 1990. The latter Bill gives the State extensive powers to acquire land in local currency, at a price determined by principles of compensation specified by Parliament. Initially, the Bill was aggressively advocated by the Minister of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement in a series of blunt confrontations with commercial farmers. At one such meeting he informed them that:

> The responsibility of this Government is to get land and give it to the landless. We will go ahead with this programme... and the status quo where vast fertile tracts of land are owned by the few individuals will not continue *(Financial Gazette,* 22 February 1991).

Speculation has been rife as to how far the Government will use its new powers to confront entrenched interest on the land issue. At this point, however, there seems little reason to believe that the State will move substantially beyond its existing policy of gradually supporting small Black farmers, cooperatives and State farms without risking major falls in production, employment and exports in the established White-dominated commercial sector. There are several reasons for taking this view. Firstly, the recently introduced Structural Adjustment Programme places primary emphasis on production for export and foreign currency earnings. It is highly unlikely at this stage that the State is in a position to depart from this trajectory. Moreover, it was clear from the Paris Donors' Conference in March 1991, where the Senior Minister of Finance, Economic Planning and Development produced supportive documentation from Zimbabwe's commercial farming community that the Government intends to continue its cautious approach to land reform. Within the current conjuncture, the commercial farming lobby will continue to assert its strength. Secondly, State and Party officials have been purchasing land in increasing numbers, with one estimate placing the number of commercial farms owned by Blacks at a figure of 300 (Moyo 1990a, 18). Recently, emergent Black commercial farmers stated their intention to form a separate organisation to press for their own interests. Given these developments, serious land redistribution may soon run counter to the interests of these groups except insofar as such redistribution increases their own land ownership. Thirdly, there are already indications from the various farming bodies, and signals from the State, that any future reform must be less concerned with need than with proven farming ability. The vice-presidents of both the National Farmers' Association of Zimbabwe (NFAZ) representing the 800,000 communal farmers and the Zimbabwe National Farmers' Union, representing the approximately 9,000 small-scale commercial farmers, have already urged the Government to resettle only competent farmers and graduates from agricultural colleges (*Farming Gazette*, 21 December 1990). The Government in its

National Land Policy has also expressed the need to resettle farmers with established ability, and to establish a sub-sector in which Black capitalist farmers will be trained and financed (Cliffe 1991, 28). Fourthly, no new financial impetus for land reform was given in the 1991-92 Budget. The Government allocated Z$15 million for land acquisition, and Z$22 million for infrastructure development of resettlement areas. These correspond to only 1.5% of PSIP. As Robinson has noted, it remains to be seen how far the GOZ utilises accumulation from the healthier parts of the economy to stimulate growth in the underdeveloped sectors (*Financial Gazette,* 26 July 1991). Moreover, this is not just a technical question of resource transfers, but relates to the balance of social forces within the country, which will determine the forces best able to organise for the mobilisation of resources in their interests.

In addition to these factors must also be considered the lack of organised pressure from the bulk of the peasantry not represented by existing farmers' organisations. The post-1980 years saw the breakdown of war-time mobilisation and local committees, and the concentration of Government energy on the implementation of top-down initiatives in local government. Rural and District Councils are heavily dependent on Central Government grants and decision-making (Helmsing 1990; Kavran 1989). VIDCOs and WADCOs intended to become vehicles for active participation and involvement remain an insignificant part of the planning process (Gasper 1990, 23). Peasant responses where they have occurred thus far have tended to be localised and under the hegemony of an elite-led national organisation or planning machinery. Where the State's provision of social services has failed, NGOs have tapped into the needs of peasants and in many cases initiated their own agenda in such areas. In the case of squatters, able occasionally to overrule the minimal State presence, in certain areas, and encouraged by Party leaders at both local and national level, peasants have been able, at certain times, to impose their demands (Herbst, 1990, 80). However, this kind of intervention has not been unambiguous, sometimes concealing the patronage of aspiring politicians and the accumulative manoeuvrings of aspiring entrepreneurs (Stoneman and Cliffe 1989, 113). Finally, the course of producer and marketing cooperatives has been littered with obstacles. In an important study of cooperatives in Zimbabwe. Yash Tandon (1988) has expressed the central fallacies in the State's perception of collective cooperatives. He has criticised both the planning model that surbodinates the human factor to the demands of production and the expectation that cooperatives would simply follow the production experience of large-scale commercial farms, without taking into account the demand of the peasants, and the current realities of Zimbabwe's agrarian problem. As a result, members of the collectives have become labourers, much as on capitalist farms, in conditions of low productivity and income levels. A consequence of these low incomes and inadequate social services has been that the morale of the membership has been seriously affected (Moyo *et al* 1991). Many members regard the farms as the property of the Government, with their real interests concentrated on the two to four acres of land given to each on the farm (Tandon *op. cit.*). Against such odds the constraints facing the majority of rural producers are formidable. Under such conditions Cliffe (1988) is correct when he writes that, supported by the struggles of urban workers, peasants in Zimbabwe "can only look to the small but significant minority of radicalised politicians and civil servants who are still seeking to act out some of the democratic and liberating aspirations of the nationalist struggle". This may seem a pessimistic view of the future, but it is a realistic one. Having said this it must also be acknowledged that as the current form of resettlement programme reaches a levelling off in terms of

production gains, pressures on the land are likely to produce other interest groups amongst the peasantry. We must wait to see the forms such a movement could take.

SECTION V

CONCLUSION

Whatever attempts are made at radical transformation in Zimbabwe will, to a significant extent, depend on the determinate factor of external pressures from international capitalist relations. While domestic political movements will attempt to negotiate problems between desirable objectives and the constraints of "feasibility", the pressures from international capital will continue to be applied in order to ensure conditions under which the only "feasible" option is a deepening structural integration into the international division of labour. Serious efforts to ensure national sovereignty over decision-making will have to confront the lethal effects of these corrosive pressures. The 1980s witnessed the destructive onslaught of neo-classical theory in the malevolent form of structural adjustment. To obtain the necessary international finance, developing countries have been forced into a long-term debt servicing burden from which they have no chance of extricating themselves. Out of the attempted implementation of these doctrinal distortions, African countries have on the whole emerged weakened, in the sense that the latter have increasingly lost their sovereignty over the determination of national policies. There is no reason to believe that Zimbabwe's fate with Structural Adjustment will be any different. Moreover, the collapse of Stalinism has given more legitimacy to those forces, national and international, who have been trying to "kill the dream" of radical alternatives in Southern Africa.

While any perceptions of Zimbabwe's future must be punctuated with question marks, the most realistic picture to present must be based on a critical assessment of the existing social forces in the country and their relation to the international balance of forces. From the above analysis of the Zimbabwean situation it is fair to say that, as elsewhere on the continent, even as objective conditions cry out for a radical democratic denouement, the popular forces remain relatively weak. However, there are also indications of a strengthening of certain popular organisations, like the labour movement, and the potential for radicalisation of sections of the petty-bourgeoisie, as eroding economic conditions present increasing dilemmas about the future. Yet a most problematic aspect of the equation remains the party that will lead the necessarily harsh and lengthy battle against capital in Zimbabwe. ZANU (PF) remains the dominant party force in the country, and at present there are no viable alternatives to the Left of the political spectrum. Moreover, it is not even clear what such an alternative force could be expected to carry out under the present constraining conditions, in the country and within the region. As matters stand there have been increasing signs of the rightward drift of the ruling party. The "Left" within the Party as well as outside of it has grown increasingly isolated, and without an opposite pole of attraction. Yet it is also clear that there are strong dissenting voices within the Party on the question of democratisation. However, at present the centre-right drift of the Party seems more likely to continue into the near future. These are pessimistic times for the grand narratives of socialism, which have rightly come under critical scrutiny. Nevertheless, there is a vacuum in terms of alternatives, into which imperialism, an unfashionable word, continues in its current mood of triumphs, to press its own disastrous imperatives for the future. In the darker visions of the omniscience of imperialism it has often seemed that there is no significant role for African interventions, and that all the continent appears to do is to plug into international circuits. It has never been easier to slip into such a fatalistic position as at

present. Yet imperialism has never been such a totalising presence, and African interventions have played their role in the dramatic changes of our dramatised century, not least in the struggle for Zimbabwe. It is, therefore, with an embattled optionism that the future needs to be faced.

Notes:

1. Information quoted on the Indigenous Business Development Centre (IBDC) was collected during an interview with the Secretary-General of the organisation, Mr Strive Masiyiwa, during an interview on 25th March 1991.
2. Details on the ZCTU are taken from my forthcoming ZIDS paper on "The State and the Labour Question in Zimbabwe".

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