

Transkei

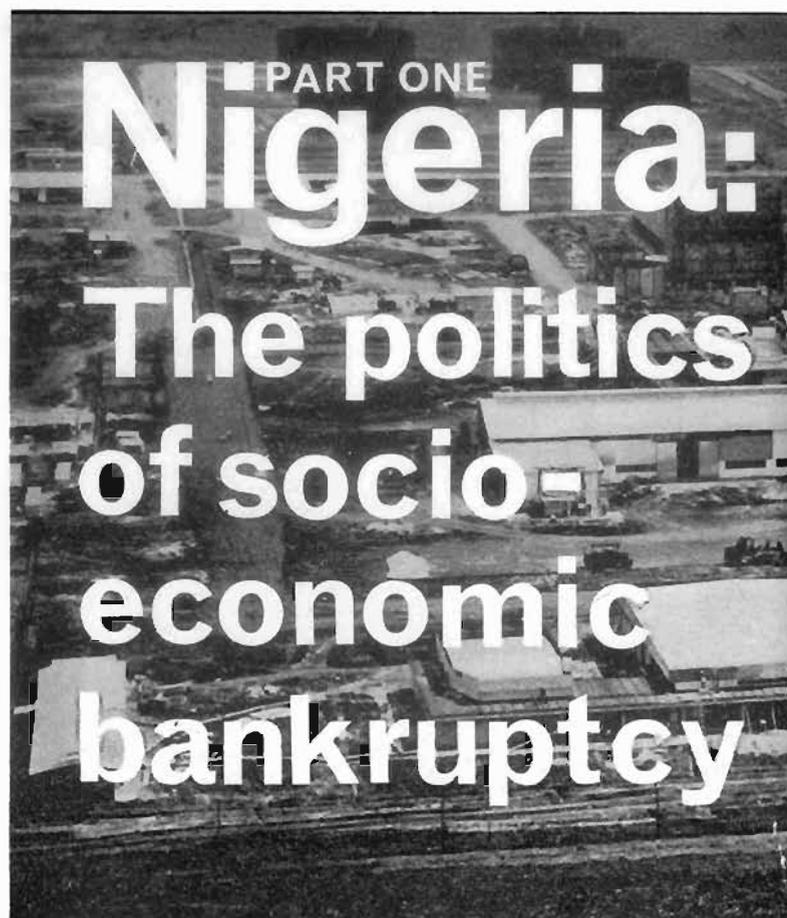
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THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL PARTIES had not been contemplated by the authors of the Bantustans. But their brain-child had a will of its own. Thus two major parties were formed in the Transkei. Since Matanzima supported and was supported by Verwoerd's Party, Poto would oppose both Matanzima and Verwoerd's Party. Since the major opposition party in South Africa, the United Party, had become indistinguishable from the Nationalist Party, Poto would support the Liberals and the Progressive Party who supported him in furtherance of their own political ends. Poto called his party the Democratic Party of South Africa while the tribal, parochial Matanzima called his the Transkei National Independence Party. Both these parties reflected the two wings of the ruling-class — the Liberals and the Apartheidists. Thus did we have the drama of politics played on the South African stage re-enacted in miniature form.

The masses of the African people were not deceived. They insisted on their demand for one-man, one-vote participation in the making of the laws of the country, their own country. This set the pace for all concerned. The United Party proclaimed its alliance with Verwoerd when its leader, De Villiers Graaff made his now notorious "one man, one vote, over my dead body" speech. The reply to this speech by Poto's Party showed how far this group had been alienated. It came from Sabata Dalindyebo, Paramount Chief of the Tembu, who condemned both Verwoerd's Party and the United Party and rejected dummy political institutions. He said: "One man, one vote makes the most appeal to me and to many other Africans." He went on: "There is very little difference, if any, between the policy of the party of which he (De Villiers Graaff) is the leader and that of the Nationalists."

I HAVE SAID THAT THE PEOPLE themselves were not taken in by the Bantustan fraud. Where they were consulted they expressed their rejection of this system in no uncertain terms. Both the rulers and the collaborators knew this. The fraud, however, had to be foisted upon the population and on the surface it seemed that the mischief was working, that the people were being effectively involved in the operation of this machinery of their own enslavement. One may well ask, therefore: How did this come about? This was only possible because of the general atmosphere of terror that prevailed, not only in the Transkei but throughout the country. There was the shock of the general state of emergency created by the Sabotage Act; there were the bannings, the house-arrests; the prosecutions, savage sentences and the hangings of freedom fighters; there were the various techniques employed in order to bludgeon everyone into conformity — threats, intimidation and outright persecution by Verwoerd's and Vorster's agents of terror, who were let loose on the population to wreak vengeance upon the opponents of the Verwoerdian regime with the full backing and protection of the law of the land. In the Transkei itself there was in addition, the Emergency Proclamation 400 of 1960 which placed that part of South Africa under martial law. As a result of its application, hundreds were apprehended to languish and rot in the jails of the Transkei as many are doing today. ●

[To be continued



■ PART ONE ■ Nigeria: The politics of socio- economic bankruptcy

"Behind the febrile boom town fever of downtown Lagos and Port Harcourt . . . stand the brutal realities of up to 45% of the labour force unemployed in Lagos, Ibadan and Onitsha." ABOVE is the £10m. refinery being built at Port Harcourt. It will refine some of the oil from the Niger delta. BELOW is the twenty-five storey Federal Government building built for prestige in the Federal capital, Lagos.





NIGERIA, UNTIL 1964 PATRONISINGLY pictured in the British and American Press as the "showcase of Western Democracy" (and model market-place for sellers and investors!) in Africa, is a sick country. Behind the febrile boom town fever of downtown Lagos and Port Harcourt and the superficially satisfactory (but statistically shaky) figures of national product growth since 1958 stand the brutal realities of up to 45% of the labour force unemployed in Lagos, Ibadan, and Onitsha. There is also the grim evidence of immiserisation of urban workers presented before the 1964 Morgan Commission on wages. Through the cracked facade of "multi-party democracy" (complete with over 80 Federal and 150 Regional Ministers) glares the fact of domination of the three ruling parties (Northern People's Congress, National Congress of Nigerian Citizens, Nigerian National Democratic Party) by a narrow political class characterised — with few exceptions — by self seeking, corruption or near corruption, and lack of vision.

To the casual outside observer this radically altered picture may have begun with the 1962 breaking of the Action Group which, under Obafemi Awolowo and Anthony Enahoro, threatened the political class monopoly of the fruits of power or with the 1963 Census debacle when the N.P.C. in effect declared that it will not permit a count to show less than 50% of the population in the North. (The facts were never really relevant to the power battle. As the N.P.C.'s leader Alhaji Sir Ahmadu Bello, Nigeria's most able and determined politician, put it in his autobiography there would be a majority in Northern Nigeria so long as he lived.)

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Even for the most blindly hopeful the systematic destruction of the chances of the United Progressive Grand Alliance (N.C.N.C., A.B., Northern opposition) by N.P.C. and N.N.D.P. forces and N.C.N.C. defectors (such as Finance Minister and Federal Leader Fesus Okotie-Eboh) finally smashed by the tactical monstrosity of a voter boycott with no mass action plan to back it up and the hopeless — if well intentioned — wavering of President Nnamdi Azikiwe should have shattered the illusion of a purposeful, united, democratic Nigeria.

TO REFLECTIVE AND CONCERNED NIGERIANS and to a number of sympathetic foreign observers the symptoms of sickness have been evident at least since 1959. 1962-5 is only a grim embodiment of their worst fears. No reader of Henry Bretten's *Power and Stability in Nigeria* or *Nigerian Political Parties* by Richard Sklar should have been surprised by the events of the past three years, odd as they may seem to devotees of Arnold Rivkin's curious projection of pro-American foreign policy backward to "produce" a vision of sound domestic economic policies and socio-political institutions.

Bitter disillusion, sullen discontent, and open contempt for the socio-political system and its ruling elite are pervasive in all regions and all groups though most sharply focused and expressed in cities and larger towns, in the West and non-Hausa North, among school leavers — unemployed — civil servants — intellectuals. A dialogue from Wole Soyinka's biting political satire "Before the blackout" illustrates both the attitude and the ruling group's response. Character 1 (clearly Western Premier Akintola): "But what more can we do — dissolve the House?" Character 2 (equally clearly Western Deputy Premier Fanyi-Kayode): "No! keep the House — Dissolve the People!" The N.N.D.P. candidates "returned" to the Federal House in the December "election" as a result of the U.P.G.A. boycott received in many cases less than the number of votes required to save their deposits had U.P.G.A. contested the election: N.N.D.P. worries over how to win the overdue Western Regional election are well grounded.

NIGERIA'S NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (if the semi-coordination collation of four Regional Plans and a Federal Plan really can be termed a Plan) is a symptom of the prevailing socio-political malaise, a tool for its continued exploitation, and a cause of its continuation. Once heralded as the first serious West African Plan, Professor Wolfgang Stolper's effort has not stood up so well to closer and more thorough inspection in the context of Nigerian politico-economic reality.

Professor Stolper heading a small group of largely expatriate advisers created a *tour de force* of neo-laissez faire planning. The Plan emphasises private enterprise in productive sectors with the state role seen as providing infrastructure, certain large scale industries not likely to be tackled by private capital but creating a climate favourable to other private investment, and the creation of a pattern of incentives conducive to foreign and Nigerian business expansion. Not only does the Plan reject income redistribution, unorthodox fiscal policy and, at least by implication, exchange control; its whole thrust displays a strong belief in the inadequacy of the state in general and the civil service in particular as agents of development. In short, *this is a plan constructed by an economist deeply distrusting overall planning and deeply committed to a limited state role.*

In itself these characteristics are scarcely surprising and — in a sense — appropriate. The Nigerian political class is also deeply distrustful of planning, deeply committed to a relatively limited state economic role, and basically interested in the promotion of the private business interests they own or represent. In terms of their socio-political aims the Stolper Plan is more suitable than the overall development strategy of radical changes in the structure of production, income distribution and trade backed by massive state investment in production and pervasive controls envisaged, for example, in the plans of Ghana, Tanzania, and the U.A.R.

HOWEVER, THIS LACK OF COMMITMENT to overall national economic development and increases in mass living standards (at best the Plan would mean no real increase in consumption per capita for perhaps 80% of the population if its strictures against price in-



Chief Adebo (left), whom the Akintola administration has managed to get appointed as the Nigerian Permanent Representative at the United Nations, watches the Federal Finance Minister, Chief Okotie-Eboh (second from left), sign a loan agreement sponsored by the United Nations.

creases were carried out) is part of a very definite commitment to personal and group gain which has led to massive distortions and shortfalls in plan execution. Professor Stolper — on the theoretically laudable ground of non-interference — actually avoided learning what revenue, recurrent expenditure and other short-term policies were intended for the Plan period. As a result Nigeria's "Plan" is really a government investment programme, with vague policy recommendations and private investment hopes loosely linked to it. It is not a national development plan in the sense of providing a relevant set of economic means for progressing by stated actions and policies toward quantitative additions to socio-political ends within the Plan period. As a result, it is particularly susceptible to *ad hoc* emendations and additions designed to serve (for that matter often quite effectively serving) special interests but quickly destroying what overall coherence and thrust the plan had.

At mid-Plan physical (discounting financial data for cost increases) fulfilment of the plan is barely 50%. In the directly productive sector it is barely 30%. Certain types of construction (involving lucrative contracts) and administrative expenditure (including government flats and offices) are *per contra* going ahead faster than called for in the Plan.

Five examples illustrate how irrelevant policy is even to the extant Plan much less to any commitment to broadly based economic development, but how frighteningly relevant it is to other ends. Nigeria's most able and outspokenly honest civil servant Chief Simeon Adebo formerly headed the Western Regional Civil Service, in 1961 probably the most competent in tropical Africa. The Akintola administration — as part of a systematic shuffling and intervening which has shattered the efficiency and morale of the service, but also clipped the power of a potential ally of the discontented Western populace — has seen that Chief Adebo now represents Nigeria at the United Nations. He does this very well but in a nation with desperate need for skilled, experienced, honest administrators the misallocation involved is clear.

In the last few budgets import duties on all types of footwear and on materials for leather and plastic — but not rubber and canvas — footwear have gone up sharply. So have internal excise rates on leather and plastic footwear. Federal Finance Minister Okotie-Eboh is financially interested in rubber and canvas shoe production.

The Ministry of Economic Development lacks a staff of first rate economists. Nigeria's one experienced planner — author of the Eastern Regional Plan which, alone of the five, is being seriously attempted and is proving workable — Dr. Pius Okigbo is posted to Brussels as Ambassador to E.E.C.

On a second class laterite road outside Bida — a town of under 50,000 — was a short ferry crossing. Today a bridge costing over £1 million spans the river and the road is to be tarred paralleling the existing trunk road to Kano. The main bridge contractor was Costain (West Africa) Ltd. but in accord with Nigerian law Alhaji Auda Bida was "joint contractor." The Northern Regional Finance Minister is from Bida.

In 1961 the Eastern Nigerian Development Corporation made a £1 million loan to a Lagos property corporation. Larger than total 1954 Development Corporation (and predecessor) loans to all Eastern Nigerian businesses, it was apparently financed by a special credit from the Eastern Regional treasury. The key figure in the Lagos based firm and the E.N.D.C. Chairman who approved the loan and secured the funds to make it are the same man.

TWO MIRAGES HAVE HELPED create an illusion of easier and more rapid future growth: oil and foreign finance. There is no doubt that petroleum exports will bolster Nigeria's foreign earnings but the real questions are *how much* will taxes, wages, and supplies purchased from or paid to Nigerians be and *what* will they be used to accomplish? Certainly the Nigerian share of oil exports seems unlikely in the foreseeable future to cover even half of 1964's £65-million-plus balance of payments gap. And unless public expenditure policies are radically revised even £20 million a year additional revenue by 1970 will still mean a *reduction* in surplus over recurrent expenditure available for development.

The £65 million foreign deficit in 1964 can be contrasted with January 1965 reserves of £70 million odd — down from £172.5 million in mid-1960. Worse still, had Plan investment totals been achieved the 1962-1964 deficit would have been about £100 million greater. So far foreign aid has run less than one third and new direct foreign investment (excluding reinvested earnings) little over half the levels envisaged in the plan. While official aid may rise to two-thirds for the entire period, private investors — including at least one of the concerns with major present interests — have begun to express grave concern over the social and political stresses so glaringly spotlighted in the general strike and the election crisis. An economy characterised by growing immiserisation of the poor — as Dr. Okigbo has characterised it — is *not* one that arouses confidence in long-term investment prospects. [To be concluded ●