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The Economics of Complex Humanitarian Emergencies: Preliminary Approaches and Findings

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THE ECONOMICS OF COMPLEX HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCIES: PRELIMINARY APPROACHES AND FINDINGS

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CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

ABSTRACT

This paper, a draft from the early stages of an ongoing UNU/WIDER research project, outlines hypotheses for the economic cause of humanitarian disasters. Complex humanitarian emergencies are considered to be man-made crises, in which large numbers of people die and suffer from war, physical violence, disease, hunger, or displacement. The study identifies four sets of economic factors responsible for emergencies: stagnation and protracted decline in incomes, unequal or immiserizing growth, rapid population growth during substantial environmental degradation and resource depletion, and large and abrupt shifts in income and wealth distribution during adjustment and liberalization programmes. The strategies of elites to maintain or expand power and benefits, in the midst of adverse economic changes and mass reaction to these changes, are instrumental in determining the potential for humanitarian disasters. A goal of the paper is to discuss, in a preliminary way, cases that fit an economic model of the causes of emergencies, setting the stage for further case studies to test how much we can generalize on the hypotheses and examples from this paper.

I INTRODUCTION

Is genocide a universal human phenomenon? Or is mass murder an aberration of the Holocaust? Väyrynen (1996) and Katz (1996:19-38) observe that the Holocaust is unique, killing 6 million people, two-thirds of European Jewry. But Prunier (1995:264-5) contends that for a three month period the 800 thousand estimated deaths (11 per cent of the population) from genocide in Rwanda April-July 1994 were perhaps the highest non-natural casualty rates in history. Rummel (1994) analyses democide, that is, the killing of at least one million people; he lists the Soviet Union, Communist China, Nazi Germany, and 14 other instances in the twentieth century in which governments intentionally killed at least one million people.

While the literature lacks consensus, we define a complex humanitarian emergency as a man-made crisis, in which large numbers of people die and suffer from war, physical violence, disease, hunger, or displacement (Väyrynen 1996). The fact that a complex emergency includes disease and hunger means that the causes of an emergency will vary from those of revolution or other internal political conflicts (see the discussion of the food crisis).

For purposes of this paper, we identify countries with current emergencies as those with at least 2,000 war casualties in 1992-94 *or* at least 100,000 internally displaced persons in 1995, that is, the twenty-seven countries listed in tables 1 and 2 (but we also discuss earlier and potential emergencies). At the peak of the Sudanese famine, partially man-made as argued below, during nine weeks in June-August 1988, 7 per cent of the population of the camp in Meiram, southern Kordofan died *each* week (Keen 1994:76). Even in 1995, Sudan had 450 thousand refugees, while in the same year Afghanistan and Rwanda each had more than one million refugees (Väyrynen 1996:19).

According to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (*World Disasters Report 1994*:149), mortality from all disasters has increased from 1968 to the present. The United States Mission to the United Nations (1996:3-4) estimates an increase in mortality and population displacement from humanitarian emergencies from 1983 to the early 1990s. To be sure, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (1995:244-55) warns: 'Serious statistical problems . . . arise in large, complex, and rapidly changing emergencies. . . . A life and death struggle for food and influence is hardly ever compatible with accurate enumeration.' Still, the increase in mortality and displacement from man-made disasters is much faster than the growth in population.

TABLE 1
THE NUMBER OF WAR CASUALTIES IN HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCIES IN 1992-94

	Number	The worst year
Rwanda	200,000-500,000	1994
Angola	100,000	1994
Burundi	100,000	1993
Mozambique	100,000	1992
Liberia	20,000-50,000	1993
Bosnia-Herzegovina	10,000-30,000	1993
Croatia	10,000	1992
Afghanistan	6,000	1992
Sudan	6,000	1993
Somalia	6,000	1993
Tajikistan	4,000-30,000	1992
Sri Lanka	4,000	1993
Turkey	4,000	1993
Colombia	3,500	1992
Peru	3,100	1992
South Africa	3,000-4,500	1993
Georgia	2,000	1992
Azerbaijan-Armenia	2,000-7,000	1993
Algeria	2,000-3,000	1993
Iraq	2,000	1993
Guatemala	2,000	1993
Myanmar	2,000	1992

Source: Väyrynen 1996.

Note: I have not included India, with 5,500 war casualties in two states, Kashmir and Punjab, with a combined population of 28 million, only 3 per cent of the country's 1996 population of 950 million, which was substantially in excess of Africa's population.

The purpose of this paper is to outline a model of the economic causes of humanitarian emergencies, and discuss, in a preliminary way, cases that fit my hypotheses. In the next section, I sketch the preliminary model, after which I tentatively explore how major economic variables affect humanitarian emergencies.

This paper represents a draft from the early stages of an ongoing UNU/WIDER research project, which will eventually draw on a large number of case studies. For this paper, I will concentrate on a more limited number of humanitarian emergencies on which I have more information, to provide examples to illustrate hypotheses. More case studies subsequently will enable us to test the extent to which we can generalize further on our tentative model.

TABLE 2
REFUGEES AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE IN 1995

	Refugees	Internally displaced persons	Total	Share of total population (%)
Afghanistan	2,328,000	500,000	2,828,000	14.1
Bosnia	906,000	1,300,000	2,206,000	63.0
Sudan	448,000	1,700,000	2,148,000	7.6
Rwanda	1,545,000	500,000	2,045,000	25.7
Turkey	15,000	2,000,000	2,015,000	3.3
Angola	313,000	1,500,000	1,813,000	16.4
Liberia	725,000	1,000,000	1,725,000	56.7
Iraq	623,000	1,000,000	1,623,000	8.0
Sierra Leone	363,000	1,000,000	1,363,000	30.2
Sri Lanka	96,000	1,000,000	1,096,000	6.0
Azerbaijan	390,000	670,000	1,060,000	14.0
Myanmar	160,000	750,000	910,000	2.0
Somalia	480,000	300,000	780,000	8.4
Ethiopia	500,000	111,000	611,000	1.1
Colombia	-	600,000	600,000	1.7
Mozambique	97,000	500,000	597,000	3.7
Eritrea	325,000	200,000	525,000	14.9
South Africa	10,000	500,000	510,000	1.2
Burundi	290,000	216,000	506,000	7.9
Peru	-	480,000	480,000	2.0
Tajikistan	174,000	300,000	474,000	7.8
Croatia	200,000	225,000	425,000	9.6
Lebanon	-	400,000	400,000	13.2
Armenia	200,000	185,000	385,000	10.7
Georgia	105,000	280,000	385,000	7.1

Source: Väyrynen 1996.

That economic factors need to be considered implies the inadequacy of the prevailing approach, the ethnic model, based on differences of language, race, tribe, religion, national origin, or some other cultural sense of identity between disputants. According to this model, ethnicity, based on 'primordial sentiments' (Rabushka and Shepsle 1972:8, 20), is considered the primary factor explaining a complex humanitarian emergency. In contrast, the economic model views ethnic conflict in the context of economic development, structural change, or collapse, and its accompanying socio-political changes.

In this paper, I will mainly focus on humanitarian emergencies in Africa. Seven of the ten major emergencies, if measured by war casualties (1992-94), are in sub-Saharan Africa (table 1), henceforth designated as Africa. These humanitarian disasters include Rwanda, Angola, Burundi, Mozambique, Liberia, Sudan, Somalia (the seven), Sierra Leone, Ethiopia, Eritrea (with large numbers of refugees, table 2), Zaïre (a potential emergency), and Nigeria (both earlier and potential emergencies).[2] For purposes of comparison and extension, I will give attention to other emergencies, especially in other low-income or lower-middle-income countries such as those in South Asia (Pakistan in 1971 and present-day Sri Lanka).[3] In subsequent papers, as more detailed case studies become available, we anticipate greater depth and more confidence in making generalizations.

II A TENTATIVE ECONOMIC MODEL

Most literature uses geopolitical and ethnic approaches to explain the recent increase in complex humanitarian emergencies. While relevant, these approaches are unsatisfactory and incomplete, as in both developing and transitional countries, economic factors are pivotal in shaping conflicts that may be triggered by political or ethnic causes. What follows is a conceptualization of the main economic variables and processes that lie behind the recent increase in humanitarian emergencies. Obviously, economic factors alone are unable to provide a complete explanation of the recent upsurge in emergencies, and need therefore to be integrated in a broader framework including economic, political, social, and cultural factors. Hereafter, however, we focus on the key economic mechanisms that are likely to create the conditions for ethnic or political conflicts. The components of this tentative theoretical model will be discussed in greater detail in subsequent sections of this paper.

2.1 Main economic causes of humanitarian emergencies

Broadly speaking, we can identify four sets of economic factors, not mutually exclusive, that lead to complex humanitarian emergencies:

2.1.1 Stagnation and protracted decline in incomes. The majority of countries with humanitarian emergencies have experienced several years (or even decades) of negative or stagnant growth, where growth refers to real growth in gross

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[2] Post-apartheid South Africa is excluded from present emergencies.

[3] The World Bank (1995:162-3) divides countries into four groups on the basis of per capita GNP. In 1993, these categories were low-income countries (less than $700), lower-middle-income countries ($700-2,800), upper-middle-income countries ($2,800-12,000), and high-income countries (more than $12,000). While the margin of error is substantial and the boundary between category rises each year with inflation, few countries shifted categories between 1974 and 1993 (Nafziger 1997: 9-37).

national product (GNP) or gross domestic product (GDP) per capita.[4] Even assuming no adverse distributional shifts, a continued fall in incomes is likely to trigger, below a given threshold, increasingly fierce competition for scarce resources, jobs and opportunities. The situation is likely to deteriorate even faster if income and asset distribution worsen (see later).

As the literature on economic behaviour under situations of extreme distress shows, economic Darwinism tends to become dominant when food and resource scarcity becomes chronic. Under such circumstances, Darwinist behaviour tends to prevail over the behaviour dictated by the legal norms and social conventions regulating access to resources and respect of property rights, and by the moral and judicial condemnation of theft, robbery and expropriation. Protracted stagnation is also likely to weaken the moral sentiments of solidarity vis-à-vis weaker groups and redistribution in their favour. Protracted stagnation may also spur elites to violently expropriate the assets and resources of weaker social communities, particularly if political, ethnic, or class tensions already exist. In the 1980s, for instance, the Sudanese government, under pressure from a shrinking economic pie, stripped the politically marginal Dinka of cattle and other major assets, distributing these to more favoured ethnic groups (Keen 1994; Duffield 1994:50-69).

The relationship between stagnation, economic Darwinism, and the breakdown of social cohesion needs to be qualified on several accounts. Obviously, countries with higher initial incomes per capita can withstand longer periods of stagnation without experiencing major social tensions (New Zealand may be a case in point) and may be able to introduce the necessary political or economic reforms to address the sources of the stagnation. Also, as the situation of Tanzania suggests, economic stagnation within a context of 'shared poverty' may not be inherently destabilizing at the local level. In addition, of major relevance is the effect of stagnation on the provision of basic needs and infrastructure, and the impact of these factors on social and political integration. And finally, repression and political control may avoid the violent manifestations that would otherwise emerge if economic decline continues unabated.

The causes of protracted stagnation vary enormously. Hereafter we list two factors that appear to be most frequently related to the explosion of humanitarian emergencies:

- *International economic shocks and deterioration.* In developing countries, sudden external shocks and long-term deterioration in international economic

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[4] GNP is the total output of goods and services in terms of income earned by a country's residents, and GDP the total output of goods and services in terms of income within a country's boundaries.

position can contribute to stagnation or precipitous slumps. Abrupt shocks may include large shifts in terms of trade, falling real aid, and interest-rate shocks (factors frequently observed in the early 1980s and 1990s), while protracted deterioration may include a long-run decline in commodity terms of trade, rising foreign protection, or the gradual exclusion from international capital markets and flows of foreign direct investment. While the distributive effects can vary, and some of the countries affected have been able to adjust, the depressive effect of these trends on weak economies, especially those difficult to restructure, are largely unavoidable.

- *Failure of agricultural development* and its links to urban unrest. Many low-income countries experiencing social tensions have suffered from the protracted stagnation of their agricultural sectors. Indeed, it is rare to observe large social dislocations where agricultural incomes have been rising steadily. As in several sub-Saharan countries, agricultural stagnation may be associated with factor market imperfections, delayed technological modernization, unfavourable government policies, obsolete agrarian structures, and slow institutional modernization. Declining rural productivity may not only contribute to increased economic Darwinism among severely impoverished rural populations, but may also spur rural-urban migration, increasing urban unemployment and underemployment and political discontent. Finally, failed rural development and rising social instability may also depend crucially on the inability to develop rural non-agricultural employment opportunities.

Agricultural development failure and international economic deterioration affect income and its distribution domestically by region, ethnic group, and class. This distribution affects social mobilization, which can set the stage for potential crises.

2.1.2 Unequal growth. Severe social tensions leading to complex humanitarian emergencies may arise also under conditions of positive (even rapid) growth and expanding resource availability. Inegalitarian growth can contribute to the immiseration or absolute deprivation of portions of the population. Absolute deprivation during substantial growth was experienced, for instance, by Igbo political elites, dominant in Nigeria's Eastern Region, in 1964-65. The East lost oil tax revenues from a change in its regional allocation by the federal government, which ceased distributing mineral export revenues to regional governments.

Even more frequently, unequal growth increases the relative deprivation of substantial sections of the population, even when these do not experience absolute deprivation. Relative deprivation is the actors' perception of social injustice from a growing discrepancy between goods and conditions they expect and those they can get or keep. Relative deprivation induces social discontent, and sometimes anger, which provides motivation for potential collective violence (Gurr 1970), which can escalate to a humanitarian emergency. The risk of political disintegration increases with a surge of income disparities by class, region, and community, especially when these disparities lack legitimacy among the population. Class and communal (regional, ethnic, and religious) economic differences often overlap, exacerbating perceived grievances and potential strife.

The trends and policies leading to this type of immiserizing or unequal growth can be summarized as follows:

- *Historical legacies* (from colonialism or imperialism, apartheid, failed past policies, and so forth), which have remained unresolved, are often a source of this type of growth. Affluent classes and dominant ethnic communities use the accumulated advantages of the past – ready access to capital, greater information and mobility, superior education and training, privileged access to licences and concessions from government, and a lower discount of future earnings – to start enterprises, buy farms, and obtain government jobs in disproportionate numbers. Less affluent and influential groups are underrepresented in entrepreneurial activity, investment, and employment (Nafziger 1986). Moreover, even if current policies no longer discriminate against a particular social group, large and uncorrected differentials in the initial distribution of assets and opportunities lead, by sheer market forces, to growth patterns characterized by large, and rising, inequalities. The inability to rectify initial imbalances may therefore, over time, contribute to increasing conflicts.

- *Endogenous, market driven, trends* may also lead to an increasingly skewed distribution of income and assets. As a growing literature indicates, technological developments and trade and financial liberalization tend to increase income inequality in both developed and developing countries. Under conditions of unrestricted asset markets, these endogenous increases in income inequality will gradually lead also to increases in asset concentration.

- *Government policies* in distributing land and other assets, taxation, and the benefits of public expenditure, affect political and social cohesion. Included are policies that contribute to differential regional, communal, and generational opportunities in employment (especially in government), education, and the armed forces; the effects of these opportunities on regional, ethnic, and generational grievances; and the influence of these grievances on social mobilization and political protest. Another policy instrument is the access to financing by classes and communities during periods of major expansions of asset acquisition, such as indigenization, privatization, or outright expropriation.

- *Regional and ethnic economic competition, conflict, and lack of integration* are associated with and can contribute to unequal growth. Growing regional inequality and limited regional economic integration, often found in economic enclaves, can exacerbate ethnic and regional competition and conflict. Lack of regional economic integration not only increases the transactions costs of interregional flows of trade, investment, and migrants but also reduces the extent to which major social forces in the regions have a vested interest in remaining politically integrated with other regions.

Regional factors contributing to conflict include educational differentials, regional and ethnic employment differentials, interregional revenue allocation formulas, and disaffection of minority language communities that lack government jobs because of examinations in majority languages. In Africa, interregional and interethnic opportunities for employment or asset acquisitions during the waves of indigenization measures of the 1960s and the 1970s, and privatization measures of the 1980s and the 1990s have been important sources of conflict.

2.1.3 Population growth, growing scarcity of non-renewable resources, and environmental degradation. Rapid population growth, in the midst of institutional obstacles to agricultural technical change, as in much of sub-Saharan Africa during the 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s, can contribute to diminishing returns to agricultural land on the production of indigenous food crops and export crops. Declining agricultural shares are a source of conflict. Exacerbating this conflict may be the distribution of land (especially common land) and water (for drinking and irrigation).

One key to land resource potential in rural areas is how land tenure and access rules evolve. Government policies, such as land reform and redistribution and definition of property rights, influence the distribution of and access to land and other environmental assets. Analysis should include the effect of the transition from communal land holding to individual land ownership on the distribution of agricultural land, income, and food; struggles for land tenure, distribution, and utilization; and their impacts on social turmoil and political violence.

The degradation of land, water, forests, and other environmental assets reduces productivity and can exacerbate conflict. Market imperfections, misguided government interventions, the overuse of common-property resources, and undefined user rights contribute to overuse, waste, and inefficiency of environmental resources, facilitating their degradation, and exacerbating the political struggle for land and other resources. However, some countries, such as Papua New Guinea, have commingled market-based incentives and individual property rights in urban areas with communal tenure with well-defined user rights, customary land courts, and the regulation of economic activity in some rural areas to prevent the overuse of common resources, such as water, forests, and common land (Panayotou 1993:20-1).

2.1.4 Large and sudden shifts in the distribution of assets, incomes, and government subsidies in the wake of adjustment programmes. These programmes, almost universal among developing countries during the 1980s and early 1990s, were mostly introduced in response to chronic macroeconomic imbalances and external deficits, often associated with negative or slow growth. Stabilization and adjustment programmes are usually introduced at the request of and with financing from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank. These programmes redistribute the timing and extent of costs and benefits among economic actors. The costs of most expenditure-reducing policies (including government employment cuts, removal of subsidies, increases in real interest rates, and the control of money supply) and of some expenditure-switching policies (such as real domestic-currency devaluation) tend to impose immediately large welfare costs, while their benefits emerge only after one to two years. Stabilization and adjustment programmes affect real wages and staple commodity prices, and may thus elicit the responses of the population groups affected (the poor and the organized middle class).

Stabilization and adjustment programmes affect the distribution of power within a country. Thus, in the first place, social conflicts may erupt during the early period of stabilization and adjustment, especially if there are few funds to support the income and social services of those hurt by the programmes. Second, adjustment programmes may become a source of potential instability if the public perceives that structural measures, such as privatization, price decontrol, and public employment policies, favour specific interest groups, such as military and political leaders, leading families, dominant ethnic communities, or high-level civil servants. This can spur regional, communal, and class conflicts. Third, national leaders of developing countries, who usually only borrow from the Bank or Fund as a last resort, complain about the secrecy of the recipient country's letter of intent, which reduces internal political dialogue and increases the difficulty of the adjustment programme's implementation (Mills 1989). These problems can undermine the legitimacy of political elites, spurring a challenge to leadership.

Trade and exchange rate policies, a part of adjustment programmes, influence the differential origin and allocation of export and other revenues and affect internal sectoral terms of trade. These shape the costs and benefits to classes, regions, and communities; and how these benefits and costs contribute to perceived grievances by classes and communities.

2.2 Interaction between economic changes and elite behaviour

How elites and masses react to prolonged stagnation, unequal growth, population pressures on resources, and distributional shifts from adjustment programmes influence the probability of political conflict and humanitarian disasters. Elites may be threatened by adverse economic changes and the reaction of non-elites to these changes. The strategies of political elites to maintain power and affluence, in the midst of economic crisis, may exacerbate conflict and the potential for humanitarian emergencies.

The struggle over economic benefits helps shape, consolidate, and modify ruling political elites. Economic growth usually expands the perquisites and benefits that ruling elites can distribute to allies and subordinates, while economic decline or cuts in expenditures from liberalization shrink the clientele base, often requiring greater coercion and corruption to maintain power. Or in reaction to economic decline and liberalization, ruling elites need new ways of exercising power, and sometimes use foreign firms and private operators to regularize revenues and expenditures. Whether or not elites are successful in creating new patron-client patterns, economic and state expenditure declines increase the potential for destabilizing the polity and threatening a humanitarian crisis.

Africa's political stability has been especially threatened by the widespread negative per-capita growth of the late 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s. When growth becomes negative, as in parts of Africa, it becomes more difficult to support so large a ruling elite. Contradictions and disunity can grow among the previously dominant elite. Negative real economic growth narrows the communal and class support of ruling coalitions, and threatens political cohesion.

Further case studies should help in testing the validity of these hypotheses concerning economic changes and their interaction with elite behaviour.

III THE HISTORICAL LEGACY: TRANSNATIONAL LINKAGES

Current economic givens and options are connected to past institutions and policies. Many countries facing humanitarian disasters have been shaped by a history that includes intervention by major powers into these countries' economies and polities. This section examines colonialism and imperialism, and suggests their relationships to economic variables that influence humanitarian emergencies.

Imperialism, the extension of economic and political power by one state over another, results not only from formal conquest and empire, but also from informal controls before and after colonialism. Informal imperialism encompasses not only the relationships of DCs (high-income or developed countries) to non-colonial African, Asian, and Latin American countries during the period from the mid-nineteenth century through the end of World War II (including China, Afghanistan, and Thailand during the early twentieth century), but also much of formally independent Africa, Asia, and Latin America in the second half of the twentieth century.

Imperial powers have often eschewed territorial expansion for other methods for acquiring privileged access to overseas markets. For Gallagher and Robinson (1953:1-15), the essence of Western economic policies in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was 'trade with informal control if possible, trade with rule when necessary.' Consider Britain's varied imperial strategy. The crumbling Ch'ing empire in China was too weak to resist demands for trade and investment treaties, but generally strong enough or large enough to make wide-scale conquest unthinkable. Thus the British joined with other major powers to create spheres of influence and impose 'unequal treaties' on China from 1842 to the end of the century. However, in 1857, the British formally colonized India, except for areas controlled by compliant native princes, after about a century of control by the private British monopoly East India Company. In Africa in the twentieth century, though, Britain's colonial administration selected various combinations of direct rule, and indirect rule through native emirs and chiefs.

The European struggle to establish forts and trading-posts on African shores from the mid-seventeenth century to the mid-eighteenth century was part of the wider competition for trade and empire. By the 1880s, European states directly intervened to assure stable conditions for trade and investment. The 1884-85 Berlin Conference, which clarified European spheres of influence, drew boundaries that arbitrarily split some ethnic groups and combined others. Africa was divided on paper by 1900 and was generally under European administration two decades later. European technology was superior in the late nineteenth century, so Africa entered the colonial era concentrating on the export of primary products and the import of manufactured and processed goods.

3.1 The costs of colonialism and imperialism

Colonialism and imperialism had both costs and benefits for the country dominated. I have elaborated elsewhere and summarize here some costs of the African legacy of the first half of the twentieth century. The colonial investment in infrastructure was oriented toward opening the country to trade with the mother country. The metropolitan country placed restrictions on converting the colony's currencies. Expenditures on the colonies, which they generally financed, were niggardly. European penetration introduced new diseases and epidemics.

Colonialism prevented rivals or masses from revolting against acquiescent native rulers. European rule (in British, French, and some Belgian colonies) strengthened privileged Africans at the expense of the population at large. Education in the colonies was for the subordination of Africans to European colonialists and enterprises. Most African women lost their limited power under colonialism. The differential impact of European commerce and colonialism created inequalities among ethnic groups, including those between Europeans, Asians, and Africans. The colonial government often issued trade licenses only to established firms, thus freezing the superior competitive power of foreign firms. The government usually restricted the establishment of labour organizational activity in the colonies. Moreover, colonial policy diminished learning gains from self-directed management and planning of government policy, financial institutions, education, infrastructure, agricultural research, and technological adaptation (Nafziger 1988:35-50).

Furthermore, imperial powers distorted subsequent Afro-Asian development, conflict, and decay by breaking up traditional African polities, societies, and linguistic entities in arbitrary and haphazard ways, and incorporating these fragments with other entities into colonial territories, changing the structure of the conquered African societies (Skinner 1975:135-6). The leading European powers presented a gift, a Trojan horse, to subsequent generations by drawing borders to enhance European influence in new states. For example, in the late nineteenth century, Britain and Italy partitioned the Somali peoples, who were disunited and comprised frequently mutually hostile clans (Ibrahim 1985:82-3). Also, in 1882, the British annexed the Vai chiefdoms of northwestern Liberia to Sierra Leone and the French annexed southeastern Liberia to the Ivory Coast, gaining further at Liberia's expense during the next quarter of a century (Akpan 1985:260-3). In addition, how the colonial administrators drew internal boundaries contributed to subsequent humanitarian crises. In Nigeria, in the 1950s, the British colonialists supported the more compliant Hausa-Fulani aristocracy and administration with suzerainty of an intact Northern Region containing a majority of the federation's population, a configuration that weakened radical discontent and nationalist strength in the South (East, Midwest, and West), and contributed to the Nigerian civil war, 1967 to 1970 (Nafziger 1983:27-92). Moreover, Africans competing for resources with Europeans were deprived of land, losing out to both Europeans and other Africans, as in the cases of the Xhosa in South Africa and the Kikuyu of Central Kenya (Skinner 1975:138-9).

Foreign-drawn boundaries also substantially influenced some contemporary Middle Eastern political conflicts and humanitarian crises. In 1920, the French mandate power, in collaboration with Maronite leaders, carved from greater Syria an independent pro-Western Christian-dominated Lebanese state, centred in Mt.

Lebanon but expanded to include adjoining Sunni and Shiite Muslim areas in Beirut, Tripoli, Sidon, and Tyre. During the early twentieth century, the British, with a League of Nations mandate in Iraq and a protectorate in Kuwait, drew a frontier that denied Iraq the neighbouring ports and (eventual) oil regions that had been integrated with Baghdad during the Ottoman Empire. In the Treaty of Lausanne (1923), the peace treaty between Turkey and the Allied powers after World War I, the Kurds (now about 24 million people), who live in contiguous areas of Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey, were denied their own nation-state. The restrictions on Jewish emigration to Allied countries during and following the Holocaust, the United Nations' partition of Palestine to create Israel for the Jewish diaspora, the conquest of Arab areas by Israel, the immediate recognition of the state by the United States and the Soviet Union, and the departure of hundreds of thousands of Arabs from Palestine, has destabilized the Middle East since then.

3.2 Imperialism in countries experiencing humanitarian emergencies

While imperialism's zenith was probably during the first half of the twentieth century, it has continued to distort economic and political development in developing countries during the last half of the twentieth century. Osterhammel (1986:295-9) indicates some features usually associated with imperialism. (1) A power differential existing between two countries is exploited by the stronger country in pursuit of its perceived interest in the weaker country. (2) The stronger country avoids direct rule over the weaker one, but possesses an effective veto power over its domestic economic policies and imposes basic guidelines on its international economic policies. (3) The strong nation either maintains a military establishment in the weak one or is in a position to influence its armed forces through military advisors and aid. (4) Nationals from the strong country maintain a substantial economic presence in the weak country, consisting of businesses ranging from agency houses to subsidiaries of multinational corporations. (5) Foreign officials or business people make major economic decisions in or are monopolistically or oligopolistically entrenched in the key economic sectors of the weak country. (6) Foreign banks control much of public finance in the weaker state. (7) The stronger state invests heavily in the inferior state. (8) The stronger country's hold over the weaker country is supported by the collaboration of indigenous rulers and comprador groups partially selected by the stronger state. (9) Indigenous collaborators partly share a common ideology with the elites of the superior state.

I have examined elsewhere how imperialism shaped civil wars between the Federation and Eastern Region (Biafra) in Nigeria in 1967-70 and between West Pakistan and East Pakistan (later Bangladesh) in 1971 – humanitarian emergencies where millions of people were killed and millions of others were dislocated. The United Kingdom and United States did not need military force or aggressive diplomacy to protect their interests before and during these civil wars, because of the dependence of Nigeria and Pakistan on the two countries and their Western allies for trade, aid, finance, investment, technology transfer, and military supplies. However, the interference of the West in Nigeria and Pakistan severely limited their political systems' coping with internal political crises (Nafziger 1983).

The rest of this section will focus on more recent humanitarian disasters. The United States, other Western countries, Russia, and South Africa have been major imperial powers vis-à-vis several countries with major humanitarian emergencies (tables 1 and 2). Angola and Mozambique's humanitarian crises have direct origins in conflicts during colonialism and the cold war. Angola's guerrilla war against the colonial power, Portugal, lasted from 1961 to 1975. From then on through the late 1980s, forces supported by the United States and South Africa opposed the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) government. Mozambique also became independent in 1975 after a ten-year war by Frelimo (Front for the Liberation of Mozambique) against Portugal. The Frelimo government, in power after 1975, was opposed until 1992 by the rebel Mozambique National Resistance (MNR), which was supported by the US and South Africa.

Angola and Mozambique, together with the other seven Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC now SADC) states – Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Tanzania, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe – lost substantially from South African military and economic destabilization, including the disruption of transport links. The ECA (Economic Commission for Africa: 1989) estimates that the nine SADCC states lost $60 billion GDP (or one-fourth), 1980-88, from South Africa's impairment. South Africa was supported in its policies in the 1980s by the 'constructive engagement' of the United States and Britain.

Sudan, Somalia, and Ethiopia have all been pawns in the cold war. Since the 1960s, these three African countries have received billions of dollars of military resources from the United States and the Soviet Union. In Rwanda, the French became the primary financial and military guarantor of the Hutu-dominated Kigali government, supporting it against the Tutsi-dominated Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), and turning a blind eye to the genocide organized by government officials against hundreds of thousands of Tutsis in 1994 (Prunier 1995).

Zaïre faces a potentially worsening humanitarian crisis. For twenty-five years after 1965, when Mobutu Sese Seko seized power, the United States and other Western powers supported him militarily and economically. In the 1970s and

1980s, Western foreign aid financed a series of white elephants that provided lucrative benefits for the regime's supporters (Nafziger 1988:98-100). External support provided much of the lubricant for the systematic corruption, from petty survival venality at the lower echelons of government to kleptocracy at the top. In the 1990s, Zaïre has lacked a functioning government, neglecting the state's responsibility to provide health care, education, justice, infrastructural maintenance and the general welfare of citizens. Indeed during the 1980s and early 1990s, President Mobutu looted the state coffers, so that billions of dollars have vanished into the hands of overseas bank accounts of him and his cronies.

Outside intervention has played a major role in Iraq's humanitarian disaster. According to Alnasrawi (1996a:11), the sanctions by the UN, under the leadership of the US government, together with the inflexible policies of the government of Iraq, under the personal control of Saddam Hussein, are responsible for the paralysis of Iraq's economy, which 'has generated persistent deprivation, chronic hunger, endemic undernutrition, massive unemployment and widespread human suffering.'

For decades, and particularly since World War II, United States intervention has shaped the political leadership and economic policies of Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Haiti, which have experienced chronic humanitarian crises. US intervention was a major contributor to Nicaragua's crises of the 1980s. From the early 1930s to the 1979 Sandanista revolution, the United States supported the maintenance of control of land by large landholders and the protection of the rights of foreign investment in Nicaragua through substantial military and economic support to the repressive rule of Anastasio Somoza and his family. Beginning in 1979, the Sandinistas undertook agrarian reform and wealth redistribution, expanded education and health care, and established an army and police force under civilian political control. However, during the decade of the 1980s, Nicaragua faced a humanitarian crisis as the United States and its Contra supporters fought a war against the Sandanista government, which, through its changes in ownership of land and industries, had violated the rules of international capitalism, dominated by the United States.

The humanitarian emergencies in Tajikistan, Georgia, and Azerbaijan-Armenia escalated after the loss of Russian transfers with the collapse of communism and the Soviet empire in 1991. The decline of empire and the assertion of newly independent states created a political vacuum, in which numerous social, economic, and ethnic interests competed to establish control (Blacker 1994:353-90). Russia's new military and economic relationship with these former Soviet republics is becoming more like the imperial relationship between the United States and Central America. Russia's vital interests in the 'near abroad' are tied to the rights of ethnic Russians, friendly relations with Commonwealth of

Independent States regimes, continuance of trade and economic ties, and avoidance of Western challenges to Russian influence (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute 1995:261-4).

IV STAGNATION AND PROTRACTED DECLINE IN INCOMES

Since economic deceleration or collapse can disrupt ruling coalitions and exacerbate mass discontent, we should not be surprised that since 1980 the globe, particularly Africa, has been more vulnerable to political violence and humanitarian emergencies. From 1960-73 to 1973-96 (and especially after 1980), growth decelerated in both LDCs (less-developed, or low- and middle-income, countries) and DCs (Nafziger 1997:13-7, based on World Bank data). Africa especially experienced a great descent in real GDP per capita after 1973. In sub-Saharan Africa, growth fell from 2.0 per cent yearly, 1966 to 1973, to -0.7 per cent yearly from both 1974 to 1984 and 1985 to 90, and -0.9 per cent from 1991 to 1994 (World Bank 1996a:77; World Bank 1996b:18).

Auvinen's analysis of political conflict in 70 developing countries in the 1980s finds that slow economic growth increases the probability of coups and other irregular executive transfers (Auvinen 1996:149). Slow economic growth reduces the clientage base for ruling elites and undermines the legitimacy of the regime, increasing the likelihood of political instability and humanitarian emergencies. Virtually all emergencies listed in tables 1 and 2 from 1992 to 1995 were preceded by slow or negative economic growth. Among African countries listed in tables 1 and 2, Rwanda, Angola, Liberia, Sudan, Somalia, Mozambique, Ethiopia-Eritrea, Sierra Leone (from sub-Saharan Africa), Lebanon, Algeria (from the Middle East), Afghanistan, and Iraq (from Asia) are the Afro-Asian countries listed in tables 1 and 2 that had negative growth in real GNP per capita in the preceding years, 1980 to 1991 (henceforth in this section referred to as the 1980s), while Burundi, South Africa (the sub-Sahara), Sri Lanka, and Turkey (Asia), among those listed, have positive growths (World Bank 1993b:238-9).[5]

Widespread negative growth among populations where a majority is close to levels of subsistence increases the vulnerability to humanitarian disasters. Consider low- and middle-income (developing) countries. From 1980 to 1991, 25 of 35 (71 per cent of) sub-Saharan African countries and 40 of 58 (69 per cent of) Afro-Asian countries experienced negative growth, according to the World Bank's *World Development Report* (1993:238-9). In contrast, from 1960 to 1980,

[5] Only recently have I discovered Stewart 1993: 357-80, which shows that daily calories as a per cent of requirements fell in five of seven African countries at war during the 1980s: Angola, Ethiopia, Liberia, Somalia, and Sudan; remained the same in Mozambique; and increased in Uganda.

only 8 of 29 (28 per cent of) sub-Saharan countries and 9 of 53 (17 per cent of) Afro-Asian countries (which includes three, Israel, Hong Kong, and Singapore, which have since graduated to high-income-country status) had negative economic growth, according to the earlier World Bank annual (1982:110-1). In addition, the positive growth of Latin America and the Caribbean during the 1960s and 1970s also reversed to a negative rate in the 1980s, according to the same World Bank sources. The increase in humanitarian emergencies in the 1990s is linked to the developing world's disastrous growth record of the 1980s.

4.1 African countries

Angola and Mozambique, which fought wars of independence until 1975 and for years after that against forces supported by the United States and South Africa, both suffered massive economic disruption during much of the last two decades. Sudan and Ethiopia, fighting civil wars in the 1980s, also suffered from economic collapse during the 1980s. Somalia's negative growth during the period of General Siyad Barre's authoritarian regime from 1969 to 1991 turned to more rapid economic decline during the fighting between factions during 1991-92, and was not reversed during the United Nations peacekeeping of 1992-94. The economies of Liberia and Sierra Leone, which experienced economic decline during the 1980s, virtually collapsed during their conflicts during the 1990s. Liberia's GNP fell an estimated 77 per cent from 1989 to 1993, while Sierra Leone's GNP declined by about one-half between the start of the civil war in 1991 and 1995 (Reno 1996a:1).

Rwanda's economic growth was positive until the mid-1980s, when it turned negative due to an agricultural crisis (Uvin 1996). Burundi grew moderately during the 1980s, not suffering from negative growth until its crisis from 1993 on.

4.2 Asian countries

Afghanistan's growth, which was slow before the Soviet coup of 1978, was highly negative during the subsequent wars with guerrilla forces. While data are scarce, economists believe that Myanmar's internal conflicts prevented positive economic growth during the 1980s and early 1990s.

On the other hand, the civil war by the government of Sri Lanka with militant Tamil separatists from 1983 until the present devastated only a small portion of the country. As a result, Sri Lanka's moderate growth in gross domestic product per capita and high levels of social indicators (literacy and life expectancy) among Asian countries in the 1970s remained during these years, although because of wartime capital destruction, the growth of *net* domestic product per capita would have been slower. In a similar fashion, Turkey's conflict with its minority Kurds had little effect in slowing down overall growth.

During the Iran-Iraq war, 1980-88, Iraq's GDP per capita (in constant 1980 prices) fell by 58 per cent. The United Nations comprehensive embargo on Iraq beginning in August 1990, followed by the United States-led bombing and war with the US and United Nations of January-February 1991, contributed to a further 64 per cent decline in GDP per head (cumulative impact since 1980 was an 85 per cent fall) by 1991. From 1991 to 1994, average GDP declined an additional 33 per cent, for an accumulative fall of 90 per cent! (Alnasrawi 1994:152; Alnasrawi 1996b:8).

4.3 Latin American countries

Colombia's urban and rural violence has not prevented the country from a moderate rate of economic growth in recent years. Nicaragua had a negative economic growth of 4.4 per cent yearly, 1980 to 1991 (World Bank 1993b:238), which included a decade-long war with the United States and its Contra supporters. Guatemala has suffered economic decline from its decades-long civil war and conflict with rebels, while Peru experienced an economic setback during the decade of attack from the left-wing Sendero Luminosa.

4.4 Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia

In Yugoslavia, from 1980 to 1990, real GDP per capita declined and annual inflation averaged more than 35 per cent. Since the breakup of Yugoslavia and the war of the early 1990s, Bosnia-Herzegovina's economy has been massively disrupted, leading to its further collapse (Woodward 1995), while Croatia, although it resumed growth in 1994, had a real GDP in 1996 36 per cent below its 1989 level (Bartholdy 1996:282, 291).

Bartholdy (1996:282, 291) indicates that after the breakdown of the Soviet Union, all of its republics experienced an income collapse, even if we assume that as much as one-fifth of income, from the black market or informal sector, is unreported. Among these were several republics facing humanitarian crises in the 1990s: Russia (with a secessionist conflict in Chechnya), Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Tajikistan (see table 3).

4.5 Conclusion

Humanitarian disaster in the 1990s is rarely episodic but is usually the culmination of longer-term politico-economic decay over a period of a decade or two. Negative growth interacts with political predation in a downward spiral, a spiral associated with African countries such as Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Zaïre, and (post-1980) Nigeria. The metaphor appears to be not that of steadily climbing a mountain to the summit of high material welfare and ethnic harmony, but of Sisyphus pushing a huge rock uphill, where every slip means backsliding or even plunging to the abyss below.

TABLE 3
GROWTH IN SELECTED FORMER SOVIET REPUBLICS

	Real GDP [a]							Est. level of real GDP in	Proj. level of real GDP in
	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995 est.	1996 proj.	1995	1996
	(Percentage change)							(1989=100)	(1989=100)
Armenia	-7	-11	-52	-15	5	7	7	38	40
Azerbaijan	-12	-1	-23	-23	-21	-17	-7	34	32
Georgia	-12	-14	-40	-39	-35	-5	5	17	18
Russia	-4	-13	-15	-9	-13	-4	3	55	56
Tajikistan	-2	-7	-29	-11	-21	-12	-8	40	37
The Former Soviet Union[b]	-4	-12	-15	-10	-14	-5	2	53	54

Source: Bartholdy 1996: 282, 291.

Notes: [a] Data for 1989-93 represent the most recent official estimates of outturns as reflected in publications from the national authorities, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the UN Economic Commission for Africa, PlanEcon and the Institute of International Finance. Data for 1995 are preliminary actuals, mostly official government estimates. Data for 1996 represent European Bank projections.

[b] Here taken to include all countries of the former Soviet Union, except Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Estimates for real GDP represent weighted averages. The weights used were European Bank estimates of nominal dollar-GDP for 1995.

V INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC SHOCKS AND DETERIORATION

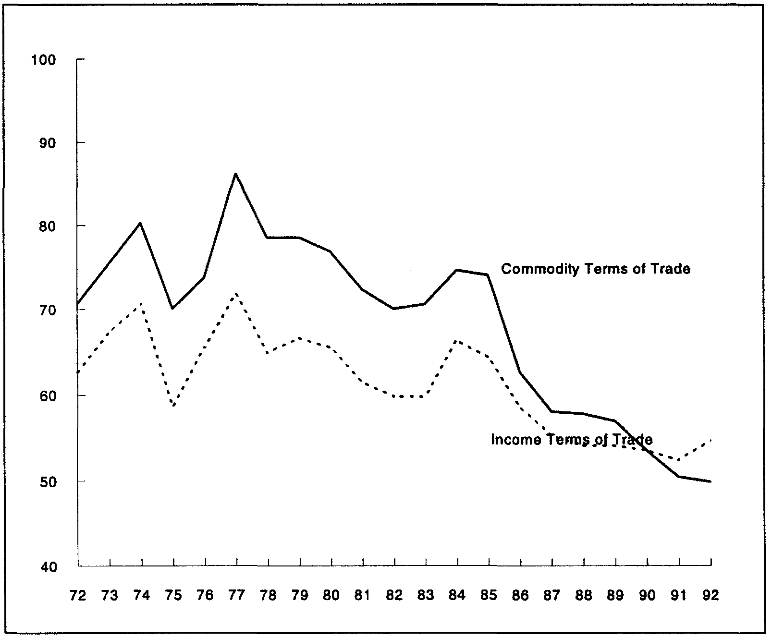
During its slow and negative growth, the sub-Sahara experienced declining commodity terms of trade (price index of exports divided by the price index of imports) – a fall of 52 per cent from 1970 to 1992 (or 38 per cent from 1980 to 1992). Sub-Saharan Africa's income terms of trade or export purchasing power, the commodity terms of trade times export volume, declined 46 per cent from 1970 to 1992 (or 29 per cent from 1980 to 1992) (see figure 1).[6] The

[6] Note that the percentage fall from 1980 to 1992 is not the same as the percentage-*point* fall in figure 1.

extraordinary fall in the sub-Sahara's commodity terms of trade over a period of one to two decades is consistent with the Prebisch-Singer thesis that the terms of trade of countries (mainly Africa and other LDCs) producing primary goods (food, raw materials, minerals, and organic oils and fats) decrease in the long run. The bulk of the extensive evaluation of this thesis for the century before the 1970s, which I summarize elsewhere (Nafziger 1997:502-5), indicates that when we adjust for biases, primary producers' terms of trade still deteriorate, although by a smaller magnitude than Prebisch and Singer thought.

This substantial fall in export purchasing power and material levels of living made the sub-Sahara more vulnerable to political crisis. In the 1980s and early 1990s, Zambia's conflict with the IMF over maizemeal subsidies, which contributed to urban riots and political instability, occurred after a decade collapse of copper prices (1975-85) and several years when the annual debt service was almost half as much as export receipts, as in the mid- to late 1980s.

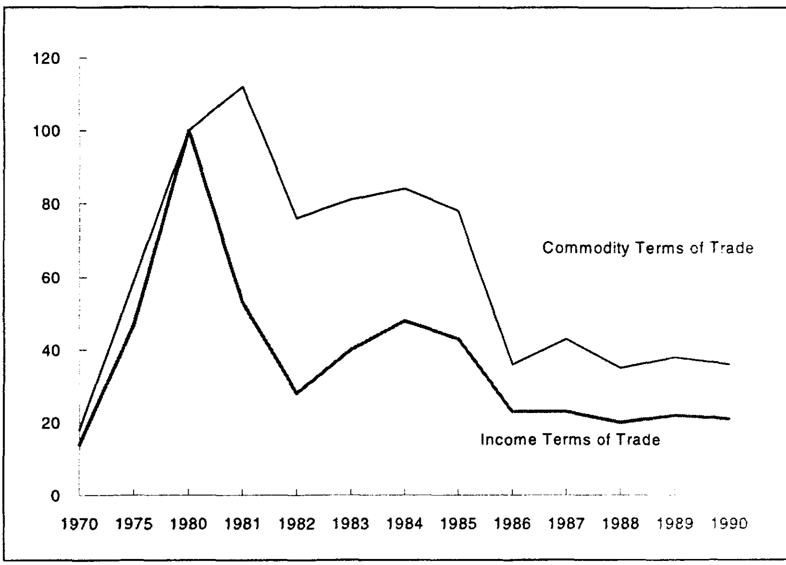
FIGURE 1
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN COMMODITY AND INCOME TERMS OF TRADE, 1972-92
(1970 = 100)



Source: Nafziger 1993:68.

Declines in terms of trade and aggregate income also exacerbated Nigeria's political vulnerability. Nigeria's fall in GNP per capita (in constant prices), 72 per cent, 1980 to 1990, and from 1990 to 1994, an additional 15 per cent (76 per cent accumulative) (World Bank 1996a:34), almost without peacetime precedent in the rapidity of its collapse, was largely from a breakdown in the terms of trade. After 1973, petroleum has comprised more than 90 per cent of Nigeria's export revenues. Nigeria's terms of trade in the late 1980s were one-third to one-sixth the 1981 oil-driven peak. On the other hand, from a peak in 1980, Nigeria's export purchasing power (or income terms of trade) fell 72 per cent in 1982 and 60 per cent in 1983 (figure 2) placing an unbearable burden on the newly re-elected, but corrupt, government of President Shehu Shagari, which was overthrown by the military.

FIGURE 2
NIGERIA'S COMMODITY AND INCOME TERMS OF TRADE, 1970-90
(1980 = 100)



Source: Nafziger 1993:69.

Nigeria's negative net transfer of resources, 12.5 per cent of exports, 1984-86, from a continuing depressed terms of trade, closely approximated the war-reparations transfer burden borne by Germany, 1925-32 that contributed to the depression, unemployment, and resentment that fuelled the rise of Nazism. In Nigeria in 1985, during the depression at the peak of this resource transfer, the Mohammed Buhari military government was overthrown by Major-General

Ibrahim Babangida (Nafziger 1993:27-8, 67-9, 129-34). Although changes in the terms of trade, net resource transfer, and other economic variables do not by themselves determine irregular power transfers or civil wars, these economic changes bear watching as signals for pressures on regimes, especially those such as military regimes that have lost legitimacy with their populations.

VI UNEQUAL GROWTH: THE CASE OF NIGERIA

Despite political conflicts associated with Quebec, Northern Ireland, and the Basque provinces, humanitarian disasters are rarely found among high-income countries, unless you include the thousands of people killed yearly, mostly by guns, in the United States' cities. Moreover, while negative growth does not cause contemporary humanitarian emergencies, these emergencies are only found in low- and middle-income (that is, developing) countries. Furthermore, as indicated before, twelve of the sixteen Afro-Asian countries in tables 1 and 2, for which data exist, had negative growth in 1980 to 1991, the period preceding the emergencies listed.

However, shouldn't we expect some instances where developing countries are split asunder into a humanitarian crisis from conflict over the potential for abundant resources and rapid economic growth? Yes, this can happen, as illustrated by the Nigerian-Biafran war, 1967-70, in which perhaps four million people died from hunger and other war-related causes and several million people were displaced. The war was fought for control of Nigeria's rich resources, especially in oil, but in the mid-1960s, political elites from the Eastern Region (subsequently Biafra) expected economic loss in the midst of rapid Nigerian economic growth. Election fraud and manipulation during Nigeria's 1964-65 elections undermined the previously critical position of Igbos, the dominant ethnic group in the Eastern Region, in the federal coalition. The East, which had produced two-thirds of Nigeria's petroleum, lost profits and other tax revenues from oil under a change in formula for revenue allocation. Moreover, Igbo and other Eastern ethnic groups were losing in the contention for key positions in the federal civil service and modern sector of Lagos, and had fled from business and high-level employment in the politically dominant North. Thus, Igbo political elites and government employees experienced not only relative, but also absolute economic decline.

The Nigerian civil war followed a period of 3 per cent real annual growth in GDP per capita from fiscal years' 1958/59 to 1965/66 (at constant 1962/63 prices); petroleum expansion led the way, but industrial and agricultural growths were also steady. GDP per head only fell 4 per cent yearly during the war (although real net domestic product, which subtracts capital consumption and destruction, declined more substantially). However, Nigeria's oil-fuelled growth accelerated after the war in the face of the fourfold increase in the price of Nigeria's dominant export, petroleum, during three months in 1973-74. Economic growth per person was 8 per cent yearly from fiscal years' 1969-70 to 1978-79 (at 1974/75 prices, a year of high oil prices, thus moderately overstating growth for the period) (Nafziger 1983:93-122, 139-42, 178-81).

But Nigeria's case is an exception that almost proves the rule. In few cases is a current humanitarian disaster listed in tables 1 and 2 a conflict over the potential for rapid economic growth; most instead are struggles to maintain slices of shrinking economic pies. The task for scholars of humanitarian emergencies is to use comparative and quantitative evidence to test the effect of growth on humanitarian emergencies.

VII UNEQUAL GROWTH: INCOME AND ASSET DISTRIBUTION

Alesina and Perotti's (1996:1203-38) cross-sectional study of 71 LDCs, 1960-85, finds that income inequality, by fuelling social discontent, increases socio-political instability, as measured by deaths in domestic disturbances and assassinations (per million population) and coups (both successful and unsuccessful). In 1992, under apartheid, the purchasing-power adjusted GDP per capita of black, Asian, and mixed-race South Africa was 1,710 purchasing-power adjusted international dollars (I$), about the same as Senegal's I$1,680, and in excess of the I$1,116 for Africa as a whole. Yet this low income for 36.1 million nonwhite South Africans stood in stark contrast to that of 7.3 million whites, I$14,920 income per capita, a figure higher than New Zealand's I$13,970. Moreover, life expectancy, an indicator of health, was only 52 for blacks, 62 for Asians and mixed races, 74 for whites, and 54 for Africa generally, while the adult literacy rate was 67 per cent for nonwhites and 85 per cent for whites (Nafziger 1997:32). In 1994 in Chiapas state, the Zapatista army, representing Indian smallholders and landless workers or *campesinos*, rebelled against white landowners, supported by Mexico's ruling party, which the Indians believed was responsible for their poverty and distress. In the state, GDP per capita (measured in purchasing-power parity dollars) was 43 per cent below, and adult literacy 24 per cent below the national average (United Nations Development Programme 1994:98-9).

Africa, however, generally lacks measures of incidence, intensity, and intrapoor income distribution and LDCs generally rarely have changes in these measures over time (Lipton and van der Gaag 1993:3; Fields 1994:87-97). The International Labour Organization (1981:29) suggests that using many of Africa's data to make policy is like trying to run through the forest in the dark without a torchlight. Nevertheless, poverty data reinforce the sub-Sahara's increasing immiserization and widespread vulnerability to crisis. Absolute poverty is below the income that secures the essentials of food, clothing, shelter, and potable water. The World Bank's poverty line, below which persons are designated as poor, was I$370 per capita in 1985. Using this standard, table 4 indicates LDC numbers of poor and poverty rates and their changes from 1985 to projections for 2000. Poverty rates, which probably did not fall during the slow or negative growth of the 1980s, rose during the early to mid- 1990s, but are expected to fall in the late 1990s. Negative growth probably contributed to increases in poverty rates in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America. While there is a substantial margin of error, the data suggest a continuing increase in the number of poor and no reduction in the percentage of the population in poverty in sub-Saharan Africa from 1985 to 1996 and an increase in poverty rates in Latin America from the 1980s to the 1990s. In contrast, growth in Asia, especially China and other parts of East Asia, contributed to falling poverty rates there.

TABLE 4
POVERTY IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD, 1985-2000

	Percentage of population below the poverty line				Number of poor (millions)			
Region	1985	1990	1996	2000	1985	1990	1996	2000
All developing countries	31	31	30	24	1,073	1,166	1,438	1,210
South and Southeast Asia	52	49	41	37	532	562	716	511
East Asia	13	11	8	4	182	169	117	73
Sub-Saharan Africa	48	48	49	50	184	216	292	304
Middle East and North Africa	31	33	32	31	60	73	124	137
Latin America	28	34	38	36	110	141	183	181
Eastern Europe [a]	7	7	6	6	5	5	6	4
World	22	22	25	20	1,073	1,166	1,438	1,210

Sources: Nafziger (1997:145), based on United Nations Development Programme (1994:73, 134-35, 174-75); United Nations Development Programme (1992:30).

Note: The poverty line, $370 annual income per capita in 1985 purchasing power dollars, is based on the World Bank poverty line. In 1990 prices, the poverty line would be approximately $420 annual income per capita.

a) Does not include the former USSR.

Reliable economy-wide income distribution data are rarely available, especially for countries experiencing humanitarian disasters. However, information on regional, communal, and rural-urban income inequalities, which contribute to political instability and humanitarian crises, are less sparse and are discussed in subsequent sections of the paper.

VIII REGIONAL AND ETHNIC ECONOMIC COMPETITION, CONFLICT, AND LACK OF INTEGRATION

8.1 Communal identity and conflict

Colonial rule exacerbated differences of class, region, and community in Africa. Indeed colonial governments did not need deliberately to divide to rule. Foreign rule itself is sufficient to cause division and conflict. Since hostility cannot be directed to the powerful foreign oppressor, it is transferred to an indigenous scapegoat (Burton 1966:124).

Communal conflicts and discrepancies originating during colonialism were often reinforced by post-independence policies that exacerbated regional and ethnic inequalities in income, employment, educational opportunities, and social services. Class and ethnic identities cross-pressure African workers and peasants. Most elites received their support from ethnic and regional bases, allied with other communal elites to control the state, and used this power to distribute benefits to their communities. The communal competition for these benefits transfers potential hostility from class differences to the elites and masses of others.

Ethnic identity is less a primordial phenomenon than an awareness formed in the process of modern social competition and political mobilization. Prunier (1995:140-1) explains that if ethnic communities or

> tribes did not exist, they would have to be invented. In a world where illiteracy is still the rule, where most of the population has horizons which are limited to their parochial world, where ideologies are bizarre foreign gadgets reserved for intellectuals, solidarity is best understood in terms of close community. In turn, these positive (or negative) group feelings are manipulated by the elite in their struggles for controlling scarce and even shrinking financial, cultural and political resources. Rwanda offers a perfect example of this process.

The salience of multiple levels of identities – extended family, subgroup, clan, ethnic or linguistic community, nation-state, or world region – varies, depending on the nature of social interaction and conflict. Thus, for example, in Zaïre in the 1950s and early 1960s, Mongo self-awareness grew with the competition for education, government jobs, and political office, but declined after President Mobutu Sese Seko seized power in 1965, regrouped provinces, and eliminated electoral politics (Anderson, von der Mehden, and Young 1974:28-78). On the other hand, Igbo identity in Nigeria, enhanced by the competition for benefits from the nationalist movement and decolonization from the 1940s through the early 1960s, increased in the mid- and late 1960s with the competition for government jobs, the election crises and coups, the politicization of the army, the violence against Igbos in the North, the return of Igbos to their ethnic homeland, the interregional contention for oil revenues, and the Biafran secession and civil war, 1967-70. After the Biafran defeat, Igbo identity declined. In East Pakistan (Bangladesh after 1971), Muslim identity asserted itself with the nationalism and the partition of the Indian sub-continent between a Hindu-dominated India and Muslim Pakistan. However, as the East's resentment festered from a lack of sharing in the economic fruits of independence and modernization, Bengali nationalism grew. Later, with conflicts with West Bengal and India over water (discussed below) and border regions, Bangladesh emphasized its Islamic identity rather than its Bengali nationality.

Melson and Wolpe (1970:1112-30) challenge the premise that new roles created with economic development and social change undercut 'tribalism' and communalism. Instead, modernization reinforces communal conflict and creates conditions that lead to new communal groups and ethnic identities. They credit what they considered to be Nigeria's rapid economic growth for 'sowing the seeds' of the nation's communal conflict in the late 1960s. Actually, crossnational data do not indicate that Nigeria's economic growth was faster than average for LDCs in the 1960s (World Bank 1973:5). Furthermore, Hibbs' survey (1973:24-5, 188) of several quantitative studies indicates, if anything, a positive relationship between economic development and domestic political stability. In fact, rapid economic growth should help political leaders satisfy the demands of many interest groups. Thus, an alternative hypothesis is that political frustration and communal mobilization increased as the gap between social aspirations and economic development widened in Nigeria in the early 1960s (Nafziger 1983:6).

Melson and Wolpe (1970:1115-8) also contend that differential rates of development between communal groups and attempts to narrow the differences exacerbate communal conflict. At independence in 1960, Southern Nigeria had more experience in parliamentary government, higher literacy, and higher economic development than Northern Nigeria. Northerners resented the disproportionate representation of Southerners in skilled positions in the army and civil service, and the immigration of Southern entrepreneurs and technicians to the North. Policies of regional discrimination and protection in the North to reduce sub-national differences, and responses to the policies in the South, contributed to the bitter enmity that broke up the Nigerian Federation during the late 1960s.

This section discusses regional and ethnic conflicts in Rwanda, Burundi, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. These conflicts took place under conditions of slow growth or, in the case of Rwanda since the mid-1980s, negative growth. The evidence suggests that politico-economic factors, not primordial ethnic variables, are instrumental in contributing to the humanitarian disasters.

8.2 African case studies

In Rwanda's precolonial history, there is no evidence of systematic violence between Tutsi and Hutu but clashes between Banyarwanda and foreign tribes or inter-lineage fighting. Indeed ethnographers regard the precolonial relationship between cattle-tending Tutsis as patrons and the Hutu agriculturists as clients as hierarchical, with an elaborate web of economic contracts and ritual exchange that provided for movement between categories (Gaffney 1994:1). From 1959 to 1961, on the eve of Rwanda's independence, a small Hutu elite revolted against the Tutsi elite, protesting against the unequal treatment of the two elites by the Belgian colonial authorities. During that period, the Belgians broke with their protégés among the Tutsi elite and replaced most Tutsi chiefs with Hutu ones. The elections of 1960 and 1961, won by the Mouvement Démocratique Rwandais/Parti du Mouvement et de l'Emancipation Hutu (MDR-PARMEHUTU), completed the ethnic transfer of power to Hutus. Control of the state meant control of access to salaried jobs in the public service or in development projects, or even jobs in the private sector, which required Ministry of Labour permission. A UN Trusteeship Council report (1961) commented that 'An oppressive system has been replaced by another one.' Hutu violence, which killed thousands and displaced hundreds of thousands of Tutsis from 1959 to 1964, forced half the Rwandan Tutsis into exile, primarily in Uganda and Burundi, from which base armed Tutsis attacked Hutus in Rwanda. Meanwhile, during this period and extending through the 1990s, Tutsis were politically marginalized and restricted by quotas in positions in the civil service and army, although because of their higher levels of education, disproportionately represented in the private sector, especially with foreign firms and agencies.

Yet from the early 1970s to the 1980s, Rwanda's economic growth was positive and faster than growth in the rest of Africa. However, in the late 1980s, with collapsing coffee and tin prices and falling food production, Rwanda's Hutu political elite lacked the revenue and output base to provide the clientage base for regional leaders. In 1989, the central budget was reduced by 40 per cent, cutting spending for education, health, and infrastructure that hurt peasants and workers. At the same time, there was more discontent among Hutu intellectuals, entrepreneurs, and disadvantaged clans, with the narrowing of the ruling group to favour a small clique of army officers and business people (disproportionately from Gisenyi prefecture), the appropriation of forest land for a cattle-raising project that benefited political leaders, and the increased days of forced labour extracted from the population. The press and newly formed associations denounced government corruption and its promotion of ethnic strife to legitimize its hold on power. By late 1990, the Rwandan political system was on the verge of collapse. The civil war between the Tutsi-exile-led Rwandan Patriotic Force and the Rwandan government from 1990 onwards and government violence cost thousands of lives (both Hutus and Tutsis), created thousands of refugees, and diverted public funds. The pogroms of both Hutus and Tutsis in neighbouring Burundi in late 1993 and the assassination of Rwanda's President Juvenal Habyarimana in April 1994 provided the cue for a genocide of approximately 800 thousand Tutsis within the next three months, set in motion, with numbing precision and elaborate preparation, by Hutu government officials, local authorities, and militiamen (Médecins Sans Frontieres 1995:32-46; Prunier 1995:49-280; Uvin 1996; Gaffney 1996b:10-1). Indeed Human Rights Watch (1995 viii) cites the Rwandan government in 1994 as an example of

> a government's willingness to play on existing communal tensions to entrench its own power or advance a political agenda is a key factor in the transformation of those tensions into communal violence. . . . In the spring of 1994, a small group of Rwandan politicians, in an attempt to maintain their control of the government, directed fellow Hutu – the overwhelming ethnic majority in the country – to kill any and all members of the Tutsi minority, as well as Hutu moderates, who were also seen as a threat to their power, . . to destroy the support base of the oncoming rebel army of the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF), a predominantly Tutsi force.

The political battle for Burundi's independence in 1962 had nothing to do with rifts between Hutus and Tutsis. The Union for National Progress (UPRONA), the nationalist victors of the 1961 election, drew from both ethnic groups. Ethnic chauvinism was initiated by the upper and middle classes who were influenced by the Rwandese revolt of 1959 to 1961. Hutus regarded this social revolution as a model, while Tutsis wanted to avoid this revolt at all costs. The breaking point took place in 1965, when Hutu gendarmes attempted a coup, which was followed by Hutu massacres of Tutsi farmers in midwestern Burundi. The Tutsis' lasting fear and ensuing repression incited efforts to edge out Hutus from political life. In 1972, in southwestern Burundi, Hutus rebelled and slaughtered several thousand Tutsis. The reprisal by the Tutsi authorities resulted in the genocidal killing of much of the Hutu elite, leaving the Tutsis with a monopoly of power in the army and administration. Indeed, although 84 per cent of Burundi's population is Hutu and 15 per cent Tutsi, since 1972 the Tutsis have dominated politics, the army, the universities, and the professions. In October 1993, elements in the armed forces attempted a coup, during which they assassinated Burundi's Hutu President Melchior Ndadaye. During the next two months, Hutu resentment fuelled the killings of an estimated thirty thousand Tutsis, with retaliation by Tutsi armed forces, who killed twenty thousand Hutus. The rising cycle of violence resulted in 700 thousand refugees and hundreds of thousands of others displaced internally (Médecins Sans Frontieres 1995:19-31; Gaffney 1996a; Prunier 1995).

8.3 Pakistan

Political and economic factors have helped shape ethnic conflicts in Pakistan in 1971 and Sri Lanka currently. In Pakistan's military government, the economic and political dominance of elites in the Western wing, who carried out economic policies that exacerbated inequalities between West and East, contributed to the humanitarian crisis of 1971. In the half century before independence in 1947, landlords, traders, lawyers, and other professionals were formed into the political elite, virtually all in the West, by their leadership in the Muslim nationalist movement in India (through the Muslim League). After independence, they were joined by (and sometimes overlapped with) an emerging class of Muslim industrial and merchant capitalists, the essentially newly created civil servants, and army officers, primarily from the West.

In West Pakistan, where the top 0.1 per cent and bottom 64.5 per cent of the landowners each owned 15.0 per cent of the agricultural land in 1960 (Gini index of inequality = 0.81, compared with 0.68 for the East), large landlords were the dominant indigenous social and political group since the early British period. In the East, in contrast, landowners were limited to a ceiling of 13 hectares each as a result of land reform legislation passed in the 1950s, which took land from Hindu rajas, who had held 75 per cent of the land.

At independence, when more than half of the manufacturing sector was controlled by Hindus, the government, or foreigners, barely 1 per cent of national income originated in manufacturing. By 1959 when the percentage had risen to over 6, Muslims indigenous to the Indo-Pakistani sub-continent controlled two-thirds of the sector. However, 96 per cent of indigenous industrial investment, 1947 to 1958, was by west Indian emigrés or West Pakistanis who invested in the Western wing. In the East, the petty bourgeoisie, who constituted the top of the class hierarchy, directed their discontent against the dominant landed and business elite in the West, who feared that a major capitalist class allowed to establish itself in East Pakistan, with a majority of the country's population, would give it the political and economic strength to become the dominant force in national politics.

Pakistani policies in the 1950s and 1960s to redistribute resources from agricultural exports (primarily in the East) to industry (largely in the West) increased regional, as well as class and sectoral, inequalities. In Pakistan, the average material level of living was higher in the West than the East in the years just after independence (1947), and these disparities increased over time. In 1949-50 GDP per capita, based on official sources, was 10 per cent higher in the West than in the East. This difference increased to 30-36 per cent in 1959-60, and to 60 per cent in 1969-70. For the West, this represented a real growth in GDP per head of 1.1 per cent annually in the decade 1949/50-1959/60, at the same time this measure was declining in the East by at least one per cent yearly. In the next decade, 1959/60-1969/70, real GDP per capita grew in the East at 1.5 per cent yearly, and in the West by 3.6 per cent annually. The Pakistani government redistributed income from export and subsistence agriculture to industry and domestically oriented commercial agriculture through policies of an overvalued rupee (which favoured imported inputs for industry and large-scale agriculture relative to jute, tea, and other primary-product exports), a compulsory government procurement of foodgrains at low prices for urban areas, generous tax concessions to industry, and the lack of these to peasant agriculture. These policies transferred savings from agriculture to industry, primarily a transfer from Eastern small farming to Western industry. Conservative estimates, based on world prices, indicate that over 24 per cent of gross product originating in the agricultural sector – or about 70 per cent of its savings – was transferred to the nonagricultural sector in 1964-65. As Eastern peasants and small farmers became increasingly conscious of the way in which much of economic policy was being used largely on behalf of a Western industrial and commercial ruling elite, discontent with the political leadership intensified, contributing to the humanitarian disaster of 1971 (Nafziger 1983:197-212; Griffin and Khan 1972).

8.4 Sri Lanka

Tens of thousands have died in the Sri Lankan civil war, which began with Sinhalese ethnic riots against Tamils in the early 1980s. In Sri Lanka, the conflict is between the ruling ethnic group, the Sinhalese, with 74 per cent of the population, and the Tamils with 18 per cent of the population. The Sinhalese urban poor formed a volatile social base, readily mobilized for the benefit of the frustrated Sinhalese bourgeoisie. For the Tamils, demands for a separate state, military resistance, and the fighting of a civil war centred on grievances from discrimination and declining opportunities in education, employment, and other economic activity. The clamour for Tamil autonomy was intensified in 1958, with the banning of the nonviolent Tamil Federal Party and the house arrest of its leaders.

Conflicting historical myths about whether and by how long during the ancient period the Sinhalese (predominantly Buddhists) arrived on the island before the Tamils (largely Hindus) have helped to reinforce post-independence hostilities.

The legacy of British colonial rule from 1818 to independence in 1948 exacerbated ethnic animosities.

In the late nineteenth century, Indian Tamils, which presently comprise 5 per cent of the population, were recruited to work on Ceylon's tea and coffee plantations. Indian Tamils, however, were denied citizenship until 1984, and were uprooted from work on the plantations, which were nationalized or distributed as estates only to citizens in the 1970s.

During the early twentieth century, Tamils, as Igbos in Nigeria, limited by population density from expanding their land holdings, were overrepresented in the public services and the professions, and well represented in jobs and businesses outside their regions of ethnic dominance. The majority Sinhalese, who resented the English examinations for the civil service and Tamil representation in government jobs, passed the Official Language Act of 1956, declaring Sinhalese as the only official language of Sri Lanka, a reversal of the early post-independence elite consensus that Sinhalese and Tamil jointly should replace English. Moreover, while Tamil was recognized as the national language of the Tamils and the administration language of the Northern and Eastern provinces, largely Tamil, in 1957, this concession was abrogated under Sinhalese protest the following year. The Tamils saw the economic advantages achieved during the British period rapidly eroded after independence. To fuel Tamil discontent further, the state sponsored colonization schemes in Eastern Sri Lanka, which were primarily utilized by Sinhalese. Moreover, the slow growth, high unemployment, and weak balance of payments since independence have made it difficult to form ethnic alliances to share economic largess among both Sinhalese and Tamils (Olsen 1989).

The ethnic polarization between Sri Lanka's two major ethnic communities is exacerbated by some overlapping cleavages. The Sinhalese are predominantly Buddhist and the Tamils largely Hindus, differences that reinforce ethnic, regional, and language identities and grievances. In addition, while the Sinhalese were dominant in business and government, the Indian Tamils were disproportionately represented in the working class and as lower caste and class, even alienated from Sri Lankan Tamils.

8.5 Lack of regional economic integration

Political cohesion is partly a function of the extent of interregional trade, capital flows, and migration. In most instances, the lack of data and the incomparability in the number of regions across countries make it difficult to determine whether the flows of trade, capital, and migrants evince a high degree of salience. Still, my data on interregional trade, migration, and investment flows in Nigeria before its civil war suggest a low degree of economic integration compared with other parts of Africa with the same number of regions (Nafziger 1983:94-8). In addition, pre-1971 Pakistan exhibits a low degree of economic integration. The partition of the Indian sub-continent in 1947 left Pakistan created from India's economic periphery. The 1,450 kilometre corridor between East and West Pakistan, together with the location of a hostile country in between and the long distance by ship, precluded an integrated national economy. Interzonal trade flows as a percentage of GDP in 1969/70 was only 3.7 per cent, higher than the figure one would get if we calculated the GDP originating in the exporting zone of the goods entering into interzonal trade (Nafziger 1994:165). Clearly this geographical separation and a low degree of economic integration in Pakistan increased its vulnerability to political conflict and humanitarian crisis.

Lack of regional economic integration has contributed to fissiparous tendencies within Zaïre, including an attempt at secession movements in Katanga (Shaba) in 1960 and a separate currency in East Kasai today. Emizet (1996:21) discusses Zaïre's present low regional integration: 'The deterioration of the national transportation network and the neglect of [infrastructural investment] by the central government resulted in a tremendous increase of illegal trade across Zaïrian borders. It was much cheaper for businesses to trade with neighbouring countries than with the Zaïrian hinterland. Thus, smuggling across Zaïrian borders ties the different regions of the country to wider geographical areas with their own smuggling circuit' outside the country.

8.6 Conclusion

Ruling elites in Africa and other LDCs utilized sentiment associated with ethnic and regional identities to transfer potential hostilities from class disparities within their own communities to differences with and antagonisms toward other ethnic groups and regions. Political leaders pursued and implemented economic policies which served their economic advantage. These policies had the effect of increasing ethnic animosities between Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda and Burundi, between West and East Pakistan, between Sinhalese and Tamils in Sri Lanka, and, as discussed in earlier sections, between Igbos and Northerners in Nigeria. Though patterns of perceived deprivation differed, major ethnic communities in these countries viewed their economic position in the state as threatened, and used violence or repression that contributed to humanitarian disasters. These cases provide hypotheses for examining communal conflict in other instances of complex humanitarian emergencies.

IX ECONOMIC CHANGE AND ELITE BEHAVIOUR: THE PERIOD OF ADJUSTMENT PROGRAMMES

In my *Inequality in Africa* (1988), I show how shrinking economic pie slices and growing political consciousness added pressures to national leaders, whose response was usually not only anti-egalitarian but also anti-growth, hurting small farmers' incentives, appropriating peasant surplus for parastatal industry, building parastatal enterprise beyond management capacity, and using these inefficient firms to dispense benefits to clients. Regime survival in a politically fragile system required marshalling elite support at the expense of economic growth. Spurring peasant production through market prices and exchange rates interfered with state leaders' ability to build political support, especially in urban areas.

More than a decade of slow or negative growth, rising borrowing costs, reduced concessional aid, a mounting debt crisis, and the increased liberalism of donors and international financial institutions, forced African elites to change their strategies during the 1980s. In 1987, IMF Managing Director Jacques de Larosiere asserted: 'Adjustment is now virtually universal [among LDCs]. Never before has there been such an extensive yet convergent adjustment effort.'[7] After 1979, when most African countries were facing external debt crises and chronic international balance of goods and services deficits, economic policymaking, characterized by structural adjustment, macroeconomic stabilization, and liberalization, has been primary shaped by conditions of IMF/World Bank loans of last resort. These conditions usually required price decontrol, currency depreciation, privatization, government spending reductions, economic structural changes, and various forms of market liberalization. In this section, I will focus on what changes we can expect during the period of liberalization and adjustment of the 1980s and 1990s.

Any substantial economic change of this kind provides chances for challenges to existing elites, threatening their position, and often contributing to increased opportunistic rent-seeking and overt repression. And cuts in spending reduce the funds to distribute to clients, and may require greater military and police support to remain in power. We expect that all these changes increase the potential for political instability and a humanitarian emergency.

With liberalization, similar to the controls of the 1960s and 1970s, contemporary African elites use their dependency on the global economy as a way to consolidate power, but they use different approaches. Indeed the funds from adjustment lending and the distribution of benefits and costs from Bank/Fund stabilization and restructuring have influenced the shifts of power and money

[7] *IMF Survey*, 23 February 1987, p. 50.

within African countries (Krueger 1974). Of course, many African elites saw the handwriting on the wall, with some African political leaders, finance ministers, and government economists (similar to many of their counterparts in Central Europe in the 1990s) experiencing an overnight conversion from Marxism to the monetarism of Milton Friedman. Some African elites allied with the Bank/Fund, supporting liberalization and becoming, with their accomplices and clients, the nouveau riche. For privatization (which required access to credit), price decontrol, and restructuring offered these elites new opportunities for expanded clientage. Moreover, Bank/Fund cooperation also enabled these elites to protect their interests from reform and competition. Still the opportunities also came with the risk of a shrinking power base, increased conflict with newly rising classes, and displacement by new economic and political groups.

9.1 Liberalization and adjustment after 1980

A country needs to adjust whenever it fails to attain balance of payments and domestic macroeconomic equilibria (full employment and price stability), that is equilibria referring to both external and internal balances.[8] Countries facing a persistent external deficit and debt crisis can (1) borrow overseas without changing economic policies (feasible if the deficit is temporary), (2) increase trade restrictions and exchange controls, which reduce efficiency and may violate international rules but may be tolerated in LDCs, or (3) undertake contractionary monetary and fiscal policies of expenditure-reducing policies. When the World Bank or IMF requires improved external (current-account) balance in the short run (two years or so), the agency may condition its loan on (4) expenditure switching, that is, switching spending from foreign to domestic goods, through devaluing local currencies (although short-run elasticities are often too low to improve the external account in less than two years).[9] For long-term adjustment, the Bank or Fund prescribes supply-side adjustments through infrastructure, market development, institutional changes, price (including interest rate) reforms, reduced trade and payments controls, and technology inducement to improve

[8] An exception is a case like the United States, whose currency, the dollar, is widely used as a major reserve currency. The US has financed a chronic external deficit through the willingness of other countries to accumulate dollars as an international means of exchange.

[9] Studies indicate, even in DCs (for example, the United States, 1985-88), the current-account improvement from devaluation usually takes about two to five years, usually beginning with a worsening trade balance in the first year. The time for adjustment is due to the lags between changes in relative international prices (from exchange-rate changes) and responses in quantities traded.

Moreover, the inflationary effect of increased import prices on domestic production interferes more with adjustment in countries with a high propensity to import, such as Zambia, Côte d'Ivoire, and Uganda, than in the United States.

efficiency and capacity to facilitate growth with external balance, but these changes take too much time for short-run adjustment.

Given the length of time for other options, remedy (3), which critics call 'leeching' after the nineteenth-century medical practice of using bloodsuckers to extract 'unhealthy blood' from the sick, works with sufficient regularity to be considered the creditor community's least-risk choice. An economy, if depressed sufficiently, will at some point reduce its balance-of-payments deficit. And indeed, World Bank evidence (1988:1-3) for thirty LDCs in the early 1980s indicates that countries undergoing adjustment give up domestic employment and spending objectives to cut their payments deficit.

Sub-Saharan external debt increased from $56 billion in 1980 to $97 billion in 1985 to $174 billion in 1990 to $194 billion in 1992 to $223 billion in 1995 (World Bank 1993a:170-1; World Bank 1996c). The origins of the African debt crisis have been widely discussed. In the early 1980s, the sub-Sahara's international goods and services deficits, continuing from the previous decade, worsened from external shocks, such as the recession in the DCs, a declining commodity terms of trade, and the decline in real official development assistance (ODA), in the midst of rapidly increasing world real interest rates. But there had also been widespread misdirection by political elites during the 1970s, when many African countries borrowed to expand their patronage resource base without increasing their capacity to service the foreign debt in subsequent years (Nafziger 1993).

The sub-Sahara's debt overhang, without new money or debt reduction, restrained investment and adjustment. African countries, with years of austerity and stagnation, could not afford to reduce spending to effect an external transfer. Large future repayments acted as a tax on investment. Paying back the debt often meant slowing economic growth (often already negative) to avoid an import surplus.

Without debt rescheduling, only intermittently and niggardly granted by African creditors, chronic external deficits require macroeconomic stabilization and structural or sectoral adjustment imposed domestically or usually by the creditor community, OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) countries, the IMF, and the World Bank. Since 1979, the United States and other OECD countries have maintained their global economic influence in poor countries not so much through direct economic aid and investment but through their role as majority shareholders in the IMF and World Bank. The Bank, other multilateral agencies, commercial banks, and OECD donor governments rely on the IMF 'seal of approval' of a stabilization programme (usually contingent on the borrower's reducing demand) before arranging loans, aid, and debt writeoffs for

LDCs. This is a managed oligopoly of policy advising which leaves African debtors with little room to manoeuvre.

Following are the major Bank/Fund programmes in Africa. World Bank sectoral adjustment loans (SECALs) emphasize trade, agricultural, industrial, public enterprise, financial, energy, educational, and other sectoral reforms. Structural adjustment loans (SALs) by the Bank/Fund, to affect the supply side, support sectoral, relative price, and institutional reform to improve efficiency. The objectives of IMF stabilization are to reduce demand to moderate inflation and to switch demand from foreign to domestic sources. In Africa and other LDCs, Bank/Fund lending to resolve external crises was usually linked to devaluing, decontrolling prices, reducing social spending, privatizing, and increasing trade, but sequencing these adjustments often exacerbated stagflation and external deficits.

9.2 The effect of liberalization and adjustment on ruling elites

Few, of course, would deny the necessity for African countries to attain long-term adjustment nor the Bank/Fund for setting conditions for adjustment loans. However, African leaders complain about the limited sources for adjustment loans, the nature of the conditions for loans, and the secrecy of the process, putting additional political pressure on the leadership (Mills 1989). Furthermore, African leaders resist the Bretton Woods institutions' adjustment programmes because of genuine doubts that they will work, and that these institutions have a narrow concept of structural adjustment. From the vast literature, let me select three major criticisms of the IMF and Bank by African elites. (1) These institutions (and their high-income OECD shareholders) do not emphasize economic growth but correcting external deficits in a short period. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (1991:89) contends: 'An important aspect of [IMF] loans and their associated policies is that they do not present a growth package as such, . . . [but] their primary role is to serve as a balance-of-payments support.' Since IMF loans are short-term (one to two years) and supply-side (structural) changes take years, IMF programmes almost always require demand restraint, with contractionary monetary and fiscal policies. The World Bank has been slicing adjustment loans into smaller and smaller elements and since the release of each slice (or tranche) is dependent on the performance of certain conditions, the World Bank, in practice, has a planning horizon almost as short as the Fund's. (2) The declining share of concessional components in packages offered by consortia of the Bank, Fund, and bilateral donors during the 1980s and 1990s makes the annual ratio of debt service (interest and principal payments) to exports onerous. Adebayo Adedeji, ECA's Executive Secretary (1975-1991), observed that Africa would not recover without lifting the 'unbearable albatross' of debilitating debt burdens, low export prices, and net capital outflow (Harsch 1989: 48). (3) Trade, exchange-rate, and capital-market liberalization policies are not sequenced correctly, resulting in immediate pressures on the balance of payments and foreign-exchange market (with the possibility of generating rapid inflation) (Nafziger 1993; Mills 1989).

Auvinen's (1996) statistical analysis of political conflict in developing countries in the 1980s indicates that IMF intervention, with its accompanying austerity measures and their stifling effect on short-term living standards, contributes to political protest and rebellion. Indeed the longer the history of Fund stabilization and adjustment is, the more extensive is the political conflict. Furthermore, IMF adjustment also has a trigger effect, damaging the politically powerful and mobilized groups and the urban working-class and poor.

In their analysis of Africa, Morrisson, Lafay, and Dessus (1994:174) contend that 'Most of the stabilization and adjustment measures run the risk of causing political troubles. Cuts in subsidies, tax increases, privatization of public enterprises or removal of commercial protection threaten the income and employment of either large numbers of people or of well-organized groups.' Africa has the highest rate of economic decline (and thus greatest Bank/Fund requirements for economic adjustment and stabilization), and also the highest incidence of political conflict and humanitarian emergencies. Is there any relationship between political troubles and intervention by Bretton Woods institutions? According to Morrisson et al.'s evidence (1994:174-91), IMF interventions require stabilization measures within one year, the most risky of which is a cut in food subsidies, which often contributes to political instability or repression.

Both IMF and World Bank adjustment came disproportionately at the expense of poverty programmes, wages, employment, and public services for working and peasant classes, who received little benefit from the borrowing, rather than from the ruling elites and upper classes whose spending had contributed to the crisis. Many opposed the economic liberalism of the Bretton Woods agencies (the Bank and Fund), whose publications emphasized long-term structural adjustment but whose programs, under constant monitoring, usually carried out demand reduction. To control opposition, some adjusting regimes arrested, banned, jailed, deported, and sometimes even killed dissenting intellectuals, students, and journalists.

9.3 Predatory rule in Africa

In several African countries that experienced negative growth and political decay in the 1980s and early 1990s, competition for the bounties of the state narrowed from ethnic and regional conflict to a patrimonial state. In reaction to economic decline and liberalization, rulers in states such as Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Zaïre, and Liberia adopted predatory rule. Predatory rule is that by a personalistic regime ruling through coercion and material inducement, a regime that tends to degrade the institutional foundations of the economy and state (Lewis 1996:80). In weakened African states, such as Zaïre, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Liberia, the shrinking external resources after the cold war, together with World Bank (1994:22-51) support of the private-sector (even management contracting) in place of customary state activities in electricity, transport, telecommunications, water, sewerage, roads, and ports, contributed to this patrimonial state, where rulers strengthened their personalistic grip on power in the midst of state and bureaucratic decay by relying on external private and military resources for survival. Predation in Africa frequently means the consolidation of an avaricious dictatorship (Reno 1995:109). According to Ayoob (1995:41), the 'unrepresentative and authoritarian character of many [African] regimes . . . spawns a vicious circle of violence and counterviolence as regimes are challenged and react with brutal force.'

9.4 African case studies

Nigeria is representative of the changes in Africa in the relative importance of government spending. In Nigeria, government expenditures as a percentage of GDP rose from 9 per cent in 1962 to 44 per cent in 1979 but fell to 17 per cent during World Bank structural adjustment programmes (SAPs), such as the one in effect from 1986 to 1990, which emphasized privatization, market prices, and reduced government expenditures. Nigeria centralized power during its 1967-70 civil war with the breakup of four regions into thirteen states, and in the 1970s, as the oil boom enhanced the centre's fiscal strength. Expansion of the government's share of the economy did little to increase political and administrative capacity, but it did increase incomes and jobs that governing elites could distribute to their clients (Nafziger 1993:50). But with a decline in GNP per capita, 1980 to 1990, 12 per cent yearly (partly from falling oil prices), and from 1990 to 1994, 4 per cent annually (World Bank 1996a:34), together with growing pressure from the IMF and World Bank, Nigeria had to reduce both absolute and relative sizes of the government sector.

Nigeria's first structural adjustment loan from the Bretton Woods' agencies started auspiciously, due to President Ibrahim Babangida skilfully playing the World Bank against the IMF for public relations gains. From 1985 to 1986, Babangida conducted a year-long dialogue with the Nigerian public, resulting in a rejection of IMF terms for borrowing. The Babangida military government secured standby approval from the IMF but rejected its conditions, while agreeing to impose similar terms 'on its own' approved by the Bank. In October 1986, the Bank, with Western commercial and central support, delivered $1,020 million in quickly disbursed loans and $4,280 million in three-year project loans (Nafziger 1993:130).

However, in subsequent years, Nigeria's state elites, encouraged by Bank/Fund secrecy, inaugurated and maintained economic adjustment without a supportive constituency. The regime continued power through tactics of 'political manipulation, populist side-payments, elite dispensation, expansion of the parallel economy, and overt repression' (Lewis 1996:87). Liberalization and privatization opened the gates to state elites appropriating public assets for private purposes. Privatization created a wide circle of beneficiaries, as well-connected insiders took advantage of sales and divestiture of liquidated state companies. The opening of bank licenses in Nigeria in 1986 provided a new source of patronage and rent distribution, as investors and managers from the military, civil service, manufacturing, trade, and the professions scrambled to enter banking, especially attracted by dealing in foreign currency.

In the 1990s, the Nigerian government lost hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue from top government officials smuggling petroleum and selling it illicitly. 'For elites,' Lewis (1996:91) contends, 'the state provided special access to nascent markets and illegal activities, and manipulated key policies to provide opportune "rents".' Indeed high-ranking venal military officers and ineffectual civilians abandoned macroeconomic management to use policy levers to enhance their own wealth and provide perquisites for clients. By 1994: 'more than a thousand million dollars annually – equalling as much as 15 per cent of recorded government revenues – flowed to smuggling networks and confidence teams, many of whom operated with connivance of top elites' (Lewis 1996:97). A circle of military elites and civilian allies made extravagant gains, creating a nouveau riche in currency trading, finance, trade, real estate, and speculative activities in contrast to middle-income and low-income populations, whose real incomes were declining.

Sierra Leone was caught in a bind between the end of the cold war and the pressure of liberalization and adjustment of the Bank/Fund. In 1991, the World Bank, IMF, and bilateral creditors offered loans and debt rescheduling worth $625 million, about 80 per cent of GNP, if Sierra Leone reduced government expenditures and employment. In response, Freetown heeded the World Bank's advice (1994:22-51) to use private operators to run state services for a profit. But privatization does not eliminate the pressures of clients demanding payoffs but merely shifts the arena of clientage to the private sector. Sierra Leone's ruling elites, needing new ways of exercising power, used foreign firms to consolidate power and stave off threats from political rivals. In the 1990s, Sierran heads of state have relied on exclusive contracts with foreign firms for diamond mining to 'regularize' sources of revenue in lieu of a government agency to collect taxes, foreign mercenaries and advisors as a replacement for the national army to provide security, and foreign contractors (sometimes the same as the mining or security firms) to provide other state services. In the process, rulers may find it advantageous to 'destroy state agencies, to 'cleanse' them of politically threatening patrimonial hangers-on and use violence to extract resources from people under their control.' To stay in power, hard-pressed rulers in weak African states often have 'to mimic the 'warlord' logic characteristic of many of their non-state rivals.' (Reno 1996b:7-8, 12).

In 1994, Zaïre received creditor leniency in return for austerity plans reducing public employment from 600,000 to 50,000. But with the shrinking patronage base, to prevent a coup from newly marginalized groups in the army or bureaucracy, Mobutu, similar to rulers in other retrenching African states, needed to reconfigure political authority; in this situation, foreign firms and contractors served as a new source of patronage networks (Reno 1996b:9). However, indigenous commercial interests that profit from the new rules are not independent capitalists whose interests are distinct from the state. Indeed as Reno (1996b:16) points out, 'Those who do not take part in accumulation on the ruler's terms are punished.'

In Liberia, Charles Taylor used external commercial networks (foreign firms), some a legacy of the Samuel Doe regime of the late 1980s, to control internal power, including a large proportion of old Liberia, and at times, the eastern periphery of Sierra Leone. Taylor's territory has its own currency and banking system, telecommunications network, airfields, export trade (in diamonds, timber, gold, and farm products) to support arms imports, and (until 1993) a deepwater port. (Reno 1995:111; Reno 1996a:8).

9.5 The former Yugoslavia

Another example of how liberalization and adjustment contributed to a humanitarian emergency is the former Yugoslavia. Woodward (1995) blames the Yugoslav conflict not on historical ethnic hostilities but the disintegration of government authority and breakdown of political and civil order from transforming a socialist society to a market economy and democracy. Yugoslavia's rapid growth during the 1960s and 1970s, fuelled by foreign borrowing, was reversed by more than a decade of an external debt crisis in the midst of declining terms of trade and global credit tightening, forcing austerity and declining living standards, during the 1980s, and early 1990s. Moreover, with the winding down of the cold war and the decline of the importance of Yugoslavia as an independent communist state, the country received less debt relief and concessional aid from the West. In an economy declining largely from reduced external resources and returning guest workers, the political conflicts over the distribution of falling economic resources and rising debt obligations between central and regional governments and the nature of economic and political reform became constitutional crises and ultimately a crisis of state among politicians unwilling to compromise.

For Woodward (1995:383):

> The primary problem, however, lay in the lack of recognition and accommodation for the socially polarizing and politically disintegrating consequences of [the 1980s'] IMF-conditionality program . . . The austerities of policies of demand-repression led to conditions that could not easily foster a political culture of tolerance and compromise. Instead, the social bases for stable government and democratization were being radically narrowed by economic polarization between rich and poor, fiscal crises for most government budgets, deindustrialization without prospects of new investment in poorer regions, growing uncertainty and individuals' resort to nonmonetary means of obtaining necessities because of rising inflation, and serious unemployment among young people and unskilled workers that began to affect even the secure jobs and incomes of public-sector professionals, skilled workers, administrators, and their children. The architects of the programs of macroeconomic stabilization and economic austerity ignored the necessity of creating not only social safety nets but even more important a political capacity to recognize and manage these conflicts.

Amidst Yugoslavia's austerity and economic collapse, Bosnia-Herzegovina, an agricultural, forestry, and mineral exporter at the periphery of the economy, was among the most vulnerable, hurt substantially by declining terms of trade and by the loss of export markets to the Middle East, Central and Eastern Europe, and the former Soviet Union. Additionally, Bosnia-Herzegovina suffered substantial deaths, dislocation, and devastation after the outbreak of war in March 1992 (Woodward 1996).

9.6 The former Soviet Union

There are a number of reasons for the economic decline of these former republics of the Soviet Union. The political vacuum from the Soviet collapse destabilized the polities of numerous republics, also disrupting economic production. Additionally, the abolition of Gosplan, the State Planning Committee and the changes to world prices that made interrepublican trade difficult to finance, reduced trade in the former Soviet Union from 1991 to 1992 by 46 per cent.[10] Moreover, decentralization was often not accompanied by institutional changes, such as price reform, capital and labour market reform, financial penalties for enterprise losses or failure, and demonopolization, that were consistent with the greater autonomy of decentralized units. Also, as decentralized units amassed greater control over their surpluses, they reduced the sequestering of these surpluses by the central government, eroding its system for revenue collection. Furthermore, governments failed to create the institutions needed for legal and regulatory changes, administrative and judicial machinery, bankruptcy law, contracts, and property transfer from the state or collective to private persons.[11]

9.7 Conclusion

In Africa in the 1960s and 1970s, the state was the major focus for struggle among ruling elites and between them and the masses. Ruling elites used taxes, government spending, public programmes, market intervention, and indigenization policies to maintain their size and stabilize their rule. But Africa's slow economic growth since 1965 compelled these elites to reduce the size of the coalition they support or use repression to extract a greater share of the majority's tiny surplus, increasing the probability of coups or other regime turnovers, and eventual humanitarian disaster. Ironically, heightened insecurity put pressure on the state class to rely even more on short-run palliatives that benefited the military, civil service, and other privileged groups but increased economic disparities and further alienated the masses.

During the 1980s and 1990s, African (and other LDC) elites faced increasing pressure from slow growth and international debt crises, as well as external pressure by donors and international financial institutions to liberalize and privatize. We can expect that pressures to cut the size of the state, in the midst of shrinking resources, put substantial constraints on the ability of elites to reward and sanction political actors, contributing to greater instability and the potential for humanitarian emergencies.

[10] *Economist* (5 December 1992), p. S10; and Popov 1996: 13.

[11] A full discussion of problems with the reform of the former Soviet Union that contributed to the economic decline of its republics is beyond the scope of this paper. I discuss the issue in greater detail in Nafziger 1997: 584-607; see also Popov 1996.

X THE FAILURE OF AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND ITS LINKS TO URBAN UNREST

10.1 The food crisis

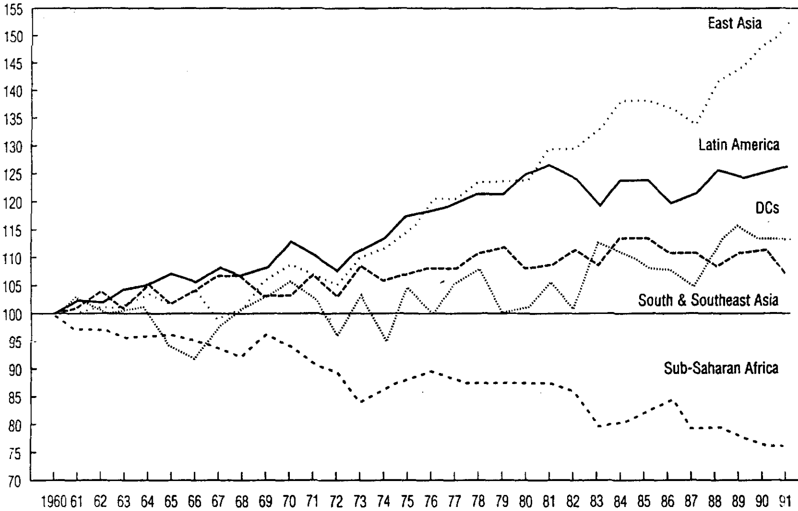
We expect that Africa's food crisis since the 1960s has made it more vulnerable to humanitarian emergencies. Cornia, Jolly, and Stewart (1987) contend that declining real household income (through falling income or rising food prices among the low-income households) reduces household food availability, decreasing nutrient intake and increasing malnutrition, and increasing disease and mortality (especially among infants and children) (summarized in Paniccià 1996). The salience of malnutrition varies depending on whether we are discussing poverty and underdevelopment, revolution, or complex humanitarian emergencies. Most measures of poverty are primarily food-based, implying that most people defined as poor are undernourished. Elsewhere I discuss the causes of LDC poverty and underdevelopment, and their relationship to malnutrition (Nafziger 1997). Revolution is more likely to emerge during a period of economic growth, in which social expectations rise, and less likely to occur during periods of widespread hunger. However, war or political conflict is more likely to be accompanied by disease or hunger, constituting by definition a complex humanitarian emergency, when large portions of the population have already been at the margin of subsistence and at the edge of starvation.

From 1962 to 1989, food output per capita grew at an annual rate of 0.5 per cent in developing countries, 0.3 per cent in developed countries, and 0.4 per cent overall, but declined 0.8 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa, meaning that food production there grew more slowly than population. (The data are calculated from figure 3, using a five-year moving average to smooth out annual weather fluctuations.) Food production per person increased from 1962 to 1989 in all world regions except the sub-Sahara.

Africa's daily calorie consumption per capita, 2116 (compared to 2115 in the early 1960s and 2197 in the mid 1970s), was 92 per cent of the requirement by the FAO, 1988-90; calorie consumption in all other regions exceeded FAO requirements. Only South Africa, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Benin, Mauritania, Mali, and Guinea had a daily consumption at least as great as the minimum required; Ethiopia's was only 71 per cent of the minimum, Mozambique 77 per cent, Angola and Rwanda 80 per cent, Somalia 81 per cent, and Sudan 83 per cent (United Nations Development Programme 1994:27, 118-20, 132-33, 207-08; Economic Commission for Africa 1983:9). Africa's food security index, as measured by the International Fund for Agricultural Development, is low (and falling since the 1960s) (Jazairy, Alamgir, and Panuccio 1992:27, 398-99), not only because of large food deficits but also because of domestic output and foreign-exchange reserve fluctuations, as well as foreign food-aid reductions. Cereal consumption per capita has had a high coefficient of variation since 1965 (Kirkpatrick and Diakosavvas 1989:2). In 1989, Adedeji spoke of 'the humiliation it has brought to Africa in having to go round with the begging bowl for food aid' (1989:2). Relief agencies indicate 20 million deaths from severe malnutrition in 1991 in six African countries where food trade was disrupted by domestic political conflict – Ethiopia, Liberia, Sudan, Somalia, Angola, and Mozambique. The 5 million or so refugees annually fleeing civil wars, natural disasters, and political repression (including before 1990, South Africa's destabilization) added to Africa's food shortages (Daley 1992:115; Goliber 1989:10-11).

Illustrative of the enormity of the sub-Sahara's difference from other LDCs is that while the sub-Sahara and India both produced 50 million tons of foodgrains in 1960, in 1988 India produced 150 million tons (after the Green Revolution and other farm technological improvements) and sub-Saharan Africa (with faster population growth) was still stuck at little more than 50 million tons. India's yield per hectare increased by 2.4 per cent yearly, while the sub-Sahara's grew at a negligible annual rate of 0.1 per cent. Thus, the sub-Sahara, which was on parity with India in 1960, produced only about one-third of Indian output in 1988 (Singer 1990:178-81).

FIGURE 3
GROWTH IN FOOD PRODUCTION PER CAPITA, 1960-91
(1960 = 100)



Source: Nafziger 1997:176

10.2 Government policies before liberalization

Africa's deteriorating food position began before the droughts in the Sahel (including the Sudan and Ethiopia) in 1968 to 1974 and in 1984 to 1985. While the roots of Africa's food crisis can be traced back to colonialism (Eicher and Baker 1982:20-3; Ghai and Radwan 1983:16-21), the continuing crisis is due to African governments' neglect of agriculture. Here we concentrate on the policies of African political elites and government decision-makers in the decade or two before 1979, the period of liberalization.

After independence, African political elites required the support of urban elites and working classes to maintain power. Elites increased their political benefits, not through market prices for smallholders, research and extension on traditional food crops, and recognizing traditional communal property, but by expanding patronage through commercial and estate agriculture, easing land purchase by the urban affluent, and selective projects and subsidies. Furthermore, African governments have preferred project-based to price-based policies to increase agricultural supplies because projects help to build and reinforce a political patron-client system.

Despite development plans proclaiming agriculture's priority and rhetoric stressing the poor rural masses, governments used pricing and exchange-rate policies, spending on investment and social services, and subsidies and protection to allocate most resources to cities, a policy of urban bias (Lipton 1977). African politicians responded to the more powerful and articulate urban dwellers. Thus, during the last quarter of the twentieth century, the policies of ruling elites diverted farm land from growing food crops, such as sorghum, millet, and local brands of maize, roots, and tubers for hungry villagers, to produce cash crops, including rice, wheat, hybrid maize, and export crops, like tobacco and natural rubber; this production shift and the greater concentration of wealth and income distribution and its effect on food demand meant that food crops declined more rapidly (or grew more slowly) than cash and export crops (Cornia 1994:217-29). Political leaders spent scarce capital on highways and steel mills, instead of on water pumps, tube wells, and other equipment essential for growing food. Moreover, government used high-cost administrative and management talent to design office buildings and sports stadiums rather than village wells and agricultural extension services.

In sub-Saharan Africa, there is generally an inverse relationship between farm size and land yields because of the low imputed costs to own labour and the low costs of monitoring and supervising labour on small farms (Cornia 1994:217-29). Yet there is a policy bias toward large farms, since government leaders and ministry officials increase clientage more by expanding production in the estate and commercial sector than by the growth of smallholder agriculture. And they profit more by subsidising farm implement, fertilizer, and seed costs than by spurring prices to produce farm goods. Political elites can manipulate farmers better through market intervention than with a free market.

Most African states have tried to keep food prices low to satisfy urban workers and their employers (multinational corporations, indigenous capital, and government). Urban unrest from increasing living costs sometimes has contributed to governments losing power or even being overthrown. To insure political survival, insecure African ruling elites forwent policies promoting rural innovation and reducing urban-rural income gaps.

10.3 Changes in government policies during liberalization

During the liberalization of the 1980s and early 1990s, the World Bank, IMF, and external donors, in setting conditions for agricultural policy in Africa for adjustment loans, emphasized eliminating price distortions. However, empirical studies indicate that farm price distortions comprise only a fraction of the explanation for Africa's reduced average agricultural output (Cleaver 1985; Cornia 1994:221). The rest of the explanation is from infrastructural and other institutional factors such as the insecure tenancy of cultivators, the highly inefficient new private commercial agricultural production (often by favoured urban elites), the limited emphasis on traditional food crops from agricultural research and extension, the increased transaction and litigation costs, and the land, credit, and insurance market imperfections, such as farmers' lack of access to credit, that contribute to greater dualism. But in Africa, the stress of externally funded adjustment programmes on commercialization means a decline in the production of traditional food crops, increased farm shares to medium and large farmers, and an increase in the purchase of farm land by urban elites as a hedge against inflation (Cornia 1994:222-31).

And the emphasis on individual property-rights systems by international financial institutions and African elites has reduced agricultural efficiency. Under most traditional community or village systems, farm families not only have tenure security but land rights are highly transferable. Ironically, issuing individualized land titles actually decreases tenure security in the short run, as the number of land disputes surge. And in the longer run, the high costs of land registration and lack of familiarity with the government bureaucracy displace weak or politically marginalized groups, and redistribute land to the commercial and estate sectors, increasing the concentration of land holdings. As an example, Kenya's land reform of the 1950s and early 1960s, which dispossessed many Kikuyu of communal lands and increased their political discontent, provided opportunities for affluent town dwellers to establish property rights though land registration.

But this reallocation not only increased inequality but also reduced labour intensity, capital formation, and innovation, contributing to the inverse relationship between farm size and yields noted above (Cornia 1994:222-31; Place and Hazell 1993:10-9).

10.4 Food entitlements, elite violence, and famines

What paradigm do we use to explain famines and other humanitarian disasters? Boulding (1970:1-22) writes of two social systems: the exchange and threat systems, pointing out that the economist, by limiting analysis to the market, misses a substantial portion of social reality. You could analyse US exploitation of, violence to, and forcible appropriation of land from native Americans and the transfer of land from Africans to whites in colonial Kenya and Southern Rhodesia by concentrating on market exchange, or slavery by using marginal productivity theory, but most economists recognize the absurdity of such a narrow approach. To explain a major humanitarian emergency, such as famine, often found in Africa during a civil war or internal conflict (as in Ethiopia and Sudan in the 1980s), we must join economics and politics into political economy by an integrated examination of exchange and coercion.

The conventional economic approach examines food (or total) output and its distribution, focusing on agricultural production, poverty rates, and Gini indices of concentration. According to this explanation, famine arises from a lack of total food supply. Sen (1981, 1983b, 1995) criticizes this explanation, emphasising that nutrition depends on society's system of entitlement. Entitlement refers to the set of alternative commodity bundles that a person can command in a society using the totality of rights and opportunities that he or she possesses. An entitlement helps people acquire capabilities (like being well nourished). In a market economy, the entitlement limit is based on ownership of factors of production and exchange possibilities (through trade or a shift in production possibilities). For most people, entitlement depends on the ability to find a job, the wage rate, and the prices of commodities bought. In a welfare or socialist economy, entitlement also depends on what families can obtain from the state through the established system of command. A hungry, destitute person will be entitled to something to eat, not by society's low Gini inequality and a high food output per capita, but by a relief system offering free food. Thus, in 1974, thousands of people died in Bangladesh despite its low inequality, because floods reduced rural employment along with output, and inflation cut rural labourers' purchasing power.

Sen argues that food is 'purchased' with political pressure as well as income. Accordingly, one-third of the Indian population goes to bed hungry every night and leads a life ravaged by regular deprivation. India's social system takes nonacute endemic hunger in stride; there are no headlines or riots. But while India's politicians do not provide entitlements for chronic or endemic malnutrition, they do so for potential severe famine through food imports, redistribution, and relief. In Maoist China, the situation was almost the opposite. Its political commitment ensured lower regular malnutrition through more equal access to means of livelihood and state-provided entitlement to basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter. In a normal year, China's poor were much better fed than India's. Yet if there were a political and economic crisis that confused the regime so that it pursued disastrous policies with confident dogmatism, then it could not be forced to change its policies by crusading newspapers or effective political opposition pressure, as in India (Sen 1983a:757-60; Sen 1983b; Sen 1986:125-32; Sen 1987:10-14).

The political approach, however, goes beyond the Sen approach, examining ruling elites' deliberate withholding of entitlement, or even violence, to achieve their goals of acquiring or maintaining power. Thus, according to this interpretation, Mao's effort to increase control through collective labour-intensive water projects during the 1958-60 Great Leap Forward contributed to China's famine, in which per-capita food production from 1957-59 to 1959-61 dropped 25 per cent. Indeed in the midst of Mao's campaign for increasing collectivization in 1959, the pressure of the party establishment contributed to false reports of bumper crops (Prybyla 1970:264-9; Lardy 1983:152-3; Putterman 1993:11).

Sen fails to consider the possibility that the state may be the cause of famine through deliberate policy to transfer resources and food entitlements from a politically marginal group to a politically favoured one. To be sure, Drèze and Sen (1989:5-6) point out that 'the dependence of one group's ability to command food on its relative position and comparative power vis-à-vis other groups can be especially important in a market economy.' But for the two authors, famines and food shortages result from entitlement and state policy failure not from state action to damage the food entitlements of a group. They attribute the Soviet famines of the 1930s and the Kampuchean famines of the late 1970s to inflexible government policies that undermine the power of particular sections of the population to command food. Drèze and Sen's emphasis is on the need for public action by a benign state, making decisions about more or less food entitlements, rather than an ill-intentioned state making decisions to intervene in favour of one group at the expense of another and its food entitlement. For Drèze and Sen (1989:17-8), avoiding famine involves the 'division of benefits [from the] differential pulls coming from divergent interest groups,' not the absolute denial of groups' entitlements.

As Keen (1994:5) contends, in Sen and Drèze's view, 'There are victims of famine, but few immediate culprits or beneficiaries.' However, the possibility that states and politically powerful groups may actively promote famine and actively obstruct relief for rational purposes of their own is not addressed. Indeed the Drèze and Sen conception of the state is essentially a liberal one, in which the failure to factor in the public interest is perceived as a failure of public policy. Scholars and international agencies share the Drèze-Sen view, widely perceiving famine as relief 'blunders' and the result of poverty and market forces, and failing to see how markets are shaped or forced by state-condoned raiding, collusion, and intimidation.

The political approach to famine, associated with the emphasis by de Waal (1989), Duffield (1994), and Keen (1994) on famine as an outcome of government's forcible asset transfer from the politically weak to the politically strong, contrasts with that of Sen's economistic approach. Duffield and Keen point out that in the 1980s, the Sudanese government, facing chronic negative growth, expropriated cattle and other major assets from the Dinka, and transferred them to other ethnic groups. De Waal contends that marginalized communities in southern Somalia became destitute not only from drought but from forcible alienation of farmland and pasture. Victims usually lacked lobbying power not purchasing power (Keen 1994; Duffield 1994:50-69; de Waal 1994:141).

As Duffield (1994:55) asserts:

> The emergence of a political economy that includes asset transfer is extremely destructive and creates ever-deepening poverty and misery. Moreover, since subsistence assets are a finite resource, once such an economy is established it demands fresh inputs as the wealth of different groups is exhausted. Asset transfer becomes a moving feast on an ethnic table . . . [and] once systemic, becomes synonymous with cultural genocide and the destruction of group rights.

Famine is an extended economic and political process, usually a result of the disruption of a way of life, involving hunger and destitution and not just death, and often long-term rather than just transitory. The state may withhold relief from famine victims, allowing more politically influential groups to appropriate the food and resources. Belligerents, such as Nigeria and Biafra in 1967-70 and the Sudanese government in the 1980s, are especially likely to block food supplies in a civil war. And even international agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other donors, facing government obstruction of relief and under pressure to cooperate with national authorities to at least provide relief in government-held areas, may discount independent accounts of famine that reflect on their negligence (Keen 1994; de Waal 1989). In contrast to the entitlement approach, the view of the political approach is that famine and humanitarian emergencies arise not from policy errors but from deliberate policy choices by ruling elites, who are trying to preserve or enhance power.[12] I support an approach that integrates politics and economics, analysing poverty, malnutrition, food distribution, agricultural price incentives, land tenure, entitlement, and the interests and behaviour of political elites.

10.5 The links of low agricultural productivity to urban unrest

Low agricultural productivity and stagnant farm employment in Africa spur rural-urban migration, increasing pressures on the urban labour and housing markets, and expanding the potential for political discontent and a humanitarian emergency. Sub-Saharan Africa's labour force growth was 2.5 per cent annually in 1980-92 and is projected at 2.7 per cent yearly in 1992-2000. Assume agricultural employment remains constant, so that growth is in industry and services. Since these nonagricultural sectors employ one-third of Africa's labour force, these sectors would have to increase their total employment more than 8 per cent annually to absorb the 2.7-per cent labour force growth (as 0.33 1/3 X 0.081 = 0.027). Virtually no African country's nonagricultural employment grows this fast, especially when you consider that increasing capital intensity means that output in nonagriculture must grow faster than its employment (Nafziger 1997:249-52).

Slow urban and nonagricultural output growth and low productivity on farms contribute to what most economists think are high rates of urban unemployment and underemployment in Africa. However, few African countries have figures on unemployment, and those that do have substantial margins of error. As the International Labour Office (1995:15-21) indicates, in Africa and other LDCs, statistics from household surveys, while generally more reliable than data from unemployment registries or insurance systems, are deficient because of inadequate infrastructure, errors in sampling method, and the inexperience and lack of training of interviewers and supervisors.

While statistics on employment are scant, the information available indicates that the unemployed in Africa and other LDCs are most often young, urban, educated males (Endale 1995:30-7; Nafziger 1997:245-53), who are potential sources of social unrest and political discontent. Moreover, there is some evidence on the effect of competition for employment, labour unrest, and their exploitation by political elites on inter-state and inter-ethnic violence that escalates to humanitarian disaster. Alnasrawi (1992:339-40) sees high and rising unemployment, together with an oil price collapse, unprecedented inflation rates,

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[12] In this vein, Keen's book (1994) about Sudan in the 1980s is entitled *The Benefits of Famine*.

and recurrent shortages, as fuelling Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1991. And in Nigeria, communal employment conflict, intensified by policies instigated in response to a large body of unemployed, was a major factor contributing to the interrelated political crises of the 1964-65 election violence, the January and July 1966 coups, and the 1967-70 civil war. Urban people out of work, particularly school leavers and dropouts, proved to be social dynamite in the hands of Nigeria's regional upper classes.

In Nigeria, by the mid-1960s, vacancies in the civil service were scarce because the indigenization in the civil service during the previous decade or so, was virtually complete (except in the Northern Region). Educated Southerners were especially frustrated as less qualified Northerners were advanced over them to give regional balance to the federal civil service. While Southern governing elites expanded the number of posts and intensified policies of regional discrimination in employment in reaction to the decline in openings, there was a limit to the growth of jobs that the political elites could provide to placate disgruntled graduates.

In May 1966, Northern Nigerian university students, who stood to lose virtually guaranteed high-level positions in the regional government, and Northern civil servants, held protest demonstrations against a fresh military decree that replaced the regional federation with a unitary administration and unified civil service. These protests gave impetus to the unrest of such marginal urban groups in the North as the unemployed, daily paid labourers, and petty traders and contractors, threatened by Igbo competition. These groups, who established a symbiotic relationship with the pre-coup Northern ruling elite, the Native Authorities and Northern politicians, spearheaded the 29-30 May riots in the North in which hundreds of Igbos were killed and much of their property was destroyed. Later, at the September 1966 constitutional discussions between federal and regional military leaders, those supporting the old ruling class of the Northern Region were jolted by the Northern (and federal) military leaders' about-face from confederation to federation. In an environment of distrust and animosity, this *volte face* provided the immediate sparks for several days of popular violence and disorders directed against Igbos and other Easterners in the North beginning on 'Black Thursday,' 29 September, and climaxing 1 October, when army troops stationed in Kano, Northern Nigeria mutinied against officers restricting them from killing Easterners. The disorders appeared too far-reaching and well ordered to have been spontaneous, and can be interpreted as a desperate last-ditch strike by the insecure former ruling Northern elite at the most vulnerable groups available.

Political thugs, including those used by the old Northern elite in September-October 1966, were recruited largely from the ranks of the unemployed. And the large number of displaced and destitute persons in the East, who were driven by pogroms in the North to their ethnic homelands, constituted a combustible and easily manipulated groups for the pursuit of military mobilization, secession, and territorial extension.

A major grievance contributing to Pakistan's 1971 civil war was the East's substantial underrepresentation among the political elite, the bureaucracy, and the military. In 1968, despite the majority of the population in the East, its representation in the Civil Service of Pakistan was only 36 per cent, comparable to its representation in other government services. And in the army, East Pakistanis constituted no more than 5 per cent of the officers in 1963, with little change during the rest of the 1960s.

Throughout most of the period since independence, Sri Lanka's urban unemployment rate has been high (Olsen 1989:27). In the late 1970s, unemployment among persons with some secondary schooling was more than 20 per cent (Squire 1981:70). The high unemployment, together with Tamil overrepresentation in the universities and civil service during the first decade after independence, sparked anti-Tamil riots and put pressure on Ceylonese political leaders to adopt pro-Sinhalese language and employment policies in the 1950s. And, as pointed out earlier, Tamil demands for a separate state were closely linked to declining opportunities in employment, especially in the central and provincial civil services.

Clanism is Somali's version of ethnicity. From 1982 to 1991, after a decade of adopting Soviet-style nomenklatura for appointments, Head of State Mohamed Siyad Barre began favouring his own Daarood clan-family, substituting clanism for ideology as criteria for appointments and business contracts. Clan consciousness rises during extreme scarcities, such as the drought and famine of the late 1980s. During drought, the overlap between clan territories increases, as natural resources become too meagre. But elites have also manipulated and coopted clan consciousness in employment, contributing to Somalia's humanitarian emergency (Adam 1995:71-3; Bennett 1991:30-69).

The link between low agricultural productivity and urban unemployment and underemployment is likely to be substantial. However, the evidence concerning the links between underemployment and humanitarian disasters is still only suggestive. We need more case studies of these links before we can make more definitive conclusions.

XI POPULATION GROWTH, GROWING SCARCITY OF NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCES, AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

11.1 Poverty, population growth, and environmental stress

Sustainable development, by some definitions, refers to maintaining the productivity of natural, produced, and human assets from generation to generation (Pearce, Hamilton, and Atkinson 1996:85-101). But for poor rural people, the incentive to maintain a sustainable environment depends on secure long-term land rights and local participation in resource management. Poor local people operating small-scale schemes based on longstanding knowledge of the soil and terrain often resist large-scale commercialization (dams, irrigation projects, fishing trawlers, timber) by governments or capitalist enterprises that fail to consult the majority of local people, deprive them of land rights, or make them bear the costs of degradation (Ghai and Vivian 1992). Moreover, when lack of secure long-term user rights transforms poor people 'into marginal people living in vulnerable and fragile ecosystems,' they will destroy and degrade their environment (Broad 1994:811-22), forgetting long-term social sustainability.

Poverty and impatience have increased the environmental stress of the sub-Sahara, whose GNP per capita is among the lowest of any world region and whose land rights are often ill-defined. At subsistence levels of living found in much of Africa, when people's survival is at stake, hand-to-mouth economics prevail in which the future is infinitely discounted; people overexploit natural resources and underinvest in conservation and regeneration, leading to resource depletion. In this economic climate, people make irreversible decisions, foreclosing options (Panayotou 1993:46-54).

Population growth, insecure tenure, and environmental degradation, by reducing economic performance or necessitating the sharing of scarce resources, can lead to conflict and humanitarian crises. In the last quarter of a century, sub-Saharan Africa has experienced substantial irreversible damage to ecosystems, including the loss of topsoil and soil nutrients, aquifer depletion, and species loss. At the same time, population has continued to grow rapidly, at about 2.9 per cent annually in the sub-Sahara, which doubles population in 24 years (and 1.9 per cent annually in developing countries generally, which doubles population in 37 years).[13] Ecological damage, together with rapid population growth, has increased conflict over resources.

[13] For more analysis of factors contributing to this rapid population growth, see Nafziger 1997: 211-44.

Population density on agricultural land has already exacerbated conflict and humanitarian disaster in Africa. Population pressure on limited land contributed to the diaspora from the Eastern Region to the rest of Nigeria in the decade or two before the 1967-70 civil war. The East had a 1963 population density of 1,088 per square kilometre compared to Nigeria's density of 404. In addition, Rwanda, with only 5 per cent of its population, and Burundi, with only 6 per cent of population living in urban areas and low labour productivity, have a population density of 1,295 persons per square kilometre (Gaffney 1996a:17). This density is about the same as that of Italy (1298), which is 67 per cent urban, and exceeds that of France (717), which is 74 per cent urban.

Hardin's 'tragedy of the commons' (1968:1244-5) implies that just as the herders' cattle eventually overgraze a pasture open to all, so do businesses and individuals overuse resources free for all to use. Individuals exploit an unpaid or open access resource as if they were facing an infinite discount rate; if they do not use the resource today, then the resource will be unavailable tomorrow. During the last quarter of the twentieth century, Africa below the Sahara, facing foreign exchange shortages, has exported substantial amounts of timber. Additionally, tens of thousands of Africans cut down timber to mitigate acute firewood shortages. Pearce, Hamilton, and Atkinson (1996:94-5) estimate that in Africa, the populations of Algeria, Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Senegal, Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, and Uganda have already exceeded their carrying capacity with respect to fuelwood availability. And the northern tropics' rate of tropical deforestation during the 1980s was 0.8 per cent yearly (Tham 1992:28-30; World Bank 1992:6); by 1996, few of these forests remain. However, in Africa, the overuse of these common resources increases not just with unclear ownership rights to land, as neoclassical economists contend, but also with large public or commercial estate ownership associated with the unclear and often capricious rules of access, exclusion, and use implemented during individual registration of communal property (Cornia 1994:226-31).

11.2 Market imperfections, policy failures, and environmental degradation

Environmental degradation in Africa originates from market distortions, defective economic policies, and insecure tenure rights. Market and policy failures arise as elites make decisions without reference to scarcity and prices, benefits and costs, and rights and responsibilities from society's standpoint. Producers maximize profits by shifting costs onto others; and businesses and governments appropriate common and public property resources without compensation. Market failures are institutional failures partly attributable to the failure of African governments: to establish fundamental conditions for efficient markets (especially rampant in the 1960s and 1970s) and to use instruments (taxes, regulations, public investment, and macroeconomic policies) to bring costs and benefits that producers fail to internalize into the domain of the market (common during the liberalization of the 1980s and 1990s) (Panayotou 1993). As Africa's population has expanded, even in the midst of slow growth, policy and market failures have engendered rapidly increasing pollution and environmental damage, contributing to a conflict over fewer and more degraded resources.[14]

11.3 Conflicts over water

The distribution of water for drinking, irrigation, and livestock is a major source of conflict within and between states. Indeed Homer-Dixon's research (1994:19) indicates that, among renewable resources, water is the most likely to contribute to war. The 1959 Egyptian-Sudanese agreement included binational cost-sharing to enable Sudan to build a 300 kilometre canal from Jonglei to Malakal. The plan included an increase of the Nile flow through the new canal by 10-15 billion cubic meters annually and drainage of the Sudd swamp in southern Sudan. But this drainage cut off cattle grazing in the Sudd basin during the flood season and on the banks of the Nile during the dry months, cutting off the livelihood of Dinka and Nuer pastoralists in southern Sudan. The Jonglei canal, regarded by peoples of the South as exploitative and indicative of Khartoum's economic neglect, became a symbol of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) opposition and a principal target during the civil war of the 1980s (Bennett 1991:100-2).

Since 1975 and increasingly since 1988, India has diverted most of the dry-season flow of the Ganges River internally to meet the demands of a growing Calcutta and the agricultural needs of the state of West Bengal before it reaches Bangladesh, where the Ganges becomes the Padma River. In the southern delta area affecting 35 million of Bangladesh's 120 million people, India's diversion has reduced agricultural and industrial production, disrupted the domestic water supply, and changed the hydraulic nature of the rivers and the ecology of the delta, contributing to estimated costs of $3 billion, 1976 to 1993. These costs have reduced the meagre sustenance available to a large proportion of the population, necessitating the emigration since 1975 of about two million people to India. This large-scale migration, beginning in the late 1970s, has contributed to communal conflicts between native Hindus and migrant Muslims in Assam and other Indian states (Swain 1996:189-204).

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[14] Part of the problem is that African policy makers, constrained by external lenders such as the World Bank and IMF, use conventional measures of economic welfare, such as GNP, to assess programmes, thus viewing environmental protection as a costly tradeoff with growth. From a tradeoff perspective, where environment spending becomes the fiscal residual, austerity programmes exacerbate ecological decay (Taylor 1996: 220). However, lenders and recipients who use Pearce, Hamilton, and Atkinson's alternative measure of economic welfare (1996: 85-101), a "green" GNP that reflects non-renewable resource depletion and environmental degradation, will view environmental degradation as a subtraction from growth.

In the West Bank and Gaza, few Palestinians hold property rights to the land or water that they use (Moustafa 1995:56-7). Israel has limited Arab access to groundwater in the West Bank and prevented Arabs from drilling new wells for agriculture since 1967. Israeli settlers in the West Bank, some of whom boast swimming pools, use four times as much water per capita as their Arab neighbours. Unequal water rights were one factor contributing to the Palestinian *intifada* on the West Bank (Postel 1996:47-8).

Many other countries face dependence on imported surface water, making them vulnerable to humanitarian crises during conflicts with neighbouring countries. Any diversion of Nile River water by Ethiopia or Sudan for irrigation would reduce Egypt's downstream flow substantially. Afghanistan, Iran, and the five independent countries of the former Soviet Union – Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan – form the Aral Sea basin and share the waters of the Amu Dar'ya and Syr Dariya. Syria's attempt to divert the Banias, a source of the upper Jordan River, contributed to rising tensions and armed conflict with Israel before the Six Day War in 1967. Israel's victory then provided control over the strategic West Bank aquifer and the Golan Heights, which feeds the Banias into the Jordan River. Other countries depending on water flows primarily originating outside their borders include Hungary, Mauritania, Botswana, Bulgaria, the Netherlands, Gambia, Cambodia, Sudan, Niger, and Iraq (Postel 1996:49-50). As populations grow and degrade their water resources, the potential for political conflict and humanitarian disaster over water is increases.[15]

XII CONCLUSION

This paper outlines preliminary approaches for examining the economic causes of humanitarian emergencies, with examples from case studies. We have identified four sets of economic factors responsible for emergencies: stagnation and protracted decline in incomes, unequal or immiserizing growth, rapid population growth during substantial environmental degradation and non-renewable resource depletion, and large, abrupt shifts in wealth distribution during the adjustment period. The strategies of political elites to maintain power and benefits in the midst of adverse economic changes and mass reaction to these changes are instrumental in determining the potential for political conflict and humanitarian emergencies. More case studies are essential to test how much we can generalize on the hypotheses and examples from this paper.

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15 Researchers on water conflict need to examine the role of pricing (an equilibrium price in excess of the price charged) in water shortages that spur conflicts. Another potential source of conflict is lower prices per unit for some communities, or for large farmers relative to small ones, as in Pakistan (see Nafziger 1997: 198, 345-46).

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