THE CRISIS OF HEGEMONY IN NIGERIA: STATE AND PRESS RELATIONS IN THE BABANGIDA YEARS

BY

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis has been composed by myself and that it is a record of my own research work. It has not been accepted in any previous application for a higher degree. All quotations are distinguished by quotation marks and the sources of information are specifically acknowledged by means of references.

Jubril Bala **MOHAMMED**

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CERTIFICATION

This Dissertation entitled: The Crisis of Hegemony In Nigeria: State and Press Relations In the Babangida Years by Jubril Bala MOHAMMED (Ph.D/FASS/7318/1992-1993) meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Ahmadu Bello University, and is appointed for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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J.B. Mohammed

The Crisis of Hegemony in Nigeria:

State and Press Relations in the Babangida years.

ABSTRACT

This is a study about the process of hegemony. It examines the theory of hegemony and focuses on the effort by the state in the tenure of General Ibrahim Babangida to foist its hegemony within the polity and, specifically the role of the press therein.

The study is specifically woven around two research problems: First, to examine the theory of hegemony, its constituent elements, instances, varieties and manifestations. Second, to examine the potential and concrete use the state made of the press in foisting its hegemony in the period under review and with what success.

Relevant data for the study were gathered from three sources: the library, interviews with notable personalities including General Babangida himself and others in the press and, content analysis of a sample of newspapers that served as units of analysis. The theory of hegemony constructed from the Marxia approach of class and class struggle as against elite perspective provided framework of analysis in the study.

After outlining elements of the research design and a reasonable exposition of the theoretical framework all in chapter one, a review of the foundation and evolution of the Nigerian press and its place and role in the process of hegemony, particularly in the Babangida period formed the mainstay of chapter two. The review of the economic and political policies of the Babangida administration formed the content of chapter three of the study.

Three hypotheses were tested each in chapters four, five and six. Data gathered therefrom not only confirmed each of the hypotheses but a statistical treatment of the

findings in each case revealed that the relationships between the variables therein are indeed significant.

In chapter seven, which is the last, the central argument of the study was established. The study has established that the press has contributed immensely in the process of the legitimation of the administration of General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida in its eight-year tenure, and at the same lime it promoted the hegemony of the state in the same period. This favourable posture of the press in the period under study was attributed to the cohesion that the bourgeoisie attained for most part of the tenure of Babangida. In the same vein the study has established that the' relationship between Babangida and the press in the last one year of his tenure after the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential election undermined the legitimacy of the Babangida administration and challenged the hegemony of the state at the same time. It automatically stands to reason therefore, that the Nigerian Press lacks the capacity, by virtue of its dominantly bourgeois philosophical orientation and ownership structure to positively contribute in relation, first, to the struggle for the revolutionary transformation of the extant social and political order and; second, to the foundation of a popular (that is working as against bourgeois class oriented) democratic alternative political framework germane to the social liberation and independent development of Nigeria.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.01 BACKGROUND STATEMENT

Since the advent of the 1980s, Africa's political history has been characterized, in the main, by increasing economic difficulties and mounting pressures for political reforms. In Nigeria, these phenomena have resulted in spirited politics manifest in the adoption of a World Bank/IMF inspired economic structural adjustment programme (SAP) and a transition programme to civil rule by the administration of General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida which came to power in a palace coup on August 27, 1985. Earlier, in his maiden address to the nation, General Babangida decried the ruthless and draconian style and policies of his predecessor, General Muhammadu Buhari and pledged to run an open administration and respect human rights (Babangida maiden address, August 27, 1985).

Accordingly, the General unconditionally freed all jailed and/or detained politicians, disbanded all military tribunals and repudiated unpopular decrees including the notorious Public Officers (Protection Against False Information) Decree No.4 of 1984 which drastically curtailed press freedom Two journalists, Messrs. Nduka Irabor and Tunde Thompson of The Guardian newspaper, earlier convicted and jailed under this decree, were also released and granted state pardon. In addition, General Babangida, who pledged to consult widely with a broad section of the polity in confronting the nations multifarious problems, threw open the economic and political future of the country to national debate.

Even in the face of increasing economic hardships brought about by the implementation of SAP resulting in retrenchment of labour, devaluation of the national currency, spiraling inflation and deteriorating social services and; frequent tinkering with the transition to civil rule programme vide the disqualification of popularly elected candidates and frequent changes in the electoral code and successive deferment of hand-over date, the

General was never unwilling to take 'ameliorative' measures. For instance, twice in 1986 and 1990, he raised salaries of workers through what has been dubbed as SAP relief packages, and also be reduced taxation levels for the poor and reviewed pension schemes upward for civil servants.

In addition, the General moderated custom duties on selected imported industrial raw materials, and created a National Directorate of Employment (NDE) to retrain the unemployed. Furthermore, he established a Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) to accelerate rural transformation and expressed open preference for new breed politicians in the political process.

As an institution, the Nigerian press was greatly affected by the administration too. Apart from the repulsion of Decree No. 4 and the state pardon granted the two convicted journalists, the general appointed a number of press personalities into responsible positions in his administration. The subsequent liberalization of imports which was part of the regime's economic programme of structural adjustment positively affected the printing industry, (Yau, 1997) as a result of which the news media sector witnessed a phenomenal boost. For instance, with barely 30 newspapers and 15 news magazines mostly publicly owned by 1983 two years before the advent of the Babangida administration, the figure shot up to nearly 70 newspapers and over 35 news magazines mostly privately owned barely a decade later (Agbondah. 1994). General Babangida was also credited with giving fat government contracts to notable publishers and even getting involved directly in funding a number of insolvent media organizations (interview with Bilikisu Yusuf editor The Citizen, June, 1995; Dahiru Coomassie, editor, Today, July 1995).

Consequently, General Babangida's endorsement, which begun with nationwide solidarity rallies by university students, trade unions, civil servants and market women, remained relatively high for most of his tenure. Yet by the early 1990s, there was increasing

disgruntlement with the general in the polity. The failure of SAP had become more apparent while the faith, hitherto widely expressed in the transition to civil rule programme meant to usher a democratically elected civilian president by October 1, 1992, had given way to deep disillusionment amidst allegation of a 'hidden agenda' against the general to perpetuate himself beyond that date.

By June 1993, following the annulment of the election of Bashorun M. K 0. Abiola in a presidential election widely acclaimed to be free and fair, opposition to the general in the polity and in the press became legendary. There is also a noticeable departure in the temperament of the press from the hitherto known dominantly pacifist and collaborationist posture to a mixture of this on the one hand and a more critical and hard hitting others on the other hand. In addition, the general promulgated several anti-press decrees and raided many media organizations and detained several journalists. In fact between March 2 - April 23, 1993 over 274,000 copies of news magazines were seized by security agents and not less than 65 journalists were detained in the same period (Momoh, 1997 -54). In addition, the press, like other agencies in the cultural sector of civil society, openly begun to defy government decrees. For instance, the Newspaper Registration Decree 43, of 1993 which requires newspapers to deposit a non-refundable fee of N250,000 and register with a Board was rejected by the press all roundly as unconstitutional and an affront on press freedom.

Eventually, amidst widespread opposition, General Babangida 'stepped aside' from the presidency (and voluntarily retired from the Nigerian Army) in favour of Chief Earnest Shonekan who assumed duty as Head of State and Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces in an Interim National Government (ING) on August 26, 1993.

Why did Babangida succeed in winning and sustaining popular endorsement for most of his tenure in contrast to General Buhari who lost same in barely 20 months in office? Why did the press, which had predominantly become vehemently critical of General Buhari

become supportive of the Babangida administration for most of its tenure? Why did Babangida loose this support in the last one year in office? In this study, I shall locate my response to these posers and perhaps more in the context of the theory of hegemony.

1.02 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEMS

The aim of this study is therefore two fold: first, to critically examine the theory of hegemony, its constituent elements, instances and varieties, and manifestations and-. Second, to examine the potential and concrete use of the press in foisting hegemony in the period under review and with what success.

1.03 OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

Consequently, this study is guided by the following objectives; to:

i. outline the basic components of the research design;

ii. establish a theory of hegemony, its constituent elements, varieties, and manifestation-,

iii. establish the nature and character of the state in the Babangida years-,

iv. review the historical background to the foundation and evolution of the press, its place and role in society and; document general Babangida's expectation of it in the tenure of the administration;

v. establish the character of press coverage of major policies and events in the life of the administration vis-a-vis the administration's legitimation project,

vi. establish the condition that resulted in the crisis that erupted between the administration and the press and the impact on the formers legitimation project;

vii. establish the impact of the success and/or failure of the administration's legitimation project on the hegemony of the state in the period under review.

1.04 Hypotheses

This study is underscored by four assumptions:

(a) that the press coverage of the August 27, 1985 military coup which ushered in the Babangida administration was favourable to the latter;

(b) that the press coverage of a selection of the *major* policies of the Babangida administration between 1985 - 1991 was also favourable to the latter-,

(c) that the press coverage of a selection of major policies and events of the Babangida administration between 1992 - 1993 was *un*favourable to the latter;

(d) that it was the ability of the administration to foster a high degree of cohesion among various strata of the bourgeoisie that was responsible for the initial legitimation of the Babangida administration and the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie. Conversely, it was the crack in the cohesion of the same class that resulted in a crisis of legitimacy for the administration and crisis of hegemony for the bureaucratic bourgeoisie in the 1992 - 1993 in the polity.

1.05 METHODOLOGY

The relevant data in this study will come mainly from a combination of both secondary and primary sources.

General background material about the basic concepts of the study, i.e. hegemony, the state and press will come from a review of relevant books and journals in the library. Osuala (1987:30) has identified two purposes for which such reviews are relevant. First, to set the theoretical base for the research and, second, to set the current research into perspective to show 'the state of the art'. By reviewing relevant books and journals and other materials in this study we are geared towards attaining the former, rather that the latter, purpose.

Another set of data will come from a content analysis of a sample of the press to establish the extent to which they 'mirrored' the two moments - of success and crisis - in the legitimation enterprise of the Babangida administration in the period under review. As a widely used technique of data collection in the behavioural sciences, content analysis has, in the course of usage, become refined in its meaning. For instance, the classical definition of content analysis as 'a research' technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication" (Danielson, 1977.-181), is no longer tenable. This is especially so with the realization that the message is not only denoted in the manifest content of the communication but also connoted in the latent content. It is therefore farcical for the researcher to be concerned only with the former to the negligence of the later. A combination of both is preferable if the content of communication, specifically, the message is to be properly understood not only in itself but also how it is presented. Consequently, like Holsti (1969-14) we operationally conceive of content analysis as "any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages". Ibrahim (1983:174) has, in elucidating this Holstian notion of content analysis, stated that "the issue then is to define what one is looking for and then analyze and discern the meaning embodied in the messages being studied, evaluate their character and assess whether they correlate positively or negatively to the issue being investigated".

In this study therefore, a sample of the press has been drawn purposively based on ownership, circulation figures obtained from the Audit Bureau of Circulation (ADC) and/or relevant agencies, ownership and location of the medium. Accordingly, National Concord, Daily Times, New Nigerian and The Guardian newspapers constitute the sample, of publications to be content analyzed. In terms of circulation figures, National Concord has the highest in the country with 169,000 copies daily. Daily Times is next with 160,000 copies

daily while, New Nigerian and The Guardian come third and fourth with 116,000 and 95,000 copies daily respectively (interview, with Akinpelu, August 7, 1995). Thus, the sample is made up of the four highest circulating newspapers in the country.

With regard to ownership, while National Concord and The Guardian are privately owned New Nigerian and Daily Times are wholly and predominantly publicly owned. Thus, the composition of the sample, is reflective of the character of ownership in the press industry in the country.

As for their location while National Concord Daily Times and The Guardian are based in Lagos, Southern Nigeria which is home to much of the country's press, The New Nigerian is located in Kaduna, Northern Nigeria. In this way, the sample again, appears sensitive to the spread of publications across the country including its skewness in favour of the South.

It is also essential to comment, even if briefly, on the philosophy of the papers that constitute the sample. Later on in chapter two, it will be demonstrated that the majority of Nigerian newspapers in both the colonial and post-colonial setting were rooted in the petty bourgeoisie-educated and skilled Nigerians who were members of various professions but who became frustrated with the colonial order, and who became actively involved in the anti-colonial struggle for independence after the second World War; and who succeeded in forming government thereby taking over political power from the colonialists - but whose ideology is in essence, bourgeois. It will also be shown in chapter two, that with few exceptions, majority of Nigerian newspapers including the four sampled, were committed upon inception and in their maturity to the defence of the capitalist neo-colonial social order.

For instance, relying on Duyile (1987), it has been cited in chapter two here that the Daily Times, which was founded by liberal minded members associated with the Lagos chamber of commerce in 1926 with Earnest Ikoli as its pioneer editor, was meant to be in the shadows of the privately owned Times of London. The same philosophy pervades the

National Concord and The Guardian both founded and owned by the multi millionaire Abiola and Ibru families while the New Nigerian is owned by the federal government which, as it will be shown later in this chapter, is bourgeois. Thus, the philosophy of the newspapers in the sample, indeed that of an overwhelming number of them, is capitalist and therefore, committed ultimately to profit making and the market.

Consequently since the focus of content analysis is on the character of press coverage of the Babangida administration, the sampled newspapers would be content analyzed along the following units of observation:

a) Editorial - This represents the official stand of the medium on any event or process of interest. It is usually published consistently on a specific page of the medium. Focus here is on the subject of editorials and how they portray an aspect of the Babangida administration positively, negatively or neutrally.

b) News - Seen as the account of events, activities and personalities in the polity and published by a medium, it is often short, written preferably in the active rather than passive sense and basically aimed at satisfying the yearnings of the prospective reader in tei7ms of what has happened, why, where, when, who is involved and how. Attention is on the subject(s) of the news and how that positively, negatively or neutrally relate to the Babangida administration.

c) Pictures – This is a graphic depiction of a process, an event and/or actors associated with various events, activities and processes. Concern here is with the graphic depiction of personages, events and activities that relate to the administration of general Babangida either positively, negatively or neutrally. d) Features - This is also a written documentation that either analyses or comments on subjects in society and published in the newspaper. Features may be written by staff and non-staff of the newspaper. The editor exercises ran discretion over the publication of any item in the newspaper. It is reasoned that features that focus on an

aspect of the Babangida administration may portray the latter either positively, negatively or neutrally. This character of portrayal is what is of concern here.

c) Cartoon - This is an artist's comment, opinion and view of an event, process and personality presented in a caricature. Often the artist creates images that represent their impression of a given reality. Cartoons may portray an aspect of the Babangida administration, directly and indirectly. Again, such portrayal may be positive, negative of simply neutral.

It is reasoned that the (political) philosophy of the medium, in this case a newspaper is almost determinant in shaping the direction and content of what is eventually published in the newspaper. In other words, although, the editor exercises discretion over what and how an item is eventually published, it is argued that what underlies the discretion of the editor is primarily though not exclusively, the political philosophy of the newspaper. In addition, although it is argued that only the editorial may represent the official opinion of the newspaper, yet to a large extent both the editorial and other items that are eventually published, must be weighed vis-a-vis the (political) philosophy of the newspaper at issue. In other words, the (political) philosophy of the newspaper not only shapes the character of its editorials, which represent the corporate stand of the publication on issues and subjects of interest, it also influences the decision of the editor to publish or not to publish other contributions - in this case, news, features, pictures and cartoons. This position departs radically from the oft-expressed opinion that only the editorial represents the opinion of the newspaper while all other items do not. Instead, it is held that those other items represent the opinion of their respective authors who may or may not be staff of the newspapers. The folly with this latter position is that it presents the relationship between a contribution and a medium in an administrative and therefore, mechanical manner. Such a position is not helpful in interpreting and analyzing the manifest and latent meaning of what is eventually

published. The relationship between contribution and medium is best appreciated in organic terms, in terms of concord and/or discord with the broad political philosophy of the newspaper that eventually published any such given contribution. To what extent is the content of ally contribution in accord or discord with the philosophical position of the newspaper in question is a question that is often asked and resolved by the editor before any item editorial, news, features, pictures and cartoons among others - is authorized for publication.

Furthermore, the sample shall comprise only newspapers. No electronic and wire medium shall be included because up till the end of the Babangida administration there wasn't a single private broadcasting outfit that had become operational. Hence, the broadcast (and wire) sectors had remained overwhelmingly government owned. This absence of diversity of ownership compulsorily rules out the inclusion of broadcast stations in the sample.

The news story, features (news analyses and commentaries), pictures, editorials and cartoons will form the units of observation. Although only the editorial expresses the official stand of the medium, yet the inclusion of the other items as units of observation is informed by the fact that the editorial board, in the ultimate, exercises agenda setting duties in choosing what is published and what is not and; of those to be published, the board determines where they should be published. At the end of the entire process, the publication is presented as an integrated whole. It is therefore the argument here that whatever is published helps in one way or the other in conveying the stand of the establishment on the issues set out in the medium. It is therefore important for content analytical purposes to endeavour to include as many units of observation as possible so as to catch a deeper picture of the attitude and stand of the organization on issues of the polity.

A third set of relevant data will come from interviews with notable personalities in the Babangida administration particularly the general himself as well as press personalities. Their views would help lend insight into certain actions and processes discernible in the hegemony process in the period under review.

At this juncture it is important to establish the general perspective of this study which is Marxian (and therefore class) as opposed to elite, based.

1.06 FROM ELITE TO MARXIAN CLASS APPROACH

It may be observed that Marxian class analysis has been 'faulted' by certain scholars in as far as its capacity for social analysis is concerned. A number of such scholars are associated with elite perspective. This approach originated first as an alternative but later attempts were being made to revise it as a complement to the Marxist approach of class and class struggle. Although these scholars, as we shall show in detail shortly, made strenuous efforts in their respective ways, their major draw-back seem to lie in their inability to purge the underlying concept of' elite' of its ideological origin. In some cases, the more these scholars try to do that, the more they come face to face with realities that have already been captured in some Marxian categories and concepts but which, for obvious ideological reasons, they often refuse to accept. It is therefore imperative to substantiate this criticism of elite approach by tracing its origin and development and usage.

Etymologically speaking, the use of the concept 'elite', which is originally from the French, in social discourse, has been traced to the 17th century. In its earliest usage, it denoted highly valuable items of trade; though subsequently, as if metaphorically, it became referent of higher social groups such as the *creme de la creme* of the nobility or crack military units (Sereno, 1938:515). However, it was probably not until 1823 that the concept: found acceptance in English and commonly so throughout European social and

political discourse by the end of the century. It gained wide usage in Britain and America around the 1930s principally through the work of Wilfredo Pareto (Bottomore, 1982:17) Pareto initially illustrated his notion of 'elite' in the following words: -

> *Let us assume that in every branch of human activity each individual is given an index which stands as a sign of his capacity, vet)) much the way grades are given in the various subjects in examinations in school. 7he man who does not get a client will be given I - reserving zero for the man who is an-out-and-out idiot. To the man who has made his millions - honestly or dishonestly as the case may be - we will give 10. To the man who has earned his thousand we will give 6, to such as just manage to keep out of the poor house 1, keep zero for those who get in.... And so on, for all the branches of human activity... so let us make a class of the people who have the highest indices in their branch of activity and to that class give the name elite (Pareto, 1935:1422-3).*

Inherent in this illustration is the notion of elite as a reflection of the general divide in human achievement in society. The concept elite was thus, in Pareto, meant to designate those who are deemed successful in their respective fields of endeavour.

Subsequently, focusing closely on political power, Pareto further stated that:

> *If we further divide the class (the elite) into two classes: governing elite comprising individuals who directly or indirectly pk7y some considerable part in government, and a non-governing elite, comprising the rest... so we get two strata*

in a population - 1) A lower stratum, the non-elite. with, whose possible influence on government we are not just here concerned then) a higher stratum, the elite, which is divided into two: a) a governing elite: b) a non - governing elite (Pareto, 1935.-1423-4).

However, beyond this general notion of the concept, Pareto did not say much.

Critically speaking, achievement, which is central to the Paretian notion of elite, is a product of a complex of factors, which seem not to interest Pareto but which undoubtedly are of (or should be of) interest to political sociologists. For instance, a knowledge of these factors would enable a classification of achievement and also (possibly) identify which factors render certain body of achievement more important than others in the distribution of political powerful society. Secondly, is it only the governing class that plays indirect role, in addition to its direct role, in government? What about the non-elite who rely on such democratic instruments as the ballot and diverse forms of political protests? To what extent do these activities constitute (of do not constitute) indirect influence in government arid more particularly, in the distribution of political power in society? Pareto thus, failed to provide a definite, concrete, specific and mutually exclusive notion of elite, a factor which is crucial in establishing its claim as a concept in the first place and that of subsequent others emanating therefrom

Gaetano Mosca, it was, who examined the concept more closely. He noted that: -

Among the constant facts and tendencies that are to be found in all political organisms, one is so obvious that it is apparent to the most casual eye-from societies that are very eagerly developed and have barely attained the dawning of civilization

> *down. To the most advanced and powerful societies - a class that rules and a class that is ruled. The first class, always the less numerous, performs all political functions, monopolizes power and enjoys the advantages that power brings, whereas the second, the more numerous class, is directed and controlled by the first, in a manner that is now more or less legal, now more or less arbitrary and violent (Mosca, 1939:50).*

Inherent in Mosca is recognition that organization and achievement underlie the superiority of the rulers over the ruled. He puts forward the fact of organization succinctly that:

> *... The dominion of an organized minority is irresistible as against each single individual in the majority who stands alone before the totality of the organized minority. At the same time, the minority is organized for the very reason that it is a minority... (and also) members of a ruling minority regularly have some attributes, real or apparent which is highly esteemed and verb) influential in the society in which they live. (Mosca, 1939:53).*

Both Pareto and Mosca recognize (or is it, acknowledge?) social inequality and attribute same to achievement and social organization. Again, both scholars credit the elite, by virtue of their superiority, with powers in influencing the conduct of the lower social groups. But more importantly, both recognize that the elite is a fractionalized social group into governing elite and non-governing elite as with Pareto and "political class" of Mosca who are organized

in "...the various party organizations... and which have to compete for the vote of the more numerous class..." (Bottomore, 1982: 10).

But unlike Pareto who held that all societies must be divided into the 'elite' arid 'non-elite', Mosca, has a third group, which is an intermediary one. "According to Mosca, 'the elite' is not simply raised high above the rest of society; it is intimately connected with society through a 'sub-elite', a much larger group which comprises, to all intents and purposes, the whole new middle class of civil servants, managers and white collar workers, scientists and engineers, scholars and intellectuals" (Bottomore, 1982: 1 1).

Notwithstanding what critics of Pareto and Mosca may see, it must be admitted that they have contributed to social theory from a non-Marxian class perspective. They were perhaps the first generation of social scientists, to draw attention to the fractions and factions within the elite. Mosca's contribution on the circulation of elite is also an indication of the conflicts, indeed struggles, between and among these fractions. This fact accords with the notion in Marxian class analysis of the universality of contradictions in all natural an (I social phenomena including social groups (Tse-Tung, 1967).

However, these classical elite theorists were not primarily concerned with the root of social inequality or unequal distribution of political power in order to advance human knowledge on this all-pervasive phenomenon but rather to provide fundamental conceptual and theoretical buffer against Marxist social science. For, as Mosca has argued: "in the world in which we are living socialism will be arrested only if a realistic political science succeeds in demolishing the metaphysical and optimistic methods that prevail at present in social studies" (Mosca 1939).

Consequently, rather than harness the finer gist of Marxian class analysis to improve the quality of their social theory, these classical elite theorists intended to launch and

ideological offensive which is predicated on the assumption that nothing is worth-while in the former, a recourse which is unscientific as it is unscholarly.

Again, driven by anti-Marxism, both Pareto and Mosca ended up committing the same 'offence' for which they charge Marx, i.e. the allegation of (economic) determinism in Marxist social theory. It has been pointed out that:

> *The fundamental argument of the elite theorists is not merely that every known society has been divided. In what respect is this less deterministic than Marxism? For whether men are obliged to attain the classless society or are necessarily prevented from ever attaining it, are they not equally unfree? (Bottomore, 1982:19).*

But is it not the realization of the inevitability of this unfreedom that prompted Marx to make his famous assertion that it is not the consciousness of men that determine their objective situation; rather it is their objective situation that determines their social consciousness. Again, and more fundamentally, is Marxian class analysis really economically deterministic? If Marxian class analysis combines, as it were several factors - economic, political, cultural ideological and legal in explaining social phenomena what basis is there for alleging economic determinism? What obtains therefore is a wrong notion of viewing the relationship between the economic and other factors by critics of Marxian class analysis. This wrong notion adopts a unilinear perspective of this relationship thereby projecting the economy (which is &e base) as unilaterally determining the political cultural/ideological and legal (which are the super-structural) phenomena in society. On the contrary however, the relationship between the two levels is symbiotic. For example, although the economy determines the capacity, of the political superstructures to manage public affairs yet through

the process of their operation, the political superstructures initiate and execute policies that regulate and/or influence the workings of the economy (Barret-Brown, 1978).

Subsequent generations of elite based scholars notably Raymond Aron (195C, 1957, 1960), C. Wright Mills (1956) and Tom Bottomore (1982) among others have sought to harness the effulgent elements of Marxist class analysis and those in classical elite theory to arrive at a revised and improved version of the latter.

Aron has suggested that the problem of combining in a synthesis 'class sociology and 'elite' sociology boils to the question as to: what is the relationship between social differentiation and political hierarchy in modem societies? He tried to establish a relationship between elite, which he conceives as a governing minority, and social classes and called for fresh distinctions and refinements in the concept of elite, and stressed the need for a more discriminating terminology than had hitherto been employed.

Similarly in the work of C. Wright Mills there is great concern with the (possible) cross theory though expressing preference for the term 'power-elite' as against ruling class. According to Mills:

> *Ruling class is a badly loaded phrase. 'Class' is an economic term, 'rule' a political one. The phrase 'ruling class' thus contains the theory that an economic class rules politically. That short-cut theory may or may not at times be true, but we do not want to carry that rather one simple theory about in the terms that we use to define our problems; we wish to state the theories explicitly, using terms of more precise and unilateral meaning (Mills, 1956:277).*

Using power as basis, Mills conceived of the concept of the 'power-elite' as those who occupy the command post. But then, how precise and unilateral in meaning is this concept of 'power-elite'? Do its members actually occupy the command post (that is, hold power) in modem USA? Mills's empirical attempt failed to provide a conclusive answer. Mills could not show whether the corporate rich, the political heads and the military chiefs which be claim constitute the power-elite in America really, indeed actually, hold power there. Thus, devoid of empirical validation, how precise and unilateral in definition then, is Mills concept of the power-elite"?

For Bottomore, the notion of elite as a reference to functional indeed occupational groups, which have high status for whatever reason and, may or may not exercise power is preferable (Bottomore, 1982:14). He further pointed out that to all those group; which exercise political power or influence and are directly engaged in the struggles for Political leadership, he refers to them as 'political-class! While those individuals who actually (exercise political power, which is a small group within the political class, he referred to them as the political-elite'. In addition, he delineated the political elite to include "...members of the government and of the high administration, military leaders, and in some cases, politically influential families of an aristocracy or royal house and leaders of powerful economic enterprises".

Bottomore appears merely concerned with defining father than explaining the stratification evident in contemporary societies. In other words, unlike Pareto, Mosca and Mills who spoke of achievement, organization and power respectively as bases for the existence of the elite, Bottomore joined the bandwagon by adding occupation to the list. But occupation and/or function merely express the role one discharges within a given system of productive relationship. And the exact location of a person in the system which Bottomore undoubtedly chose to leave out of his analysis, depends strongly on the character and needs of

these social relations of production which are themselves dependent upon the level of development of the productive forces and specifically the instrument of production (i.e. technology). In other words, what occupations and/or functions there are in society at any historical time, is dependent on a complex network of factors which as it were, Marx has not ignored in his formulation of social classes and which I will exhaustively refer to later.

Thus, occupation and/or fractions on their own appear superficial and cannot therefore, are concrete bases for explaining social divisions and specifically inequality of access to power, howsoever conceived.

As for the boundary of the 'political class' in society, Bottomore, admits the difficulty of its delineation but pointed out that it would:

> *Include the political elite, but it may also include counter elite comprising the leaders of political parties which are out of office and representatives of new social interests or classes (e.g. trade union leaders), as well as groups of businessmen and intellectuals who are active in politics:*
>
> *(Bottomore, 1982:11-15).*

As for the pattern of interrelationships between various factions within his political-class, Bottomore suggested that this may be co-operative, competitive or conflictual within the political class however, and the factors which determine whatever disposition these patterns assume at certain historical time periods seem not to be important to Bottomore.

Recent studies on patterns of intra-elite relationships have sought to address "s area which Bottomore ignored. Notable here is studies by Field and Higley (1980, 1985), Burton and Higley (1987a), Burton (1987b), Field, Higley and Burton (1988, 1990) and Higley and Burton (1989).

Broadly speaking, these scholars, whose main concern is with political stability and the pre-condition for democracy, suggest that both factors are founded on the elite structures in specific societies and the transformations they undergo. They identify three specific types of elite structures, namely: ideologically unified, consensual unified and disunified. They state that elite structures are by nature disunified and:

> *A disunified national elite, which is the most common type produces series of unstable regimes that tend to oscillate between authoritarianism and democratic forms over varying intervals. A consenually unified national elite, which is historically much rarer, produces stable regimes that may evolve into a modern democracy... if economic and other facilitative condition permit (Higley and Burton, 1989:17-18).*

Elite structural transformations from disunification to consensual unification therefore, forms the pre-condition for political stability and lasting democracy.

In addition, these scholars point out three specific historical routes to consensus I unity:

> *Special colonial legacies where consensus is achieved prior to national independence, elite settlements where elite negotiate a deliberate compromise and, a two-step transformation where, first, a consensually oriented bloc gains stable majority electoral support and at a later stage a radical minority abandons its distinctive ideological positions adhering to the consensus achieved b)) its*

adversaries (Higley and Burton, 1989: 2 7; Field, Higley and Burton, 1988:5-6).

The strength of this proposition lies in its being a seminal attempt at categorizing the pattern of elite inter-relationships, which has for long been taken for granted especially by previous social theorists of the elite school. It goes further to suggest the mode of regulating those relationships.

However, it is not clear if some of the categories associated with this proposition such as ideological unity, consensual unity and disunity are mutually exclusive. It is also not clear if the two-step transformation is only operational between ideologically incompatible elite groupings. Furthermore, the empirical bases of the proposition (which involved six country studies) with none in Africa appear inadequate. (See Cammack, 1990 for additional critique of the new elite paradigm).

On the whole, Marxist class analysis, seen and applied from the historical materialist perspective, continues to provide one of the most comprehensive social theories 'in contemporary social science. Its value lies not only in its recognition of social division into ruling and ruled groups over most of human history but also in attributing this to a complex set of inter-relationships of economic, political cultural and other factors taken individually and at the same time collectively. Indeed, these inter-relationships probably testify to the dialectical character of the basis of major social divisions over most of human history.

Similarly, in expressing the value of Marxian class analysis in social sciences, Ossowski (1963) has stressed that:

Its value lies in the vigorous attempts to analyze the sources of political regime. With the aid of this conception Marx

> *succeeded in, expressing in a more exact form an idea which recurs continually in popular thought and in social theory: namely, that one of the structural features of human societies is their division into a ruling and exploiting group on one side, and subject, exploited groups on the other.*

As for Bottomore (1982:3 1) class analysis goes further to provide:

> *an explanation of the causes of this division by connecting in an impressive synthesis a mass of hitherto unrelated, economic, political and cultural facts in accounting for changes in social structure by the rise and fall of classes.*

As for the concept and approach of elite, we therefore have a strong doubt over its applicability at least here. From the foregoing exhaustive review, we are in accord with Issa Shivji who has identified five major shortcomings with the concept and the theory in relation to Africa situation. He pointed out that:

> *first, built into the concept of elite is the notion that elite share superior qualities and therefore accept and support the status-quo; second, that they (elite theories) are ideological and value-laden in support of capitalism in their attempt to explain political change; third, that the theory wrongly considers the masses as passive variables of history (in favour of the elite) rather than central makers of same (Shivji, 1976:25).*

He also described elite theory as being static, undialectical and a historical and hence, incapable of providing any tool for the analysis of social change and social movements. In addition, he said elite theories are incapable of guiding under-developed societies to overcome underdevelopment.

With regard to the Marxist approach of class and class struggle the point must be made that Marx did not accomplish the formulation of a comprehensive definition of "class" and "class struggle". This is however amply compensated for by a firm grasp of his dialectical materialist method. Accordingly, Lenin has defined class to mean "groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of production, by their relation (in some cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production by their role in the social organization of labour, and consequently by the dimensions and mode of acquiring the social wealth which they dispose (Lenin, 1968:248). Four aspects of this definition are noteworthy. First, that social classes are large bodies of people rooted (or better stilt founded) in a historically circumscribed system of production. A system of production is essentially referent of a widespread network of social relationships of labour activities constitutive of the entire process of the creation of material value. It suggests that without this determination by the system of production, it would be inconceivable to speak of social classes. It is only upon a definite system of production therefore, that social classes, seen in the Marxian historical materialist point of view, germinate.

The system of production however, is not given; in other words, it is not just out there, fixed and simply engendering classes. Rather a system of production, though with inherent laws of its development, simultaneously affects, and at the same time is affected by, human conscious endeavour. In other words, the, system of production is a product of conscious human construction but at the same time develops based on its internal laws. Here in lies the dialectical nature of the system of production.

Any given system of production therefore, operates through a combination of forces both internal and external to it-from infancy, through maturity and decline when it is due for supplantation by a new one more suited to the needs of the time. The system of production that is dominant at any historical period is called the mode of production. In other words, the mode of production refers to the entire system of material production that is dominant at any given historical period.

In his studies of human history, Marx has identified five dominant modes of production corresponding to different historical periods: Primitive Communalism, slave, feudal capitalist and communist (Marx and Engels, 1977). We shall be more concerned here with the capitalist, which as it were, is still dominant globally and locally in Nigeria.

Second, that in addition, those large bodies of people, for them to constitute a social class must share a *specific form of relationship to the means of production*. *Means of* production by definition basically involves a relationship between the labourer and the means of exerting his labour power to the target. As Marx pointed out: "If we examine that- whole process from the point of view of its result, the product, it is plain that both the instruments and the subject of labour, are means of production" (Quoted by Volkov, 1985:220).

The decisive place among the means of production is held by the means of labour and especially the implements of labour (Volkov, 1985:220). In its broadest sense, instruments of labour may refer to all facilitators-physical moral structural, organizational intermediating between the source of labour power and target of labour power; whereas, implements of labour indicate only an aspect of the instruments such as capital, land, machinery in the case of mechanized capitalist agricultural production; building, etc in the case of industrial production. Under capitalism, the dominant implement is capital seen here as "value which begets surplus value as a result of the exploitation of wage labour" (Volkov, 1985:3 1).

Members of a given social class therefore, must be united by a definite, common and uniform pattern of relationship to the means of production, especially the implements. Is this relationship that of ownership or that of hired wage earning operators of those implements in the production process? Or is it, so to say, a combination of both?

Third and closely related to the point made above, a social class must also discharge a specific role in the overall social organization of labour (within any system of material production). In other words, if the group is one that has an ownership relationship to the means of production, it means that it is divested from any other role in the overall organization of labour. If the relationship is that of hired operators of the means of production, then this class is, a labouring class. Owners therefore, are distinguished from the labouring classes, because they, do not labour and yet they appropriate the surplus value of those that labour.

The fourth noteworthy aspect of Lenin's definition of 'class' is that the class must be united in the dimension and mode of acquiring the social wealth, which it disposes. In other words, in what form and in what manner do these social classes secure the material values they have created? Under capitalism, the capitalist class secures the material values created by the working class in the form of surplus value created by the unpaid labour power of the latter which they appropriate by means of undervaluing the labour power of the working class. The working class, on the other hand, secures (part of) the social product they create in a form of wages (regular periodic under-payment for services rendered) by selling their labour power, theii7 sole material possession in the productive process, to the capitalists. The two, who may superficially appear distinct are after all, bound by necessity to one another. While the capitalist must rely on the appropriated surplus value generated by the unpaid labour power of the working class for what to exploit on the one hand, the working class, on the other, can only change its individual capitalist masters but can never refuse to sell its labour

power to the capitalist as a class. Here in, lies the dialectical relationship between these two social classes.

One more point that must be stressed is that the relationship of exploitation, which is at the bottom of the interactions between these two classes, is at the same time the basis for the antagonism between them (more on this later). In between these major social classes under capitalism there exist a tiny class of people united by a dilution of those four characteristics of a social class as defined by Lenin. In other words, they -may possess features of both capitalists and working classes though in limited quantities, a fact which defines their transient nature in origin and position. Examples here, include medium farmers and artisans who are both labourers and employers of labour on small-scale private enterprises. In periods of prosperity they maintain high capitalist aspiration. On the contrary in bad situations, they often loose ground and sell their labour power. Depending on their degree and quality of political consciousness, they may therefore side with the working class sometimes and with the capitalists on some others.

This, in the main, is an interpretation of the Marxist notion of social classes as defined by Lenin. But what about the class struggle. It has been alluded earlier, that the relationship of exploitation which underlies the interaction between the capitalist and working classes is at the same time the basis for the antagonism of same. For, while the capitalist class would like to continue with the exploitative order, the working class would be more interested in breaking loose from same in favour of a more humane and favourable order. The contradiction between these two classes is therefore the principal source of conflict in as far as capitalism, indeed the capitalist mode of production, is concerned. It is principal because it permeates all facets of social life - economic, political and ideological - under capitalism

Again, it is evident that given the exploitative relationship between the capitalists and the working class, both classes are bound to enjoy differential relationships to power. As Poulantzas (1978:36) has observed:

> *The economic process is class struggle, is therefore relations of power - and not just economic power.. in the case of classes, power comes down to objective positions rooted in the division of labour,- it designates the capacity of each class to realize its specific interests in relation of opposition to that capacity in other classes. It is therefore impossible for power to escape economic relations. Rooted in the production of surplus value and in their relation to the political ideological power, these power relations are further more concretized in specific institutions-apparatuses: the companies, factories or production units that are the site of the extraction of surplus value and of the exercise of these powers.*

Consequently, a critical implication of the Marxist theory of class and class struggle to the study of the problem of hegemony with particular regards to state and press relations is that first of all they must be regarded as variables operating within a social context; hence the nature of the society within which they are operating must be historically established. In other words, these variables cannot properly be understood, so to say, in abstract devoid of their social contexts. Another implication is that conceiving these variables within definite social contexts is not enough, they must specifically be situated in the conflictual inter-class and intra-class relationships that predominate in the said society and in the period specifically under review. Put differently the issue of the state, press and hegemony must be seen in terms

of their individual (and collective) relationships to each of the social classes or groups in the Struggle to protect, preserve and promote their respective interests.

At this juncture, it is pertinent to state that two principles underscore the class analysis inherent in this study. First, that in nature as in society, there is a perennial conflict and at the same time there is unity between and among the structures, components and aspects constitutive of all phenomena. Thus, in the subsequent attempts to establish the form and character of the Nigerian State, we shall identify the various social forces at play that define the uniqueness of same. In other words, in depicting the character of the Nigerian political economy, we shall identify the various social classes therein and the various group, "within these classes and how the struggle and unity between and among these classes and groups shape the history of the country. Thus, while it may be conceived that the bourgeoisie and working classes are two major social classes in Nigeria, we are aware that each is made up of various sub-divisions that have different (secondary) interests within the class but also at the same time the totality of these respective individual interests shape the character of the corporate interest of the various classes within the country. Within the bourgeoisie, we refer though continuously to these various groups as elite. However, elite may not necessarily always be part of the bourgeoisie.

Second, that although we have given a broad outline of the Marxist notion of class and class struggle, it must be stressed that the forms classes and the struggles between and within them take, is specific to each society. In other words, classes and class struggle may not assume a uniform character nor may their actions induce the same results in societies within the same mode of production.

Having documented the basis of the rejection of elite, in favour of the Marxist approach it is therefore appropriate to outline the conceptual and theoretical framework of this study.

1.07 TOWARDS A THEORY OF HEGEMONY

In it's earliest form the concept of hegemony, which derives from the Greek word 'hegemonial', referred to leadership as exercised by one state especially in a federation of states (The New Lexicon..., 1995:449). This implies a number of states or principalities coning together into an affiance of some sort (for whatever reason) with one of them, probably relatively more endowed in one or the other variables, to play a leadership role over, but also supposedly in the interest of the rest of the affiance. By this role, the leading state could be said to exercise hegemony over the affiance. Therefore, in this original sense, hegemony is merely a condition of leadership being discharged by one party over the rest in a form of affiance.

In its usage in Marxist discourse, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels can be credited with being the first to use the concept in relation to the role of the proletariat in the struggle for socialism The notion of the hegemony of the proletariat became topical at a time in the 19th century when the development of capitalism had produced two antagonistic classes - the bourgeoisie and the proletariat (seen here as industrial workers). The latter class, though very small initially but with enormous potentials of growth, became the most firmly rooted of the oppressed groups, classes and social layers to wield the peasantry, lower layers of the petty bourgeoisie and some remnant social groups of the dying feudal social order, into a very revolutionary affiance to compel the bourgeois state into first, conceding to a democratic agenda and secondly to fundamentally alter and replace it with a socialist/communist one Prokharov, 1975:548). The notion of hegemony of the proletariat therefore connotes the leading role of the proletarian class in the affiance in the revolutionary transformation of society to socialism/communism.

In this classical Marxist, as in its original sense the concept of hegemony represents a leadership relationship. This relation of leadership, from a Marxian class perspective, however, would depend, as Prokharov noted, on:

> *The form and extent of the class alliances of the proletariat... determined by the character of the historic period, and by the tasks arising at any given stage of the struggle in a particular country; these factors depend in turn on the maturity of the working class itself, its ability to provide the leadership of the liberation struggle, the level of development of other class forces, and the national peculiarities of the particular country (Prokharov, 1975:548).*

The processes leading to the revolutionary exemptions in czarist Russia also witnessed the usage of the concept of hegemony. Lenin, in demonstrating the sanctity of the hegemonic role of the proletariat in the age of imperialism, put forward the thesis that the strength of the proletariat is immeasurably greater than its size within the population as a whole. Lenin, wrote further that:

> *... the proletariat must carry the democratic revolution to completion, allying to itself the mass of the peasantry in order to crush the autocracy's resistance by force and paralyze the bourgeoisie's instability. The proletariat must accomplish the socialist revolution, allying to itself the mass of the semi proletariat elements of the population, so as to crush the bourgeoisie's resistance by force and paralyze the instability of*

the peasantry and petit bourgeoisie (Lenin in Prokharov, 1975:449).

Nevertheless, speaking elsewhere about Lenin's concern with hegemony Gramsci described him as; "The greatest modern theoretician on the plane of political struggle and organization to have reestablished the concept of struggle on the cultural front and constructed the doctrine of hegemony as a complement to the theory of the state-as-force (61-amsci in Williams, 1960:599).

Thus, arising from these classical allusions to the concept of the hegemony of the proletariat in the context of the national liberation, democratic and socialist revolutions as amply demonstrated above, it may be pointed out that such references were made so much without establishing a coherent theory of hegemony nor was there a profound treatment of the doctrine. It was to Gramsci's eternal credit that an in-depth treatment of the concept was undertaken.

Gramsci was one of seven children born to a humble family in Ales, Sardinia, Italy in 1891. He was enrolled into a local school at Ghilarza in 1898 and, ten years later, despite crippling financial difficulties and poor health, he was able to complete elementary school successfully. In 1908, he proceeded to a higher school in Caglieri where he lived with his elder brother Gennaro, a white-collar worker and militant socialist. It was Gennaro's influence that introduced Gramsci to the world of politics in his high school days.

In 1911, Gramsci won a scholarship to the University of Turin, a programme which he started on a promising note only to be compelled by hard biting penury, coupled with poor health to abandon in 1915. It was at the University that Gramsci came into contact with other radical students as well as Marxist-Leninist literature. Gramsci subsequently became

justified and necessary; that the leaders should remain in Italy until it became quite impossible for them to do so (Ravira cited by Hoare and Smith; 1976:1xxxvii).

Gramsci was subsequently arrested towards the end of 1926 and, after two years in detention, his trial opened on May, 28, 1928. He, along with other leaders of the P("I were accused of organizing an armed insurrection. in reference to Gramsci the prosecutor had addressed the court urging that "for twenty years we must stop this brain from functioning". On June 4, 1928, Gramsci along with other PCI leaders, was convicted and sentenced to 20 years imprisonment.

And being of poor health in the first instance, Gramsci's condition deteriorated while in prison. By April 21, 1937 when his sentence would have been served less remission, Gramci's state of health was so poor that he could not even leave the prison hospital on that date. He died on April 27, 1937 at the age of 46.

While Gramsci was in prison custody, he continued to give vent to his enormous intellectual might albeit under very stricter condition of censorship. His Prison Notebooks were written in captivity between 1929 - 1935. Hence his ideas appeared very ambiguous, vague and often times fragmentary, as a result of which he (Gramsci) did not produce a full blown theory of hegemony, specifying social structural and historical conditions for its strengths and weaknesses (Gitlin, 1980:252). Scholars such as Perry Anderson have commented that Gramsci's Prison Notebooks, especially his notion of hegemony, contain some built-in inconsistencies specifically the ambiguity in his positioning of culture and hegemony vis-a-vis the state and force (Anderson, 1976/77).

The hiatus in Gramsci's thoughts not withstanding, the Prison Notebooks have been subject of and/or provided information of profound interest to students of Marxist political sociology. Little wonder therefore that Hoare and smith, foremost editors of Gramsci's Prison Notebooks have found it necessary to suggest that "Gramsci has perhaps suffered

justified and necessary; that the leaders should remain in Italy until it became quite impossible for them to do so (Ravira cited by Hoare and Smith; 1976:1xxxvii).

Gramsci was subsequently arrested towards the end of 1926 and, after two years in detention, his trial opened on May, 28, 1928. He, along with other leaders of the P("I were accused of organizing an armed insurrection. in reference to Gramsci the prosecutor had addressed the court urging that "for twenty years we must stop this brain from functioning". On June 4, 1928, Gramsci along with other PCI leaders, was convicted and sentenced to 20 years imprisonment.

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themselves, read seriously and in all their complexity, are the best antidote..." (Hoare and smith, 1976:xciv).

Nonetheless, according to Raymond Williams it remains to the eternal credit of Gramsci's great contribution to have emphasized hegemony and to have understood it at a depth which is rare (Williams cited in Apple, 1979:4). Indeed, for Gwyn Williams, Gramsci occupies a towering status among Marxist thinkers most absorbed in the problem of the superstructure (Williams, 1960:590).

Accordingly, in adumbrating a working conception and theory of hegemony for this study, I shall operate within the interpretation and re-interpretation of Gramsci manifest in the excellent contributions of Williams (1960), Bates (1975), F[all (1979), Apple (1979), Gitlin (1980), and Agbaje (1992) all read and comprehended in the background of the Prison Notebooks.

It must be pointed out here that Gramsci wrote at a time of intense fascism in Italy- a period in which the opposition was seriously on the defensive. The need to theoretically understand fascism, its content and social historical base coupled with the need to plot the strategy and tactics of the working class struggle against it were therefore some of the issues that preoccupied Gramsci. Specifically Gramsci wanted 'to understand, among other things, why the working class uprising in Northern Italy after world War I had failed- why the working class was not necessarily revolutionary; why most of it would be defeated by fascism" (Gitlin, 1980:252).

Therefore in his examination of the concept of hegemony, Gramsci preceded from a consideration of the base- superstructure dichotomy common to Marxist political analysis and located hegemony within one of the two 'levels" of the superstructure. Gramsci pointed out that;

> *What we can do for the moment, is to fix two major super-structural "levels": the one that can be called "civil society", that is the ensemble of organisms commonly called private", and that of " political society" or "the state". These two levels correspond on the one hand to the function of "hegemony" which the dominant group exercises throughout society and on the other hand to that of direct domination " or command exercised through the state and "juridical government (Gramsci, 1976:12)*

Central to this statement therefore are two assumptions: first, and which, according to Bates forms the premise of hegemony, is that man is not ruled by force alone but also by ideas (Bates, 1975:351). Second, that hegemony is a product of the activity of the dominant group over the rest of society.

Arising from these assumptions, students of Gramsci have defined hegemony in at least four different ways: hegemony as political leadership, as the supremacy of the dominant class ideology, as an instrument of cultural renovation and, as a social system of conflict among and within cleavages.

For instance, hegemony has been defined variously as political leadership based on consent of the led, a consent which is secured by diffusion and popularization of the world view of the ruling class (Bates, 1975:352)- or even as a ruling class's (or alliance's) domination of subordinate classes and groups through an elaboration and penetration of ideology (ideas and assumptions) into their common sense and every day practice; it is the systematic (but Dot necessarily or even usually deliberate) engineering of mass consent to the established order (Gitlin, 1980:253). For others such as Gwyn Williams hegemony is a

process of 'incivilimento' of 'persuasions permanente', the actual seizure of power emerges as a stage, albeit an essential one" (Williams, 1960:594). In fact, Gwyn Williams, who described the object of Gramsci's concern as alienation considers that hegemony, seen in that context is nothing but an instrument of cultural renovation" (Williams, 1960:593).

What appear common to these various attempts at grappling with the problem of hegemony are the following points: first, that hegemony takes place in class societies, as an activity of the dominant class; second, that it is basically ideational (referred to variously as world view, ideas and assumption or ideology); third, it is systematic and persuasive whose goal is to induce the 'consent' of the 'victim' so to say, as it sublimates into their common sense and/or common day practice.

What appears worrisome in some of the notions of hegemony above include the issue of the nature of the process of hegemony. Is it peaceful episodic, continuous and unchallenged? On the contrary the process is conflictual giving rise to consent and dissent at one and the same time. In addition, introducing a phrase like "political leadership" as with Bates appears confusing. For instance, is political leadership coterminous to political domination" or 'intellectual and moral direction" or both? For Gramsci writing elsewhere in his Risorgimento he pointed out that "(T) he supremacy of a social group... manifests itself in two forms, political domino and intellectual and moral direction, the two spheres of the superstructure" (Williams, 1960:590). Furthermore there is pressing need to quality usage of the term consent into 'consent' or as in the edition of Hoare and Smith's Prison Notes (pg. 12) with Gramsci himself "spontaneous" consent. The latter are suspicious in that such consent is induced but also, in the final analysis, involuntary. 'Consent' or "spontaneous consent" rather than consent approximates hegemony. Again, if Gramsci were concerned with (an aspect of) alienation as with Gwyn Williams, then hegemony, propelled by

dominant class interest and mediated by agencies in their control, can hardly amount to "cultural renovation". In what way(s) is it a renovation and for whom is it so?

In a very brilliant contribution, Adigun Agbaje has conceived of hegemony in the context of the totality of conflicting relations over power. According to him, hegemony is:

> *... a social system of intra-cleavage and cleavage relations in which power is secured and contested not only through direct and undisguised coercion but also via the agency of a broad popular consensus arrived at from the interplay of the dual claim of consent and dissent and achieved through and within political, economic, socio-cultural institutional, non-institutional and moral means and levels of society (Agbaje, 1992.-13-14),*

This notion of hegemony is effulgent in its consideration of the nature of the variable, which is conflictual resulting in consent and dissent at one and the same time. It also, highlights the dimension and/or levels of hegemony which are political economic and socio-cultural.

What does appear uncomfortable is the description of hegemony as a matter of mere "cleavage" or 'intra- cleavage" relations without necessarily indicating the class context of these cleavages. While admitting that cleavages exist within all classes, yet in speaking about hegemony it is important that the specific class relationship must be brought to the fore. For instance, is hegemony an intra-class or inter-class precept or a precept of both? This is not clear in Agbaje's notion of hegemony. After all hegemony, seen in its Gramscian sense is essentially conceived in the background of Marxian class analysis which is cognizance of cleavage not withstanding Gramsci's substitution of "class" with "group" to beat off the censor.

Again, what does it mean when Agbaje speaks of securing "power not only through direct and undisguised coercion but also via the agency of a broad popular consensus" in the background of intra-cleavage and cleavage relations? Is it implying that power can be secured through both "direct" (as with undisguised coercion) and "indirect" (as with broad popular consensus) means all in the same, class? In other words, can the phrase be implying that both hegemony and domination can be exercised either at 'intra-cleavage" and "cleavage" levels at one and the same time?

In this study, hegemony is conceived as a form of social consciousness borne of a conflictual relationship manifest in intellectual and moral leadership exercised at the political economic and socio-cultural levels of society by the dominant group which, along with domination based on force, constitute the necessary condition for the possession, consolidation, sustenance and exercise of power.

Five points can be made about this conception of hegemony. First, this conception clearly situates hegemony, a long with domination as part of a duality embodied in the superstructure; the former relates to civil society while the latter to political society. This point accords clearly with what Gramsci has in mind when he commented on the two levels of the superstructure earlier cited herein. This point also implies that both hegemony and domination are not mutual exclusivity's but constituents of the same entity (what is, the superstructure) whose relationship is that of unity but also contradiction. In fact, the relationship between hegemony and dou3ination is described by Gramsci in terms of "a complex and reciprocal interaction" (Williams, 1960:587).

Second, this working definition indicates that hegemony, by nature, is basically ideological (intellectual and moral) but also a product of conflictual relationships, which, depending on its quality, may result to a varying degree, in 'consent' or dissent. Agbaje makes this point better:

> *... hegemony is an 'open sesame' since it is itself fragile, not ossified, and is never a finished task for several reasons. For one, human society can hardly be expected to record absolute consensus on all issues at all times. On a day to day basis, therefore, there is a constant pressure toward counter hegemony (sic), affected and reflected by such social institutions as the press, given the fact that realism on which hegemony is erected is socially constructed and is, therefore bound to be fractious, reflecting different representations of reality as lived and perceived by the various social groups and fractious of social groups in contact (Agbaje, 199:ix).*

Third, the working definition suggests that hegemony exists in diverse moments and variants. For, when Gramsci described the functions of hegemony and domination as being "organizational and connective" (Gramsci, 1976:12), it may be suggested, as with Agbaje, that three moments and variants of hegemony are discernible. These are political economic and socio-cultural. If the ideas of the dominant social group form the fulcrum around which the political economic and socio-cultural life of society are organized and lived then it is plausible to speak of political economic and socio-cultural moments and variants of hegemony.

Fourth, that hegemony is primarily a factor of (the) alliance of groups within the dominant class and that it only secondarily relates to subordinate classes. Probably this is what Gramsci means when he said:

> *... that supremacy of a social group manifests itself in two ways, as "domination " and as "intellectual and moral*

> *leadership ". A social group dominates antagonistic groups, which it tends to "liquidate " or to subjugate perhaps even by force; it leads kindred and allied groups (Gramsci, 1976:57)*

Thus while hegemony attains primacy over dominance in the relationship between a dominant group on the one hand and kindred and allied groups on the other, hegemony takes secondary position over domination (or so it seems) in the relations between the dominant and antagonistic groups. To this extent therefore, both hegemony and domination may be said to be 'applicable' to the entire social rubric though the primacy of each would depend on the specific historical time and the class composition of same in relation to the hegemonic project. In fact, else where here reference was made to Marx and Engels and Lenin who all examined the concept of hegemony of the proletariat in alliance with the peasantry against the bourgeoisie.

Finally, while neither hegemony nor domination alone can secure, consolidate and promote a successful exercise of power yet Gramsci argues that "hegemony constitutes the normal form of control (while) force and coercion becoming dominant only at times of crisis" (Williams, 1960:591).

Consequently, relying on this conception of hegemony I shall attempt in this study to capture and document the use of the press by the state during General Babangida's tenure to establish, consolidate and sustain its hegemony. But, first of all what is the character of the state in the Babangida years and, what expectation did General Babangida have of the role of the press in relation to his administration?

1.08 THE STATE IN THE BABANGIDA YEARS:

A number of studies on Nigeria's colonial political economy, have identified three distinct though interrelated social classes therein (Onimode, 1983 and 1985; William.-,, 1980: Nzimiro, 1985). These were, first, the imperialist bourgeoisie (mainly British, though added to a lesser extent by the French, Italian, German, Portuguese and Leventine others); second, the petty bourgeoisie, composed of educated Nigerians working in various aspects of the colonial administrative and commercial concerns, traditional rulers, self employed professionals and commercial middlemen. In the context of the colonial political economy, the dominant class was the bourgeoisie and it was wholly foreign in origin, i.e., imperialistic. As a class, it represented the assortment of international (foreign) capital operating in the country. It ruthlessly exploited the population through various methods of primitive accumulation such as slavery and slave trade, use of forced labour, unequal exchange, theft and eventually consolidated its presence in Nigeria by virtue of conquest. And as a dominant class, the imperialist bourgeoisie also exercise political power and therefore governed on behalf of foreign capital by regulating, coordinating and enforcing all levers of control over the rest of society. The dominant class was at the same time the governing class; and by exercising both economic, political-juridical and ideological control, it was therefore the ruling class. Third, the working classes composed mainly of the incipient proletarian masses and the peasantry.

The nationalist movement leading to the dawn of independence in 1960 was to result in the devolution of political power to an indigenous crop of politicians. Though, these were mainly members of the colonial petty bourgeoisie, yet with independence they were now to command and exercise political power at both regional and federal levels. And because of their inferior position originally as clerks, teachers, professionals etc. in the colonial production relation, they were subsequently to take advantage of their command of political

power, and via that, control of surplus generated by the Marketing Boards and, oil revenue in the 1970s, these hither to petty bourgeois elements were to develop into what Mamdani calls the "bureaucratic faction" of the bourgeoisie in Nigeria. Mamdani defines the bureaucratic bourgeoisie as "bureaucrats who though do not own property (but) are assured privileged access to social surplus" (Mamdani 1976: 10). The bureaucratic (faction/bloc of the) bourgeoisie which essentially was entirely Nigerian include the political office holders such as premiers, governors, ministers, ambassadors and, through successive military coups, the military high command which provided the officers to man diverse governmental positions in period of military rule. All these were united by their reliance on the machinery of governance and corruption as their main source of capital accumulation to enable them play a subservient though complementary role to the imperialist (faction/bloc) of the dominant bourgeoisie in the country. Thus, as it will be clearer in subsequent sections both Generals Buhari and Babangida, as leaders of military regimes, all represented the bureaucratic bourgeoisie. In other words, the military orligarchy, which means leadership by the general staff of the armed services is integral to the bureaucratic bourgeoisie.

Mark Anikpo has suggested that this implied co-existence of two factions of the same exploitative bourgeois class, the bureaucratic and imperialist bourgeoisie created highly unstable political atmosphere which had three major implications: first, it exposed the state structure to military intervention; second, the resultant chaos increased the economic misery of the exploited (working) classes and, paradoxically their political consciousness and; third the under-developed nature of the economy places great power to control the means of production with the political decision makers (Anikpo, 1985:50). Ikenna Nzimiro has also undertaken one of the most seminal studies of the ruling class in Nigeria. He traced its historical evolution to the colonial economy and submitted that unlike its forebears in the West, the ruling class does not constitute a coherent social group in Nigeria.

He argued that politically, the Nigerian ruling class lacked a national will and consciousness and located their political ideology along ethnic lines. Furthermore, he said they used the machinery of state as instrument for primitive accumulation while corruption has become innate to their political practice (Nzimiro, 1985:485).

Still in the same vein, he examined the Nigerian Military critically, especially since they assumed power from 1966, and suggested that in place of the rabid regionalist an(l ethnic ideologies of the disbanded political parties of the first republic, the military oligarchy elevated the ideology of statism and national development. They created states as component units within a federal structure in place of the four regions thereby decentralizing the 'power centres' in the country. "The superstructure of society was tinkered with but the base remained unaltered. The whole social structure was not questioned. What emerged was the same class structure" (Nzimiro, 1985:485).

Nzimiro further identified ten critical features of the Nigerian military which underscored their commitment to a capitalist course of development, their romance with the multi-national corporations, indigenization programme, contract mania, and their corruption 'indigenous' faction make of political instruments to intervene in resolving intra-class conflicts in its favour.

Again within the 'indigenous' faction, internal cohesion and coherence is at best perfunctory, superficial and platonic, thereby rendering it vulnerable to recurrent crises that may assume diverse dimensions. This is probably because unlike their western counterparts, this 'faction' lacks what Nzimiro earlier called "a national will and (a) national consciousness" or what Karl Mannheim calls utopia, i.e., a set of ideas to inspire the transformation of the existing order and the liberation of human capacities (cited in Williams, 1980:41) nor do they possess, in the words of Gavin Williams, "the commitments of a religious, socialist or nationalist character of the rationalizing, capital accumulating, surplus - expropriating classes

which directed the industrialization of Britain, Russia, Germany and Japan" (1980:40). In fact this ideological ambiguity of this faction of the 'national' bourgeoisie has been aptly summed up still by Gavin Williams in the following words:

> *Its nationalism is the outcome of its wish to appropriate resources hack from the foreigner; its commitment to foreign investment is the outcome of its concrete dependence on the neo-colonial political economy. National Unity and reconciliation expresses its ambition to act as an hegemonic class, providing moral and political leadership at the national level and within the international arena; its tribalism is the outcome of its lack of control of the productive resources of the economy and hence of the competition among the bourgeoisie for favoured access to scarce resources, and the need to manipulate particularistic interest and. sentiments among the poor to maintain the bourgeoisie's political domination, (William, 1980:40).*

Economically, it may also be pointed out that in the prevailing capitalist production relation, the 'indigenous' faction, to a large extent depends on its imperialist counterparts. The former initially lacked the capital to compete with the MNCs who represent the latter and who maintain fin-n dominance over investment opportunities by virtue of their advantage over technology, skill and capital. The 'indigenous' faction had little qualms resorting to their possession of political power for financial aggrandizement. They perfected the art of corruption to enrich themselves by pilfering from public resources in the Marketing Boards. 'Me Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree of 1972 and later amended in 1976 and repealed in 1995 was not only to reserve certain business undertaking exclusively for them and also to

compel certain others to have majority Nigerian shareholders. But the state was also to establish requisite financial institutions such as the Nigerian Industrial Development Bank (NIDB) and Bank for Commerce and Industry (NIBCI) in addition to the directive that all commercial banks in which government now maintains 60% controlling shares should advance loans to Nigerians to purchase up businesses and/or shares in others.

The advent of the oil boom in the 1970s saw these bureaucrats operating as businessmen and state officials playing middlemen positions to prospective foreign oil contractors. Teresa Turner's studies on the operation of these businessmen and officials in respect of the oil sector reveal what she called their "collaborative compradorial" or "statist compradorial" roles. Here is her graphic presentation of the matter:

> *'Comprador' a Portuguese word for 'buyer' is used here to describe those state officials who perform the function of organizing the foreign traders' access to local markets. Within political independence of the European colonies and the expansion of trade after the Second World War, the state in these new countries became major market and market regulator. With sovereignty, some state officials begun to perform a kind of 'gatekeeper' function: they allow the entry and exit of goods and in the process may exert a 'toll' for performing services of ,opening the gate'. In the following discussion., state officials who perform this function are called compradors, or alternatively, gatekeepers'. It is useful to distinguish two different gatekeeper roles where the gatekeeper actively is of the indirect kind, a middleman Is used Gatekeepers who work in partnership with private local middlemen can be called*

> *collaborating compradors because they and the middlemen join to carry out transactions which also include representatives of foreign firms.... However, the gatekeeper activist can also be direct, that is, the official deals directly with the foreign businessman. Instead of being triadic, the relationship is dyadic. Officials* can *be called 'statist' compradors since they exclude the private national sector from transactions between the state and foreign multinationals (Turner, 19 78:1 71)*

This dwarfed position of this faction of the 'national' bourgeoisie vis-a-vis its imperialist counterpart has resulted in frustrating investment experiences by the former, a condition which has pushed them into simply living ostentatiously on their ill-gotten wealth at home and abroad or quietly accepting to play second fiddle to their foreign counterparts. The term 'national bourgeoisie' is a cautious reference to the Nigerian component of the capitalist class within the global capitalist system which it was incorporated into through the process of colonialism. It is a reference to the geography, seen in its limited sense, of the bourgeoisie, for ease of usage as an analytical category.

Finally, it may also be pointed out that the "indigenous" faction of the national bourgeoisie which we have earlier noted to be fractious, incohesive and incoherent, is composed of two critical blocs: first, the bureaucratic bloc made up mainly of the politicians who inherited political power at independence, their successors in the second and the botched third republics, retired top members of the civil services at both regional, state and federal levels and who, as the proverbial old wine, kept recycling in service as chairmen and directors of para-statals at both tiers of government and the military oligarchy who all accumulated capital through their control of the machinery of government over the years. Second,

there is the corporate rich bloc which in the words of Nzimiro is constituted of captains of the private sector.

> *"They are mainly products of human resources developments and profound professional training and who occupy/occupied top positions in the MNCs in the industrial, commercial, financial and manufacturing and oil sectors of the national economy. They have also been professionals who though self employed, but have made serious inroads into the boards of private sector organizations" (Nzimiro, 1985:485/6).*

'Comprador bourgeoisie' as a concept was first introduced into social scientific discourse in Nigeria, to the best of my knowledge, by Terisa Turner in her seminal studies of the oil sector in the 1970s. In this original usage, 'comprador' refers to a new role been played by bureaucrats in their capital accumulation process. Seen in this sense therefore, 'comprador bourgeoisie' may be coterminous to Mamdani's notion of bureaucratic bourgeoisie since both concepts indicate reliance on the machinery of government for (primitive) capital accumulation.

These two major blocs though distinct but also interlocked in several ways, some of which were enumerated by Nzimiro and referred to in preceding passages. The terms 'fraction' or 'bloc' of the bourgeoisie refer essentially therefore, to the subdivision within the 'indigenous faction' of the 'national' i.e., Nigerian bourgeoisie as a class. Their degree of cohesion may not however be as sophisticated as those of their western counterparts. This notwithstanding, they are engaged in contestations for within the (indigenous faction) of the 'national' bourgeoisie. In the course of the nation's 38 years of post independence status, the bureaucratic bloc, that is top serving bureaucrats, former bureaucrats-turned-politicians, and

members of the military high command whose major road to income and/or property was their control and use of the machinery of government, has always been in power through either period of military rule or those of democracy. This is true to the extent that it is recognize that most of the political actors in the period had relied on the machinery of government as their major source of capital. The corporate rich, mainly made up of captains of industry and members of the organized private sector which made a strenuous effort in the politics of the third republic, would have had its first victory in the ascension of Chief M.KO. Abiola but for the annulment of the election in 1993. In this election both flag bearers M.K. O. Abiola and Bashir Tofa of the SDP and NRC respectively were big time businessmen, captains of industry and members of the organized private sector. Never before in previous elections did members of the organized private sector make a strenuous attempt at the leadership of this country. Other than this, the corporate rich as a bloc has remained subject of alliances whenever the bureaucratic bloc happen to be in power.

In addition, regardless of which bloc is in power, alliances are forged with certain amenable categories within the other bloc to facilitate in discharging the affairs of state though wider the dominance of a given ruling bloc and to regulate possible fictions and/or contradictions between them as groupings of the same bourgeois class.

The process of bourgeoisifying the hitherto colonial petty bourgeoisie which was dialectical was therefore at the same time to create the condition for their reproduction in the post colony. The lower middlemen hitherto operating as fieldmen of the Multinational Trading Companies who were the official agents of the produce marketing boards, the individual vehicle owner-drivers in the transport sector, the self employed artisans and technician- school teachers and fresh young graduates of tertiary institutions rapidly become co-opted members of this class. This process of reproduction was manifest, for instance, in the pre-requisites going with education in those days fondly recalled in Northern Nigeria

when qualified secondary school leavers were massively sent to universities overseas for undergraduate training and others to local tertiary institutions on in-service conditions to meet the needs of Northernizing the regional civil service. Across the nation such elements were to become middle level officers in the federal and state civil services and para-statals, the armed force, the professions, in private sector employment and for their reproduction in the schools as teachers.

The subsequent creation by successive military regimes of additional states provided further opportunities for bourgeoisification and petty bourgeoisification across the country. This was particularly so during and after the civil war with massive recruitment of officers into the armed forces, the advent of oil revenues, expansion of public infrastructure, manufacturing and mining and the social service sectors. Consequently, both ideologically and politically, the petty bourgeoisie became more turgidly attached to the apron strings of the postcolonial bourgeois state. They, intact, share in the aspiration to accelerate along the social ladder.

These postcolonial developments were also to affect other sectors of the working class. While the peasantry came wider rapid proletarianization, the ranks of the trade union movement was thus to expand tremendously. This slight intra-class adjustment in the labouring sector is significant particularly in the development of trade union consciousness.

For instance early in the post independence period in 1964, a nationwide general strike succeeded in compelling the bourgeois state to concede to demands for improvement in workers condition of living via the Morgan Commission Award. This was followed in 1971 by widespread strikes by private sector employees for the extension to them of the Adebo Commission Salary Award hitherto designed for public sector employees. Yet again in 1975, workers took to the streets only to be pacified by the Udoji Salary Award which granted not only salary increases but also arrears of up to two years in some instances. It must however

be stressed that underscoring these spate of strikes was the most barbaric and utterly inhuman policy of wage freeze in force from 1960 till the advent of the second republic in 1979 on the one hand and the severe and utterly rapacious manner foreign capital was milking the economy. However, as if to forestall the revolutionization of workers' consciousness, the bourgeois state resorted to its juridico-political instruments to regulate its contradiction with labour. Consequently, in 1976, a Ministry of Labour was recreated in the federal government under Major General Henry Adefope. In 1977, government released its view on the Adebiyi Panel Report and subsequently, invoked its juridico-political instrument to ban seven veteran trade union leaders, including Pa Michael Imoudu and Wahab Goodluck from Union activities for life. Thereafter, government was to set out to forcefully reorganize the trade unions into a single central industrial Organization . Thus, once again through juridico-political fiat, a single labour centre was decreed to which industrial unions were compelled to affiliate. The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) was thus created and 42 industrial unions were forcefully affiliated to it and in 1978, Comrade Hassan Sunmonu of the Civil Service Technical Workers Union of Nigeria (CSTWUN) was elected the first president of the Congress. The sum of NI million was provided by the Federal Military Government as a take-off grant.

But if the salaried labour force was 'subdued' by means of the subtle though forcefully imposed unity into a single centre, the non-salaried members of the working class, notably the peasantry, and their dependents, notably the students, were to experience the naked might of the bourgeois state.

It must be pointed out at this juncture that in their disparate locations, in scattered farmlands and communities, the basis for peasant unity is over-stretched and therefore becomes almost tenuous. But once they perceive a threat, from an organized force, to their economic lifeline, the basis thus presents itself for unity. This perhaps explains the episodic

and scattered nature of peasant resistance That is why, for instance, in 1962 cocoa farmers in Western Nigeria revolted against the conditional sales of their products initiated, with state backing, by the Multinational Trading Companies acting as official buying agents of the produce marketing boards. Again, slightly over half a decade later, peasants in the same region of the country, organized massively in their Agbekoya (Cooperative) Movements to challenge and resist scores of taxes imposed on them by the bourgeois state.

The increasing penetration of the rural areas by capital especially in the period of the Third National Development Plan (1980 - 85) when eleven River Basin and Rural Development Authorities (RBRDA's) were established across the nation, and several hundreds of peasant communities and farmlands were dislodged with little or no proper alternative nor were commensurate compensations paid. A number of peasant revolts were recorded in this period, one of the most famous being the Bakolori peasant revolt in the Sokoto/Rima River Basin Area of Sokoto State in 1980 in which 386 people were killed (Odeyemi, 1982:87).

In all these peasant revolts which included the one in Kano in 1980; Maiduguri, in 1982; Gombe, in 1984; and Yola in 1986, among others, the state wasted no time resorting to brute force with several peasants often killed. These dislodged peasants, especially in the Northern states, fled the countryside and later turn to Allah and; relying on the Holy scriptures and linked up with the dregs of the urban poor, often become fodder for massive religious rebellious in a number of major cities.

The students have however become the most enigmatic and resilient in their resistance to the bourgeois state. A highly cohesive group especially at the tertiary level and with a deep and rich organizational tradition rooted in the anti-colonial struggles, Nigerian students appeared to be the only associates of the working class that have remained consistent kicking against the policies of various ruling factions of the bourgeoisie and remained firmly anti-

imperialist. They formed the National Union of Nigeria Students (NUNS) in 1956 and, under its banner, they waged heroic resistance campaigns against the excesses and destructive consequences of state policies and actions.

Some of the campaigns mounted by Nigerian students since independence include the demonstration against imperialist machination in Congo Kinshasa (later Zaire and now Democratic Republic of Congo) resulting in the murder of the country's visionary leader Patrice Lumumba in 1961, their condemnation of the subordination of Nigeria's foreign policy to British dictates during the Balewa administration as manifest in its membership of the imperialist controlled Monrovia group in the process leading to the formation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963, the secret Anglo-Nigeria Defense pact of 1961 and the nation's virtual indifference to the effort to form the Non-Aligned Movement also in 1963. Back home, the students decried the fratricidal intra-class conflicts among the factions of the 'national' bourgeoisie which resulted in such tragic events as the census crisis of 1962, the Western regional crisis, the subsequent treason trials of Chief Obafemi Awolowo and some members of the Action Group in 1963, the Tiv riots etc. and campaigned against secession by Eastern Nigeria resulting in the civil war in 1967. They condemned public corruption during the administration of General Gowon and resisted, rejected and condemned the decision by him not to hand-over power to civilians in 1974 . They also denounced the deployment after the civil war of the American Peace Corps and described them as American intelligence operatives; and supported such radical but short-lived organizations such as the Nigerian Youth Congress (NYC) and the Pan- African Youth Movement. In 1976, they hailed the Murtala/Obasanjo regime for making Africa the center-piece of the country's foreign policy and the administration's firm commitment to Anti-apartheid and recognition of, and support for the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MTLA) in Angola's intractable independence struggle. In 1978, they mounted a nation wide demonstration

against increasing cost of education, an action that was to be violently suppressed by the state and a number of students were killed. Thereafter, the state banned the NUNS and rusticated a number of students' union leaders and lecturers. But rather than immobilize the students, it galvanized them as they formed a new central organization-National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) – in 1979.

In responding to the contradiction between the state and the working classes in his tenure, 1976 – 79, General Obasanjo was also aware of the crisis of hegemony that may confront the state should the situation deteriorate. And so as if to paper over the cracks, the administration embarked on social projects that were not only of massive capital requirement but also of doubtful productive value. As Pious Okigbo noted:

> *General Obasanjo, so patently anxious to appear popular, and so determined to leave behind him a number of moments to his administration, seemed to have lost the spirit of the movement that swept him and his colleagues into office. The last three years of the military administration, 1976-79, was characterized by a charade of incoherent, inconsistent, ill thought out policies often superficially well motivated but often so wrong in ultimate objectives. In these three last years, the breakdown of discipline became complete and total. The military on the eve of their departure bequeathed to the nation an ill-governed country, a restless and disorderly society... many abandoned projects and a country in which corruption has practically become a way of life (Okigbo, 1985:11-12).*

1.09 THE PRESS

The term "press" as used here merely refers to newspaper and magazines. These are some of the major media of social communication actively involved in processing and mediating reality and, presenting same as news, seen here as "timely account of events in society". The have, so to say, a direct bearing on routine definition of reality on a broad basis. They are, in addition, visibly the most actively deployed agency of the socio-cultural moment of hegemony in contemporary times (more on this later). The decision to focus on newspapers and magazines in this study is explained below

As a distinct pattern of social relationship, human communication with or without inter-mediation is invariably as aspect of the dominant property relation in capitalism and therefore, a site of the class struggle. The press as productive ventures are therefore components of capitalist private property and are avenues through which surplus value is appropriated. They exist in their individuality also as units of capitalist power relations like the factory. They produce commodities in the form of (cultural) messages that have triple value: use, exchange and ideological. Such messages go into shaping opinions about reality. Media organizations, especially news agencies sell messages to newspapers, magazines and radio and television houses for onward delivery to readers, listeners and viewers. But more importantly such cultural commodities (messages) are skewed in favour of the ruling classes in terms of perspective, volume, language, mode and format of presentation etc. Herein lies, the ideological content/character of these cultural commodities. To this extent therefore, the class struggle is alive in the mass media just as it is in the factory, classrooms football pitch and the theatre.

In respect to the class distribution of the press in Nigeria all the newspapers and magazines without exception make no claim to articulating, championing nor protecting the interest of the dominated class - workers and peasants and their dependents. To this extent therefore, the term 'press' is used here for aft the newspapers and magazines published and

distributed in this country and which, as it has been alluded above, are overwhelmingly, bourgeois in philosophy. In this study, use in our sample will be made only of newspapers by virtue of their periodicity as dailies as against magazines that are weeklies; circulation figures which run into several thousands and are relatively more than that of newsmagazine. Other criteria used in selecting the newspapers are ownership in terms of government and private as well as location of publication. For these reasons, newspapers appear to play more role, as they are more frequently deployed, in social communication and consequently enhance the process of hegemony through what Golding describes as "conferring status and validity on issues in the polity and setting the agenda for political and cultural debate" (Golding, 1982:102).

Furthermore, it was clearly underscored earlier here that hegemony is located within the civil, as against political society at the level of the superstructure. And Bates was succinct in describing civil society as a market place of ideas in which intellectuals play a great role.

> *Civil society is the marketplace of ideas, where intellectuals enter "as salesmen " of contending cultures. The intellectuals succeed in creating hegemony to the extent that they extend the world views of the rulers to the ruled and hereby secure the 'free " consent of the masses to the law and order of the land To the extent that the intellectuals fail to create hegemony, the ruling class falls back on the state's coercive apparatus which disciplines those who do not "consent"... (Bates, 1975.-353).*

Thus, in the words of Golding by "conferring status and validity on issues in the polity and setting the agenda for political and cultural debate". the press therefore actively

intervenes in processing these ideas and disseminating them throughout society. Ben Bagdikian has, in examining this process of conferring status, validity and agenda setting, identified three stages in selecting the news:

1. - an editor decides that a certain scene should be looked at as the site of a newsworthy event;
2. - a reporter decides what is worthy of notice on that scene; and
3. - editors decide how to treat and place the resulting story (Bagdikian cited in Gitlin, 1980:258).

Consequently, we argue here that by establishing the direction of press reports (news, features, editorials, pictures and cartoons), we can establish the specific and general role of the press in the process of regime legitimation and eventually hegemony in the Babangida years.

1.10 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

This is a study about the crisis of hegemony, which rocked the administration of General Ibrahim Babangida in general and particularly, the role of the press therein. One significance of this study therefore is that the finding may stimulate similar curiosity among scholars to focus on the role of other moments and agencies of hegemony. This is because, as it has been stressed earlier,]Hegemony is a process involving a multitude of agencies. It is therefore of scholarly interest to explore the specific nature of each agency contribution in the process.

Similarly, the finding may excite the interest of scholars and students of media studies to focus on the same agency in a future study within a different historical time period within

the same society. Any such scholarly work may, together with this one, provide pioneering grounds for comparison of a longitudinal nature.

Yet it is not enough to study how dominant social groups prosecute their hegemonic campaigns as this study shall show even if limited only to the Babangida period. It is also critical to point out the extent to which the finding may be relevant in formulating strategies in favour of the dominated classes in their struggle for democracy and national liberation. Herein lies, one more significance of this study.

1.11 LIMITATION OF STUDY

It has earlier been pointed out that the sample of the press on which a content analysis

will be undertaken in the course of this study shall exclude the electronic and wire media. This is due primarily though not exclusively to the fact that although licenses to the effect of diversifying ownership of (mainly) the broadcast media were issued during Babangida's tenure yet by the time of his exit no such stations had become operational. These private stations cannot therefore be credited with any role so to say in the process of the struggle for hegemony under Babangida. Notwithstanding this however, one broadcast station, the Ogun State Radio and Television Corporation-was closed down on the orders of the Federal Military Government for being too critical especially over the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential election. This figure is however too insignificant to represent the magnitude of diversity of opinion within the broadcast industry, particularly, on the problem of legitimacy in the Babangida years.

Another limitation of this study is that although we focus on the press, this is not to disregard the fact that other institutions also played critical roles in the process of legitimation/delegitimation in the period under review. Mention must be made of the trade

unions and the schools that were hotbeds of opposition to Babangida's regime throughout its tenure. The choice of the press in this study is therefore not to under estimate the role played by those other agencies. The choice is simply for academic interest.

In addition, the study covers only eight years between August 1985 when Babangida came to power and August 1993 when he left the scene. This does not however mean that history can be cut out and dried as such, rather, the Babangida tenure is seen as a product of a continuous process of historical developments. Thus, while recognizing the Babangida period as a product of history, our focus shall be on his tenure if only to serve as an attempt to understand (the process of a phenomenon which became so manifest in the period.

Furthermore, although the study covers the period 1985-1993, this is not however, to suggest that the crisis of hegemony was resolved with the exit of Babangida. On the contrary, in fact, the same scenario kept unfolding under Abacha. However, our choice of Babangida's tenure should be seen primarily in terms of the necessity of circumscribing scholarly work, including this one, to temporal limitations. In other words, this study should be seen as one whose product may be extended through future research beyond the period currently under consideration.

Finally, it is regrettable that only General Babangida, among leading members of the administration, was interviewed. Series of efforts to interview Prince Tony Momoh, Babangida's longest Minister of Information and Culture from 1986 - 1990 and Chief Alex Akinyele failed. While Mr. Momoh was recovering from injuries sustained in an armed robbery attack, Chief Akinyele had had to be rescheduling our appointments on account of his tight engagements. As for Babangida's political advisers notably Professors Sam Oyovbaire and Adiele Jinadu and Dr. Tunji Olagunju, use has been made of books they have either edited, prefaced or introduced on the general during which their views on relevant aspects of the study were appreciated. However, it may be reasoned that the interview with general

Babangida who was the central actor in the administration provided much needed insight into the actions and views of the administration on the process under study.

1.12 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

This study is organized into seven chapters. Chapter one, which is introductory, establishes the basis of the interest in the research area and identifies the specific problems the study would tackle. It goes further to give a general outline of the research design including the theoretical framework, definition of concepts and significance of the study. Chapter two, which is titled: Foundation and Evolution of the Nigerian press forms the thrust of the literature review. It touches on the social character of the press since inception through to the Babangida years, depicting specifically its potential and real role in the process of hegemony in the same period. Chapter three established the politico-economic context of the study.

Chapter four, five and six are empirical in nature and they revolve each round a content analysis of press coverage of three respective issues: the August 27, 1985 military coup that ushered in the Babangida years; a selection of cardinal policies and programmes of the Babangida administration from 1985 - 1991 and; a selection of cardinal policies and programmes of the same administration from 1992 through to 1993 when Babangida left office respectively. Crucial to these three empirical chapters is the desire to establish the role of the press in the processes of legitimation as a prelude to hegemony using the character of coverage of the three set of events in the period under review as demonstration of their disposition towards the Babangida administration and its policies and programmes in the period under review.

Chapter seven which is conclusive, apart from summing up the finding of the three empirical chapters in the shadows of the two earlier others, wraps up by extrapolating the

factors and conditions underlying the failure of Babangida's legitimation project while at the same time documenting the relevant implications of same for politics beyond Babangida.

1.13 SUMMARY

In the foregoing presentation, effort is done to outline the corpus of this study. Specifically, the study aims at documenting and explaining the process of hegemony in the tenure of General Ibrahimm Babangida and relying on that, establish the general and specific role of the press therein. Accordingly, the operational notion of hegemony inherent here is that it is a form of social consciousness borne of a conflictual relationship manifest in intellectual and moral leadership exercised at the political economic and socio-cultural levels of society by the dominant group which, along with domination based on force, constitute the necessary condition for the possession, consolidation, sustenance and exercise of power.

The hypotheses, methodology, operational definition of critical concepts, significance and limitation of study were also outlined in this chapter.

In the next chapter focus will be on the foundation and evolution of the Nigerian press and their place and role over time down to the tenure of General Ibrahim Babangida.

CHAPTER TWO

FOUNDATION AND EVOLUTION OF THE NIGERLAN PRESS

2.01 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, what follows is a documentation of the historical conditions that led to the foundation of the first newspaper in Nigeria marking the birth of the Mass Communication sector as one of the agencies and institutions at the socio-cultural moment of hegemony which, in the words of Golding (1982:102) are actors in the political and industrial institutions; explanators of other institutions; information brokers and; agenda setters in public discourse by conferring status and validity on public issues and values.

The subsequent portion of the chapter is devoted to an exposition of the evolution of the press in the country and its place and role in the process of hegemony.

2.02 COLONIAL PRODUCTION RELATIONS

The transformation of the pre-colonial economy into a colonial production relation involves what Onimode calls a "transitional conjunction" which is a process involving two stages: first, a violent struggle for colonization which the British had accomplished throughout the country by 1906 and; second, an economic struggle where various institutional means - such as unequal exchange, wage labour, taxation, forced labour, decree, etc - were mobilized to destroy the non-capitalist pre-colonial economy (Onimode, 1983:38).

Since the formal colonization of Nigeria, the main thrust of British economic policy was essentially the progressive transformation of the colony into a producer and exporter of primary goods to feed British industrial requirement for raw materials and a veritable overseas market for the finished products. The logic through cyclical was thus to institutionalize the production of primary goods which would be exported and the peasant producers would get money in return. Their capacity to conswne finished industrial products

would be thus enhanced and their living condition would also improve. It was therefore, evident that the goal of the colonial production relations was to exploit the colonial producer at two levels: the appropriation of the production of their surplus labour in the production process and- appropriation through unequal exchange.

In the agricultural sector, British policy emphasized the cultivation of cash crops mainly for export. Such crops as palm-oil and kernel cocoa, cotton, groundnuts, rubber, citrus fruits, kolanuts, beni-seeds and shea-butter and hides and skins all featured prominently.

Cocoa was introduced into South Western Nigeria from the island of Fernando Po in 1874 and by 1887, the colonialists had ventured into establishing cocoa nurseries for distribution to farmers (Onimode, 1983:43). Rubber received a boost with the demise of Brazilian exports by 1900 (Onimode, 1983:44).

Cotton and groundnuts, both had long history of cultivation in Northern Nigeria preceding the arrival of European traders. In fact, the former was widely used for hand woven cloth making which, as a small-scale industry in the pre-colonial economy, was evident from the Kingdom of Borno down South to Ijebu-Ode in Yorubaland.

To ensure that African peasants got on with the cultivation of those export crops, the colonial economy had to be monetized. Two developments made this process possible: the introduction of a unified currency as a legal tender in place of the numerous others - couriers, manilla coins, barter, etc - in the pre-colonial economy; and, the imposition of various taxes in this uniform currency to finance colonial public administration. The introduction in 1894 of Banking services with the arrival of Standard Bank of England, now First Bank, accelerated the process of monetizing the colonial economy.

The construction of the colonial economy also witnessed the ruthless liquidation of African middlemen. In the coastal flanks of the oil rivers, African middlemen such as King

Jaja of Opobo, Nana Olomu of Ebrohimi in Itsekiririland, and the Brassmen of Nembe for instance, sometimes called "oil princes", emerged by 1860 to mediate in the palm oil and kernel trade between producers in the hinterland and European traders along the coast. These oil princes, nay heads of trading houses, resisted the British incursion in the second half of the 19th century, a posture the colonialists failed to countenance. Through a combination of dubious treaties and physical might, these middlemen were totally sub-dued and their roles taken over by foreign trading companies. Notable among these were, United African Company (UAC), John Holt, Lever Brothers, Company of African Merchants, Anglo African Company, African Merchants of Bristol, Royal Niger Navigation and Trading Company and Merchants of London - Liverpool Trading to West Coast of Africa were all British (see Dike 1960 for more on this).

The trading companies relied on the various commodity marketing boards to control the sources of production, rule out any competition and manipulate the pricing mechanism in their favour. Mention may be made of Cocoa Marketing Board established in 1947 and Cotton Marketing Board, Groundnut Marketing Board and Palm Produce Marketing Boards in 1949 among others (Onimode; 1983:50). These Boards were later regionalized depending on the commodities and their respective areas of production.

Under the Marketing Board system, a new form of middle - manship emerged. The producer was expected first of all to sell their produce to individuals who very often pay prices lower than official rates. These individuals, who operated as agents, turned over what they purchased to the trading companies who were the official and accredited agents of the Marketing Boards. These trading companies would feed the marketing boards who were all organized into the central marketing board based in Lagos. At the international level there was the London based Nigerian produce marketing company which arranged shipment for onward sale at the so-called world market (Onimode, 1983:50). African middlemen were at

best incorporated into the colonial commercial network as junior agents supervised by the trading companies.

To accelerate the transportation of bulk to the coastal areas, the colonial administration embarked on the construction of roads and rail lines across the country. These projects were executed through a combination of forced labour and high taxation. By 1929, a total of 1265 miles of rail lines had been laid (Ekandare 1973) in addition to over 6,000 miles of road network already in place by 1926 (Onimode; 1983:45).

In the mining and mineral sector, foreign multi-national Companies were involved as early as 1900. Tin and columbite were mined in the Bauchi - Jos Plateau; coal in Enugu, salt in Muri and on a smaller scale silver, lead, petroleum and diamond (Onimode, 1983:53-54).

Thus, on the whole, contrary to what was evident in the pre-colonial economy which was predominantly based on internal dynamics of operation, the new colonial economy, based on capitalist production relations, was now essentially responsive to external dynamics, i.e., the moods of the British economy. This situation, is widely referred to as the effective incorporation of the Nigerian economy into a global capitalist economy though occupying an inferior status as producer of primary goods, source of cheap labour and consumer of western manufactured products - within the inherent international capitalist division of labour

Again, African traders, Eke their educated counterparts were at best incorporated as subordinates rather than equals within the colonial system They were both victims of discrimination, an experience that was to launch them into the nationalist struggles in the post second world war years.

It must also be stressed that the development of the colonial production relations provided the material and institutional foundations for the development of the subsequent neocolonial political economy in the post independence period (Williams, 1980:33). The Marketing Board system remained in place even after independence but this time "to finance

party political activities, line their (indigenous rulers') pockets, accumulate money capital and finance industrial development both directly and indirectly. Thus, the Marketing Boards could be used to finance industrial developments and establish an indigenous capitalist class" (Williams, 1980:33).

The post war international capitalist system witnessed the ascension of the U.S. to a position of prominence over Britain which suffered 'relatively heavier losses and emerged exhausted. The U.S. was to cash on Britain's relative weakness after the war to insist on the right of self-determination for all colonies; a pressure which Britain could not withstand. It would be to the glory of American post war economic policy that colonial barriers be done away with in favour of an open - door policy for free competition in overseas markets.

In 1947, with a new Labour Government in place, Britain begun the process that would eventually lead to the decolonization of Nigeria. Through series of constitutional conferences, a constitutional framework was worked out for the subsequent devolution of power. This framework ruled out any likelihood of radical transformation of the colonial production relations to reflect the needs and aspirations of an independent Nigeria. The rudiments of radical indeed socialist, politics manifest in the activities of the Zikist movement and a section of the trade unions were seriously discountenanced by the colonial administration as much as the colonial petty bourgeois politicians.

The commencement of party politics witnessed the formation of parties along regional inclination. The Egbe Omo Oduduwa, a cultural group of Yoruba descendants of Oduduwa metamorphosed into Action Group in March 1951. Similarly, Jamiyyar Mutanen Arewa another cultural group based in Northern Nigeria transformed into the Northern Peoples Congress in October, 195 1. The National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons (later of Nigerian Citizens) founded in 1944 as the first national political party became increasingly bogged down into the affairs of the Ibo State Union based in Eastern Nigeria.

These three petty-bourgeois political parties were complemented by the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) formed in 1950 as a radical petty bourgeois political organization whose philosophy was the liberation of the talakawa.

During the Independence elections of 1959, with the exception of the NEPU, each of the three bourgeois parties captured power in its region of origin. Central power was narrowly won by the NPC but which nevertheless entered into a coalition of some sort with the NCNC -

On October 1, 1960, Nigeria became independent with NPC's Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa as Prime Minister, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe of NCNC was Governor General and Chief Obafemi Awolowo of AG as Leader of Opposition. In 1963, Nigeria became a Republic and the title of Governor - General was converted to President.

As Gavin Williams noted, political power was thus successfully devolved to the local bourgeoisie who now commanded resources both human and material to determine state policy at the regional and national levels (Williams 1980:38).

2.03 CLASS AND CLASS STRUGGLE IN THE COLONIAL POLITICAL ECONOMY

It is no longer necessary to embark on a rebuttal of the often heard theory of classlessness in contemporary African societies. For one, such an exercise is belated as copious literature already exist on this matter (Williams, 1980; Nzimiro, 1980; Onimode, 1980, 1985). Rather, we shall proceed from our position, articulated earlier on, that to understand the class composition of any given society, and the conflicts between and among these classes which is the propellant of their social history, it is necessary to examine the mode/modes of production evident in the society under consideration. In doing this, attention must be paid to the ownership of the means of production and the character of the relations of production as the specific condition of deciphering the class composition of the society at issue and the conflict between and among them.

Accordingly, we have examined the basic configuration of the colonial political economy. In the process we have observed that under colonialism, Britain controlled the economic, political and cultural life of Nigeria. She had absolute jurisdiction by virtue of conquest, over the material wealth, real and potential of the country. Britain also exercised supreme political juridical and ideological (cultural and educational) powers within the territory.

To this extent therefore, the British Imperialist State had, through colonial conquest, extended its authority over the country. In other words, Nigeria came under the absolute authority of the British imperialist state. It supplanted, through forceful means, the assortment of slave and feudal modes of production dominant in the Kingdoms and city states out of whose demise the colony and protectorate of Nigeria was forged.

Consequently, the British imperialist state deployed its agents - such as the Governor General - Regional Governors, Lt-Governors, Residents and Divisional Officers in addition to several directors and heads of administrative departments - to exercise formal political authority in the country. These were joined by agents of leading imperialist commercial/industrial firms operating as produce buyers and sellers of manufactured goods, banking representatives, representatives of private capitalist mining companies and hordes of missionaries. These came together to constitute the colonial state in Nigeria.

The British imperialist bourgeoisie aided though to a lesser extent by those of France, Germany, Portugal Lebanese, Syrians, Yamanis constituted the dominant class in the Nigerian colonial political economy. This class owned, in various ways, the means of production. They had absolute authority over land and mineral resources and technology (though this was largely left undeveloped) and using state policy, controlled the deployment of labour. In addition, by virtue of this control, they exercised the capacity to appropriate the surplus labour of the working classes.

Beneath this class there was the class of those people who were created by and/or co-opted to, serve the needs of the imperialist state. This class included the educated Nigerians who met the requirements for middle level bureaucrats to man the expanding administrative structures of the state; their counterparts at the middle levels of the colonial commercial concerns as well as the traditional rulers - Emirs, Obas, Warrant Chiefs - who now collected taxes for the colonial administration and conscripted forced labour for the mines, construction projects and the colonial army.

All these together, which formed the colonial petty bourgeois class, were bound together as a class by their role as employed servants of the imperialist state, a means through which they all derived their income.

The third social class within the colonial political economy was the working class. Central here were the peasant farmers. These were the subsistence cultivators and tillers of the land. They were the producers of the cash crops - palm oil and kernel cocoa, rubber, cotton, groundnuts etc - that formed the bases of the colonial economy and the key items of the legitimate trade. These commodities were needed as raw materials to feed the needs of British industries. This stratum of the working class was the most ruthlessly appropriated as pointed out while examining the Marketing Board system more-so; as the colonial economy was essentially reliant on subsistence agriculture. Industrial and technological growth initiated by the imperial State for the sake of transforming the colonial forces of production was virtually insignificant. In fact, even the technology to intermediate between these peasant subsistence farmers and the objects of their labour remained as crude in almost all spheres.

Miners especially of tin and columbine at the Bauchi - Jos Plateau, the Enugu coal miners and numerous others - gold, petroleum, salt and diamond, virtually relied on skeletal but essentially labour intensive technologies. Conscripts deployed to construction projects as

in laying railway lines, building Motor ways and residential estate for colonial administrators were all made to work with crude technologies that were also labour intensive.

These workers in the mines and construction projects formed the second stratum of the working class in the colonial political economy. Like their counterparts in agriculture, they were ruthlessly exploited as they were basically conscripts and were poorly paid. They were kept in camps, made to work long hours on barely subsistence wages. Until the dawn of the second world war these workers were not unionized and so, they were unable to fight for basic trade union rights, a little less agitate for improved working condition, better wages, pension scheme and humane working hours among others.

These were the three major social classes borne of the colonial political economy. Given the process of its construction, and the subsequent consolidation and development of new capitalist production relations there were bound to be numerous intra and inter class disagreements, conflicts, frictions-in other words contradiction. These contradictions, which sometimes broke into open confrontations, existed at various levels. For instance the contradiction between the new dominant capitalist class within the ascending capitalist mode of production and the erstwhile feudal Lords and slave masters of the obsolescent feudal and slave modes prevalent in the erstwhile pre-colonial Kingdoms and city states was manifest, into violent confrontations and wars spanning several decades across the country resulting in the defeat of the latter. Similarly, the contradiction between the colonial capitalist class and the indigenous petty bourgeoisie nurtured the seeds of the nationalist struggles from the 1920s.

However, the principal contradiction of the colonial political economy was between the colonial state and the working classes over the effective attainment of the goal of imperialist colonial acquisition i.e., to exploit the material and human resources of the colony to serve the needs of British imperialism

2.04 THE FOUNDATION OF THE PRESS

In the subsequent portion of this chapter, effort shall be made to examine some aspects

of the class struggles within the colonial political economy in relation to first, the emergence of the mass media and; second, sowing the seeds of nationalist struggle for independence in the country.

Although students of media studies in Nigeria have written copiously on the origin of the mass media in the country there are, unarguably, areas of agreement as well as disagreement in their respective accounts.

For instance there is marked agreement on the chronology of events light from 1846 when the first printing press in Nigeria was established in Calabar in the South East by the Reverend Hope Wadell of the Church of Scotland Mission through to the foundation of the Iwe Irohin fun awon ara Egba ati Yoruba (the newspaper for the Egba people and Yoruba) in Abeokuta by the Reverend Henry Townsend of the English Church Missionary Society in 1859 down to the contemporary proliferation of newspapers in the country. Again, there is high concurrence on the identity of personages associated with the foundation of various newspapers within the same period.

However, there appears to be room for divergence of opinion on the interpretation of the historic event that the founding of the newspaper in the country was and its significance to the future course of history in the country, indeed of the West African coast.

For example, writing about the Rev. Townsend and the processes leading to the foundation of the newspaper, Duyile said:

> ***On** 17th December 1842 he arrived at Badagry and worked with many Sierra Leonian Fred slaves and the natives of Badagry...*

> *Rev Townsend left for Abeokuta where he lived the rest of his missionary life, and there in 1854 he established a small printing press. Five years after he set up an African Christian newspaper the 'Iwe Irohin'...*
>
> *His motive among others was to excite the intelligence of the people in his area of operation and to get them to read (Duyile 1987:6).*

Simialarly, Omu has also written about the missionary linkage in the genesis of the newspaper press in Nigeria. He stated that the missionaries.

> *embarked upon programmes of western education and general enlightenment in Sierra Leone and subsequent in what became the colonies of Nigeria, Gold Coast, Gambia. Their most enduring weapon was the school but journalism played an important role. The newspaper had been established as an essential instrument of mission work outside Britain as a result of the effective use which the British. humanitarian movement made of it in mobilizing support for their programmes (Omu, 1978:6).*

Both scholars appear to conceive of the newspaper merely as an instrument for the attainment of the goal of missionary activity, specifically evangelism and humanitarianism Even on the few instance,, when allusion is made of the political role of the Iwe Irohin, it is done, more often than not, in the narrow context of Egba politics (for instance, see Duyile, 1987:16).

Again, it seems both scholars do not recognize the extraordinary, connection between the activities of the Christian missions and the goals of colonialism In other words, they conceive of Christian missionary work as purely for the mind and soul while colonialism was

for the politics and economy as a result of which their relationship is depicted in a superficial at best administrative manner.

In other words, both scholars have hardly gone beyond the Christian missionary activity in explaining the origin of the newspaper press. Again, they interpret the historic foundation of the newspaper and its significance to the future course of events in that limited context too,

Consequently, their accounts which I term as the ecumenical theory of origin of the press, tend to miss the essence of the development and thus, stopped short of being, properly historical.

To understand the foundation of the newspaper press,, indeed the entire mass media, it must be situated in a proper historical context, specifically in the context of the class struggle that engendered colonialism and the establishment of the capitalist mode of production in Nigeria. Accordingly, we shall attempt to show that the foundation of the Iwe Irohin just Eke the deployment of Sierra-Leonian ex-slaves to Badagry and subsequently, Lagos and Abeokata was part of the process of establishing the structures of colonialism Thus, notwithstanding the missionary background of its founders, the Iwe Irohin was primarily *though not exclusively a political instrument for the articulation, propagation, coordination* and defense of imperialist ideology in Egbaland. In other words, Iwe Irohin was, in essence established "to mobilize the minds and ideas of people, over time to accept and adopt capitalist values and practices" (Ibrahim; 1981).

Elsewhere in this chapter, we have suggested that if, as it were, the goal of *colonialism was the rabid appropriation of the human and material resources of the colony*, then British incursion, indeed intervention into local African affairs in the 19th century which was widely hinged on humanitarianism and evangelism; in effect however, merely found ideological legitimation in them.

European presence along the west African coast was already remarkable by the advent of the 19th century. The British were significant in Barthurst (now Banjul), Freetown, Gold Coast, Badagry and Lagos; the French in Dakar, Goree, Quidah, Porto Novo etc; Portuguese in the Island of Sao Thome and Guinea and Bissau; the Spanish in Equational Guinea while the Germans were in Lome and together with the British and French in the Niger basin.

By the first half of the 19th century elements of unhealthy rivalries among these imperialist powers for the acquisition of fertile territories were becoming evident. Mention may be made of the Franco/German and British rivalry in the Niger Basin by the 1870s; a matter which pushed Britain into granting a Royal Charter to Sir George Goldie's Royal Niger Company (RNC) in 1882 to organize and strengthen her economic activities in the area. By 1884 the RNC had succeeded in Pushing out the French and Germans from the area (Onimode, 1983:32).

Thus, the second half of the century witnessed intensive imperialist bickering with coastal middlemen. Through trickish treaties combined with gun-boat diplomacy various European powers were able to extend their spheres of influence into the hinterland. The 1884/85 Berlin Conference for the partition of Africa among the leading imperialist powers was conceived primarily to regulate intra-imperialist rivalries in the process of African colonization.

For Britain, therefore, with an established role as anti-slavery crusader and, with traditional commitment to the settler colony of Sierra Leone which she founded since 1787, she evolved a policy of utilizing these ex-slaves who had widely attained literacy and proficiency in various trades and along with these attained exposure to imperialist ideology and values to promote British imperial interest along the coast and in the hinterland. It was therefore not surprising that barely 14 years after the foundation of Sierra - Leone, the officers of the Sierra Leone company (who were administering the territory before it was re-

designated a colony in 1808) established The Royal Gazette in 1801 (Omu 1978:5). This newspaper, which was the first along the West African coast, existed up till 1827 (Omu, 1978:5).

Fyfe has reported that at its best, The Royal Gazette, which was later renamed The Royal Gazette and Sierra Leone Advertiser in the 1920s, carried local news, advertisements, poems, letters and accounts of fashionable He in Freetown (Fyfe, 1957). These reports, undoubtedly capitalistic, related to activities of the Europeans and the settlers rather than those of the local inhabitants.

It was probably the successful experience of Sierra Leone that encouraged General (Sir) Charles Macarthy, Governor of the Gold Coast settlements to establish The Royal Gold Coast Gazetter in 1822.

Thus, both in Sierra Leone and Gold Coast (now Ghana) the administration effectively pioneered the foundation of the newspaper. It was probably due to the successes of these government Initiatives in both Sierra Leone and Gold Coast, that the British Imperialist state devised a new strategy (probably to conceal its direct involvement at this early attempt) at penetrating the hinterland, by relying on Christian missions assisted by Sierra Leonian emigrants in Badagry, Lagos and Abeokuta in Yorubaland to prosecute the twin ideological function of education and evangelism, indeed journalism, for future colonial penetration. For as Onimode noted:

> *... the impact of Christian ideology imposed on West Africa after the 15th, Century which facilitated the penetration of imperialist values also effected cultural alienation to the extent that it still persists today, Christian missionaries were cultural agents of mechantilist imperialism (Onimode; 1983:25).*

Consequently, both Rev. Hope Wadell and Rev. Hem-y Townsend, who had both been in Sierra Leone, left for Badagry in 1842 to continue to work among Sierra Leonian emigrants. From Badagry Hope Wadell moved to Calabar in the south east where he established the rest printing press in 1846. Townsend, moved to Abeokuta in the South West. In 1854, like Wadell, he established a printing press and; five years later he begun the Iwe Irohin as a vernacular newspaper for the Egbas and the Yorubas. The initiative was successful such that a year later an English supplement was added (Omu, 1978:7).

Allusions have also been made about the quality, of the content of Iwe Irohin which was said to be in favour of the Egba point of view. In an account in which Ade Ajayi lamented the destruction of the Iwe Irohin in the anti-European Ifole riots of 1867 in Egbaland, he said

> *It was a spontaneous uprising... libraries were destroyed, harmonium broken down, and the printing works where the "Iwe Irohin" had so often proclaimed the Egba point of view was destroyed (Ajayi, cited in Duyile, 1987:21).*

Similarly, Suburi Biobaku has commented on Townsend's activities in Egbaland.

> *Townsend's prestige touched its zenith. He was not only the amanuensis of the Egba 'nation' but he was regarded as the author of their deliverance from the Dahomi. Henceforth, he must be acknowledged as the real architect of Egba policy toward the British.*

> *His objective was peace in which missionary and other civilizing influences might flourish and the great obstacle which must be overcome was the foreign slave trade (Biobaku cited in Duyile 1987.-25).*

But if as it has been claimed that Iwe Irohin was even the amanuensis of the Egba nation, then why was it victimized in the Ifole anti-European riots of 1867? If it had so much as defended Egba against Dahomi as Biobaka claimed why was Iwe Irohin, indeed Townsend, reluctant to support the same Egba in their claim to areas near Lagos as part of their frontier against the British, by now firmly entrenched in Lagos?

A statement by George Townsend immediate brother to Hem-y Townsend and one of his biographers, is revealing at least in establishing the initial motive behind the establishment of Iwe Irohin:

> *The Publication of 'Iwe Irohin' shows what was attempted among the secondary means of introducing new life and thought in Africa, Thus Leadingup to the grand idea of substituting lawful tariff for that of the trade in human creatures,* with all its horrible commitments, a *consummation devoutly to be washed (stress mine) (Townsend, cited in Duyile, 1987:23).*

Thus, from George it is clear that Iwe Irohin was in fact, primarily a means of introducing new life and thought, i.e., those acquiescent of the goal of British imperial presence in the west coast and in Nigeria; and 'leading up to the development of British economic activities' substituting lawful tariff for that of the trade in human creatures. Thus

the promotion of the ideological and economic prosperity of (British) imperialism were the twin factors underlying the foundation of the Iwe Irohin (see Ibrahim 1983 for more on this).

2.05 STATE, ECONOMY AND SOCIETY IN COLONIIAL NIGERIA

It was earlier indicated that one of the levels of the class struggle within the colonial political economy was between the imperialist colonial state on the one hand and the obsolescent pre-colonial dominant classes rooted in the feudal (as with the Emirs of the Sokoto Caliphate and Obas of the city states of Yorubaland and Benin) and slave modes of production (as with the slave masters of Aro country and parts of the oil rivers and old Calabar). Yet another level of class struggle was between the imperialist colonial state on the one hand and the petty bourgeoisie mainly members of the fast growing African intelligentsia. It was the development of the class struggle at each of these two major levels that would shape the future course of development in relation to the state, mass media and society in colonial Nigeria up till 1960.

Duyile has reported that after Iwe Irohin the birth of Robert Campell's The Anglo-African on June 6, 1863 had slightly introduced a critical element in newspaper content. He stated that The Anglo-Africa: "devoted its front pages to publishing adverts, notices and announcements. It carried local news, and a lot of editorials dealing with issues of those years. It was ahead of Townsend's Iwe Irohin "in news coverage and editorial issues" (Duyile, 1987:29). It must be pointed out that Campbell's slightly critical posture may have been informed by the frustrating ordeals of the educated African intelligentsia, the colonial petty bourgeoisie, in the face of discrimination- an experience which, for instance explains why Campbell was highly critical of Townsend in the latter's conflict with Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther (Omu, 1978:2 1). Omu has intact observed that:

> *In the 1960s the African intellectuals who had hitherto cooperated with the missionaries as the only means by which they could pave way for the creation of a modem African nation were becoming disillusioned and frustrated. They were finding it increasingly difficult to reconcile missionary protestations of Christian ethics with evidences of glaring hypocrisy... (Omu, 1978:21).*

Following the demise of the Anglo-African on December 30, 1865 no publication was issued until the 1880s' (Duyile 1987:31). It must be pointed out that at this period the internal politics of Yorubaland, Benin, the Aro country, the oil rivers and Old Calabar display evidence of massive internal decay. Aspects of this decay have already been documented earlier on here. On the other hand, the British colonial state was not prepared to brook any African leader impeding their advancement into the hinterland.

Thus from the annexation of Lagos in 1862 the struggle between these two social classes within the colonial political economy was eventually to be resolved in favour of the imperialist colonial bourgeoisie. Formal colonial authority was proclaimed through the colony and protectorate of Nigeria by the first decade of the 20th century.

During this process, the African intelligentsia was predominantly acquiescent of the calculations of the imperialist colonial state. For, having been socialized into Western capitalist values through education, the African intelligentsia initially took up jobs within the colonial bureaucracy, at the Ports and commercial establishments, schools and Christian nfissions. Others opted to be self employed either as technicians, legal and medical practitioners and journalists among others.

The intelligentsia was led, through their process of immersion into aspiring in the future, to enjoy the rights and privileges of their contemporaries in Europe-such as equality of opportunities, freedom against discrimination, freedom of speech and assorted liberal democratic values. Their experience of discrimination in the colonial service, commerce and even in the missions was to push them into a radical reappraisal:

> *... the frustrations of educated Africans which had been gathering momentum from the 1860s, and the keen competition which became a feature of commerce from the 1870s was added the growing circulation of learning and the eruption of nationalist and intellectual favour in the 1880s and after.. (Omu, 1978:21).*

Thus, the 1880s through to the 1920s into 30s saw the beginning of sporadic agitation by the colonial petty bourgeoisie especially the intelligentsia. Excluded from the colonial executive council, repressed in the legislature, frustrated in the bureaucracy, commerce and the missions and schools, these educated Africans turned to journalism to challenge their oppressors. In the first phase which lasted up to the second world war, they were agitating for fairness, justice and equity within the colonial order but, in the second phase which proceeded from the post war years they demanded for national independence, to be free and sovereign within the comity of nations.

It was behind this background that the establishment of a plethora of newspapers in the country from the 1880s should be perceived and appreciated.

For a run down of the newspapers (including frequency, date of foundation, name of editor(s) and ownerships during the first phase of our classification - 1880-1937 (see Appendix I). In this period a total of 58 publications with varying frequencies were issued.

This figure did not include Christian missionary publications. 42 newspapers were published in Lagos while 16 were based in the hinterland. Of these newspapers, only seven were vernacular papers; the vast majority were in English language. Thus, Lagos had the concentration of the country's newspapers; a situation which has continued till today. Again, with English as the dominant language of communication in Nigerian newspapers, it means that du-ring the period under review, readership was limited to those literate in the English language, a proportion undoubtedly insignificant in relation to the overall population of the territories these newspapers were meant to serve.

Furthermore, all the 58 newspapers issued in the period under review were owned by members of the African intelligentsia. In very many cases, they served as owners and at the same time, editors of their respective newspapers. Being educated and skilled in various occupations, the views of the African intelligentsia were considered weighty in shaping public opinion. This is primarily because of their knowledge of the colonial system having been employees at various times in the colonial service. Some of them had crowned their educational attainments with degrees from England. These and many more were to broaden their focus relative to their under-privileged compatriots; thereby ascribing to them the duties of opinion leadership.

Thus, between 1880-1937, the process of colonization had assumed a ferocious dimension following the Berlin Conference of 1884/85, leading to the final imposition of colonial rule by the end of the first decade of the 20th century. Still in the same period, the colony and protectorate of southern Nigeria was merged with the protectorate of Northern Nigeria in a historic ceremony on January 1, 1914. The first World War (1914-1918) was also fought with Britain, a leading power in battle against Gem3any. Nigeria, just Eke other British colonies, felt the pinch of these war years.

At the political-administrative plane, several colonial administrators had come and gone. Notable among them were Walter Egerton (1903-1909); Frederick Lugard (1912-1919) and Hugh Clifford (1919-1925).

However, of all the numerous issues in this period, few if any had generated so much anxiety in the polity as the civil war in Yorubaland, crisis of legitimacy in the church and racism in the colonial service. It may be recalled that for 16 years between 1877-1893, peace had eluded Yorubaland. Ibadan had been locked in a war with a broad coalition including Egba, Ijebu, Ekiti, Ife and Ilorin. Never had so much pandemonium and anarchy permeated the region since the demise of Old Oyo in 1830. This situation had virtually paralyzed economic activity in Lagos which had always depended on commercial relations with the hinterland. From their colonial strong holds in Lagos and the Niger Basin, the British were reluctant to intervene. Yet the colonial petty bourgeoisie, especially the African intelligentsia begun to feel insecure. Using the newspapers as tribune, they campaigned for British intervention to end the war and restore normalcy or even extend British colonial sovereignty over the region.

For instance, early in the 1860s when both Ilaro and Ado were annexed to Lagos, the Weekly Record had described the action as "highly politic (sic) and satisfactory" (Weekly Record, 29/1891 cited in Omu, 1978:21). Following the same line of thinking, the Lagos Observer, one of the most dependable newspapers up till its demise in 1890, had, at the height of the civil war in 1884, appealed for British intervention assuring that the 'brethren on the mainland would really welcome the intervention of, a foreign power" (Lagos Observer, 28/2/1881, 24/4/1884 cited in Omu, 1978:120).

However, the newspapers were to denounce the British expedition against Kano in 1901 and Sokoto in 1903 and applauded the satiru rebellion against the British in 1906 (Omu, 1978:128). This conflicting posftffe may be attributed to the perception of the African

intelligentsia, most of whom were Saro, who regarded Yorubaland as ancestral home while Lagos was merely frontier. Hence any disquiet in Yorubalaild was of profound historical significance to them, far beyond mere considerations of economics and ideology. In addition, if the coalition of forces had over run Ibadan, then would it not be predictable that the security of Lagos may be endangered? There are valid grounds therefore to understand the posture of the newspapers on the issue of foreign intervention in Yorubaland.

On the other hand, Kano and Sokoto may be said to be of little direct consequence to the life of the average Saro. The newspapers could regard developments in these areas as matters of 'foreign affairs' which they could take advantage of to lambast British imperial policy.

There was also the crisis of legitimacy that gripped the Christian missions and, along with that, allegations of racism and racial discrimination in other facets of colonial service. Educated Africans who had gone through a long process of colony socialization, were beginning to come to terms with inequities characteristic of second class subjects. In the churches, school civil service and commerce; they were subjected to inferior treatment in relation to their European counterparts. This experience led to a feeling of resentment and frustration with the colonial system.

From the advent of the 20th century into the first two decades, the dominant themes in newspaper activity were cultural nationalism and anti-racism Cultural nationalism found expression in the popularization of traditional African names, attires, vernacular press and literature and the eventual Africanization of the church.

As for anti-racism scores of skilled Africans resigned their appointments in the colonial service in favour of journalism, now seen as a shriving alternative pre-occupation. But more importantly, journalism was now the latest avenue, after the schools and churches, for decisive 'counter-hegemonic' campaigns.

In 1905, the Lagos Aborigines Protection Society (LAPS) was formed to coordinate the straggle of the intelligentsia for equity, justice and fairness. Though LAPS fizzled out in 1908, yet it exemplified the yearning of the colonial petty bourgeoisie for an organizational platform to respond to the excesses of the imperialist colonial state.

The Amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates in 1914, and the advent of the first world war, were to set the ground for series of fiscal measures aimed at rendering the colony solvent but also to contribute towards shouldering the cost of the war. Notable among these measures were the introduction of water rates in Lagos and the plan for the extension to Southern Nigeria of the 1930 Land and Native Rights ordinance of Northern Nigeria which vested land. ownership in the Governor.

These measures generated great anxiety in the polity. The newspapers, the traditional institutions and market women protested in various ways against the measures. A floodgate of critical editorials were unleashed by the newspapers, signature campaigns were mounted and protest marches were organized. The slogan 'No taxation without representation' gained increased currency thereby elevating the agitation into a struggle for full political participation into the colonial political order.

This struggle resulted in the Clifford constitutional reform of 1922 which for the first time introduced the electoral principle in the country. The constitution made provision for a new legislative council with official and unofficial members in addition to four elected Nigerians (three for Lagos mid one for Calabar) seating. Subsequently in 1923, two political parties the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) founded by Herbert Macaulay and Thomas H. Jackson, both journalists and politicians and; the Union of Young Nigerian formed by Dr. Moses J. da Rocha, a medical practitioner and journalist of moderate persuasion emerged. The NNDP won all four seats.

In addition to bowing to pressure through constitutional reform the colonial state sought other ways of staving-off the vociferous press. Three methods may be discerned.

First, inducements to win the friendliness of newspaper owners. This was Manifest in granting adverts to augment the journal's financial base. For example, The Eagle and Lagos Critic, a monthly publication founded by Owen Emerick Macaulay, a grandson of Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther and Brotheir of Herbert Macaulay on March 31, 1883 was partially sustained by the adverts inserted by the administration of Lt-Governor W.B. Griffith, Moloney's predecessor (Omu, 1978:') 1). Similarly, Governor G. T. Carter was said to have arranged to place government notices worth 150 pounds sterling per year in the Lagos Wegkly Records. a foremost example of bellicose 1)ul)lic opinion in the last decade of the 19th century. The arrangement survived Carter's departure from Lagos in 1896 and was not terminated till 1900 (Omu, 1978:3'1-34).

The second method was for the colonial authorities to encourage friendly educated Nigerians to establish newspapers, understandably with an editorial policy that would not be caustic. Examples here include The Nigeria Pioneer and Daily Times. The Pioneer was established by a successful Lagos Lawyer Sir Kitoyi Ajasa. Omu reports that he was the most celebrated 'Black Englishman' of his time having had his post primary through University education in England. He was cricket captain in his Grammar School days when he won the respect of his peers. In Lagos, he endeared himself to the European population who reposed so much confidence in him that most of the merchants among them employed him as their counsel. For Ajasa, peaceful persuasion was a better way of getting government to redress grievances than violence and vituperation which displeased those in authority and destroyed all chances of success (Omu 1978:44-45). According to Allister McNOan, The Pioneer was founded following persuasion from Governor Egerton to get Ajasa to start a newspaper that would voice the opinions of both white and blacks (Allister Macmillan cited in Omu,

1978:48). The Daily Times was founded hi 1926 by Adeyemo Alaldja, a successful Lagos Lawyer who was foundation chairman of the Board, Richard Burrow, Chairman of the Lagos Chamber of Commerce, and Earnest Ikol@ who was founding editor. Ikoli once said that their aim was to fimd a daily in the tradition of The Tii-nes of London: "...our policy is to support government as much as possible" (Okoli cited in Omu, 1978:62).

The third method of silencing the critical press was through the law. Notable here were the newspaper ordinance of 1903 and the seditious offenses ordinance of 1909. The former imposed stiff financial requirements before establishing a newspaper while the latter made an editor liable for reports that cause or were likely to cause disaffection in the mind of readers against the colonial administration (Elias, 1972).

On the whole however, the struggle of the African intelligentsia was not geared in this period, at a fundamental restructuring of the colonial status of Nigeria nor was it aimed at a radical transformation of the colonial system. They essentially needed equity, justice and fair play within the colonial order.

In the second phase of our classification - 1937-1960 the second world war was perhaps the most critical event of the period with far-reaching impact on the country. In 1937, Nnamdi Azikiwe, then 33 years old, returned to Nigeria having successfully trained as a Political Scientist at Lincoln University U.S.A and distinguished himself as a University Professor, publicist and journalists He founded the West African Pilot in November as a newspaper chain that was to play a very active role in the future political process in the post war years. His paper became very successful and a strong moulder of public opinion against Nigeria's commitment to the war.

The colonial administration, which had earlier on in 1932 established a BBC relay station in Lagos up graded the facility into a Re-diffusion station in 1936. Similar facilities were commissioned in Ibadan, Enugu, Kaduna, and Kano all in a bid to strengthen official

propaganda media. In 195 1, these stations were reorganized into stations of the newly formed Nigeria Broadcasting Services (NBS). By an Act of Parliament in 1956, the NBS was fin-ther reorganized into the Nigeria Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) allegedly to give it a semblance of independence from direct government control (Nigeria Broadcasting Corp Ordinance, 1956).

In Northern Nigeria where the effect of the press was stiff not felt, the colonial administration took giant pre-emptive strides with the establishment in 1939 of the Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo, a vernacular mouth piece of the then Lt. Governor of the Region (Ibrahim, 1981). It was issued under the aegis of the Northern Literature Agency in Zaria. In 1944, Dr. Rupert M. East was commissioned by the regional administration to set up the Gaskiya Corporation to promote the printing and publication of vernacular reading matter on a large scale (Sanni, 1991).

In 1948, The Citizen was established as an English version of the Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo. In 1966 The citizen was renamed New Nigeria. Both Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo and New Nigeria were being issued at the instance of the colonial government, have till this day retained their pro-governent posture.

The Second World War ended in 1945. The USA and USSR emerged as global super powers. Both powers supported the struggle for self-determination of the colonial people of Africa and Asia; a development which instantly went against the grain of British colonial policy. This posture of the super powers, more especially the US, was a manifestation of the post-war contradiction within the international capitalist system Britain, now a relatively weaker power was anxiously looking forward to increased American aid for her post-war reconstruction. She was therefore, to set in motion series of constitutional reforms that were meant to lead to the independence of her overseas domains.

In 1948 both India and Pakistan attained independence. In 1954 Morocco followed suit. Three years later Ghana and a year later Guinea all became independent. These international developments were to serve as tonic for the nationalist struggles in Nigeria in which the press were to serve as veritable instruments of political struggle.

Consequently through further constitutional reforms,-Richard's constitution of 1946, McPherson's constitution of 1951 and Lyttleton Constitution of 1954 greater vistas were opened for electoral politics. The colonial petty bourgeoisie, especially the intelligentsia, who were the main beneficiaries of these constitutional developments, formed political parties and, along with that more newspapers, to compete for political power. However, notable members of this class, who had earlier distinguished themselves as journalists and astute anti-colonial agitators, now each assumed power in their regions from 195 1. In the 195 9 Federal elections the NPC narrowly emerged with more seats in the legislature than the AG and NCNC. NPC's Abubakar Tafawa Balewa became Mime Minister, AG's Obafemi Awolowo became leader of Opposition and NCNC's Nnamdi Azikiwe, the Governor-General. Nigeria thus, attained (political) independence on October 1, 1960.

In all these processes the colonial petty bourgeoisie, now close to power, turned rather hostile to radical ideas associated with the politics of the working class. They unanimously, regardless of party differences, preferred to close ranks with the colonial administration than countenance the radical politics of the Zikist movement rooted in the working class and in the trade union movement. They would rather concentrate on how to win political power from the British, as a means to deploy national resources towards their transformation into a post colonial bourgeois class.

In summary, what we have attempted to do in the preceding discourse was to establish the historical framework to appreciate the subsequent development of the Nigerian press. We have extensively dwelt on what is essentially a reinterpretation of crucial historical landmarks

in the emergence, growth and activities of the mass media in the period under review. These reinterpretations derive more from our reliance on the theory of class and class struggle which lent more insight into the essence of such developments.

Central to the endeavor has been the desire to resolve three crucial issues, viz., what form and manner of relationship did the mass media maintain with the dominant class. Here, we have been able to establish that both the imperialist colonial state and the colonial petty bourgeoisie effectively founded, owned, and operated the mass media to articulate, propagate and defend their respective class interest in the context of the colonial political economy. From the 1930s though till independence, the mass media had virtually become, perhaps, the hottest theatre of hegemonic contestations between the two classes.

Second, what form and manner of relationship did the mass media maintain with the dominated classes? Here, to the extent that we are referring to the working classes- workers, peasants and students-they were at best treated as subjects rather than objects of history. The class interests aspirations and opinions were not as primary as their support in the struggle of each of the two classes.

Third what was the pattern of property relationship in the media sub-sector? Here we have shown that the media were owned by the two combating classes, i.e. the dominant imperialist colonial bourgeoisie as well as the colonial petty bourgeoisie. Because the activities of both classes were linked up to the emergence, growth and development of capitalist property relations, their newspapers tended to be concentrated in the areas of most economic activity, most especially, Lagos, subsequently . , Ibadan, Enugu, Kaduna and Kano which all became industrial centres also served as the media capitals in their respective regions.

2.06 PRESS, POLITICS AND SOCIETY IN POST-COLONIAL NIGERIA

It was noted in the preceding discussion that the mass media in colonial Nigeria were established, owned and maintained on the one hand by the state and on the other by the colonial petty-bourgeoisie. The former needed the institution primarily to articulate, promote and defend bourgeois imperialist values, ideas and world outlook, and to counteract nationalist agitation. The colonial petty-bourgeoisie viewed the institution as an instrument to agitate for accommodation within the bourgeois state by championing the cause of national independence. Thus, these two social classes, engaged as it were in fierce political struggle mobilized their respective media of mass communication, which now became instruments and theatre in the struggle.

The fear of 'politicizing' the mass media in terms of reducing the institution into the naked megaphones of powerful political and other partisan interests had been expressed way back before independence. This fear was, for instance, inherently articulated in the justification for the establishment of the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation via an Act of Parliament in 1956 and the desire to insulate broadcasting from 'politicization' and/or ethnicization.

> *... The Corporation should be modeled on the British Broadcasting Corporation with a national and regional organization and that so far as the regional organization is concerned there should, within the lines of the Corporations policy, be a large share of regional autonomy, in deciding the content of programmes. The detailed arrangements, when they have been formulated will be subject to the approval of the House of representatives. Among other*

> *provisions there would be laid upon the Corporation the obligation of impartiality.* Controversial broadcasts could be given by the Corporation provided that all reasonable points of view are represented. It should be the particular care of the Corporation to ensure reasonable expressionshall not be denied to minority groups. Whether cultural, religious or political (Mackay, 1964:2)

Some of the functions of the Corporation include the provision of independent and impartial broadcasting services; provision of service, when considered as a whole that would reflect the unity of Nigeria as a federation and at the same time give adequate expression to the culture, characteristics, affairs and opinion of the people of each region or part of the federation; to engage in un-prejudicial presentation of ministerial speeches, speeches from various political pal-ties that seek to explain the view and policies of various political parties, speeches that express divergent views on controversial issues other than political views, and presentation of religious services representing the mainstream of religious thought or belief within the federation and; provision of education services (Nigeria Broadcasting Corp. Ordinance, 1956).

The stations of the defunct Nigeria Broadcasting Services (NBS) in Kano, Kaduna, Enugu and Ibadan continued as regional outposts of the NBC though operating on graduated wave-lengths commensurate to their subsidiary status while the one in Lagos continued as national headquarters and federal transmitting station. The Act also established a two-tier Board - one at the federal level with superior powers and the other at regional level with authority limited to the operation of the station within the regions. Furthermore, Government through the Federal Ministry of Information, would finance and supervise the activities of the NBC, while through the Federal Ministry of Communication, control frequency allocation.

As a concurrent legislative matter, the establishment of broadcasting stations was however open to both the Federal and regional (later state) governments.

However, the character of politics in post-colonial Nigeria, was to significantly undermine those fore-mentioned precepts underlying the NBC. This was amply captured by the mood of the regional governments to the character of transmission emanating from the studios of the Corporation:

NPC: press release of July 21). 1961

> .... *The Northern People's Congress has expressed grave concern over the continued discrimination of the NBC against the government of the North as well as the NPC. It is surprising to note that the Director-General of the NBC who is strongly biased and deliberately allows discrimination to continue, is now coming to the North to bid fare-well to the people of the Northern Region'*

NCNC. letter from AG. National Administrative Secretary a to NBC Director-General dated July, 30 1961

> *'On behalf of my party, I send you this protest drawing your especial attention to the uncooperative and vexatious attitude of the news division of the NBC towards us. This is not the first time we are protesting against the inexplicable discrimination of the \NBC against NCNC, a partner in the two-party federal coalition government'*

'NEPU. Press release of July 31, 1961

'If anybody is to complain against the NBC, it is the opposition parties whose release are being shortened or abandoned in order to give full coverage to those of the NP('a,-id the Northern government

Action Group: pless release August , 1961

'In the view of the Action Group, the NBC has all along been showing bias in *favour of the' NPC and its partner in, the Federal coalition government.... its bias is against the federal opposition party (Mackay, 1964:68-69).*

These complaints coming as they were from both the ruling coalition parties at the centre, those in power in the regions and those evens out of government, were expressive of the regional centralism and intolerance of the politics of the first republic. But this was also cashed upon by the Honourable Theopollius Olawale Benson (NCNC, NW) Minister of information to justify the objectivity and impartiality of the NBC (Mackay, 1964:67-68).

In contrast to the NBC the mass media organizations hitherto associated with various political parties and politicians simply adjusted into the new dispensation. This was all the more facilitated with the exit of the imperial colonial officers and administration that had hitherto been the convenient targets of anti-colonial mass media activity. Concomitantly in place of the quest for independence which organically unified the pre-independence political groupings, there was now, in the post-colony, a veritable struggle within these forces for involvement, equity, fairness and justice in access to the spoils of office in the regions and at the centre.

Thus, in the Northern region, such media establishments such as the Hausa Language publication Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo established in 1939, her English stable mate, The Citizen founded in 1948 and renamed New Nigeria in 1966 and Radio Television Kaduna established in 1962 became handy for the NPC which controlled power in the region; the Western Nigeria Television founded in 1959, The Tribune group of newspapers founded in 1951 by Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Sketch newspapers established in 1964 were amenable to the Action Group government in the Mfestem Region. While Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe's West African Pilot founded in 1937 and its chain of publications in addition to the Eastern Nigeria Television established in 1960 were for the NCNC.

Subsequently upon the attainment of independence in October 1960 and the devolution of political power to the petty bourgeois politicians through these three major political parties, which they each now relied upon to transform themselves into regional strata and blocs within the indigenous faction of the national bourgeoisie, these developments and the ensuing nature of politics were to impact on the place and role of the mass media in post-colonial Nigeria. With the indigenous faction of the national bourgeoisie fractionalized along regional and ethnic lines, the struggle for control of the spoils of office between these strata and blocs became intense. Within their respective regions, the political party in power openly and offensively practiced politics of outright exclusion to opposing others. Supporters of the opposing political parties outside of those in power were persecuted, haunted, victimized and chased out of the political process. Conversely, those who belong to the ruling party in the region were assured of political security, accommodation and spoils of office. This prebendalism permeated all rubrics including the mass media, in the praetorian post-colonial Nigerian society. A dispatch by the resident correspondent of the New York Times on the Western Regional election crisis of 1965 captured the pulse of the moment. This was a period when the NCNC had broken ranks with the NPC, the latter bad aligned with a

breakaway faction of the AG calling itself the United Nigeria Democratic Party led by Ladoke Akintola former deputy leader of AG and premier, of western region while Awolowo was leader of Federal Opposition. The NCNC had subsequently forged an electoral alliance with the AG. This dispatch read, in part:

> *In the populous Eastern Region., whose political powers are aligned with the opposition Action Group in the West, key city councils adopted Ordinances banning papers that stayed neutral or actively backed the Western Government's return to power. 7his group includes the federal Government owned Morning Post, the Western Government-owned Daily Sketch and the independent Daily Express and the Daily Times Nigeria's most widely read paper. The net effect of the ordinances has been. to block the entrance of these papers into the Eastern Region by either air or road. In retaliation, city councils in the West have made it a crime not only to read pro-opposition Pilot, Telegraph Daily Tribune but also to tune in the Eastern Region radio. If caught, errant newspaper readers and radio listeners are subject to a year's imprisonment. 7he East has imposed no such penalties. But purple uniformed political thugs have set up road blocks, search cars for the "wrong" papers and beaten the occupants who possessed them (New York Times, 20/11/65).*

Events in the first republic became a must to be viewed and subsequently reported from the adulterated lenses of regionalism, ethnicity and political affiliation by the mass media. Such was the case with developments related to the treason trial of Chief Obafemi Awolowo and some of his aides in 1963, the census crisis of 1963, the Tiv riots of 1965, the above mentioned Western regional crisis and the federal elections of 1965, the successful agitation by the minority ethnic groups of the Western Region for the creation of Mid-Western Region in 1963 were notable cases to mention. Government's response to these crisis and the dangerous role of the mass media therein, was to result in the formulation of drastic legislations.

The advent of military rule following the military coups of January and July 1966 through the civil war of 1967-70 till the successful return to civil rule on October 1, 1979 was to result in a new dimension in coping with the excesses of the mass media. As characteristic with all military coups world wide, the military government of General J.T.U. Aguiyi - Ironsi had upon inception in Januaiy 1966, banned an political activity, dissolved the political parties and suspended the constitution.

The Gowon administration which followed after the violent overthrow of Ironsi's government in July 1966, retained the above named measures taken by his predecessor. With the degeneration of the political situation into a civil war, the military would not be expected to be diverted from prosecuting the war by a 'recalcitrant' mass media system. Prosecuting the war became the de facto task of both government and institutions of civil society, including the mass media, on both the Federal and Biafran sides.

With the end of the war in 1970, attention was to shift towards national reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction. The mass media, like all other institutions, were expected to be functional in this respect. Instances of slight deviation by journalists and media organizations from this decreed course was instantly handled by battle weary soldiers taking

the law into their hands. The manhandling of Mr. Miniere Amakiri a journalist based in Port Harcourt, by soldiers in 1971 was a national curtain raiser in this respect. Many unfortunate others were arbitrarily sacked from their jobs for as minor an 'offense' as printing a dark or unclear picture of the wife of a Governor in the newspaper.

These 'minor' frictions got to a head when the mass media went onto the offensive by decrying widespread corruption among public officers under General Gowon. Notable here was the publicity given to the allegation of corruption against the then Military Governor of Benue - Plateau State Police Commissioner J.D. Gomwalk and the then Federal Commissioner for Communications Mr. Joseph Tarka. The latter had to resign his job eventually perhaps due to pressures from public spirited individuals and the mass media.

Other allegation of official corruption that attained wide publicity include the Lockheed bribery scandal of 1974, that: of scania buses in 1977, the alleged 2.8 billion missing oil money in 1980, the allegation of massive corruption against politicians in the wake of the military coup of 1984 and the case of $12.2 billion unaccountable oil windfall during the gulf war which made the headlines in 1994. This anti-corruption posture of the mass media in the post war years was a positive departure from their tradition of the 1960s - champions of regionalism, ethnicity and political intolerance - to a more altruistic cause.

Another theme of mass media activity evident in two decades after the war has been the promotion of national unity, almost akin to the Federal Government's war time slogan- "To keep Nigeria one is a task that must be done". With the proliferation of government-owned periodicals, radio and television stations in the period of the oil boom this theme became more widespread if only for a publication to conform to standards. Related to this was their concern for democracy and civil rule. Earlier in 197 1, Lateef Jakande, then editor of the Ibadan based private newspaper Tribune, was detained by security agents for daring to call on General Gowon to announce a transition time table for a return to civil rule. This

subject was however, to become popular and a source of constant pressure on the military administration. Eventually, General Gowon was to announce that his government would work towards a return to democracy by October 1, 1976. Although Gowon was to recant on his promise in April 1974, the subject remained in perpetuity confronting every new military administration that was formed in the country. Military rule, centred as it were around authoritarianism is depicted as an anomalous state of affairs.

At the international level, pan-Africanism was championed by the mass media in Nigeria after the war. This posture may be traced to the massive support the mass media gave General Murtala Mohammed when he, impugned American interference in the domestic affairs of African countries and successfully canvassed for the recognition of the MPILA in Angola to the chagrin of the Americans. His support for FRELIMO in Mozambique and SWAPO in Namibia- and the adoption of Anti-apartheid in South Africa as a principle of the nation's foreign policy were widely applauded by the mass media. Ditto with the nationalization of Shell British petroleum in 1978 in protest against Britain's continued dealing with the apartheid regime in Pretoria.

2.07 THE PRESS IN THE BABANGIDA YEARS

Babangida's expectation of the role of the press in relation to his hegemonic campaign may be gleaned from an excerpt of this interview held with him in Minna for this study:

> *Q. Prior to becoming Nigerian's Head of State in 1985, can you, recall your notion of the place and role of the press in relation to governments?*

IBB. *I must first of all say that if you see the development of the press in the 40s. 50s and the 60s, they did very well. The press, the trade unions and the politicians at that time fought fiercely for the independence of this country. Therefore they played significant role in* the building and development of this *country at the initial stage which all patriotic Nigerians will appreciate and give them credit for; ... well, after independence, that is a different thing altogether. But personally I would attribute that to a sort of transition. You see you (the press) fought against the colonialists up to the time they gave you independence. Even, though they left, the mentality of fighting a colonialists (sic) power was very much there. There hadn't been any formal reorientation. to disabuse the minds of people to accept the reality of our independence. We probably derailed little bit after getting independence.* We should have fought <u>to keep the country</u> *to make it United, to try to be the watchdog of the society, the mirror of the society, every thing that comes out should reflect the <u>inspiration, the yearnings of the majority of the People of this country</u> (emphasis mine). In all honesty I don't think we have succeeded in establishing that. Until quite recently, we are beginning to realize that the institution is capable of destroying this country...*

Q. Did you therefore find it imperative to cultivate the friendship of the press preparatory to the event of August 27, 1985?

IBB. Definitely, once you are involved in governance you are involved in trying to sell an idea. You are involved in trying to make your views and thoughts known about how this country can move, you need the press. Therefore, in the process, you need to have some very good understanding and very good working relation because they are the people who will transmit these ideas to the society I see them as potent source fo mobilizing the entire citizenry of this country toward ,making this country great. So it was necessary at that time to cultivate a very good relationship with the press (emphasis mine)

Q. What other remarks would you like to make on the relationship of the state and the media in Nigeria?

IBB. The should see themselves as partners working for the progress of this country....

Elsewhere in an address to the nation, General Babangida had also alluded to the kind of role expected of various groups and institutions. He noted that "the elite, the media and the academia all have important roles to play in the process of moulding our thought and opinions to sustain the spirit and drive toward a new democratic order" (Babangida, 27 August, 1990).

Thus except for such few excerpts such as the ones above that touch on the crux of General Babangida's thought on the press in relation to governance hardly have there been special presentations made by the General solely about the press. However, what must be stressed here is that from what can be gleaned above, General Babangida harboured a notion of the profound powers of the press but at the sometime felt extremely suspicious of the maturity of the average Nigerian journalist to channel the powers of the press to a national cause.

Not-withstanding this however, General Babangida still regarded the press as worthy partners whose duty, unlike that of the policy maker, is to "transmit... ideas to society..." and, "...as a potent source of mobilizing the entire citizenry..." so as "... to keep the country one, to make it united, to try to be the watch - dog of the society, the mirror of the society, every thing that comes should reflect the inspirations (SIC), the yearnings of the majority of the people of this country..... In other words, General Babangida expected the press to first be information suppliers on government activities to the citizenry. Second, in doing this the press should be guided by the desire to mobilize the citizenry towards clearly defined national objective(s). This much was reiterated by Prince Tony Momoh, general Babangida's information Minister from 1986 - 1990 in one of his Letters to My Country Man in which he stressed the obligation of the journalist and journalism to monitor government (Momoh, n.d.) with the -view to helping constructively in the process of governance.

The implication of this to the operation of the press in the context of General Babangida's government programmes is to foster their acceptability and; promote popular involvement in their execution. This way, the general believed, the press would be discharging a partnership - role to him by legitimating (through favourable coverage/reportage) his policies, programmes and administration.

However, seen critically, the notion of the profound powers of the press, is as unsubstantiated as it is untenable. This notion of the powerful press accords well with the hypodermic needle hypothesis which suggests that the people are likely to act on the basis of the messages they get from the media. It therefore follows that public opinion is the result of what the media report, if not, what they say. Thus, for Babangida, the logic is that if the press should report government favourably, then the resultant public opinion may well be positively disposed towards the attainment of government_set objectives such as the transition programme to civil rule, SAIII, etc; hence the need to have a "very good understanding and very good working relation..." with the press. But studies (Lazarsfeld, et at 1944; Katz and Lazarsfeld, 1955; Katz, 1957) have all denied this profound powers of the press in public opinion formation and, in turn, advanced their two-step flow hypothesis showing that media messages are useu only to those who care for them and who, in turn, re-disseminate same to others. The powerfulness vide direct message delivery. to all members of the audience is not there after all. Subsequently, critics of the notion of the profound powers of the press have spoken of multi-step flow and selective exposure, selective perception and selective retention all concluding that the miss media do not have the kind of powers, people like General Babangida credit them with (Mcguire, 1969; Berelson and Stonier, 1964; Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet, 1968; Festinger, 1957).

Nevertheless, for the purposes of this study, specifically in relation to Babangida's hegemonic campaigns, the expected role of the press therein, was, in the final analysis to be partners in progress with (his) government by projecting government, its activities, programmes and policies in i favourable light and; by so doing facilitate their legitimation in the polity. To what extent have the Nigerian press done that and with what impact on the General's hegemony project in the country?

Seen on the whole however, the miss media did not develop these themes itemized earlier above in relation to the 1970s in their activities freely. Successive governments in the country especially that of General Ibrahim Babangida had tried in one way or the other to contain the assumed excesses, indeed arrogance of the mass media and some individual journalists Three methods of doing these were common in the Babangida years.

First, journalists and other media personalities have benefited from appointments into various positions in government. Such appointments include those of Directors of Press Affairs, Press Secretaries, Directors of Information, Commissioners, Ambassadors and even Ministers. In these positions, the appointees, apart from being government image makers, also double as liaison officers with their professional colleagues. This strategy has had the effect of dividing the ranks of journalists thereby leading to squabbles and internal wrangling. These appointments appeared to meaning a reward for loyalty and; a loyalty that is expected to promote the government, its officials including General Babangida, its policies and programmes. By so doing, these promotional services would enhance the acceptability of the administration, indeed its legitimacy, in the polity.

Second, through legal means. Here aspects of existing laws and/or new decrees were summoned to control in one way or the other, the freedom of the press howsoever defined. Two categories of these legislation can be identified: regulatory and restrictive. Regulatory legislation are those that enhance the freedom of the press. Some examples here include libel and defamatory laws, privacy, contempt, the right to fairness, obscenity, etc, are all geared towards enhancing the quality of practice and freedom of the press while at the same time checking the likelihood of abuse. Restrictive legislation such as Public Officers (Protection Against False Information) Decree No 4 of 1984, the Detention of Persons Decree No 2 of 1984 and the Official Secret,, Act of 1964, among others, all exist to limit press freedom (see Appendix II for a list of the Decrees that may be referred to in

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this section). With regard to the Babangida years both sets of legislation were utilized. To entice the mass media and win their confidence at his inception and for most of the subsequent years of the administration, the General used and/or formulated regulatory legislation's' Mention here include the abrogation by decree of the Public Officers (Protection Against False Accusation) Decree No 4 of 1984 and the subsequent release from jail/the state pardon granted Messrs. Nduka Irabor and Tunde Thompson convicted wider the latter decree, the liberalization of import restrictions which affect printing materials and sometimes, the granting of executive waivers for securing foreign exchange from the Central Baiik, among others. These legislation/administrative directives had the intention of enabling the press to operate better but at the same time reciprocating the 'kind gesture' from the administration by publishing friendly reports (or at least being less critical) of the General, his administration and his policies thereby promoting the process of his legitimation in the polity. On the other hand, the same administration was to resort to such restrictive legislation as the dreaded Detention of Persons Decree No 2 of 1984, Newspaper Registration Board Decree No 45 of 1992, Newswatch Proscription Decree among others to fight the critical press particularly in the last one year of its tenure. These draconian legislations were either formulated and/or resorted to by the Babangida administration in brute show of force against the press thereby limiting press freedom but also intimidating civil society, accelerating its alienation and Facilitating the deconstruction of the hegemony of the General his administration, his policies and programmes in the polity

Third, extra - legal means. This range from physical assault on journalists by security agents, closure of news organizations and detention of press personalities for varying periods without being charged to court for any offense. It may also include alleged threats to life and perhaps total liquidation as in the case of M-. Dele Giwa, Editor-In-Chief and Chief Executive of Newswatch news magazine in 1986. All these extra-legal means were meant to

force the critical press into submission especially in the last one year of the tenure of the Babangida administration. In contrast, the General was also credited with recourse to such extra-legal measures as granting fat government contracts to friendly publishers, and sometimes even the direct funding of indigent news organizations through what is widely known as the policy of 'settlement' (Interview with Yusuf and Coomassie, June and July, 1996 respectively). This policy of settlement has had the consequence of setting publishers against 'overzealous journalists in their employment which had resulted in warnings, suspension and even dismissals for the latter.

The three methods itemized above tailed with the view that Babangida's style of leadership was wrapped up in a combination of persuasion, coercion and the abashing use of state resources to promote the process of his legitimation and essentially, foster the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie in the press. A demonstration of this will become evident in the content analysis of samples of the press in subsequent chapters.

For instance, appointment of press personalities into the administration is essentially a way of persuading journalists to have faith in the regime (its personages, policies and programmes) and take advantage of their colleagues who are therein, to make constructive inputs into, rather than damaging criticisms of the administration. Equally persuasive is the use of legal means to enhance press freedom such as the abrogation of Decree No 4, of 11)84 and the unconditional freedom granted the two journalists convicted under the decree. But the use of draconian decrees to proscribe media organizations and the frequent raiding of media houses by security operatives, seizures of copies and the detention, trial and even murder journalists exemplify coercion (apparently for failing to live up to the expectation of the hegemon).

The use of state resources to curry favours from the press is succinct of the fat contracts given to publishers, waivers on restrictions to access to foreign exchange, direct

funding of indigent media houses as well as gifts to 'good' journalists often on the State House beat.

This style, in contrast to that of General Buhari succeeded very remarkably in wining the friendship of a dominant section of the Nigerian press (more on this later). What must be stressed here is that this friendliness was to set the stage for the positive presentation of the General his administration, policies and programmes leaving little or no room for critics to express themselves. This condition, may have, promoted General Babangida's acceptability and ultimately his legitimation campaign in the polity for much of his eight year tenure.

However, contradictions were to surface in the political economy in the period 1992-93, which were to challenge the dominant posture of the Nigerian press and, along with it the legitimacy of the Genaral, a fact which subsequently facilitated his exit from office on August 26, 1993.

2.08 SUMMARY

What has been carried out in the preceding discourse is an examination of the historical landscape relating to the foundation and subsequent evolution of the press in 1'4ige-ria. Accordingly, the colonial production relation was identified against which background the attendant class formation was pointed. In this context, it has been argued that the foundation of the Iwe Irohin as the first newspaper in this country in 1859 by the Rev. Henry Townsend of the CMS in Abeokuta was primarily to enhance the dissen3ination of the values that would promote the attainment of the goal of British imperialism i.e., the rabid exploitation of the colony and people of Nigeria rather than the often touted reasons of furthering the Interest and aspiration of the Egba and Yoruba people or for the spread of Christianity.

The chapter also traced the course of development of the press in the colonial period showing how the oppressed and repressed petty bourgeoisie also invested in founding newspapers to fight back their predicament within the colonial political economy.

In respect to the post - colonial period, the chapter has identified and documented the challenges that confronted the press and its response. It has been pointed out that the devolution of political power to the (colonial) petty bourgeoisie organized into those political parties as the NPC, AG, and NCNC and rooted in the Northern, Western and Eastern regions and their subsequent transformation into the indigenous component of the dominant bourgeois class, the press continued their functionality as instruments of the class struggle. However, this service to the bourgeoisie has assumed a dual character - primarily as a weapon of the interclass struggle in favour of the bourgeoisie against the working classes and, secondarily, as a weapon of the intra-class struggle between and among the factions of the bourgeoisie.

More specifically, with regard to the Babangida period 1985 - 1993, it is posited that while the General acknowledged the potency of the press in their dual service character, he evolved a systematic strategy, which combines persuasion (appointments into governmental position as well as showering them with state resources) with coercion, to utilize them to, broadly speaking, consolidate the legitimacy of his administration and the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeois state it represented.

In relation to hegemony, the press constitutes one agency, indeed institution, located at the socio-cultural moment. Earlier on hegemony has been defined here as a form of social consciousness home of a conflictual relationship manifest in intellectual and moral leadership exercised at the political economic, and socio-cultural level of society by the dominant group which, along with domination based on force, constitute the necessary condition for the possession, consolidation, sustenance and exercise of power. To this extent therefore, the

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press are viable structures of intellectual and moral activity which renders it as an institution significant in the process of hegemony.

Again, it has also been pointed out in the previous chapter that the press exist in Nigeria as a form of capitalist property which therefore produces commodities in the form of cultural messages that have three forms of value: use, exchange and ideological. As conferees of status and validity on issues in the polity, media messages therefore shape peoples' opinions about reality. Accordingly, by examining definite forms of media messages - news, features, editorials, cartoon s and pictures, it is argued here, it is possible to establish a definite pattern in terms of the role of the press in relation to legitimating the activities of the Babangida administration as a prelude to facilitating the hegemony, or negating same, of the state in the polity in the period under review.

In the next chapter, the study will review the social character of the policies and programmes of the Babangida administration. It will also consider, the character of press coverage of the advent of the administration vide the military coup of August 27, 1985.

CHAPTER THREE

REVIEW OF ECONOMIC AND POLITICIES OF THE BABANGIDA YEARS

3.01 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, focus has been to, among others lay out the crucial theoretical context of the study and trace the historical evolution of the Nigerian Press specially, establish class character of their dominant ownership pattern, political (and therefore) operational philosophy and more importantly, their expected role in relation to the legitimation of the policies of the Babangida administration and ultimately, assess their impact on the hegemonic project of the state.

In this chapter therefore, the thrust is to identify and review the economic and political programmes of the Babangida administration with the view to establishing their class character.

3.02 ECONOMY AND SOCIETY IN THE SECOND REPUBLIC – 1979 TO 1983

On October 1st 1979, the Military handed over power to an elected civilian administration under Alhaji Shehu Shagari. The event marked the termination of the four-year political programme of transition to civil rule earlier adopted by the junta when it came to office in a military coup in 1975.

Four months, Nigerians rejoiced at the prospects of settling down to rebuilding their punctured democratic tradition after years of military rule. But, unknown to them, the second republic was delivered on the eve of one of the longest economic crises of the International Capitalist economy, an event which was to play a critical role in shaping the political destiny of Africa's most populated nation.

In 1980, the civilian administration, had in the "outline of the Fourth National Development Plan 1981 -85" stated the objectives of the plan to include the following:

(a) Greater self reliance,

(b) Development of technology

(c) Increased productivity

(d) Reduction in rural urban migration and

(e) Promotion of a new national orientation conducive to greater discipline and better attitude to work and cleaner environment (Okigbo, 1985:72).

When eventually the Plan was released, the direction of growth chosen for the economy for the next five years was given thus:

> *In agriculture, the aim of self sufficiency in staple items of the diet; industry, a move from mere import substitution and light consumer goods to heavy industrial goods and machinery; in infrastructure, to complete the process begun by the three generations of plan to make Nigeria a modern state in road network, railway and river transportation and telecommunication; to generate, supply and distribute sufficient energy to buttress industrial growth as well as the transformation of the rural economy (Okigbo, 1985:88).*

However, the devastating round of economic crises which gripped western economies in 1980, was to wreak havoc on the dependent economies of the third world, including Nigeria's. Some scholars have observed that this crisis was a product of oil glut in the international market and corruption and economic mismanagement at home, mono-cultural nature of the economy, declining productivity of labour and high wage bill (see Usman, 1984;

National Economic Council (NEC), 1983; Iloabachie, 1986;Okoro, 1984; Shonekan, 1993 among others), but, in essence, as some scholars have argued from a critical Marxist perspective, was a manifestation of the routine crises of the world capitalist economy which though originating in the west, must doubtlessly reverberate in the dependent economies of the third world including Nigeria. Thus, proceeding from Nigeria's historic incorporation into the global capitalist economic system and the simultaneous advent of the capitalist process of development with its fundamental contradiction between socialized character of production and private character of appropriation; and the attendant germination of two antagonistic social classes - the bourgeoisie and the working class in the country, Bangura (1984) has identified three sources of the perennial crises in the capitalist economy: the contradiction between social production and consumption, the tendency of the rate of profit to fall and the contradiction between national and international accumulation and argued that there is no way Nigeria can insulate itself from these perennial crises of the global capitalist system.

What this critical perspective on the genesis of the crisis implies therefore is that no amount of moral prescription nor packages of fiscal and austerity measures would present a long-term solution. They may however, offer minimal short-term relieves, but these would most certainly relapse. This point is important because, as we shall show later, it underlies the continuous failure of successive remedial measures by governments; a fact which was as true of Shagari's Economic Stabilization (Temporary Provision) Act of 1982, Buhari's ruthlessly austere measures and Babangida's 15 - month Economic State of Emergency and the IMF/World Bank inspired Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP).

On April 19th, 1982, a joint session of both Houses of the National Assembly passed the Economic Stabilization (Temporary Provisions) Act earlier sent in (as a bill) by President Shagari. The Act empowered the president 'to issue provisional orders in respect of Custom and Excise duties, import and export prohibition and for other purposes connected therein

'with the goal of promoting' economic development and stabilization or correction of distortion in the Nigerian Economy" (Federal Republic of Nigeria Official Gazette, 1982:A7).

Between 1982 and 1983, orders issued under the Act were to reveal their half hearted nature as much as their class character. For instance, the core of the orders issued were directed at resolving the external deficit and generating more revenue for government. Consequently, increases were effected in import duties on such items as toilet papers, paper napkins, electric fans, motor cycles, autocycles and bicycles; additional custom duties of between 5-10 percent and above were imposed on those items like bulk tea, cereal flour, car tyres, pick-up and delivery vans, batteries; while conditional import prohibition was placed on packaging materials, duplication paper, trucks, computers, corrugated asbestos roofing sheets, motor tyres, louver window frames, printing ink, saw miffing equipment, roofing tiles, laboratory equipment, printing equipment and industrial machinery, etc (Osagie, 1983:26).

These orders were all directed to curtail minor excesses at the level of exchange rather than production and surplus appropriation; as such it was merely cosmetic. But more importantly, in many instances the order affected items that relate to the business or livelihood of the petty bourgeoisie rather than the bourgeoisie. It did not directly affect the business and neither fortune of the MNCs nor those of the 'indigenous' factions of the bourgeoisie, who then operated mainly in import license procurement and related business, peculation, "contractocracy" and similar forms of accumulation. Indirectly however, it did confound the emasculation of the working and petty bourgeois classes and lowered their purchasing power, which resulted in negatively affecting demand for industrial products and many companies and industries suffered some decline. Meanwhile, between 1979-83, the economy continued its downward slide. Annual volume of oil exports kept dwindling. From 842 million barrels in 1979, it fell to 754 million barrels in 1980, 522 million barrels in 1981 and 475 million in 1982 (Philips, 1985: 18). Similarly, prices per barrel which had hit an all time high of $44 early in 1981 fell to $35 by mid year and $29 in 1983 (Philips, 1985: 18). The GDP too fell from $32

billion in 1977 to N31 billion in 1978, N30.5 billion in 1980 and N29.8 billion in 1981 (Philips, 1985:15)

The result was the deepening balance of payment deficits and spiraling inflation. In 1980 the value of exports stood at N14 billion while the corresponding figure for imports was N12 billion; only to decline to NI I billion and N14 billion respectively in 1981 and NIO billion and NI 1.4 billion in 1982 (Philips, 1985:16)

Government resorted to massive foreign borrowing to shore up the country's dwindling external reserves which was put at N5.6 billion in 1980 but fell to 2.6 billion in 1981 and N I. I billion in 1982 (Philips, 1985:17) to meet increasing external deficits. Subsequently, the nation's debt profile which stood at a mere $3,444.8 million in 1980 increased to $3,667.7 million in 1981 before rising to $13,124.1 million in 1982 and $14,130.7 million in 1983 (Fasipe, 1980:7)

These statutory efforts at managing the external disequilibrium were also said to have resulted in spiraling inflationary trends. And as Eghosa Osagie, posited in respect of countries experiencing external deficits:

> *... there is a facile resort in protectionism. Import duties are raised, import licensing is introduced to allow a more thorough control of imports, certain goods are banned outright. Also, foreign exchange regulations are imposed and national currencies devalued... Higher import duties, import licensing, the banning of imports and devaluation generally lead to higher domestic currency prices of importables... increasing prices of importables either set motion or boost an inflationary process (Osagie, 1982: 56).*

Meanwhile, pushed to the wall, the working class fought many strenuous battles against the bourgeois state. In 1979, the NILC called a nationwide strike, which resulted in terminating the 19 year old wage freeze regime. The National Assembly was subsequently to approve a new national minimum wage of N250.00 per month.

In 1981, at the Triennial Conference of the Congress in Kano, the state almost succeeded in fermenting profound internal split in the Organisation. A group of unionists, allegedly with state support, styled themselves the Committee for Democratic Trade Unions (CDTU) led by Mr. David Ojeli set to challenge the Marxist- labelled leadership of Comrade Hassan Summonu. When this was frustrated the state schemed round, though again unsuccessfully, to break labour unity by a facile attempt to amend the Trade Union (Amendment) Decree (then Act) of 1978 to provide for additional central labour organisations.

But not-withstanding these hard won victories, Nigerian workers were to contend with massive job losses at this period. For instance, between April to October, 1982, a period of only six months, nearly 100,000 workers lost their jobs in only 28 companies (Liberation News, 1982)

Nigerian students, organized under their national association, were not left out of the resistance to the excesses of the bourgeois state. Kolleh Shettima has documented many instances of the heroic activities of this strata of Nigerian youths in the struggle for genuine democracy (Shettima, 1983)

But neither were the peasants left out. Shagari's Green Revolution Programme which had in 1979, established eleven River Basin and Rural Development Authorities (RBRDA's) across the country had, among others, uprooted several hundreds and thousands of peasants without adequate compensation nor proper resettlement. This was to generate peasant revolts, most notable of which was the Bakolori revolt of 1980 in Shagari's home state of Sokoto.

This period also witnessed strenuous attempts by underground groups of communists across the nation to unite at least to resist the atrocities of the bourgeois state which they charged was sliding dangerously towards fascism (see, Olukoshi, 1 993).

To these acts of resistance, the state responded with greater muscle. The police especially the Mobile Force, had at this time acquired lethal weapons and, with Ml-. Sunday Adewusi as Inspector General, were not willing to brood the slightest challenge to authority. At the same time, an application for $2.8 billion loan package from the IMF and World Bank earlier made in April 1983 had met with stiff conditionalities. Some of these include far-reaching import liberalization, currency devaluation, commercialization and privatization of public enterprises, reduction of subsidies on energy, education and transportation; and massive rationalization of labour. These conditionalities did not go down well with the NPN Federal Government primarily though not exclusively for fear of their electoral consequences in view of the impending general election later in the year. The negotiation for the loan therefore became stalemated.

Commenting on the state of the nation at this period in one of its publicity leaflets, the NLC noted that "The demise of the... civilian regime was predictable. What perhaps was not discernible or known is how, when it would take effect and what social groups would effect it" (NLC, 1984: 1).

The August 1983 general election, which witnessed wanton rigging and which returned the NPN and Alhaji Shehu Shagari with wide margin to power; an election whose results were roundly condemned and rejected by the five other political parties was perhaps the last straw that broke the camel's back. On December 31, 1983 the Military eventually struck in a coup de'tat thereby terminating the democratic process once again. Wind of the coup had been thick in the country and so when it eventually descended, it hardly surprised many save perhaps those political neophytes who were under the illusion that nothing drastic

may happen to them provided they did not resist the takeover. They were tragically wrong. The coup, which was packaged and announced more of a rescue mission to halt the deterioration in the political situation did not fundamentally threaten the dominance of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie as power remained within the same bloc though only moved from the politicians to the military.

3.03 DEEPENING ECONOMIC CRISIS, CLASS STRUGGLE AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE BABANGIDA ADMINISTRATION.

Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida was born in Minna in 1941. His parental background was humble, as his father was a pious Muslim scholar; a tradition, which impacted on the mode of up-bringing young Ibrahim, had. It was said that by the time he enrolled into primary school at the age of six, Ibrahim was already ahead of his peers in Islamic scholarship.

After his primary education in 1955, Ibrahim was admitted into Bida Provincial Secondary School, one of the only nine provincial secondary schools in the then Northern Nigeria. He was said to be very talented in various courses in addition to sports. He also showed remarkable leadership qualities at that tender level as friends and peers found him pivotal and dependable. He was however, short but stoutly built.

The turning point in young Ibrahim's life came when the then Minister of State for Defence in the Federal Government Tanko Galadima, himself an indigene of Minna, stopped over to visit Bida Provincial Secondary School. The year was 1960 and young Ibrahim, was in his final year. The Honourable Minister addressed the staff and students and invited budding final year students to think of a career in the armed forces. The result was that 15 students including young Ibrahim acceded to the call by the minister and all 15 sat the

entrance examination into the then Nigerian Military Training College (NMTC), Kaduna, the fore runner of the Nigerian Defence Academy (NDA). Ibrahim along with 13 others passed the examination, thus marking the commencement of his military career in 1960. Initial officer training at NMTC, followed by more intensive one at the Military College Aldershott, England saw Ibrahim earning a regular commission as a Recce Officer in the Nigerian An-ny in the rank of Second Lieutenant in 1962.

The exodus of British officers in the Nigerian armed forces at independence and the political crisis which degenerated into the Nigerian civil war of 1967-1971 exerted great challenge to the armed forces as an institution. The response to this challenge was manifested in the intensification of training and retraining for officers and men.

In 1964, Ibrahim became a full Lieutenant and Captain three years later when the Nigerian civil war broke out. Ibrahim distinguished himself as an officer during the war. Mention must be made of how, as a Captain and a relatively junior officer, he was saddled with the task of raising a full battalion, which he discharged creditably and led them through several military expeditions at various fronts. The battalion, owing to its numerous successful exploits, earned the nickname the Rangers. Following his wartime feat, Ibrahim earned for himself a place of fame in the Nigerian army. And as a hardworking officer, his promotion in service was also just a matter of time.

By 1969, Ibrahim had become a Major, and in 1972, a year after the war, he became a Lieutenant-Colonel. He was posted to the Nigerian Defence Academy as an Instructor. By 1975, when General Gowon was toppled in a bloodless coup, and the advent of the Murtala Mohammed administration, the then Lt-Colonel Ibrahim Babangida was appointed to the exalted position of Commander, Nigerian Army Armoured Corp and Member, Supreme Military Council (SMC), the apex executive and legislative organ of government at the time.

These were undoutedbly weighty responsibilities for an officer of Ibrahim's rank. He was in this capacity when the abortive military coup of February 13, 1976 occurred.

As Commander of the Armoured Corp, Ibrahim was said to have been ordered to bring the rebellion to an end. Through a combination of courage, tactics and wit, Ibrahim was said to have walked to the coup leader, Lt-Colonel Bukar S. Dimka, who was his contemporary and friend, during which they dialogued over the need for the latter to end the mutiny.

Ibrahim's feat in respect of this coup attempt was widely reported by the media, casting him into an icon in the public mind. Seen as a soldier's soldier, Ibrahim was said to have turned down many political appointments, preferring to stick to his professional duties. This image of Ibrahim Babangida was to remain in the public mind, as he became the man to watch whenever there was a major military posting and/or change of government. This form of presence of Ibrahim Babangida in the public mind would be useful later in securing legitimacy for his administration and in constructing the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie during his tenure.

In 1976, Ibrahim Babangida was promoted Colonel and Brigadier three years later in 1979. In 1982, along with six of his course mates including Muhammadu Buhari, Ibrahim Babangida became a Major-General.

The apparent failure of the economic policies of the civilian administration of president Shagari coupled with the outstanding consequences of the massive electoral mis-deeds that returned the same government to power, resulted in a very precipitous situation. Once again, the 'political class' as a fraction of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie was showing increasing inability to control the situation in the political economy thereby increasingly exposing to further erosion the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie. It was to forestall further slide and the possibility of long drawn anarchy which may undermine bourgeois rule

that the military orligarchy, intervened, primarily to rescue and sustain the extant social order even if it means expending some elements of its sibling, the 'political class'. This much will be shown shortly below.

On December 31, 1983, Major General Muhammadu Buhari and Major General Tunde Idiagbon assumed power in Nigeria after a coup as Head of State and Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces and Chief of Staff Supreme Headquarters respectively. In place of the National Assembly, a Supreme Military Council (SMC) was established with apex executive and legislative power. A Council of Ministers made up of military cum civilian members and a Council of State made up only of military Governors were also established. Both organs, which were under the chairmanship of the Head of State, had essentially executory powers.

In his maiden address to the nation, General Buhari had recognised the critical economic problem gripping the nation which he attributed to the global recession and subsequent oil glut which had affected the nation's main foreign exchange earner and wanton corruption and economic mismanagement by members and operatives of the defunct civilian administration (Buhari, maiden address, December 31, 1983).

Several hundreds of politicians and former public office holders of the former administration at federal and state levels across the nation were rounded up by men of the security agencies on allegations of corruption and abuse of office. Special military tribunals were constituted to try all those arrested. Several hundreds were later convicted in dubious trial processes and sentenced to long prison terms in addition to having their assets confiscated.

To the mass media, General Buhari could not have been more forth-right when he said he would clip their wings. He accused them of falsehood and professional misconduct especially towards public officers. In fact, one of the first decrees promulgated by the military administration was the Public Officers (Protection Against False Information)

Decree No. 4 of 1984. This piece of legislation which allegedly sought to protect public officers against the presumed excesses of the press was in essence primarily to cage the latter. Falsehood was conceived not in terms of incongruence between what was uttered/revealed by a source and what was published. On the contrary, falsehood was defined in terms of unauthorized disclosure by the press. Investigative journalism was thus seen as anti-climactic by the administration in the name of protecting public officers.

In March, 1984 two journalists were convicted under this decree and they were accordingly sentenced to one year imprisonment each without option of fine while their employer, The Guardian Newspapers Limited was fined N50,000.00 only.

To infuse sanity in society, the regime decreed a War Against Indiscipline (WAI). WAI Brigades were formed out of young but unemployed school leavers nationwide to superintend orderliness in social life. In addition, a monthly environmental sanitation exercise was ordered nationwide to rid the vicinity of filth. Members of the security agencies were constituted into an Environmental Sanitation Task Force to monitor compliance while a sanitation court was put in place to instantly try defaulters.

The death penalty was imposed for drug trafficking while such other social problems as examination malpractice, tampering with electric and telecommunication cables would carry long prison sentences upon conviction. A specially constituted Miscellaneous Offences Tribunal, which was though under a High Court Judge, but also include a representative each of the Army, Navy, Airforce and Police, was instituted to try offenders. The Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), which had decried the trial process and after several unsuccessful efforts to prevail on the military authorities to revert to civil courts instead of military tribunals, subsequently ordered its members to boycott the Tribunals. Suspects were thus left defenseless before Tribunals composed mostly of and presided over by military men. Every

legal step taken by the administration simply bypassed the established courts in the name of efficiency.

At the economic plane, particularly in respect of resolving the problem of external disequilibrium and high inflationary trends, statutory measures taken here were also decisive. The negotiation with the IMF over $2.8b loan, which the country applied for in April 1983 but which had been stalled over issues of conditionalities, was re-opened. Eventually, with little head way being made in ensuing negotiations amidst worsening balance of payment and debt repayment deficits, the administration sought recourse in counter-trade. Counter trade agreements with some South American countries notably Brazil were entered into in the spirit of south-south cooperation. Oil, the country's major foreign exchange earner was exchanged for such essential requirements as spare parts, industrial raw materials, and medicines which the nation could not procure at the open market for lack of foreign exchange. In addition, the administration became over-zealous to improve its image among creditors. For instance, about 25% of foreign exchange earning in 1984 and 44% in 1985 were deployed for debt repayment and servicing.

To stem increasing inflationary profiles in the economy, the administration announced a sudden change of the local currency in circulation. Little time was given for people to exchange the old currency for new ones. The goal of the exercise was to mop up excess money said to be in circulation thereby beating inflation. Meanwhile, life was increasingly becoming unbearable for the working class. More industries were folding up and increasing number of workers were retrenched. It was estimated that with an official unemployment rate of 4 percent of a total labour force of 32.7 million in 1980, the figure of unemployment rose to 10 percent in 1986 when the Babangida regime introduced SAP and 12.2 per cent a year later (Fashoyin, 1991:1 I).- A number of trade unions through several conferences, seminars and meetings issued communiqués that protested the deteriorating condition of labour.

Essential commodities, hitherto massively imported to complement (or is it to kill?) domestic production during the civilian administration were now scarce and expensive. Inflation could not be tamed.

Strikes by workers and students were met by the strong arm of the state. Several trade unions were banned outright and their member s ordered back to work. The leaders, having been isolated, were picked up and detained. In one case, striking pilots and aircraft engineers whose action had grounded flights by the national carrier were dismissed enmasse and replaced by Brazilians. The NANS was also banned but students refused to recognise this and continued to operate, albeit in tighter conditions of illegality.

The mass media were not spared either. Apart from groaning under the spectre of Decree No. 4, a number of media organisations had been closed down on orders of the military government. Many outspoken editors and journalist were harassed, intimidated and sometimes picked up and detailed by operatives of the dreaded National Security Organization (NSO).

However, like Shagari's Economic Stabilization (Temporary Provisions) Act of 1982, Buhari's austere economic policies all stopped short of addressing the fundamental contradictions of the under-developed political economy. These policies and statutory measures embarked upon by General Buhari were misplaced, superficial and of short term effect if any at all. In fact, it may be argued that the difference between Shagari's and Buhari's perspective on the economy was very slim. Both anchored the cause(s) of the economic crisis in the country to the global recession and its effect on oil sale which had occasioned limited foreign exchange thereby instituting balance of payments deficits and inflation. The only difference, if at all, was circumstantial, in that being a politician Shagari had to contend with electoral consequences of his action, a fact which perhaps made him to 'soft-pedal', a step the military felt was a manifestation of ineffectiveness and inefficiency. General Buhari on the

other hand, had absolute powers and no electoral consequences to battle with; hence, he summoned all his military skills to elevate efficiency into an ideology. It was evident however that the economic crises needed more than mere efficiency to overcome.

In all these actions of the Buhari administration there lies the notion that indiscipline underscored the entirety of the country's problems. The need to infuse discipline, seen as regimentation, in all spheres of national life permeated the entire spectrum of the administration's programmes, policies and actions. This world view of the Buhari tenure drew from the mainstream thinking which sees the armed forces as essentially an a-political and non-partisan institution which has no business being in government; and that in some countries of the third world they get into government when compelled to by the circumstantial need to sanitize the polity from threats of ruin and disintegration, to make for orderliness in governance.

However, the falsity of the notion that indiscipline is the bane of Nigeria's problems coupled up with the excessive use of force which accompany the regimental behaviour the Buhari administration was bent on imposing on (civil) society cumulatively resulted in a back-lash. Frustration, resignation, fear combined with widespread uncertainty, abuse of human rights all alienated broad segments of the citizenry such as the business community, politicians, trade unions, professional groups, the press and the academic community from the political process and; accelerated the delegitimation of the Buhari administration.

The delegitimation of the Buhari administration which became glaring through the increasing failure of its economic policies such as regulating currency exchange control and counter-trade along with the commitment of 40% of foreign exchange earning to debt servicing and/or repayment - all on the one hand and mounting social discontent manifest in strikes by the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), Academic Staff Union of University (ASUU), National Association of Pilots and Aeronautical Engineers (NAPAE), National

Association of Nigerian Students (NANS), the Nigeria Bar Association (NBA) and the Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) among others, on the other cumulatively resulted in more desperate measures and wanton human right abuses by the administration. For instance, the administration resorted to trial through the tribunal system under military personnel thereby by-passing the regular court system, frequent recourse to detaining citizens by armed personnel without trial, the application of draconian decrees to silence the opposition became frequent. Opposition, both foreign and local, to the administration thus became legion. Once again, the dominance of the bourgeoisie as a class, and the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie, therein, was under enormous threat.

And so on August 27, 1985, while the Chief of Staff (Supreme Headquarters) and second in command to Buhari, General B. A. Idiagbon, who had established a reputation for ruthlessness towards opponents of the regime within and outside the armed forces, and other top government officials was away on the holy pilgrimage to Mecca, the then Chief of Army Staff, Major General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida led a palace coup against Buhari. Unlike his predecessor however, General Babangida assumed office with the title of President and Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces. In place of the usual Chief of Staff (Supreme Headquarters), he appointed Chief of General Staff and in place of the Supreme Military Council he constituted the Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC).

In contrast to Buhari, General Babangida came into office with a kind of philosophy that questioned the traditional place of the armed forces in modem society. For instance, in an interview with the author in Minna in October, 1995 the General speaking on whether or not the notion that the military should not rule is realistic, said that although military rule is an aberration in principle, yet in Africa, the idea is justifiable:

> *I do accept the notion that military rule is an aberration. But then one also has to look at the whole concept of military rule in*

> *Africa. We should recall that military rule started gaining prominence in Africa back in about 1952 when the military took over power in Egypt... In the case of' Nigeria, six years after independence, the military intervened.. I still maintain and I still believe that it is an aberration. But then we are a developing continent or developing countries, these things have to happen in the course of development. Even some of the advanced countries had gone through similar stages... (Babangida, personal interview* in *Minna on October 10, 1995).*

Earlier, in an address to the armed forces consultative assembly in Abuja in December 1989, General Babangida once again made a tacit justification for military rule:

> *The Nigerian, armed forces cannot regret playing a role that has made life more meaningful for many Nigerians. We do not expect that whoever stops a cat from consuming a rat will be an enemy of the cat. The politicians, professional contract organizers, import license arrangers and others in this socioeconomic class, have a reason to continue to complain about the regime that curtailed their dominance. But must they continue or be allowed to continue to pretend to be the guardian of the national interest? We once trusted them to our regret. And this regime will not allow them to intimidate us away from the sacred duty of protecting and advancing the national interest (Babangida, 1989).*

Therefore, as against their prescribed role as custodians of national defence under a democratic authority, General Babangida regarded the military, particularly in Nigeria, as a fulpledged actor in the struggle for power; and as actor, (with him as president and Commander-In-Chief of the armed forces), Babangida conceived of Nigerians as merely Epicurean, if not hedonistic, the essence of whose activities is to have a bite at the 'national cake'. Therefore, like Easton (1971), Babangida regarded Nigerian politics as mainly revolving on the authoritative allocation of values and; with him at the helms, the surest way to legitimizing himself was to regulate as best as he could, the authority to determining who gets what and how much of the (material) values abundant in the country. This 'gate-keeping' business in distributing state resources is a significant feature of his legitimacy project (more on this later). Accordingly in justifying the change of government, Babangida indicated how his leadership would look like in contrast to his predecessor:

> *Let me at this point attempt to make you understand the premise upon which it became necessary to change the leadership: the principle of discussion, consultation and cooperation which should have guided the decision making process of the Supreme Military Council and the Federal Executive Council were disregarded soon after the government settled down in 1984. Where some of us thought it appropriate to give a little more time, anticipating a conducive atmosphere that would develop in which affairs of state could be attended to with greater sense of responsibility, it became increasingly clear that such expectation could not be fulfilled. Regrettably, it turned out that Major General Muhammadu Buhari was too rigid and uncompromising in his attitude to issues of national significance... Major General*

> *Tunde Idiagbon was similarly inclined in that respect... He arrogated to himself absolute knowledge of problems and solutions and acted in accordance with what was convenient to him, using the machinery of government as his tool. A combination of these characteristics in the two most important persons holding the nation's vital offices became impossible to contend with. 7h e situation was made worse by a number of other government functionaries and organizations, chief among which is the Nigeria Security Organization (NSO) (Babangida, maiden address, August 27, 1985).*

Inherent here is the idea that, in contrast to his predecessors who were inflexible, dictatorial and autocratic, Babangida hinted that he would be flexible and open minded.

Although, the thrust of the justification of change of government appears largely personal with every effort being done by Babangida to distance himself from the former administration of which he was evidently the number three man and to discredit the personal styles of his predecessor, he was also at the same time, consciously reinforcing the myth surrounding his person, a matter whose import in the legitimacy project will be visible later. In fact, hardly, perhaps had a Nigerian Military officer worked more assiduously to become a head of state. In fact, in a lengthy interview in July 1993 while breaking his silence since his overthrow, General Buhari made allusions to 'a fifth columnist' in the inner caucus of his administration who was arbitrarily using officers of the military intelligence to intimidate and arrest elder statesmen and eminent senior citizens unconnected with the former civilian administration primarily to dent the public image of his administration (Buhari in The News news magazine, July 1993).

A detailed examination of the economic, political and social policies and programmes of the Babangida administration in its entire tenure shall follow later. What appears critical here are, first, to sum up the class struggle in the polity resulting in the advent of Babangida and; second, to attempt a characterization of the state during his tenure.

Consequently, the brief review of Nigeria's post colonial politics undertaken in preceding pages seem to suggest that the colonial production relation and its attendant class structure merely underwent slight alteration in the superstructure followed by quantitative boost in some strata. For instance, the dominant bourgeois class, hitherto entirely imperialist in nature and character, wielding both political and economic power in the colonial political economy had now been altered to include a co-opted portion of the (hitherto colonial) petty bourgeoisie to whom the former had compromised and subsequently gradually ceded political power in a neo- colonial arrangement at independence in 1960. This newly co-opted portion in addition, to the armed forces general staff who were later to be in power through successive military coups, were to heavily rely on their control of the machinery of government to dubiously enhance their individual and group economic capacities thereby transforming themselves into what Mamdani has described as a "bureaucratic" bourgeoisie (Mamdani,1976:10).

In the neo-colonial arrangement therefore there emerged three components of the bourgeoisie in Nigeria. There is the imperialist bourgeoisie (British, American, French, etc in origin), the bureaucratic bourgeoisie (with its compradorial tendencies) and; those that Ikenna Nzimiro calls the "Corporate rich" which constitutes of captains of the private sector. Of this later bloc, Nzimiro said:

> *They are mainly products of human resources developments and profound professional training and who occupy/occupied top positions in the MNCs in the industrial, commercial, financial and manufacturing*

> *and oil sectors of the national economy. They have also been professionals who though self employed, but have made serious inroads into the boards of private sector organisations (Nzimiro:1985: 48516)*

These tricameral constituencies constitute the bourgeoisie in Nigeria which controls the economic life of society and, along with it, political and socio-cultural life. In their relationship to successive Nigerian governments, the imperialist bourgeoisie, the bureaucratic bourgeoisie, and the corporate rich all had a stake in maintaining the extant capitalist order. During the most part of the Babangida administration there was remarkable unity of these blocs behind the administration. This much will be clear in the content analysis of the character of press coverage of events and policies in his tenure.

However, the annulment of the outcome of the June 12, 1993 Presidential elections was to result in a fissure in the unity of the diverse blocs of the bourgeoisie. The corporate rich became the main hub of the opposition as they used their economic capacities as captains of industry to prevail on Western powers to mount pressure for an end to military rule. It was perhaps this realization that dawned on General Babangida to 'step aside' in favour of Chief Ernest Shonekan, Chairman/Chief Executive of UAC (Nig) Plc., the Nigerian component of the British conglomerate, UNILEVER; a move that, as it will be shown later, successfully divided the rank of the opposition built around a defence of the 'June 12 Mandate'. The bureaucratic bourgeoisie, much of which, by virtue of its composition and perhaps geographical origin, stayed on with the Babangida administration. The imperialist bourgeoisie with eyes on continuing their exploits in the country, resorted to diplomacy and diplomatese in articulating a position on Babangida's Nigeria at the international level. While mounting pressure on Babangida to relinquish power, the imperialist bourgeoisie avoided treading the course of open confrontation with the administration.

Deep down in the social ladder, there exists the labouring masses notably those industrial mining_and manufacturing workers and the peasantry. These unionized, semi-unionized groups have fought many heroic battles of resistance against deteriorating conditions of life and of labour, income and security of tenure.

This class also looks forward to the restoration of democracy as a better political framework to enhance their participation and interest in national politics.

In addition, white collar workers in the service sector, self employed professionals, small-scale industrial employees and others alike form the post colonial petty bourgeoisie. This class has witnessed deep erosion in the period of SAP in the 1980s and beyond. Some of its members especially the intellectuals in the academia and the professions have cast their lot with the struggle for democracy in Nigeria.

The attempt behind this social structural background is made to appreciate various characterization of the state in the Babangida years. In discussions elsewhere above, it has been alluded, indeed argued, that the difference between the Buhari and Babangida administrations are superstructural and therefore of no fundamental consequence to the extant social and political order. For instance, both of them were products of the Nigerian army with its bourgeois political doctrine rooted in the process of colonial and post colonial accumulation-, they both came to power through military coups and ruled by decree; to a lesser or greater degree both of them ruled for the bureaucratic bourgeoisie by virtue of their social root and leadership philosophies which determined the direction of their economic and political policies and programmes and; both were also repressive of popular forces rooted in the trade unions, press, academia and ethnic minorities who have been. struggling for democracy and against authoritarianism

However, and as we pointed out earlier, the difference between the Buhari and Babangida administrations are located in their perspective on the place and role of the armed

forces in the distribution of power and, their leadership styles. For instance, we have pointed out in preceding discussions here that while Buhari regarded military intervention in politics on purely redemptive but also cathartic grounds, for Babangida, the military in Africa are legitimate contenders for power. In their leadership styles, Buhari was regimental coercive and forceful while Babangida combined abashing use of state resources in a policy both Coomassie and Yusuf have called "settlement"; co-operation and, force (coming after those techniques had failed). On the whole, therefore, the contradiction that resulted in Babangida supplanting Buhari and Ms group was of a secondary nature and therefore did not fundamentally threaten the bourgeois social order nor the continued dominant role of the military within the bureaucratic bourgeoisie.

Under General Babangida as much as Buhari therefore the military held and used power to continue building upon an existing authoritarian state form established through years of military rule on behalf of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie. And, authoritanianisrn, by its very nature and logic, is demarcated by the concentration, indeed monopolization, of power in the Head of state (or President as in the case of General Babangida) or the general staff, kith and kin, friends and associates and, the concomittant access to state resources by the same group and, large-scale corruption. All these combined to result in heightened competition for political power among contending groups within the bourgeoisie thereby exacerbating political instability in the polity.

It is pertinent to point out that some scholars have in describing the character of the state in contemporary Nigeria therefore, identified one dominant feature of the political economy as the basis for their categorization.

For instance, identifying endemic corruption as a dominant feature, Joseph described the state in contemporary Nigeria as "pre-bendal". Others such as Medard (cited in IbrabiiA1994) harped on the posture of the state as the vehicle for access to resources which

enables the leader and his cohorts to claim to have the capacity to satisfy the needs and wants of the citizenry to arrive at what he calls the "neo-patrimonial state". William Graf (cited in Ibrahim 1994) identified the collection of royalties and taxes as major source of income (rather than actual intervention in production) to arrive at the notion of the "rentier state". These classifications and more are valid in that they, individually and collectively, are based on one feature or the other of the authoritarian state deemed critical at various stages in its life. In this study, these features of the state are regarded as being symptomatic of the rabid oppression, exploitation and various forms of discrimination replete in the conduct of the authoritarian state in Nigeria under general Babangida.

Behind this background, high premium is placed on the acquisition of power which continues to underscore the frequency of competition by intra-class groupings for power sometimes using such ersatz premises and ideologies as regionalism as with North - South dichotomy; religionism as with Muslim - Christians; gender as in male - female; course type in the aimed forces as with Regular Commissioned officers - Non - Regular commissioned officers and; in the case of the change from Buhari/Idiagbon group to the Babangida group, their perception of the role of the military in (African society and style of leadership. Such conflicts however do not fundamentally threaten the dominance of the bourgeoisie as a class nor that of the bureaucratic faction as the ruling group therein.

Earlier, it has been argued that hegemony should be seen and perceived here as a form of social consciousness borne of conflicting relationships manifest in the intellectual and moral leadership exercised at the political economic and socio-cultural levels of society by the dominant group which, along with force, constitute the necessary condition for the possession, consolidation, sustenance and exercise of power in society. In outlining some of its attributes earlier, we noted that hegemony is a factor of alliance of groups (within the dominant class) and; depending on the success and/or failure of the intellectual and moral

leadership of the dominant groups result in consent or dissent respectively. Consequently, the problems of hegemony becomes problematizable at this juncture, thus; can hegemony be possible in the background of an authoritarian state form? To what extent did the ruling bureaucratic faction of the bourgeoisie provide intellectual and moral leadership primarily within the dominant bourgeois class and secondarily across the entire social spectrum in Nigeria in the period under review? Did the legitimation project of the Babangida administration result in consent or dissent or both in its tenure? These and more will be solved in the course of the study. In the meantime however, attention will be directed at examining the programmes of the Babangida administration in the period under review.

3.04 ECONOMIC RECOVERY PROGRAMMES

With reference to the economic situation in the country at the advent of his administration, Babangida had identified four fundamental issues therein:

1. A decrease in our domestic production, while our population continues to increase.
2. Dependence on import for both consumer goods and raw materials for our industries.
3. A grossly unequal gap between the rich and the poor.
4. The large role-played by the public sector in economic activity with hardly any concrete result to justify such a role.

And to the stalemated negotiation with IMF for a balance of payment support loan, General Babangida, while appreciating the passion and anxiety the matter had generated in the polity expressed the intention of his administration to weigh the implications carefully as a prelude to breaking the deadlock.

Subsequently, on September 25th, 1985, General Babangida inaugurated the Presidential Committee on IMF Loan (PCIL) and charged the committee to conduct a

nationwide debate over the loan. While the debate was afoot, the president took opportunity of the silver jubilee anniversary of national independence to declare a National Economic Emergency Programme to last for 15 months with immediate effect. Highlights of the emergency programme include the abolition of counter trade, ban on the importation of rice and maize, reduction in the number of River Basin and Rural Development Authorities, overhauling of the system of import licensing and the restructuring of the Commodity Boards (Daily Times Newspaper, Oct. 1, 1985). In addition, graduated deductions were ordered from wages and salaries covering the period of the economic emergency.

In its interim report submitted to the president on December 3, 1985, the PCIL had reviewed the national debate and highlighted two major options: whether this country should face the challenge of her economic recovery through a structural adjustment based entirely on the effort of our citizens, or through a combination of efforts and help by way of a loan from the IMF. Appraising both positions later, General Babangida pointed out that although opinions seem to weigh heavily in favour of rejecting the loan, it was however, "not at all clear from the evidence that the additional sacrifice involved by obtaining the loan is less than the additional sacrifice entailed in not taking the loan. But what is clear is that whichever option we take will involve a lot of sacrifices by our people" (Babangida, nationwide address, December 2, 1985)

Finally, General Babangida announced the discontinuation of the negotiation with the E\4F in line with majority opinion in favour of the spartan course of restructuring the economy based on the "determination of our own people to make all the sacrifices necessary... at our own pace and on our own volition" (Babangida, nationwide address, December 12,1985).

General Babangida subsequently assembled a team of economists, financial experts and management consultants to formulate a locally made Structural Adjustment Package.

Among experts contacted were Dr. Chu Okongwu, Minister of Finance, Harvard trained economist and formerly of the World Bank; Chief Olu Falae, Secretary to the Federal government, Yale University trained and formerly Managing Director/Chief Executive in the banking sector; Alhaji Abubakar Alhaji, Minister for Budget Affairs in the Presidency, London trained economist and an experienced bureaucrat; Dr. Kalu Idika Kalu, Minister for National Planning, Harvard trained economist and a former staff of the World Bank and Alhaji Abdulkadir Ahmed, Governor of the Central Bank and an experienced Chartered Accountant. The team was complemented by the Presidential Advisory Committee (PAC) headed by Professor Ojetunji Aboyade, a Cambridge trained economist with working experience at the World Bank, Nigeria Institute for Social and Economic Research and as Vice-Chancellor of University of Ife (Umodeni, 1992:73). This team formulated a reform packed budget, which General Babangida presented to the nation on December 31, 1985. The objectives of the budget were presented as follows:

a. to restructure and diversify the productive base of the economy in order to reduce dependence on the oil sector and imports;

b. to achieve a fiscal balance of payments viability over the medium term; and

c. to lay the basis for a suitable, non-inflationary growth over the medium and long terms.

These were to be pursued and achieved within definite policy guidelines. These policies were as follows:

a. restoring external balance by discouraging imports and the commission of a maximum of 30% of foreign exchange for external debt serving;

b. export promotion and counter-trade in line with the report of the Presidential Committee on investigation of counter-trade;

c. rationalization of imports and sanitation of import licensing system with priorities on necessary items;

d. restructuring of incomes, price moderation and fringe benefits

e. reduction of subsidies on petroleum products;

f. enhanced rural development through the establishment of Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI)

g. privatization of Parastatals and Companies

h. review of domestic financial system, and

i. promotion of repairs and Maintenance of existing infrastructure rather than embarking on new ones (Babangida, text of 1986 Budget, nationwide address, December 31,1985).

However, not withstanding these reforms, the World Bank, fN4F and Nigeria's major creditors did not consider the package far reaching, particularly as it did not include devaluation of the national currency, the Naira (Faruqee, 1994: 224).

In August 1986, at the behest of the above mentioned forces, General Babangida announced a comprehensive Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) to last tin June 1988 but which was later extended for the rest of his tenure. Highlights of the programme were as follows:

a. the adoption of tight fiscal and monetary policies to reduce inflationary pressures and to rationalize public expenditures, including public investment progamrnes;

b. the dismantling of (currency) exchange controls and the adoption of a market determined exchange rate policy;

C. the liberalization of the trade regime, the rationalization of customs tariff and excise duties and the abolition of price controls;

d. finance sector reforms; and

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e. the privatization and commercialization of public enterprises and the abolition of Marketing Boards (Faruqee, 1994:247).

A critical analysis of the viability or otherwise of Babangida's economic recovery package, which though is not primary to us here, has nevertheless generated a healthy body of literature on Nigeria's political economy. What is however crucial and of import here is to examine the philosophy and class character of the entire economic recovery package of the administration.

First of all, the premise of the economic recovery package was faulty. This premise which was evident in the administration's analysis of the cause and development of the economic crisis is not far-reaching and fundamental. For instance, to claim the "The crux of the economic problems has been identified to centre around four fundamental issues: A decrease of our domestic production…; dependence on imports for both consumer goods and raw materials for our industries; a grossly unequal gap between the rich and the poor and; the large role played by the public sector in economic activity with hardly any concrete result to justify, such a role", is anything but fundamental. Those are manifestations of the structural lopsidedness of the post-colonial capitalist economy which is in itself a reflection of the law of unequal development of capitalism which is rooted in the fundamental contradiction underlying the dominant capitalist production relation, i.e., the contradiction between the socialized character of production, on the one hand, and the private character of appropriation, on the other. Capitalist production rests on the profit motive; as such, areas and sectors that stand out profitable tend to attract (foreign and, to a lesser extent, local) investment thereby accelerating their development relative to other sectors of the national economy. That is the case with mining (especially of oil), industry/manufacturing, finance, Banking and Insurance, construction and merchandising sectors, on the one hand, and agriculture, on the other, in Nigeria. While oil mining has grown phenomenally, the proceeds

from which forms the nation's major source of foreign exchange and which has trickled down to positively influence the growth of industrial/manufacturing, construction, finance, banking and insurance and commercial sectors, agriculture, whose foreign exchange worth is relatively little and insignificant, has been on a downward slide. Consequently, domestic production of food agricultural raw materials, and a significant range of required inputs into the industrial and manufacturing sectors have to be imported.

Furthermore , the MNCs and their local collaborators and agents who control the means of production in the key sectors of the national economy - oil mining, finance, Banking and insurance and Industrial/manufacturing - keep getting richer because they reap enormous profit on their investments while the working classes and their dependents - workers, peasants and students - sink into poverty as the cost of labour in the country is relatively low and surplus expropriation high.

As for the significant though unprofitable role of the public sector in economic life, this was necessitated in the past as we have shown earlier by the relatively low capital base of the indigenous faction of the national bourgeoisie in the course of its development. Hence, government had to move in to invest in those areas of the economy, society and culture rather than leaving everything entirely to foreign capital with all its implications. It was the divestment of public interest in the economic sector in favour of Nigerian entrepreneurs that would encourage the development of the indigenous faction of the national bourgeoisie later in relation to its imperialist counterpart.

Thus, rather than being fundamental issues, these four factors iten3ized by the president were mere manifestations of the fundamental contradiction underlying the prevailing capitalist order in the country. In fact, as Bangura has shown previously here, it is from this 'mother of all contradictions' underlying the capitalist order that all others, including the three he had earlier itemized and on which he anchored the genesis of the current economic crises to, emanate.

Philosophically speaking too, Babangida's perspective on the nation's economic plight is deeply embedded in the liberal mould, which in its origin was associated with the rise of capitalism in Europe. In fact, liberalism as a philosophy gained currency and wide acceptance in 18th century Europe as a counterforce to feudal absolutism and authoritarianism. This liberal philosophical point of departure, though in the contemporary context of monopoly capitalism is obsolete, was elevated by General Babangida as the only acceptable perspective on all issues begetting presidential attention and consideration. In contrast to liberalism, Babangida had despised Marxism which he had variously dubbed as "extremist", "alien" and "confrontational". Thus, a discussion of the origin, development and manifestation of the economic crisis from the Marxian perspective never attracted the sympathetic consideration of the president. Little wonder therefore, in his near slavish obeisance to liberalism, which was no less "alien", "extremist" and "confrontational" than Marxism in its origin and development, Babangida became close-minded to possible remedial ideas and measures from perspectives other than liberalism. And so, like his predecessors, Alhaji Shehu Shagari and General Muhammadu Buhari, General Babangida had come to mistaken the manifestation of the economic crisis for the cause. This would inevitably lead to misplaced remedies if they are at all.

3.05 THE TRANSITION PROGRAMME TO CIVIL RULE

Responding to mounting anxieties over a time-table for a return to civil rule, General Babangida had taken opportunity of his 1986 budget speech to the nation to broaden the base of inputs in fashioning out a time table. He pointed out that "consistent with the philosophy (sic) of this administration that of consultation with and the involvement of the people in the decision making process, the AFRC has decided, once more, to sponsor a national debate on the country's political future" (Babangida,1986 budget address to the nation ,December

31,1985). Subsequently, a seventeen-mán Political Bureau was constituted and charged with the following terms of reference:

i. Review Nigeria's political history and identify the basic problems, which have led to our failure in the past and suggest ways of resolving and coping with these problems;

ii. Identify a basic philosophy of government which will determine goals and serve as a guide to the activities of government;

iii. Collect relevant information and data for the government as wen as identify other political problems that may arise from the debate;

iv. Gather, collate and evaluate the contributions of Nigerians to the search for a viable political future and provide guidelines for the attainment of the consensus objectives,

v. Deliberate on other political problems as may be referred to it from time to time (Babangida, nationwide address at Inauguration of Political Bureau, January 13, 1986).

While the Bureau was to complete its assignment within one year (January - December 1986), the president however sounded definitive when he told members that "Your assignment must therefore provide time-sequence for the transition to be achieved by October 1, 1990." and "Based on the finding of the Political Bureau, government will announce in the course of 1987 a new political programme and prepare for handover of power" General Babangida added.

On 27th March, 1987, the Political Bureau submitted its report to government which promptly established a committee to draft a Government White Paper on same. By 18th May, 1987 the Committee had submitted its report to the president In a nationwide broadcast in July, General]3abangida made allusion to the nation's chequered history. He observed that:

... The lack adequate and guided political culture had led to the politics of intolerance and indiscipline among politicians. The

rules which were designed to govern the 'game of politics' were often ignored or blatantly violated as politicians turned the political arena into a 'battle, ground' which only catered for 'a survival of the fittest'. A political failure in one election meant failure for all tintes (Babangi.da,, nationwide address on the transition to Civil Rule, ,Jul y, 1, 1987).

Consequently, he reiterated the determination of his administration to bestow a lasting political Culture and political order to the nation "strong enough to withstand the shocks of political crisis while being flexible enough to adapt to disable changes. "General Babangida, relying on the white paper on the political bureau report, subsequently unfolded a Transition Programme spanning five years from July, 1987 to terminate with the final disengagement of the military from politics and the inauguration of an elected civilian President on October 1, 1992. Three quick comments may be made about the journey in the transition programme. First, although it was one of the terms of reference of the Bureau to "identify a basic philosophy of government which will determine goals and serve as a guide to the activities of government" and, based on the volume of inputs received, the Bureau eventually recommendation the adoption of socialism as a (political) philosophy for the country. Yet, rhetorics aside, this recommendation was outrightly, rejected by government. General Babangida had justified the decision to reject the recommendation by referring first, to the national objectives in addition to the relevant portions on fundamental human lights, fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy as enunciated in the 1979 constitution and then argued that, "what we need is the will and the courage to practically pursue these lofty objectives in order to achieve greater Happiness for the masses of our country. Therefore, government does not consider it necessity to attach any ideological label to our new socio-political order" (Babangida, nationwide address on the Transition Programme, July 1, 1987).

Similarly, in an address at the inauguration of the Constitution Review Committee (CRC), General Babangida alluded to why his administration rejected socialism: " ...isms are not the problems (sic) of Nigeria that can be solved through Constitutional fiat or decree" (Babangida address to Constitution Review Committee, September 7,1987).

Nevertheless, as it has been indicated previously, General Babangida was an untiring advocate of liberalism in all spheres of social life. Perhaps, it may be apt to describe the General, ultimately, as an ardent advocate of a broad participation in his military government, a populist defender of human rights, the 'visionary realist' resolutely committed to the liberation of the rural poor, the General who never believed in "isms" and alien political models and the president who upholds liberalism but hates socialism and still disclaims being ideological.

The next observation relates to the shift in handover date from October 1, 1992 and its implications. Perhaps this was in line with Babangida's flexibility. But such flexibility, if not inconsistency was to underscore the allegation of a 'hidden agenda' which critics insisted the General was labouring. This allegation was further strengthened whenever the president dabbled into aspects of the Transition Programme. Instances of such dabbling include the refusal to register any of the over twenty political associations that emerged when the ban on party politics was lifted inl989. Instead, two political parties - Social Democratic Party (SDP) and National Republican Convention (NRC) complete with their manifestoes, funds and secretariat - were set up by government and prospective politicians were directed to register with either. Then again in August 1992, at the end of their respective party primaries, both parties had elected their presidential candidates but again government moved in canceling the exercise and disqualifying both candidates. Ever before then too, government had barred a section of the citizenry dubbed 'old breed', 'ideological and religious extremists' from participation in the political process in favour of the 'new breed'. The handover date was once

again also shifted backward to August 27, 1993. And when a new set of presidential candidates were elected for the two parties and even when a presidential election took place on June 12, 1993 government still annulled the results.

This litany of inconsistencies, for whatever reasons and no matter how altruistic were bound to reinforce the allegation of a 'hidden agenda' (more on this later).

It can also be observed that notwithstanding the supposed belt tightening and austere environment occasioned by SAP, corruption, which had become pandemic in society, had rendered the political process more of an investment for members of the bourgeoisie than an exercise in political democracy and nation building. Corruption coupled with evident uncertainty cast over the administration's sincerity to handover to a democratically elected civilian administration had cumulatively generated widespread feeling of alienation in the polity and cast a thick cloud of doubt over the entire transition process.

3.06 THE BABANGIDA ADMINISTRATION AND THE PROBLEM OF LEGITIMACY

The study has argued that the Buhari administration revolved around a group of Military officers who held the view that a professional army had no business being in government except when circumstantially compelled to intervene to halt a degenerating political situation and thereafter sanitize the polity for 'resumption' of democratic rule (see Buhari, maiden address to the nation on assumption of office as Head of State, December 31,198')) . It has also been suggested that the Buhari regime as characteristic of most African military governments, viewed indiscipline as the fundamental problem of the country and therefore proceeded with dispatch to impose discipline, seen often as regimental efficiency, as panacea. Consequently, the effect of widespread regimentation of civil life backed by very draconian decrees was the massive alienation of the civil population from the political

process. In fact the Buhari coup which, according to Momoh (1996:19) "was greeted by an (sic) euphoria because of the momentary relief it granted" was soon running out of legitimacy, a condition which the Babangida group cashed upon to strike. The successful military coup of August 27, 1985 which ushered in General Babangida as President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces was led by officers who, in contrast to Bubari, had a different notion even if subliminally expressed of the place and role of the armed forces in contemporary African societies. For the Babangida group, the military as a profession is an institution in society like any other and; it has a stake in governance which cannot be left to civilians nor can it be realized when it subsumes itself under democratic authority. In other words, in contrast to Buhari and his group, Babangida and his group believed that the military as a faction of the dominant bourgeois class in contemporary Nigeria, is as good an actor in the intra-class factional struggle for power as any other. This much is inherent in parts of his speech while justifying the coup that brought him to power. He stated that "...And so it came to be that the same government which received a tumultuous welcome now became alienated from the people. To prevent compete erosion of our given mandate (stress mine), therefore, we had to act so that hope may be rebuilt" (Babangida, nationwide address on assumption of office as President, August 27, 1985).

In terms of strategy, while Buhari relied so much on regimental techniques for instance using members of the security forces for virtually every task, in contrast, Babangida relied on a combination of persuasive / coercive techniques especially in constructing and sustaining their hegemony respectively. For General Babangida, this would become apparent in reviewing the dimensions of hegemony that confronted him at the beginning of and through the course of his tenure. It is also significant to note that these strategies would eventually have the consequence of promoting his legitimization and subsequently, the military orligarchy within the armed forces and in other factions and classes.

The first dimension of the problem of legitimacy that confronted General Babangida has to do with the crisis of political support. This problem arose from two main sources: a) in the contexts of the interclass struggle Babangida and his group faced the need to establish across society that his intervention was necessary (at the time it came); and b) at the level of the intra-class struggle, Babangida and his group faced the need to reassure various emasculated blocs of the bourgeoisie that he did not share the political philosophy, strategy and style of the ousted Buhari/Idiagbon regime.

Accordingly, General Babangida's response to this dimension of legitimacy was very decisive. His maiden address to the nation on the justification for the change of government delivered on assumption of office on August 27, 1985 is very significant here. Although as chief of army staff, General Babangida was evidently the number three man in the administration and the most powerful in terms of access to men and weapons, he itemized all the difficulties that confronted Nigerians in the 20 months tenure he replaced and squarely heaped the blame on his two superior colleagues, Generals Buhari and Tunde Idiagbon. He openly condemned their leadership styles which relied on coercion and, in contrast, made allusions to respect human rights and freedom of expression (by indicating that his regime had no monopoly of wisdom in solving the country's problems). He promised to encourage broad participation in the decision making process through public debate over major issues, respect for freedom of the press (as he repealed the dreaded public officers (protection against false accusation) decree No 4 of 1984 and granted unconditional pardon to journalists convicted under same and pledged respect for the right to life by abrogating the death sentence for drug offences and; he disbanded various military tribunals. To reassure various emasculated blocs of the bourgeoisie, General Babangida released all detrained politicians and even rehabilitated some senior military officers dismissed for economic and political offences by the Murtala - Obansanjo regime. To win over the middle classes, he appointed a

number of accomplished professionals and middle level popular military officers into various positions in his government. Several mass media personalities, among them, Dr Patrick Dele Cole, Managing Director and Mr. Tony Momoh, former editor both of the Daily Times; Chief Duro Onabule, editor, National Concord; Alhaji Saka Fagbo, Chief Segun Olusola and Mallam Yusuf Mamman all of the Nigeria Television Authority (NTA) among others all benefited from those appointments. Subsequently, General Babangida was to commission a number of biographers to write books about him even while in office. One such chroniclers was so flattering in his admiration for the General that he stated that:

> *My admiration for the man, Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida dates back to the abortive coup of February 13, 1976 in which one of Nigeria's great leaders, General Murtala Mohammed was assassinated It will be recalled that in response to that tragedy, the then Colonel Babangida in classical Hollywood style, employed a tactful combination of moral persuasion and sheer guts to dislodge the purported coup leader Colonel Bukar Dimka, from the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation station in Ikoyi, Lagos. I was then a second year undergraduate student at the university of Lagos and that unprecedented act of gallantry and patriotism caught my admiration and that of most students of my time. Babangida instantly became a hero to most of us (Umodem, 1992:Preface).*

Fragments of a Babangida myth were being painted, as the one above - that of being gallant, patriotic and skilful - in many of those books written by those commissioned writers. In addition, pictures of the General appeared often in the press especially in the early days of the administration, beaming with smiles and flanked by loyalists as against the stern looks of

his predecessors and sometimes instantly fielding questions impromptu from wary journalists at Dodan Barracks, the then seat of the federal government in Lagos. These flurry of activities helped to foister a positive image of the general and his administration thereby foreclosing critical discourse on same. Consequently, this has facilitated the process of the construction of the legitimacy and eventually, the hegemony of the General and his administration and more importantly the bureaucratic bourgeoisie, which they represented.

The second dimension of the crises of legitimacy that confronted Babangida was that bordering on economic stability and progress. These crises, whose effects cut across the classes, essentially involved the need to decisively halt the deteriorating condition of living occasioned by growing inflation, scarcities of essential commodities, growing unemployment, poor social security, deteriorating condition of economic infrastructure and the fear of impending hardships arising from conditionalities accompanying foreign loan packages.

In his response to these crises, General Babangida instituted an Economic Emergency Programme, threw the IMF loan issue to public debate and subsequently broke negotiations with the Fund thereby removing the spectre of hardships that could have arisen from taking the loan. To assuage the international financial community he introduced an allegedly home grown Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) and tried through various relief measures to cushion its effects on the vulnerable sectors of the population. He established the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) to check unemployment; established the Directorate of Food, Roads, and Rural Infrastructures (DFRRI) to address the problem of rural development. To the business community, he liberalized imports, devalued the national currency, encouraged export promotion campaigns and initiated the commercialization and privatization of public enterprises in which members of this community procured shares. Third, the crises of cultural renewal also posed a serious challenge to the initial legitimacy of General Babangida. This crises was manifest in popular impatience with deteriorating

environmental hygiene, lack of etiquette, moral degeneration and total breakdown of ethics. In the public service, nepotism, corruption, arbitrariness, divided loyalty, poor attitude to work, personalization of public property, lack of accountability had become legendary. The armed forces by their increasing involvement in governance came to see their role more as legitimate contenders for political power. They became brutish, brutal and ruthless towards the civil population. Armed robbery, drug trafficking, prostitution, minor and medium level crimes escalated. For more on the manifestation of these immoral behaviours in government see Ibrahim (I 997:5 7-75). What need be pointed out at this juncture however, is that all these developments combined to produce a siege mentality across society.

In responding to these crises Babangida pointed out in his maiden speech that "the War Against Indicipline (WAI) will continue, but this time in the minds and conduct of Nigerians, and not by way of symbolism or money spending campaigns" . Subsequently General Babangida established the Directorate of Mass Mobilization for Economic Recovery and Social Justice (MAMSER) and charged it, among others, to mobilize the citizenry towards cultural and ethical revival in all facets of social life

These response by General Babangida to those afore-mentioned crises to a very great extent gingered faith in the man, his administration and his policies and programme and accordingly promoted his administration's legitimacy and the bureaucratic bourgeoisie's hegemony in the polity. Critics became brandished as being impatient with government and sometimes even described as plain saboteurs. This much had been the main stay of the image of the academic community - lecturers and students - and- with their appearance later, the relatively small but critical press. These were later to challenge Babangida's legitimacy and threaten the bourgeoisie's hegemony as they led the opposition against his SAP, the transition to civil rule programme and eventually, the man and his administration.

3.07 SUMMARY

From the foregoing, the study argues that in post - colonial Nigeria, independence simply meant the restructuring of the dominant bourgeois class first, into a foreign and indigenous factions with the former retaining economic power while devolving political power to the latter. Second, that the indigenous faction, is itself composed of two constituent blocs: the bureaucratic and the corporate rich blocs.

It is further argued that with internal cohesion very minimal between and within the blocs, the contest for political power between them often challenges their fragile unity and threatens the corporate dominance of the bourgeoisie in Nigeria. The military oligarchy by virtue of its regimentalism and control of instrument of violence, has succeeded in monopolizing political power in post -independence Nigeria thanks to alliances, inter bloc contradictions have been regulated with a modicum of success. The challenge of building hegemony before the ruling class has therefore often been regulated through well-tailored alliances resulting in co-optation, cooperation and eventual access to power and state resources.

The study has also documented evidence suggesting that the crises in the global capitalist economy wreaked devastating havoc on the Nigerian political economy, crises the politicians of the second republic were unable to regulate. Frequent strikes, demonstrations and other popular forms of protests were forcefully suppressed thereby further complicating the political process. The advent of the military on December 3 1, 1983 under General Buhari as chief helmsman, rather than halt the deterioration in the political situation merely compounded matters. The belief by the Buhari group that indiscipline was the root of Nigeria's problems merely offered justification for the use of regimental techniques to redress the situation. The failure of this philosophy / strategy resulted in the overthrow of the regime in a military coup on August 27, 1985 led by General Ibrahim Babangida, then chief of army

staff, who instantly assumed office as President and Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces.

The Babangida administration, which received a tumultuous welcome, as the study points out, proceeded to operate from the philosophical position that the Nigerian military is a legitimate contender for political power and, though with a misguided notion of the genesis of the nation's economic and political problems, saw the promulgation of a package of economic and political policies and programmes which were, in essence, neocolonial and bourgeois but which was promoted through a combination of suasion and coercion backed by an abashing use of state resources, to construct his legitimacy in the polity. This tripodal- style, also saw the General formulate and prosecute his response to three critical dimensions of the problem of legitimacy, viz., the crisis of political support, the crises of economic stability and growth and the crisis of cultural renewal - that confronted the administration in its eight year tenure. The remarkable success in coping with these critical dimensions of the legitimacy of the administration gingered the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie in the polity.

In the next chapter, the study will proceed to analyse the content of a sample of newspapers to establish the role of the press in legitimating the advent of the Babangida administration and, by extension, promoting the hegemony of the (bureaucratic) bourgeois bloc dominant in the polity which the administration represented.

CHAPTER FOUR

IN SEARCH OF HEGEMONY I: ANALYSIS OF PRESS COVERAGE OF THE AUGUST 27, 1985 MILITARY COUP

4.01 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapters, attempts have been made to present the general background ,theoretical context and social environment of the subject matter under investigation. In addition, a sketch of the historical development of the Nigerian press has been articulated. In the next three chapters, the study will adduce empirical data gathered to test each of the three assumptions in the study. These assumptions are as follows:

a) That the press coverage of the August 27, 1985 military coup which ushered in the Babangida administration , was favourable to the latter.

(b) That the press coverage of the major policies of the Babangida administration between 1985-1991 was also favourable to the latter .

(c) That the press coverage of a selection of major policies and events of the Babangida administration between 1992 - 1993 was unfavourable to the latter.

On the whole, the study is aimed at resolving two research problems: First, to critically examine the theory of hegemony, its constituent elements, instances, varieties and manifestations; and second, to examine the role of the press in the legitimation of the Babangida administration and promoting the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeois bloc which it represented in the period August 1985 to August 1993. This chapter directly relates to the second research problem of the study by attempting to establish the extent press legitimized the August 27, 1985 military coup that marked the advent of the

Babangida administration, as well as its role in the process of hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie in the period under review.

4.02 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

The working hypothesis underlying this chapter is that the press coverage of the August 27, 1985 military coup which marked the advent of the Babangida administration was favourable to the latter.

4.03 ANALYSIS OF MEDIA CONTENT

Accordingly, in order to test the working hypothesis in this chapter, it is imperative to analyze the content of a selection of Nigerian newspapers (more on this later). Berelson (1952), has defined content analysis as a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communications. He also identified two major objectives of content analysis as a research technique: first, that through an analysis of the manifest content of the media, inferences may be made about the personality, intelligence, attitude, motives, values or goals of the originator of the message; and second that through the same technique, the potential effects of the communication may be discerned. Thus, in the Barelsonian perception what content analysis should do is to establish a link between text with its creator; and also between both text/creator on the one hand and the society/audience on the other.

McQuail has summed up the method of content analysis from the perspective articulated above in the following steps: choose a universe or sample of content; establish a category frame of external referents relevant to the purpose of the inquiry (e.g. political

parties or countries); choose a 'unit of analysis from the content (word, story, picture, sentence, etc); match content to category frame, per chosen unit of content; express the result as an overall distribution of the total universe or sample in terms of the frequency of occurrence of the sought for referents (McQuail, 1982: 128).This procedure, undoubtedly pioneering in the study of media content, is simple as all the steps are clearly enunciated thereby rendering it easily repeatable by subsequent researchers. Again, given its emphasis on the frequency of occurrence, it is therefore emphatic on quantity; thus it is relatively easier to subject to statistical treatment. Its emphasis on manifest contents of communication means its variables are fairly easily discernible at least to the researcher.

However, the procedure is also open to some drawbacks. Some of these include, first, that frequency of occurrence is not the only guide to meaning since much depends on the context; second, to assume that overt meaning of a text is the real and concrete meaning raises the problem of reliability; third, meaning of categories are man given and so in this way the researcher tends to impose meanings on contents of text (McQuail, 1982:129). To overcome these shortcomings of the conventional techniques of classical content analysis, recourse is made to structuralism and semiology which are crucial to modern content analysis. Structuralism is concerned not only with conventional verbal language but also with any sign system which has language - like properties (McQuail, 1982:130). A sign is any 'sound image' that acts as a 'signifier' of something 'signified'; the latter being an object or concept in the world of experience about which we wish to communicate (McQuail, 1982:130). For more on structuralism and semiology see Berthes, 1967, 1977; Eco, 1977; Fiske, 1982; Burgelin, 1972.

Crucial to this technique of content analysis therefore is the linkage between the sound image (signifier) and the thing signified. The point here is that a sentence - impression of something may not have necessary correspondence with the thing signified. Thus, structuralism and semiology have introduced concern with both connotative and denotative meaning of signs taken together. The implication of this to the study of media content is the recognition that the meaning of texts is not only overt but also covert. It follows therefore that a text has its own intrinsic meaning apart from the overt intention of the sender or the selective interpretation of the receiver (McQuail, 1982:131)

On the whole, this method of content analysis enables the researcher to establish the 'cultural meaning' of media content and thus, shed light on some of the questions underlying the various purposes of content analysis as articulated earlier. It may also shed light on the producers of the media content - their intentions, personalities, orientations, world outlook, etc; and may also describe the content in terms of potential usefulness in predicting or explaining effects. Structuralism and semiology do not accept frequency of occurrence as a way of arriving at meaning; instead they hold that meanings are arrived at from relationship and contexts rather than frequency. In addition, from a structuralist and semiological perspective manifest meaning is seen as being open to lots of interpretation since it is taken out of its context i.e., taken out of the structure of the text. Furthermore, this technique of content analysis suggest that social reality consists of diverse meanings to all those involved in it instead of a single meaning for same (McQuail, 192:130-131)

Thus, as used in this study, content analysis is basically seen as "any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages (Holsti, 1969:14). Accordingly, "The issue then is to define what one is looking

for and then analyze and discern the meanings embodied in the message being studied, evaluate their characters and assess whether they correlate positively or negatively to the issues being investigated " (Ibrahim, 1983:174).

Therefore, as pointed out earlier, this chapter is aimed at finding out how the press reported the Babangida - led military coup of August 27, 1985. And to do this, the manifest and latent meanings of the content of a selection of Nigerian newspapers will be assessed as a prelude to determining how positively or negatively the press portrayed the coup.

4.04 UNITS OF ANALYSIS

As part of delimiting the scope of this study, it has earlier chosen to focus on newspapers only, specifically four newspapers: Daily Times, National Concord, New Nigerian and The Guardian. The sampling technique used, and the criteria adopted have earlier on been examined in chapter one in detail and do not require repitition here.

4.05 UNITS OF OBSERVATION

As stated earlier in Chapter One, these are the editorial, news, pictures, features, and cartoons. Each as equally been defined thoroughly also in the same chapter.

4.06 DATA PRESENTATION

It is germane to make a slight clarification at this juncture. In classifying media contents, it is obvious that items may vary in their express purpose. Thus, while some may be directly supportive of the (new) administration, others may be simply critical of the

(deposed) one. In classifying these two items in their relationship to the hypothesis and goal of the study, both are grouped as being favourable to the new administration. Other items may pick one aspect of the deposed administration and recommend its adoption/continuation by the new administration. Again, such item is classified as being favourable to the new administration since the latent purpose of the writer seems to be to offer an advice to the ascending leadership from past experience while at the same time, portraying the deposed leadership as being good (only) in that singular respect which, by the judgment of the writer, is worth recommending to the new leadership.

Items classified unfavourable and neutral are essentially those that by their manifest and latent meaning in the background of the working hypothesis and goal of the study, condemn or steer clear of reference to, the Babangida administration. Commercial and public service advertisements, change of name, side bars and obituaries are classified as 'others' and, which by implication fall out of consideration for the purposes of this content analysis.

4.06.1 THE DAILY TIMES

A total of 18 editions out of 24 were correctly coded while six were improperly done and eventually canceled. In terms of the distribution of the units of observation in those 18 editions, 16 editorials, 541 news stories, 103 features, 25 cartoons, 243 pictures as against 1055 others were recorded and presented in Table 4.01 below.

Table 4.01: Distribution of Units of observation in 18 editions of Daily Times newspaper coverage of the August 27, 1985 military coup in Nigeria

Subject Matter Units of Observation	Economy	Politics	Culture	Health	Recreation	Conflict & War	Crime	Social Welfare	People	Labour	Total
Editorials	1	9	2	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	16
News	84	116	52	27	102	0	36	73	17	34	541
Features	28	23	13	7	16	1	1	7	5	2	103
Cartoons	1	5	0	0	19	0	0	0	0	0	25
Pictures	42	127	8	0	46	2	3	1	12	2	243
Others	546	122	93	3	34	0	2	19	227	9	1055

As indicated in Table 4.01 above, there are 928 items of the units of observation altogether (16 editorials, 541 news stories, 103 features, 25 cartoons, and 243 pictures) as against 1055 others in the editions of the Daily Times Newspaper, in the period under review.

Table 4.0 2. shows the distribution of the units of observation in terms of directionality.

Directionality Units of Observation	Favourable	Unfavourable	Neutral	Total
Editorial	8	5	3	16
News	173	24	344	541
Features	21	0	82	103
Cartoon	5	1	19	25
Pictures	122	3	118	243
Total	329	33	566	928
Proportion in Percentage	(35%)	(4%)	(61%)	100%

There are 392 (35%) items arising from all the units of observation that are favourable, 33 (4%) unfavourable while 566 (61%) neutral in the Daily Times coverage of the first 24 days of the August 27, 1985 military coup that marked the advent of the Babangida years. Thus, from the statistics above, the Daily Times published more items favourable (35%) to the change of government than those that were expressly unfavourable (4%) to same.

4.06.2 THE GUARDIAN NEWSPAPER

20 editions out of 24 were coded correctly and four were rendered invalid.

Table 4.0 3. presents the distribution of the units of observation in those 20 editions of the newspaper analyzed.

Thus, from the statistics above, the Daily Times published more items favourable (35%) to the change of government than those that were expressly unfavourable (4%) to same.

4.06.2 THE GUARDIAN NEWSPAPER

20 editions out of 24 were coded correctly and four were rendered invalid.

Table 4.0 3. presents the distribution of the units of observation in those 20 editions of the newspaper analyzed.

Subject Matter Units of Observation	Economy	Politics	Culture	Health	Recreation	Conflict & War	Crime	Social Welfare	People	Labour	Total
Editorials	3	8	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	12
News	102	231	75	48	148	22	23	47	16	28	740
Features	31	54	39	1	6	2	1	8	9	3	154
Cartoons	3	20	1	0	2	0	0	4	0	1	31
Pictures	17	132	32	1	112	0	0	4	2	0	300

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As shown in Table 4.03, a total of 12 editorials, 740 news items, 154 features, 31 cartoons and 300 pictures were recorded in the 20 editions of The Guardian analyzed.

Table 4.0 4 depicts the distribution of units of observation in terms of directionality

Directionality Units of Observation	Favourable	Unfavourable	Neutral	Total
Editorial	7	1	4	12
News	301	9	430	740
Features	50	3	101	154
Cartoon	18	2	11	31
Pictures	108	1	191	300
Total	484	16	737	1237
Proportion in Percentage	(39%)	(1%)	(60%)	100%

Table 4 .04 shows that there were 484 (39%) favourable, 16 (1%) unfavourable and 737 (60%) neutral items in The Guardian's coverage of the first 24 days of the August 27, 1985 putsch.

4.06.3: **THE NEW NIGERIAN NEWSPAPER**

All 24 editions of this newspaper were coded and accordingly analyzed.

Table 4.05 presents the distribution of the units of observation in 24 editions of New Nigeria Newspaper

Subject Matter Units of Observation	Economy	Politics	Culture	Health	Recreation	Conflict & War	Crime	Social Welfare	People	Labour	Total
Editorial	5	12	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	21
News	186	281	40	22	175	26	54	98	14	7	903
Features	31	32	12	5	8	0	1	14	1	3	107
Cartoons	0	1	0	1	20	1	0	0	1	0	24
Picture	27	213	28	8	70	2	3	22	24	2	399

Table 4.0 6 presents distribution of units of observation in terms of directionality.

Directionality Units of Observation	Favourable	Unfavourable	Neutral	Total
Editorial	15	1	5	21
News	348	62	493	903
Features	27	6	74	107
Cartoon	1	3	20	24
Pictures	221	14	164	399
Total	612	86	756	1454
Proportion in Percentage	(42%)	(6%)	(52%)	100%

Table 4.0 6 indicate that 612 (42%) favourable, 86 (6%) unfavourable and 756 (52%) neutral items were recorded in respect of the New Nigeria Newspaper coverage of the first 24 days of the coup that brought General Ibrahim Babangida to power on August 27, 1985.

4.06.4 : **NATIONAL CONCORD NEWSPAPER** 21 editions of this newspaper were appropriately coded while three were invalid.

Table 4.0 7 presents the distribution of the units of observation in 21 editions of National Concord Newspaper

Subject Matter Units of Observation	Economy	Politics	Culture	Health	Recreation	Conflict & War	Crime	Social Welfare	People	Labour	Total
Editorial	3	10	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	16
News	122	207	54	30	140	15	54	71	14	21	728
Features	31	37	21	4	10	1	1	10	5	3	123
Cartoons	1	9	2	0	13	0	0	2	0	0	27
Pictures	13	177	23	7	80	7	6	13	17	5	348

Table 4.0 8 shows the distribution of units of observation of the Concord newspaper on the basis of directionality.

Directionality Units of Observation	Favourable	Unfavourable	Neutral	Total
Editorial	10	2	4	16
News	274	32	422	728
Features	33	3	87	123
Cartoon	8	2	17	27
Pictures	150	40	158	348
Total	475	79	688	1242
Proportion in Percentage	(38%)	(6%)	(55%)	100%

From Table 4.08, it may be observed that a total of 475 (38%) favourable, 79 (6%) unfavourable and 688 (55%) neutral items respectively appeared in the National Concord newspaper coverage of the first 24 days of the Babangida administration which came to power in a military coup on August 27,1985.

In terms of summary, Table 4.09 is a presentation of the statistics on newspaper coverage of the August 27, 1985 military coup in its first 24 days in terms of directionality across the units of analysis.

Table 4.09: Distribution of units of analysis on the basis of directionality in thier coverage of the first 24 days of the advent of the Babangida administration.

Directionality Units of Analysis	Favourable	Unfavourable	Neutral	Total
Daily Times	329 (35%)	33 (4%)	566 (61%)	928 (100%)
Guardian	484 (39%)	16 (1%)	737 (60%)	1237 (100%)
New Nigerian	612 (42%)	86 (6%)	756 (52%)	1454 (100%)
Concord	475 (38%)	79 (6%)	688 (55%)	1242 (100%)
Total	1900 (39%)	214 (4%)	2747 (57%)	4861 (100%)

4.07 DATA ANALYSIS

Table 4.09 shows that of the 96 copies of the units of analysis examined, 39% of their total editorials, news reports, features, cartoons and pictures published in the first twenty -four days since the coup of August 27, 1985 were favourable to the administration of General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida; 4% unfavourable while 57%. were neutral.

With a confidence level of 95% (and Error level of 5%), the finding above stands at 5% error margin. Consequently, with both error level and error margin standing at 5% the situation is too close to call; and eventually, too much to make a significant statement

However, following a T-test, the difference between the proportion of items published favourable to the Babangida administration (39%) and those unfavourable (4%) at 95% confidence level stands at approximately 10% which (compared to the Z-value of the confidence level which is 1.96) is quite significant.

It may be observed further that from the sample studied, the press tended to steer a more neutral course than be seen to be manifestly favourable or unfavourable to the Babangida junta at its advent. This is evident in the volume of neutral items (57%) which exceeds the combined volume of favourable/unfavourable items (43%). At 95% confidence level, a T-test indicates that the difference between the two proportions stand at approximately 19% (which far exceeds the Z-value of the confidence level 1.96) which is very significant.

On the whole, it may be stated that other than being manifestly neutral, the study indicates that the press was more favourable than unfavourable in their coverage of the military coup of August 27, 1985 which brought General Ibrahim Babangida to power.

4.08 DISCUSSION

The finding above seems to support the research hypothesis that the press coverage of the August 27, 1985 military coup which ushered in the Babangida administration was favourable to the latter. This finding obviously accords with popular sentiments which often times allude that given its rough experience under the deposed administration of General Buhari, the press had embraced the newly installed Babangida administration. To this extent, it is reasoned further, that the press had become far less critical, if not supportive of the Babangida administration regardless of its implication to the overall aspiration for democracy in the country.

At the official level, however, General Babangida, recognizing the importance of the press to his consolidation in office, never tire in his overtures to elicit favourable relationship from the institution: " When you stage a coup, you have to tell people what they want to hear so that you can get accepted" , Babangida once stated in a press interview (Tell, July 24, 1995). And so to the restless Nigerian press, the General seemed to have told them of his avowed commitment to human rights and press freedom, he abrogated the Public Officers (Protection Against False Information Decree No. 4 of 1984, he unconditionally released from jail the two journalists convicted by the deposed administration under the above named decree and he endorsed the appointment, subsequently, of journalists and media personalities to serve in various positions in his government - all these being evidence of such overtures to win the press. These different strokes appear to lend credence to the finding of the study which points out that the press was more favourable in its coverage of the administration than being unfavourable.

Seen in the context of the theory of hegemony, one would say at the level of legitimacy Babangida had succeeded in winning over the press to endorse his avowed difference from the ousted Buhari regime. This means that at the inter - group level within the military orligarchic bloc of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie the contradiction between the ousted Buhari and Babangida groups over political power as well as over moral high grounds appeared to have both been resolved in favour of the latter. Little wonder therefore that the General in summing up the initial response of the press to the event of August 27, 1985 said: "The press have been very supportive when we came in and even more supportive when we abrogated the famous (sic) Decree No. 4 " (Interview with Babangida, October, 1995).

A look at the specific nature of the response of some media organizations to the events of August 27, 1985 would establish the firm basis for General Babangida's enthusiasm about the press. Here is what the Sunday Times said of the coup; " If today we shout hosanna on the advent of Babangida and his team, we do so for good reasons" (Sunday Times September 1, 1985).

As for The Guardian, Babangida's task was well cut out for him:

> *General Babangida is yet to vouch safe a detailed blue print of his intentions. But he knows, as we do, that his task is well cut out for him. His preliminary statements suggest that he does have a sensible idea of the causes of his predecessor's downfall (The Guardian, August 29,1985).*

And the National Concord was no less optimistic;

> *There is the all-important recognition by the new leadership that for a federation to be worth its name, ethnicity should not be capitalized upon by those who find themselves at the helm of affairs.... The new leadership has*

indicated a realistic economic approach... (National Concord, August 30, 1985).

Speaking of 'a realistic economic approach' barely three days after the advent of the Babangida administration when in effect no such 'realistic economic approach' was unfurted as at then indicates the level of over-zealousness of the National Concord, in embracing the administration. Such over-zealousness would be considered subsequently in relation to the administration in constructing its legitimacy, a process that was necessary for hegemony.

Consequently, this favourable disposition of the press vis-a-vis the Babangida administration in its advent testifies to the successful nature of his approach to handling the press but also it would serve as tonic for him to strengthen his grips over the same institution. It may reinforce his (faulty) notion of the profound powers of the press in opinion moulding and encourage him to invest more, as the case were, in them. These, taken together, facilitated the General's systematic effort at establishing his legitimacy and the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie he represented within the bourgeois class.

This collaborationist posture of the press to the incoming Babangida administration whose credential was dubious (owing to its proximity to the Buhari administration it ousted; for instance Babangida was the chief of Army Staff and evidently number three man in the junta; General Sani Abacha, Chief of Army Staff in the new government was General Officer Commanding (GOC) of a military division under Buhari and several other officers and this makes it *ab initio* palpably share in the liability of the Buhari regime with all its consequences)may be attributable to two things. First, as an institution, ownership of the press is overwhelmingly located in the bourgeoisie as a class.

Specifically, the press outfit in Nigeria are either owned by the state directly as with New Nigeria and Daily Times groups among others on the one hand or indirectly owned by leading bourgeois elements as the case were with The Guardian and National Concord and more. Consequently, both Babangida and the press have something here in common: a common world view rooted in, and justifiable of, bourgeois dominance.

Second, Babangida's approach in courting the press further encouraged them to fall to his bait especially in charting his distance from the ousted Buhari ruling group whose fate was sealed by a (no less erroneous notion of the genesis of the country's problems) but also its regimental leadership style which intimidated, terrorized and emasculated other blocs within the bourgeois class. This is further attended to by the broad based bourgeois alliance evident in the composition of Babangida's leadership group in sharp contrast to Buhari's leadership which was overwhelmingly drawn from the military oligarchic faction (especially the General Staff) of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie

4.09 SUMMARY

In the preceding presentation, an attempt has been made to critically appraise the character of press coverage of the August 27, 1985 military coup that marked the advent of the Babangida years. In the process, the research hypothesis, which states, that the press was very favourable to the new administration in its coverage, has been supported by the evidence arising from a content analysis of 24 editions each of four of Nigeria's leading newspapers: Daily Times, National Concord, The Guardian and New Nigerian covering the first 24 days of the change of government. The finding suggests that the

newspapers published more items that were favourable in nature vis-a-vis the coup as against unfavourable ones, in the life of the newly installed Babangida administration.

In relation to Babangida's quest for legitimacy, this favourable posture nose - dived into his expectation of the role of the press which should be that of partnership and; with this posture, it means the coup that brought him and his administration to power, appeared legitimated going by media reports in the first 24 days of the administration (more on this in the final chapter).

In the next chapter, the character of press coverage this time in respect of a selection of events and activities in the period from 1985-1991 will be undertaken to ascertain the actual role of the press in legitimating these items of the Babangida administration and by extension, the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie which he represented.

CHAPTER FIVE

IN SEARCH OF HEGEMONY II : ANALYSIS OF PRESS COVERAGE OF SOME SELECTED CARDINAL POLICIES AND EVENTS OF THE BABANGIDA ADMINISTRATION FROM OCTOBER 1, 1985 TO DECEMBER 31, 1991.

5.01 INTRODUCTION

This chapter, just like the one immediately before it, is an empirical one. It focuses on establishing the character of press coverage of 26 deliberately selected events and activities. These items which occurred from October 1, 1985 extend to December 31, 1991, in the life of the Babangida administration, are as follows:

S/NO	ITEM	DURATION OF ANALYSIS	TOTAL NUMBER OF DAYS
1.	15 - Months Economic Emergency	October 1-10, 1985	10 days
2.	Rejection of IMF loan	December 12-19, 1985	7 days
3.	Attempted coup uncovered	December 20-27, 1985	7 days
4.	Budget 1986, SAP & Political Bureau established	January 1-21,1986	21 days
5.	Conviction and Execution of coup plotters	Feb. 25-Mar. 5, 1986	10 days
6.	National Security Organization (NSO) dismantled and new security outfits established	June 5-12, 1986	7 days
7.	Political Bureau Submitted Report	Mar. 26-Apr. 3, 1987	10 days
8.	Some Politicians banned		

	from politics; National Association of Nigerian Students, National Association of Technology Students, and ASECA banned	June 27-July 10, 1986	14 days
9.	FMG gave N25m to states for employment generation	Oct. 27 - Nov. 4, 1986	8 days
10.	MAMSER established	July 7-18, 1987	11 days
11.	Akwa Ibom and Katsina states created .	Sept. 5-15, 1987	10 days
12.	Higher Institutions closed for demonstrations against increase in prices of petroleum and allied products.	April 1-12, 1988	21 days
13	Constituent Assembly Inaugurated	May 11-17, 1988	7 days
14.	Babangida, in National Day broadcast, warned extremists	Oct. 1-7, 1988	7 days
15.	Budget 1989 announced	Jan. 1-10, 1989	10 days
16.	Ban on political activities lifted	May 3-10, 1989	7 days
17.	Spate of Anti-SAP riots across the nation.	May 21-30,1989	10 days
18.	Armed Forces Assembly Inaugurated; govt. announced SAP relief measures.	June 5-16, 1989	11 days

19.	NEC recommended six political Associations to AFRC for Registration as political Parties; rejected, SDP and NRC and Centre for Democratic Studies established	Sept. 26- Oct. 14, 1989	18 days
20.	Second coup attempt	April 22 -30, 1990	8 days
21.	FMG restructured, office of Vice President created and Aikhomu appointed.	Aug. 27-Sept. 10, 1990	14 days
22.	Duty on newsprint imports slashed from 60% to 10%	Sept. 14-20, 1990	6 days
23.	Nine new states, 47 LGAs created, received take-off grants; regional political activities and associations.	Aug. 27-Sept. 7, 1991	11 days
24.	89 additional LGAs created	Sept. 23-30, 1991	7 days
25.	12 governor ship aspirants from states disqualified; national census started	Nov. 25-Dec. 1, 1991	6 days
26.	Eleven banned politicians arrested; seat of govt. moved to Abuja; Presidential race open to all comers.	Dec. 2-23, 1991	21 days
		TOTAL =	286 days

Accordingly, a sample of editions of the four newspapers that form the units of analysis of the study was composed. Editions of the newspapers for some specific days within which each of those policies and events took place were identified and their content examined based on the units of observation.

In selecting these events, attention was paid to their spread and how they related to the political and economic policies of the administration, which in chapter III earlier were shown to be in essence, bourgeois in character. Accordingly, it may sound repetitive if each of those afore-listed policies and events is analysed for its class character once again. However, brief analysis of the class character of some of these policies and events may be inevitable in stressing certain points elsewhere later in this chapter

5.02 THE RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

The press coverage of the cardinal policies and events in the seven year period identified above, was favourable to the administration of General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida. This statement represents the central hypothesis which is tested in the course of this chapter.

It is popularly believed that in those seven years under study, General Babangida seemed to have enjoyed a wonderful but healthy rapport with a dominant section of the Nigerian press, a situation which observers believe disposed most journalists to portray the man, his administration and his policies in good light. This favourable presentation, it is further reasoned, helped suppress opposing views and articulated the official position with little variation and/or criticism if any; a fact which eventually enhanced the legitimacy, and subsequently accelerated the process of the consolidation, of General Babangida, his

policies and his tenure in the polity. Accordingly, it also facilitated the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie which the administration represented in the polity in the period under review.

5.03 DATA PRESENTATION

Like in the previous chapter, use is made of tables in presenting the data generated from the units analyzed.

5.03.1 The Daily Times

Out of a total of 287 editions of the paper examined, 33 were improperly coded. The remaining 254 editions were adequately coded and the data are presented in Table 5.01 below:

Table 5.01: Distribution of Units of Observation by subject matter in 254 editions of the Daily Times newspaper.

Subject matter Unit of Observation	Economy	Politics	Culture	Health	Recreation	Conflict and War	Crime	Social Welfare	People	Labour	Total
Editorials	69	103	13	9	18	12	8	5	7	6	250
News	228	453	53	98	69	73	49	61	55	95	1234
Features	63	68	18	22	32	29	21	19	15	38	325
Cartoons	49	33	3	-	-	3	17	6	-	19	130
Pictures	87	261	63	17	105	35	23	18	31	46	686
Total	496	918	150	146	224	152	118	109	108	204	2625

Table 5.01: shows that a total of 250 editorials, 1234 news items, 325 features, 130 cartoons and 686 pictures were recorded in the analysis of a sample of 287 editions of the Daily Times published from October 1, 1985 to December 23, 1991.

Table 5.02: Distribution of units of observation in terms of directionality in the Daily Times coverage of selected policies and events from 1988-1991.

Subject Matter Units of Observation	Favourable	Unfavourable	Neutral	Total
Editorial	188	23	39	250
News	867	33	334	325
Features	175	18	132	1234
Cartoons	75	7	48	130
Pictures	391	53	242	686
Total	1696	134	795	2625
Proportion in Percentage	65%	5%	30%	100%

Table 5.02: indicates that a total of 2625 units of observation were recorded. Of this figure, 1696 (65%) favourable, 134 (5%) unfavourable and 795 (30%) neutral in relation to the Daily Times coverage of a selection of 26 major policies and events from October 1, 1985 to December 23, 1991 of the Babangida years.

5.03.2 National Concord Newspaper

16 editions out of a total of 287 were rendered invalid. Thus, 271 editions were analyzed and the finding is presented below in Table 5.03

Table 5.03: Distribution of Units of observation on the basis of subject matter in National Concord coverage of selected policies and events from 1985-1991.

Subject Matter Unit of Observation	Economy	Politics	Culture	Health	Recreation	Conflict and War	Crime	Social Welfare	People	Labour	Total
Editorials	87	93	15	8	19	11	5	7	3	6	254
News	265	401	88	35	129	71	63	51	45	47	1195
Features	129	152	34	10	37	18	15	6	2	19	422
Cartoons	20	20	3	8	13	10	9	16	0	0	99
Pictures	70	205	47	31	79	27	18	13	19	21	530
Total	571	871	187	92	277	137	10	93	69	93	2500

Table 5.03 shows that a total of 2500 items were published by the National Concord Newspaper in respect of its coverage of a selection of major policies and events spread within the period from October 1, 1985 nearly two months after the military coup that brought General Babangida to power down to December 23, 1991, about two years before the termination of the Babangida years. Of this figure, a total of 254 of such items were editorials, 1195 news reports, and 422 features. Others were 99 cartoons and 530 pictures.

Table 5.04 presents a classification of the afore-mentioned items based on directionality. In this respect, attention is on the proportion of these items that were favourable to the General, his regime and his policies; unfavourable and/or neutral to same.

Table 5.04: Distribution of Units of Observation based on directionality in the National Concord newspaper coverage of a selection of policies and events between 1985-1991.

Subject Matter Units of Observation	Favourable	Unfavourable	Neutral	Total
Editorial	178	38	38	254
News	896	179	120	1195
Features	189	106	127	422
Cartoons	32	31	36	99
Pictures	353	16	161	530
Total	1648	370	482	2500
Proportion in Percentage	66%	15%	19%	100%

Table 5.04 shows that 66% of editorials, news, features, cartoons and pictures published and/or printed by the National Concord newspaper in respect of its coverage of selection of major policies and events spanning seven years from October 1, 1985 through to December 23, 1991 were favourable to General Ibrahim Babangida, his administration and policies. In contrast, only 15% and 19% of those items were unfavourable and neutral in relation to same.

5.03.3: The Guardian Newspaper

All but three out of 287 editions of this newspaper formed the sample that was studied here. Table 5.05 presents the findings in respect of the distribution of units of observation in terms of subject matter.

Table 5.05: Distribution of units of observation based on subject matter from The Guardian newspaper coverage of selected policies and events from 1985-1991.

Subject Matter Unit of Observation	Economy	Politics	Culture	Health	Recreation	Conflict and War	Crime	Social Welfare	People	Labour	Total
Editorials	96	77	16	15	8	7	5	12	10	21	267
News	204	271	148	87	138	39	31	56	29	19	1022
Features	138	186	117	86	39	100	62	55	66	48	897
Cartoons	86	143	25	47	13	17	25	15	6	16	393
Pictures	92	106	61	56	111	39	43	35	48	17	608
Total	616	783	367	91	309	202	166	173	159	121	3187

Table 5.05 indicates that a total of 3,187 items of the unit of observation were published in the course of The Guardian newspaper coverage of a selection of some major items and events spread across a seven year period. October 1, 1985 to December 23, 991. Of this figure, 267 were editorials, 1022 news items, 897 features while cartoons and pictures stood at 393 and 608 items respectively.

Table 5.06: **Distribution of Units of observation in terms of directionality in**

The Guardian newspaper coverage of major policies and events from 1985-1991.

Subject Matter Units of Observation	Favourable	Unfavourable	Neutral	Total
Editorial	112	73	82	267
News	783	146	93	1022
Features	420	213	264	897
Cartoons	193	111	89	393
Pictures	379	173	56	608
Total	1887	716	584	3187
Proportion in Percentage	59%	22.5%	18.3%	100%

Table 5.06 shows that a total of 1887 (59.2%) items - editorials, news stories, features, cartoons, and pictures - published in The Guardian newspaper in its coverage of major policies and events in the life of the Babangida tenure particularly from October 1, 1985 through to December 23, 1991 were favourable to the administration. 716 (22.5%) items spanning the same range published by the same newspaper during the same period were however adjudged unfavourable to the administration. As it can also be seen from the table, a total of 584 (18.3%) items were neither favourable nor unfavourable to the administration.

5.03.4 NEW NIGERIAN NEWSPAPER

This periodical was examined for a total of 279 days out of 287. In other words, eight editions of this newspaper, owing to the overwhelming errors associated with coding during the field work were invalidated. A total of 279 editions therefore made the sample in this case that was eventually analyzed. Table 5.07 presents the finding arising from the analysis. It contains a distribution of units of observation on the basis of subject matter as evident in the newspaper's coverage of major policies and events from October 1, 1985 through to December 23, 1991 in the life of the Babangida administration.

Table 5.07: Distribution of units of observation by subject matter in New Nigerian newspaper coverage of selected policies and events from 1985-1991.

Subject Matter Unit of Observation	Economy	Politics	Culture	Health	Recreation	Conflict and War	Crime	Social Welfare	People	Labour	Total
Editorials	57	141	19	8	18	12	8	7	-	-	270
News	159	381	67	38	105	31	20	38	29	66	965
Features	93	103	41	19	39	56	48	37	23	43	502
Cartoons	33	27	-	18	15	16	10	-	-	10	129
Pictures	59	357	7	26	87	23	29	5	-	25	618
Total	401	1040	134	109	264	138	115	87	52	144	2484

Evident from Table 5.07, is the information that a total of 270 editorials, 965 news items, and 502 features were published in the New Nigerian newspaper in the period under review. Others were 129 and 618 cartoons and pictures were respectively published too.

In respect of their distribution into subject matter, a total of 401 items were published on various aspects of the economy, 1040 on politics, 134 on culture and 109 on health. Recreation, conflict and war, crime, and social welfare recorded 264, 138, 115 and 87 items respectively in the course of the analysis. People and labour got 52 and 144 items respectively. On the whole, a total of 2,484 items were recorded.

Table 5.08, presents a distribution of the units of observation on the basis of directionality. Do these items directly or indirectly favour General Babangida, his policies and his administration? Alternatively, are these items unfavourable or neutral in respect of *the General, his policies and administration*?

Table 5.08: Distribution of units of observation by directionality in the New Nigerian newspaper coverage of selected major policies and events from 1985 -1991.

Directionality Units of Observation	Favourable	Unfavourable	Neutral	Total
Editorial	180	15	75	270
News	749	96	120	965
Features	195	56	251	502
Cartoons	42	32	55	129
Pictures	384	17	217	618
Total	1550	216	718	2484
Proportion in Percentage	62%	9%	29%	100%

Table 5.08 reveals that a total of 1550 (62%) items including editorials, news features, cartoons and pictures that were published in the New Nigerian newspapers in its coverage of some selected major policies and events from October 1, 1985 and December

23, 1991 were favourable to General Babangida, his administration and his policies. Those unfavourable and neutral of same amounted to 216 (9%) items and 718 (29) items respectively. In respect of features, there was a total of 251 items neutral as against 195 items favourable. This posture, which deviates slightly from the pattern in the table, may be attributable to the preponderant flair by the newspaper to publish externally authored feature materials including those from news agencies and those lifted from international news magazines. The features department of the newspaper is seemingly weak such that its proportion of the total number of features published is quite minute.

Table 5.09, contains a summary of the finding in respect of the coverage of some selected major policies and events by a sample of the Nigerian press from October 18, 1985 through to December 23, 1991, a period of nearly seven out of eight years of the Babangida years.

Table 5.09: Distribution of units of analysis by directionality in their coverage of selected policies and events from 1985-1991.

Directionality Units of Analysis	Favourable	Unfavourable	Neutral	Total
Daily Times	1696	134	795	2625
National Concord	1648	370	482	2500
The Guardian	1887	716	584	3187
New Nigerian	1550	216	718	2484
Total	6752	1436	2579	10,796
Proportion in Percentage	63%	13%	24%	100%

contrasts with 1436 (13%) items that were unfavourable and 2579 (24%) items that were neutral. These figures indicate a change in pattern compared to the result of the newspaper coverage of the August 27, 1985 military coup that brought General Babangida to power. In the previous chapter, evidence gathered from the content analysis showed a preponderance of 'neutral' items while in this case, there is dominance of items that are favourable. A discussion of this finding will come shortly.

5.04 DATA ANALYSIS

Basically, this study has utilized a multi-stage sampling technique. This technique essentially involved, at the first stage, the purposive selection of four newspapers - Daily Times, National Concord, The Guardian and New Nigerian. Their selection was based on two criteria: circulation figures, to wit, the first three highest circulating dailies in the country as at 1987, were those first three identified above. The other criterion, was ownership, that is to say, of the three highest circulating newspapers, two are privately owned - National Concord and The Guardian - while the Daily Times is (quasi) public. To balance the sample in terms of ownership, the New Nigerian newspaper, which is public owned, thus became included in the sample.

At the second stage, a total of 27 major policies and events were selected . Some of these policies include the declaration of 15-month state of economic emergency to enable government mobilize resources for economic development, the introduction of SAP in 1986, the establishment of politbureau to recommend a political time-table for a return to civil rule, the anti-SAP riots of 1988, the inauguration of a Constituent Assembly to recommend a constitution for the nation, state/ local government creation and lots more.

Some of these policies and programmes will be critically analyzed later in this chapter. What is critical and what needs be pointed out at this stage is that in the nearly seven year period October 1, 1985 to December 23, 1991 - the coverage of those items selected and listed in detail earlier in this chapter spread to a total of 287 days. As each policy and event was introduced by the government of General Babangida attention is paid to the newspaper coverage of same within a minimum of one week and a maximum of three weeks. It is assumed that within this period, the newspaper could critique, report, comment and analyze these policies and events at least optimally as to facilitate their acceptability/rejection within the polity. Accordingly, with four newspaper contents being examined across 287 days, there would be a total of 1,148 editions (content) analyzed altogether. At the third stage, based on the units of observation - editorial, news, features, cartoons and pictures -, a total of 10,796 items were realized. Eventually, those 10,767 items (made up of 2625 items from the Daily Times, 2500 from the National Concord, 3187 from The Guardian and 2484 from the New Nigerian) constituted the sample which is analyzed for directionality in relation to their potrayal of General Babangida, his administration and policies in the period under review, i. e. October 1, 1985 through to December 23, 1991.

To recap, the research hypothesis states that the press coverage of the (selected) cardinal policies and events in the nearly seven year period was favourable to General Babangida, his administration and his policies and events. The evidence arising from the sample depicted in Table 5.09 shows that, on the whole, 63% of the items were favourable, 13% unfavourable while 24% neutral. This suggests that the research hypothesis is supported; but what is not yet clear is whether or not a significant statement

may be made on the basis of the finding. To do this however, a statistical treatment of the relationship between the two variables - press (coverage) and government policies/events - is necessary.

Thus, as usual, with 95% confidence level, the study would accommodate a maximum of 5% error level. Given the Z-score of the confidence level, the error margin stands at 0.005 (less than one percent), thus, p<5%. This accords perfectly with one of the cardinal precepts of statistics which states that the higher the sample size, the smaller the error margin.

Thus, with an error margin of less than 1%, which, in itself, is less than the error level of 5%, it suggests therefore that the relationship between the variables, based on the sample, is very significant.

In terms of proportion, how significant is the difference between the volume of favourable and unfavourable/neutral items? With a confidence level of 95% which translates in to a Z-score of 1.96, a T-test will reveal 26%. This figure far exceeds the Z-score of 1.96 (value of 95% confidence level in the Z-table). This implies that the difference between the volume of favourable and unfavourable/neutral items, is very significant and; this result is what may be obtained in reality in any similar study with very little probability.

On the whole therefore, based on the evidence arising from the sample, it is clear that, Nigerian newspaper coverage of the cardinal policies/events in the period under review was overwhelmingly favourable to the Babangida administration.

5.05 DISCUSSION

This finding accords with popular sentiments expressed by professional journalists in the industry. Emeka Omeihe, editor of the Daily Champion, a private owned newspaper based in Lagos described the relationship between Babangida and the press in the almost seven year period as being "fairly okay" (interview with Omeihe, 1995). Indeed, Today newspaper editor, Dahiru Coommasie, is even more succinct

> *It (the relationship between General Babangida and the press) started nicely. He was clever. He abrogated the Public Officers(Protection Against False Accusation) Decree No. 4 of 1984, and left Decree No. 2 (of the same year) which was a more serious decree. The press were so selfish as they recognized only Decree No. 4 as it (directly) affected them.... I do not know whether to call it naivity (sic) or self centredness. The relationship continued nicely. Babangida courted the press and they were carried away (interview with Coommassie, 1995).*

For Bilkisu Yusuf, CITIZEN News magazine's editor, the relationship between Babangida and the press in this period was rather a "mixed bag". She observed that

> *At first, Babangida was praised by the Nigerian press. They sang his song and cooperated with him, and this helped him to sell himself and his programme to the populace. But later, there were problems... This arose especially when the press realized that some of the General's programmes were not as good as they thought (and) they criticized the Structural Adjustment (Economic) Programme of the administration, they exposed and decried his profligacy with public funds, etc (interview with Yusuf, 1995)*

Nevertheless, Yusuf still credited General Babangida with a good strategy of courting the good will of the press in the course of his tenure. A highlight of this strategy, pointed Yusuf, was the "frequent informal contacts Babangida was in the habit of having

with press personalities during which he was fond of telling journalists what they wanted to hear" (interview with Yusuf, 1995)

Adding, Yusuf identified the "policy of settlement ... (which) simply means providing gratification to media personalities, journalists and publishers alike", in so many ways as yet another highlight of the strategy mentioned above. Elucidating, Yusuf said "He courted them as personal friends and then he got a good deal of them (proprietors especially) to caution and sometimes even fire stubborn and anti-government journalists on their payroll", (interview with Yusuf, 1995).

The outcome of this rapport with the press was, for Muhammed Suleiman, former Executive Director of the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria, Kaduna, "very successful". According to him, General Babangida "succeeded up to... 70 percent" (interview with Suleiman, 1995).The General too did not fail to recognize this feat in courting the goodwill of the press, at least in this period. General Babangida recalled glowingly:

> *Well, they did well to be very honest. Before we introduced the economic reforms, the press was up and doing in trying to get the people to understand the issues involved, in trying to fashion out ideas and get the mind of the people to focus on particular issues. And I think they did that extremely well and that enhanced in carrying out some of our programmes. Take for instance, the IMF debate. Issues were highlighted and those who had things to say the press allowed them to do so. On our part we organized seminars, and conference on the various aspects of the IMF loan. We were able to know where the nation wanted to go and what sacrifices they (sic;) were prepared to do. And so we introduced the Economic Emergency programme in October (1985), (the) Structural Adjustment Programme, the Political Bureau debate, etc (interview with Babangida, 1995).*

Thus, the press was really seen by leading press figures as much as by the administration as being 'partners in progress' in the period under review. However, this is not withstanding the pockets of opposition from some sections of the press, particularly the news magazines. For instance, The News news magazine, which, since its birth in 1991, had maintained a critical stand towards the General and his administration. According to Dapo Olorunyomi, the Magazine's Editor-In-Chief, Babangida's romance with the press in the period under review was any thing but calming. Mr Olorunyomi observed that Babangida,

> *kept battling for acceptance. Initially there was that cordial relationship. But the regime squandered it with the Dele Giwa (mysterious murder) and the (alleged) entry of Nigeria into the Organization of Islamic Conference and, partly because the opposition too was building up and tried to mobilize the press. For most of his tenure, he had uneasy relationship with the press. Initially, he could have been faxing editorials to media houses and then would get published. But all that was squandered (interview with Olorunyomi, 1995).*

But views such as those expressed by Mr. Olorunyomi were, for some observers, representative of a brand of journalism that emerged at the advent of the 1990s in the country, that went straight into advocacy, which is anything but 'fair' to all the parties in a story. This much was acknowledged by its counterpart, TELL as it strove to make a veiled redress while preparing for a cover story on Babangida, nearly two years after he left office. In recognizing this impression, TELL editor Onome Osifo-Whisky reeled in the preface to the magazine's July 24, 1995 edition that:

> *Being a pioneer of the kind of journalism that questions the*

> *pretenses and sugar coated falsehood (sic) that were assuming the hall mark of the Babangida presidency, TELL was bad-mouthed (sic) in official quarters as a publication (which was) rabidly anti-government and so set in its ways that it was not ready to hear the other side, that of government. We wanted to prove to such critics that this was wrong, besides the fact that we thought there were issues never asked the general which we ought to ask (Whisky, 1995).*

To prove critics wrong or not, the impression was probably widely shared that advocacy journalism tends to be unfair, at least, unequally treat parties to a story. This kind of journalism was certainly to predominate in the anti-Babangida chorus, especially in the last one year of the administration, a period that will be examined shortly in the next chapter.

In the meantime, the point must be noted that the press was predominantly acquiescent of the administration of the General in the period under review. This could be attributed primarily though not exclusively to the increased confidence the administration may have reaped from its successful courtship with a dominant section of the press. General Babangida became more consolidated in office as a result, and given the public relation function the press rendered to him and his policies and which he acknowledged graciously else where earlier, his 'acceptability' increased in society. Conversely, opinions critical of the General, his administration and policies became the mainstay of the relatively small section of the press that was becoming evident by the advent of the nineties.

Looked at from a class point of view, it may be stated that , in this period, the various factions of the bourgeoisie appeared to have recovered from their traumatic experience under the deposed Buhari administration. It may also be observed that at the

sometime they may have regained confidence in the course of their cooperation with the Babangida administration whom many prominent bourgeois elements often treat as a 'messiah' having not only 'liberated' them from prison but also provided them various forms of respite to recover in business and political relevance. This point is very much evident in the class character of Babangida's cardinal policies/programmes in this period.

For instance, the point was made earlier in a previous chapter that the 15 months state of economic emergency which effected compulsory deductions from salaries and wages in both the private and public sectors, the armed and para-military services and later extended to include deductions of between 5-15% from the after tax profit of all companies registered and operating in the country, was a superficial way of tackling fundamental economic problems of the country for two reasons. First, those minor cuts in respect of the after tax profit of companies, particularly the TNCs and MNCs was very paltry when compared with their combined profit repatriation over the years. Secondly, and most importantly the deduction in wages and salaries amounted to roping the poor to pay for the profligacies and rapaciousness of the bourgeois class. It is also plausible to query this assertion. For instance, can it be proven empirically; how much was it that the poor paid and how much was paid by the members of the bourgeois class; were the contribution not fixed *pro rata*? This assertion is difficult to prove statistically since the deductions were not done on class basis and the proceeds recorded as such. In addition, the horde of mobile and officeless 'business men and women' and the self employed small scale entrepreneurs were hardly covered. The assertion can however be implied. When the compulsory deductions of between 5 - 15% were decreed on wages and salaries in both public and private sectors, the armed and para-military services as well as the after tax profits of companies operating in the country there lies the assumption that, depending on extent, all Nigerians, human and corporate, were responsible for the nation's economic predicaments in one way or the other; therefore they must each share in its (economic) revival. This is where the quarrel lies. For, it is clear that this assumption is not tenable. This is because while the working class put their labour power to sustain the country but do not get proportionate value from same; the companies especially the TNCs appropriate the product of the labour power of the working class in the name of profit. How then can the victim and oppressor be said to have played similar role in the nation's economic down-turn; and therefore, depending on the extent of the said role, each must submit to some deductions? In all, the reasoning here is that the working class had no hand in the nation's economic down-turn; if any at all, they are its worst victim. Hence, any deductions from them only confounds their sorry state, and therefore, it is unjust and unfair

reference of the Bureau was to "identify a basic philosophy of government which will determine goals and serve as a guide to the activities of government " and, based on the volume of inputs received, the Bureau had eventually recommended the adoption of socialism as a (political) philosophy for the country. This recommendation was however, out rightly rejected by government. In rejecting this recommendation, General Babangida had harped on the national objectives, fundamental human rights, fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy as enunciated in the 1979 federal constitution and argued that, "what we need is the will and courage to practically pursue these lofty objectives in order to achieve greater happiness for the masses of our country. Therefore government does not consider it necessary to attach any ideological label to our new socio-political order" (Babangida, 1987). It was also observed earlier that although the president was staunchly anti-socialist yet he was an ardent advocate of (philosophical) liberalism in all spheres of social life.

Another comment on the political transition programme and which was also pointed out earlier in previous chapters, is that not-withstanding the austere environment occasioned by SAP, corruption, which had become widespread in society had rendered the political process more of an investment for members of the bourgeois class than an exercise in genuine political engineering. For example, the two political parties decreed by government - SDP and NRC - each required a non-refundable financial deposit of half a million naira from prospective presidential candidates; a measure which amounted to limiting the Presidency only to a bourgeois affair.

Consequently, it may be deposed that, essentially Babangida ruled for the bourgeoisie, particularly the bureaucratic component in addition to their imperialist allies.

This class, more than any other, benefited immensely from the cardinal policies and activities of the General in the period under review The bourgeoisie attained maximum unity behind the General and his administration within the period under review, a fact which testifies to the hegemony of the (bureaucratic) bourgeoisie within the polity in this period.

Consequently, the press which were instruments in the hands of either leading members of the bourgeois class or of the bourgeois government itself, became dominantly, reflective of this unity of purpose and action between the military government and the (coalition of various factions of the) bourgeoisie in the country. This partly explains the uncritical posture of an overwhelming section of the Nigerian press to the General, his administration and policies. In fact, in a gross departure from standards of professional practice, the National Concord was to flash an outrageous banner titled "Vatsa Must die" when a military court martial convicted (Major - General Mamman) Vatsa for treason even before the Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC), the apex executive and legislative body then in power, had confirmed the sentence passed (National Concord, between 25/2 - 5/3, 1986). Such over-zealousness by this newspaper, owned single-handedly by Chief Moshood Abiola, a multi-millionaire businessman, politician and close friend of General Babangida, underscored the desire of the bourgeoisie to protect and defend the status quo ante against any threat.

Conversely, the greatest victims of General Babangida's policies and programmes in the period under review were the petty bourgeoisie and the working classes. These social groups had emerged most debilitated, emasculated, alienated and dejected. They lost their means of livelihood to the harsh conditions of structural adjustment and the

attendant inflationary trend. The devaluation of the national currency and government's systematic withdrawal from the social sector exposed members of these classes to vulnerabilities of diverse kinds almost with fatal consequences. Crimes, infant and maternal mortality, unemployment and under employment, divorce, prostitution and reduced economic capacity became the main stay of their lives. A weak faction of the bourgeoisie, the corporate rich, as against the bureaucratic faction with direct access to the general equally suffered a great deal too. Industries and factories were operating at reduced capacities and economic and political activities were increasingly becoming organised around general Babangida and his associate. For instance, he founded the Centre for Democratic Studies and appointed his friend and associate, Prof. Omo Omoruyi as Director-General; using state fund the first lady and wife of the president established the multi-million naira Better Life for Rural Women Programme with herself as Chairperson. He appointed his friends and associates, Prof. Sam Oyovbaire and Dr. Tunji Olagunju first as his advisers and later as ministers in his cabinet; he single-handedly dissolved and re-constituted the AFRC,the nation's highest executive and legislative body; unilaterally replaced the Chief of General Staff and number two man in government and appointed cronies as governors; he established the Agency for Mass Mobilization and Social and Economic Recovery (MAMSER) and appointed his former class mate Prof. Jerry Gana and his friend , Prof. Tunde Adeniran as Chairman and Secretary respectively; created political parties complete with offices, funds and manifestoes for the politicians under the Transition to Civil Rule programme. Primordial rather than objective criteria along with its corrupt tendencies were becoming major features of the power relationship in this period all to promote Babangida's legitimacy and sustain the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie vis-a-vis the corporate rich. It was also to assure the imperialist bourgeoisie that Nigeria was pacified in contrast to the Buhari days, therefore, conducive for foreign investment.

It is perhaps pertinent to note at this juncture, that relying on the operational definition of hegemony here, it is primarily the activity of a dominant bloc in relation to a constellation of blocs within the dominant social class. In this case hegemony relates to the activity of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie in relation to other blocs such as the corporate rich and to some extent, the imperialist faction rather than to

Babangida as an individual or his administration. However, given the period under study, Babangida and his administration as elements of the bureaucratic (bloc of the) bourgeoisie were functional in the process of consolidating and sustaining to a great extent,the hegemony of this dominant bloc.Thus,hegemony operates primarily at the level of social groups and secondarily at the level of the administration and Babangida himself.

Correspondingly, this objective condition propelled mass organizations rooted in the working class to the path of resistance. The Nigeria Labour Congress(NLC) and National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) were two prominent organizations of the working class to engage the Babangida administration in running strikes. The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), the Nigeria Bar Assopciation (NBA), the Nigeria Medical Association (NMA), Nigeria Association of Pilots and Aircraft Engineers among others from the petty bourgeoisie also struck several times in opposition to the Babangida administration in the course of the period under review.

In terms of access to the press, the working and petty bourgeois classes,who constituted the fountain head of opposition to the bourgeois state , were drastically streamlined. This is testified to by the very small volume - 13% of items unfavourable to the administration arising from the sample examined.

The advent of the nineties however,saw the emergence of news magazines such as The News, Tell, The Week and a host of what is often referred to as 'soft sale' publications that manifest being critical of the *status-quo ante*. Two reasons may be adduced to explain the emergence of this category of the press, which I have chosen to dub the reformist press.

First, the growing negative consequences of the economic and political policies of the dministration for most of its tenure threw forth a new crop of young men who moved into journalism to sow the seeds of advocacy.These youngsters,mostly university educated,and very often victims of economic and political policies of the administration during their students' days, conceived of journalism as instrument for their continuing criticism of the social situation in the country. As a student leader in the late

1970s and early 1980s and very familiar with popular democratic organizations myself, one may state without fear of contradiction that very infinitesimal proportion, if any at all, among these youngsters however, had previous exposure to critical philosophy, social science and organized resistance as to inform the quality of their (political) practice once out of University. Consequently, these youngsters parading as professional journalists, lawyers and human right activists reduced their social criticism to personalities, ethnic and regional groups. Common references in this vein may be recalled of how Babangida was projected by this section of activists distributed across the professions and in organizations of civil society as the greatest problem in the country rather than military rule which he epitomized or even the bourgeois state. Hausa-Fulani and/or the (far) northern constellation of states and peoples were presented as being the dominators of other peoples and therefore, the sources of the country's problems howsoever, conceived. This imagery reached tragic heights when a group of soldiers led by Major Gideon Orka staged an abortive coup in April, 1990 during which the rebels announced , among others, the excision of the far northern states of Borno, Bauchi, Kano, Katsina and Sokoto from Nigeria.

Secondly, a sprinkle of bourgeois elements took advantage of the growing rejection of the relatively older and hitherto dominant press and invested into the founding of news magazines in the 1990s and around which those young University graduates were employed. Mention here may be made of The Week, founded and owned by Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, formerly of the Nigerian Custom Services, a front line politician and former Presidential candidate in his own right; Sentinel, founded and owned by retired General Shehu Musa Yar'Adua, number two man in the administration of General Obasanjo and a

front line politician and former Presidential candidate; TELL news magazine was founded similarly by Mr. Lai Balogun, a politician and former Presidential candidate and many others like that. These media represent that kind of journalism articulated earlier who, in their frenzy with social criticism, often mistake the consequence for the cause. Their quality of journalism, which was to become dominant after the annulment of the June 12, 1993 Presidential elections, has become source of worry in the country.

In a paper on "press coverage of national crisis" Dr. Idowu Sobowale, Managing Director and Editor-In-Chief of The Republic Newspaper had cause to excoriate the press for their coverage of crisis (such as the anti-SAP riots and Zangon Kataf communal disturbances of 1989 and 1992 respectively) which showed sufficient slants that betrayed the prejudice of the affected media (Sobowale, 1994). For Randy Zomelo (1994), Nigerian journalists lack inquisitiveness in handling local crisis and urged them to coordinate efforts with security forces in handling national issues.

In the same vein, Egbon (1994) rebuked (Nigerian) media personnel for using the mass media to serve selfish and elite minority interests while Al Bashir (1994), former editor-In-Chief of the Kaduna based the Democrat newspaper had cause to condemn those publications which he described as being based on 'half truths' and 'falsehood' and urged for self regulation to check the menace. The then national President of the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), Sani Zorro, also expressed concern at "The Influx of untrained and unscrupulous practitioners into the profession (which) tended to water-down (the) understanding of the ethics of the profession" (Zorro, 1994).

5.06 SUMMARY

What has been attempted in the proceeding pages, was an analysis of media content to test the research hypothesis which states that press coverage of a selection of 26 major policies and events from October 1, 1985 through to December 23, 1991 would be favourable. The hypothesis was supported by evidence arising from the analysis of a sample of the contents of the press that was studied. Following statistical analysis, the relationship between press coverage and the presentation positively of those major policies and events in the life of the Babangida administration was found to be very significant. Similarly, the difference between the proportion of favourable items on the one hand and a combination of those unfavourable/neutral others was, following an appropriate statistical test, found to be very significant too.

The implication of the finding to the study is that during the period under review, the overwhelming posture of the press which was in favour of the administration, meant that the institution had become a 'partner in progress' with the Babangida administration. In other words, a dominant section of the press came to render a sort of public relation service to the General, his administration and policies within the polity, a matter which facilitated his legitimacy in the polity, and promoted the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie (which the administration was part of).

In subsequent discussions, this posture of the press is attributed to its capacity to reflect in its coverage, the unity of the (various factions of the dominant) bourgeois class behind the General and his administration. This unity is demonstrated by the class character of the economic and political programmes of the administration, which is conclusively infavour of the bourgeoisie, particularly the bureaucatic faction which had

become adept at corruption and compradorial behaviours rather than a distinguished presence in the productive process.

As for the working and petty bourgeois classes, it is argued that as social classes, they were the greatest victims of the rapaciousness of those economic and political policies of the administration. The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) declared three anti-SAP nationwide strikes in 1986, 1988 and 1991. Professional groups such as the Nigerian Bar Association, Academic Staff Union of Universities, Nigerian Medical Association as well as the National Association of Nigerian Students also went on strike to press for political and economic reforms. These classes became very active in the struggle against military rule and for a return to democracy; a struggle that challenged the legitimacy of the Babangida administration and threatened the hegemony of the (bureaucratic) bourgeoisie in the polity,

Further, this development facilitated the emergence of two phenomena: first, the rise of a crop of educated youths who now operate as journalists and operatives of various human rights groups. In these institutions, these youngsters perceived of their mission as that of continuing with social criticism, a vocation they acquired however conceived, in their days as students within their dilapidated institutions of learning. Secondly, and related to the first, some elements of the bourgeoisie, out to reap from the social discontent within the working and petty bourgeois classes, begun to invest into the foundation of a variety of news magazines anchored around a very critical though reformist philosophy.

In the next chapter, focus, will be on adducing empirical evidence to test the hypothesis that in the last one to two years of the Babangida administration press coverage of the administration was negative, a situation that out rightly challenged the legitimacy of the General and his administration and threatened the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie in Nigeria.

CHAPTER SIX

THE CRISIS OF HEGEMONY - STATE AND PRESS RELATIONS IN 1992 - 1993

6.01 INTRODUCTION

This is the last of the three empirical chapters in the study. The aim of this chapter is to adduce field evidence on the state of relations between the administration of General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida and the press. The evidence to be adduced will be limited to the last 21 months of the Babangida years: January 1, 1992 through to September 10, 1993, two weeks after General Babangida had actually 'stepped aside'.

The strategy of achieving the goal of the chapter will be, first, to identify the major policies and events in the life of the administration within the period under review; second, select the editions of the four newspapers (that form the units of analysis) drawn from the period corresponding to the introduction of these policies and conduct of these events into an appropriate sample of their content; third, review this sample of their contents; fourth, establish the character of the press coverage of those major policies and events earlier identified and; finally, attempt an explanation of the finding and its implication to the problem of legitimacy of the General Babangida administration and its implication to the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie, which the administration was part of, within the polity.

6.02 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Accordingly, the central research hypothesis in this chapter is that the press coverage of these policies and events was unfavorable to the General, his administration

and policies. It is observed that during the time under review, events in the polity (as listed below) had generated so much tension resulting in a state of political crisis and; the news media, the institutional structure that had the dominant function of interpreting and reporting these events, played a critical role in conveying a definite definition and meaning of these events. Again, in selecting these events, consideration is given to their spread and their relationship to the economic and political programmes of the administration whose social character the study has earlier on established.

List of selected policies and events of the Babangida administration from January 1,1992 to September 10,1993.

1. *January 1 - 20, 1992: Budget 1992, new revenue allocation formula, Federal cabinet dissolved and new Ministers appointed and sworn-in.*

2. *March 24 - April 7, 1992: New financial reforms, new SAP relief package, NEC empowered to ban politicians and aridity hit many states.*

3. *May 5 - 15 1992: Fuel crisis in Lagos and other parts of the country.*

4. *May 19 - 30 1992: FMG bans all associations founded along ethnic, political and religious lines; government approves the establishment of the National Guards as additional security outfit.*

5. *June 26 - 30, 1992: NEC disqualifies more politicians.*

6. *July 4 - 10, 1992: Nationwide elections into the National Assembly.*

7. *July 22 -30, 1992: ASUU proscribed by the FMG, NRC fixes N500,000 as non-refundable fees for presidential aspirants, AFRC pushes backward to 1993 the inauguration of National Assembly.*

8. *September 18 -30, 1992: Presidential Primaries in both the NRC and SDP concluded. Alhaji Adamu Chiroma / Alh. Umaru Shinkafi had a tie in the NRC while General Shehu Yar Adua was returned in the SDP.*

9. *November 11 - 18 1992: FMG bans both NRC and SDP flag bearers; National Executive Committees of both parties dissolved; caretaker committees set for both parties at all three levels of government; fresh presidential primaries ordered.*

10. *January 4 - 10, 1993: Fresh registration of party members.*

11. *January 11 - 17, 1993: Political aspirants asked to apply to NRC for screening.*

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12. *March 25 - April 3, 1993: National Convention of both SDP and NRC elect M. K. O Abiola and Bashir Tofa as respective presidential candidates;National Executive Committees elected for each of the two political parties and hand over by the national caretaker committees.*

13. *June 12 - 20, 1993: Nationwide presidential election, deadlock over announcement of results.*

14. *June 23 - 30, 1993: Annulment of Presidential election.*

15. *July 1 - 15, 1993: Appointment of Transition government under Chief E. O. A. Shonekan. Chairman/Managing Director of United Africa Company (Nig) Plc.*

16. *August 26 - September 10, 1993: General Babangida steps aside, hands over power to an Interim National Government headed by Chief Shonekan.*

It is further reasoned that during this period, the news media were believed to have abandoned their core duty of truthfully interpreting and dispassionately and accurately reporting events, activities and personalities and, instead, joined the fray individually taking sides either in favour of , or against the, military administration. Either ways there were to be found a mixture of private owned news media spread across the nation.

6.03 DATA PRESENTATION

In consonance with previous chapters, the use of tables is adopted in this chapter as a means of presenting the field data realized from the analysis of media content. Similarly, the four newspapers will each be examined and the data arising therefrom depicted individually too. Eventually, a separate table will be used to contain a summary of the data across the four newspapers. It must also be pointed out that given the number of days within which each event /policy is expected to be reported upon by the news media

and the total number of such days across all the selected policies and events, stands at 156. This means that 156 editions of each of the four newspapers would be analyzed. On the whole, 624 editions across all four papers would be affected.

6.03.1 The Daily Times Newspaper Out of 156 editions, 12 were poorly coded and this leaves 144. Table 6.01 below presents a distribution of units of observation by subject matter:

Table 6.01: Distribution of Units of observation on the basis of subject matter in the coverage of selected policies and events in 1992 - 1993 by the Daily Times newspaper.

Subject matter Units of Observation	Economy	Politics	Culture	Health	Recreation	Conflict & War	Crime	Social Welfare	People	Labour	Total
Editorial	16	49	5	3	5	13	17	8	2	5	123
News	285	389	37	31	27	42	159	18	10	50	1048
Features	96	109	48	55	39	43	29	17	11	31	478
Cartoons	31	61	0	9	29	21	34	31	5	17	238
Pictures	159	207	69	51	102	61	105	83	56	65	958
Total	587	815	159	149	202	180	344	157	84	168	2845

by the Daily Times in respect of those major policies and events selected within the period under review, 123 of these were editorials, 1048 news reports and 478 feature materials. Cartoons and pictures recorded 238 and 958 items respectively.

Table 6.02: Distribution of units of observation on the basis of directionality in the coverage of selected major policies and events by the Daily Times newspaper from 1992 - 1993.

Directionality Units of Observation	Favourable	Unfavourable	Neutral	Total
Editorial	95	0	28	123
News	679	96	273	1048
Features	173	53	252	478
Cartoons	108	33	97	238
Pictures	772	69	117	958
Total	1827	251	767	2845
Proportion in terms of Percentage	64%	9%	27%	100%

Table 6.02: shows that of the total of 2,845 items published by the Daily Times in its coverage of selected major policies and events in the period under review, a total of 1,827 (64%) items were favourable to the Babangida administration. The corresponding figures for those unfavourable and neutral were 251 (9%) and 767 (27%) respectively.

The preponderance of favourable items published by the Daily Times at this time may be attributable to the increased desire by the federal government to mobilize all its propaganda arsenals to articulate and assert the official position on the state of the economy and politics. This found much attestation in the calibre of the (then) newly appointed Minister for Information and Culture Mr. Uche Chukwumerije, a seasoned journalist by profession and an accomplished propaganda chief in the defunct Republic of Biafra, was appointed in January, 1992, and retained in his post even after the exit of

General Babangida from office on August 26, 1993. It may also be recalled that shortly before then, the President and Commander-In-Chief had approved the deployment of Otumba Tola Adeniyi, Director-General in the Presidency, to the Daily Times as Managing Director and Chief Executive. It is probably reasonable therefore to suggest that the reorganization of the Federal Ministry of Information and the Daily Times, a quasi parastatal under the same Ministry, may have impacted on the direction of the content of the newspaper.

6.03.2 National Concord Newspaper

Like the Daily Times, 12 out of 156 editions of this newspaper were improperly coded, thereby rendering them invalid for the purposes of the analysis. Again, owing to its ownership by Chief M. K. O Abiola, multimillionaire businessman and presidential candidate of the SDP in the June 12 election that was annulled by the Babangida administration on June 23, 1993, the newspaper, just like all other periodicals in the Concord Group, became highly critical of the administration. The latter retaliated drastically by banning this newspaper and all other publications in the Concord Group: National Concord, Weekend Concord, Sunday Concord and African Concord Magazine in addition to The Punch, Saturday Punch, Sunday Punch, Daily Sketch, Sunday Sketch and Nigerian Observer Newspapers vide the Newspaper, etc. (Proscription and Prohibition from circulation) Decree No. 48 of July 21, 1993. This further curtailed the number of editions of this newspaper by another 14 that were eventually analyzed. On the whole, a total of 130 editions were examined.

Table 6.03, presents the distribution of the units of observation in terms of subject matter arising from the newspaper's coverage of those selected policies and events in the third part of the Babangida tenure from January, 1992 through to September 10, 1993

Table 6.03: Distribution of units of observation by subject matter arising from National Concord newspaper coverage of selected policies and events in 1992 - 1993.

Subject matter Units of Observation	Economy	Politics	Culture	Health	Recreation	Conflict & War	Crime	Social Welfare	People	Labour	Total
Editorial	46	68	2	4	2	0	2	2	0	0	126
News	1391	1314	187	166	1121	143	158	333	233	65	5111
Features	87	64	14	13	17	6	8	11	10	3	233
Cartoons	40	45	10	17	8	3	4	11	3	3	144
Pictures	497	451	100	98	469	67	69	166	275	40	2232
Total	2061	1942	313	298	1617	219	241	523	521	111	7846

Table 6.03 shows that the total number of units of observation published in the period under review stood at 7846. This figure, which is the highest so far in all the periods and periodicals examined, may be attributed to two possible factors: first, the increased role of the newspaper, indeed all the Concord Group of publications, in the electioneering campaigns of Chief M. .K. O Abiola after January 1992. This has evidently resulted, among others, in increase in the volume of the newspaper from its traditional 20 page average hitherto to, between 32 and 36 pages, and, along with that more contributions from within the employees as well as the Chief's supporters out there. Secondly, from the political party primaries held sometime between March and April, 1993 when Chief M.K.O Abiola emerged as the Presidential candidate of the Social Democratic Party through to the June 12, 1993 Presidential election down to the annulment of the out come of the same election in which Abiola was believed to have won and the aftermath, the National Concord, indeed the Concord Group of publications, were to become highly propagandistic of the Chief as much as critical of Babangida and his administration. This too resulted in much sensationalism in the paper's content, a trend which swelled the paper's circulation among the supporters of the Chief nationwide, a fact which probably resulted in the promulgation of Decree 48 of 1993 which banned, among others, the entirety of the Concord Group effective July 21, 1993. Accordingly, of the 7,846 items, 126 were editorials, 5111 news stories, 233 features while cartoons and pictures stood at 144 and 2232 respectively.

Table 6.04, depicts the distribution of the units of observation in terms of directionality. In other words, of the 7846 items, what proportion was favourable,

unfavourable, and neutral, respectively to General Babangida, his administration and those policies and events within the time under review?

Table 6.04: Distribution of units of observation by directionality in the National Concord newspaper coverage of selected policies and events in 1992 - 1993

Directionality Units of Observation	Favourable	Unfavourable	Neutral	Total
Editorial	32	86	8	126
News	790	3343	978	5111
Features	51	175	7	233
Cartoons	16	88	40	144
Pictures	409	1520	303	2232
Total	1298	5212	1336	7846
Proportion in terms of Percentage	17%	66%	27%	100%

Table 6.04 indicates that of a total of 7846 units of observation published by the National Concord in its coverage of those selected policies and events in the period , under review, 1298 (17%) items were favourable to General Babangida, his administration and policies. 1336(17%) items were neutral but the overwhelming figure of 5212 (66%) items were adverse to the Babangida administration.

It may be observed that most of the items that were favourable and much of those neutral to the Babangida administration derive from items published in the period before the June 12, 1993 presidential election. This was a period of open collaboration between Chief M.K.O. Abiola, owner of the Concord group of newspapers, and General Babangida. The affinity was based on the presumption that other than personal ties which

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actually existed between the two personalities, M.K.O. Abiola, having just unfolded his political ambition in the context of the political transition programme of the Babangida administration, would definitely not wish to be seen to be critical of the same administration.

6.03.3 The Guardian Newspaper

A total of 148 editions of this newspaper were content analyzed. This meant that only two editions were poorly coded and therefore, rendered invalid. Table 6.05, presents a distribution of the units of observation in terms of subject matter.

Table 6.05: Distribution of units of observation in terms of subject matter arising from The Guardian newspaper coverage of selected major policies and events in 1992 - 1993

Subject matter Units of Observation	Economy	Politics	Culture	Health	Recreation	Conflict & War	Crime	Social Welfare	People	Labour	Total
Editorial	7	49	1	2	1	1	3	5	4	3	76
News	1053	896	118	189	780	3	29	261	41	114	3484
Features	94	272	78	59	15	0	2	28	19	2	569
Cartoons	29	36	4	0	3	0	2	5	3	2	84
Pictures	325	306	180	30	228	1	10	47	64	5	1196
Total	1508	1559	381	280	1027	5	46	346	131	126	5409

Table 6.05, shows that a total of 5409 items of the units of observation were published by The Guardian newspaper in relation to the coverage of selected policies and events in the period under review. In terms of distribution over subject matter, the break down shows that politics, economy and recreation were the first three highly reported subjects with 1559, 1508 and 1027 items respectively. Others were culture 381 items, social welfare 346, health 280 and people 131. Labour, crime and conflict and war bring up the rear with 131, 126 and 5 items respectively. Table 6.06, presents the distribution of units of observation in terms of directionality.

Table 6.06: Distribution of units of **observation in term of Directionality in The Guardian newspaper coverage of selected major policies and events in** 1992 - 1993

Directionality Units of Observation	Favourable	**Unfavourable**	**Neutral**	**Total**
Editorial	1	13	62	76
News	881	364	2235	3484
Features	36	82	451	569
Cartoons	5	35	44	84
Pictures	260	29	907	1196
Total	1183	523	3703	5409
Proportion in terms of Percentage	22%	10%	68%	100%

From Table 6.06, it is evident that a total of 5409 items were published in the period under review. This figure translates into 76 editorials, 3484 news reports, 569 features, 84 cartoons and 1196 pictures in all. In terms of directionality, a total 1183 (22%) items were favourable to General Babangida and his administration and policies; 523 (10%) unfavourable and 3703 (68%) neutral.

Although not banned from circulation by the (then) outgoing Babangida administration, The Guardian had been one newspaper that laid much claim to being 'the flagship' of Nigerian journalism. Evident in the claim has been the effort to maintain independence in terms of its content while at the same time striving hard to capture and present the pulse of the nation. This may have underscored the preponderance of the 'neutral' items over and above the 'favourable' and/or 'unfavourable' others arising from the analysis of the content of the editions of this newspaper reviewed above. This claim to independence was evident in its critical stand on the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential election. This was particularly manifest in the volume of unfavourable feature items and cartoons published by the newspaper in the period under review. It must be recognized that these two features were probably very unique, and accordingly, contributed to the influence of this newspaper in the polity.

6.03.4 The New Nigerian

A total of 140 editions of this newspaper were reviewed out of 150. This means that 10 editions were invalidated Table 6.07, presents a distribution of the units of observation in terms of subject matter.

Table 6.07: Distribution of units of observation by subject matter in the New Nigerian newspaper coverage of major policies and events in 1992 - 1993

Subject matter Units of Observation	Economy	Politics	Culture	Health	Recreation	Conflict & War	Crime	Social Welfare	People	Labour	Total
Editorial	6	14	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	3	29
News	294	522	32	52	324	36	62	158	62	20	1562
Features	32	84	20	6	8	0	4	46	10	5	215
Cartoons	0	6	0	0	40	0	0	0	0	2	48
Pictures	142	358	56	24	536	22	14	116	66	10	1344
Total	474	984	108	82	908	58	80	326	138	40	3198

Table 6.07 shows that a total 29 editorials, 1562 news items, 215 features, 48 cartoons and 1344 pictures were published in the newspaper in the period under review. In terms of distribution across subject matter, it is evident that politics recorded the highest number of items with 984, recreation came second with 908, followed by the economy with 474. Others were social welfare 326, people 138 and culture 108 items. Health recorded 82 items, crime 80, conflict and war had 58 while labour had the least with only 40 items.

These statistics reveals that the Newspaper is strongest in reporting politics, and this may have to do with its overwhelming public ownership as much as its consistency in articulating federal government positions on matters of interest in the polity. The emphasis given to recreation over the economy is equally indicative of the newspaper's public service orientation which would rather promote the former (which is less controversial and less an avenue for anti-government rhetoric) than the latter which was not only controversial but an area where the Babangida administration had had to contend with much criticism.

Table 6.08 :Distribution of units of observation in terms of directionality in the New Nigeria newspaper coverage of selected major policies and events in 1992 - 1993

Directionality Units of Observation	Favourable	Unfavourable	Neutral	Total
Editorial	15	7	7	29
News	838	291	433	1562
Features	9	15	191	215
Cartoons	5	3	40	48
Pictures	707	125	512	1344
Total	1574	441	1183	3198
Proportion in terms of Percentage	49%	14%	37%	100%

Table 6.08 shows that of the total 3198 items of the units of observation published by the newspaper in the period under consideration, 1574 (49%) were favourable to General Babangida, his policies and administration. This figure was against 1184 (37%) and 441 (14%) neutral and unfavourable items respectively. Table 6.09, presents a summary of the statistics across all four newspapers (as the units of analysis in the study) in terms of directionality.

Table 6.09: Distribution of units of analysis by directionality in their coverage of some selected policies and events in 1992 - 1993.

Directionality Units of Analysis	Favourable	Unfavourable	Neutral	Total
Daily Times	1827	251	767	2845
National Concord	1298	5212	1336	7846
The Guardian	1183	523	3703	5409
New Nigerian	1574	441	1183	3198
Total	5882	6427	6989	19298
Proportion in Percentage	31%	33%	36%	100%

The statistics in Table 6.09, shows that all four units of analysis generated a total of 19,298 items of units of observation. The breakdown in terms of directionality shows that a total of 5882 (31%) items were favourable to General Babangida, his policies and administration. This figure is against 6427 (33%) items which were unfavourable and 6989 (36%) items being neutral. The distribution therefore shows amazingly that, based on the sampled units of analysis, the press coverage of some selected policies and events in the last phase of the Babangida years; January 1, 1992 through September 10, 1993, tended to be unfavourable to the General and his administration .

6.04: DATA ANALYSIS

The finding above, which is not surprising, is not contrary to popular expectations. The popular sentiment was that in this last phase of his tenure, General Babangida had come under massive criticism from the news media such that a sample, howsoever taken, should be reflective of this pervasive critical posture. The finding above seems to suggest that this perception is substantiated at least on the basis of the sample of newspapers examined. In other words, available evidence arising from this study supports this popular perception. This, indeed, is quite interesting.

In respect of the research hypothesis, which states that press coverage of (major policies and events in) this phase of the Babangida tenure would be critical and adversarial, the finding above is therefore supportive. The statistics, show that press coverage of those policies and events was more unfavourable than favourable.

Evident in Table 6.09 too, is the fact that, the Daily Times and New Nigerian tended to be more supportive of the government than The Guardian and National Concord. This is evident in the volume of the favourable units of observation in both newspapers which were 1827 and 1574 respectively as against those of National Concord and The Guardian which were 1298 and 1183 items too. This may be due to their pattern of ownership which pitched the first two being publicly owned while the latter set is privately owned. This accords with previous findings by Sobowale (1985) and Edeani (1988) to the effect that there is a correspondence between ownership and pattern of media coverage.

Similarly, National Concord, of all the four newspapers, published most of the unfavourable items by virtue of the volume of same (5212 items) which was over 80

percent of the total across the four newspapers. This preponderance may be attributed to two factors: First, the increase in the average volume in terms of pagination of the newspaper in this period which was alluded to in preceding discussion and; second, the fact that the proprietor of the same newspaper Chief M.K.O. Abiola, had within this period become vehemently critical of General Babangida and his administration over the annulment of the results of the June 12, 1993 presidential election which the former was believed to have won. These two factors therefore, may be responsible to a large extent for the high volume of 'unfavourable' items published by the National Concord newspaper in the period under review.

In the same vein, The Guardian with its claim to being the flagship of Nigerian journalism and the desire to be the country's most independent medium, may have underscored the dominance of 'neutral' items which, evidently, was the highest across the four units of analysis. This is in contrast with the Daily Times which published the least number of 'neutral' items. This was the period when the Daily Times had as its Managing Director/Chief Executive Otumba Tola Adeniyi, who, until this appointment was a Director-General in the Presidency. This period brought the Daily Times almost to the brink of collapse as its circulation figures nose dived drastically owing, most probably, to its dwindling patronage in the polity as a result of increasing propaganda service to the Babangida administration.

With a confidence level of (95%) whose Z-value is 1.96 (and a maximum error level of 5%) and a sample size of 19,298 items (across the four newspaper) the attendant error margin shall be 0.003. This means that with a large sample size of 10298 at 95% confidence level, there is a probability of less than one percent error margin. This squarely

accords with a common principle in statistics which states that the higher the sample size, the smaller the error margin.This further means that since the error margin is less than the 5% maximum error level,then the relationship between the variables being studied , based on the sample examined, is significant.

On the whole therefore, based on the evidence arising from the sample studied, press coverage of the major policies and events in this phase of the Babangida years was primarily unfavourable to general Babangida, his administration and his policies, a matter which negatively affected the legitimacy of the administration and severely questioned the hegemony of the (bureaucratic) bourgeoisie in the power relationship in the period under review.

6.05 DISCUSSION

This findings, which proved book makers right, and seen in the context of the theory of hegemony would provide interesting insight into the balance of forces within the bourgeoisie in the period under review. Accordingly, this period, which could be described as the most tumultuous of the entire Babangida years, witnessed the corporate rich bloc of the bourgeoisie organised around Chief M.K.O. Abiola and supported strongly by the American (and a constellation of European) imperialists pitched in battle against the military orligarchic wing of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie of the same class. With the annulment of the result of the June 12, 1993 presidential election which was believed to be favourable to M.K.O. Abiola of the SDP, backed and supported by a broad coalition of politicians and business people and the international community as the immediate

cause, a deep political crisis engulfed the country from June 1993 onward, i.e. beyond the exit of Babangida from office.

Having regained much confidence and attained a modicum of unity as a class during most of the Babangida years, it was not easily fathomable at first which of the contenders would have an upper hand in the gambit. Consequently, in their respective frenzy, threats of civil war and national disintegration rented the air. The press, seen as instruments of class politics, were mobilized in the fray in either sides of the battle line articulating, propagating and orchestrating the battle cry of their respective blocs and/or alliance of blocs. For the first time, in this period, the traditional and often touted divide between privately owned on one hand and public owned media on the other collapsed. Lined up around the sanctity of the June 12, 1993 presidential election result were all the media in the Concord group of publication, the Punch group, a number of news magazines as well as the television and radio stations owned by the Social Democratic Party (SDP) controlled state governments. At first, this was the picture across the nation. But with the subsequent emergence of ethnicity and regionalism, the defense of the June 12, election results receded mainly to the South-Western part of the country. Ethnicity and regionalism surfaced out of the recklessness of the opposition press to do Babangida in along with his supposed (Hausa - Fulani and Northern regional) constituency. Babangida ceased to be a military man nor was he in office as a military oligarch but a Hausaman from Minna, Northern region and ruling on behalf of his ethnic group, these critics reasoned . Thus, his perceptible political miscalculations, including the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential election, were presumably done for ethnic and regional considerations they

further reasoned. Conclusively therefore, the Hausa - Fulani ethnic group and all people of northern Nigerian origin should share in Babangida's perceive crimes run the thinking of the 'critical' press.

Behind the military oligarchy were such media as the Daily Times, and New Nigerian newspaper both being predominantly and overwhelmingly publicly owned, the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) group, the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) group, state owned media in the NRC controlled areas as well as such privately owned newspapers as the Kaduna based Democrat group, Today newspaper group, Hotline news magazine group among others. But with the ethnicization and regionalization of the defense of the June 12, 1993 presidential election result, several of the news media owned by the SDP controlled in the northern and eastern part of the country became alienated.

The sour relationship between general Babangida and his administration on the one hand and the opposition press reached its lowest in the aftermath of the June 12, 1993 election. This section of the press, in the context of the avoidable political crisis enveloping the nation, which had now become very dominant, painted the imagery of a nation on the brink of civil war and total disintegration. Its strategy, include, first, identifying and harping on the anti-Babangida, anti-federal government, anti-Hausa/Fulani, anti-far north dimension to events and issues in their content. Second, by imbuing their contents with much sensationalism especially when they involved prominent elements of the Babangida junta as well as their civilian cohorts. This further worsen the already tenuous hegemony of the bourgeoisie as neither the military oligarchy that was desperate to tighten its hold on political power nor the assortment of the politicians, popularly known as the 'political class' had any dominance.

To confound matters, notable organizations of civil society particularly human right groups and a number of organizations of working and petty bourgeois class dispositions now freely articulate positions critical of the General and his administration (for more on this see Shettima, 1997; Olukoshi,1997).

The response of General Babangida and his administration to the situation above varied. First, and as Bilkisu Yusuf pointed out earlier, this involved befriending the press (and by extension the opposition) through the policy of 'settlement.'

> *Settlement, simply means granting favours.... (and) this was done in so many ways especially to journalists from opposition media houses .... (and) the proprietors. The goal of this policy was to render them close to himself,trust him, make them dependent on himself (Interview with Yusuf, 1995).*

Still in the same vein, another editorial executive of a private owned newspaper has reported that;

> *I know many media houses in Nigeria rely solely on government patronage, i. e. provision of advertisement such as supplements by Federal Ministries and state governments, printing contracts or in the case of theBabangida era direct funding... because he wanted to be a friend to any body. All you need is go to him, tell him your problem and he will give you money. He has done it with a lot of newspapers in the country including those who attack him.... (interview with Coomassie, 1995).*

On its part the NUJ Press freedom committee, had in its 1993 annual report acknowledged" .... allegations of huge Abuja contracts and cash and vehicle gifts to publishers, editors and State House correspondents. 'Settlement' definitely played a significant role during the heat of the June 12,1993 struggle" (Press Freedom Committee, 1993:6).

When this strategy failed to secure conformity, Babangida had resorted to using security agents as a second strategy to harass the opposition. Critical journalists, human

rights activists, students' leaders, trade unionists, University lecturers, professionals, politicians and retired military officers were several times arrested and detained primarily but not exclusively for their opinions against the administration in this period. In fact, the Press Freedom Committee of the Nigeria Union of journalist (NUJ) has observed that:

> *In the causes (sic;) of 1993, 88 journalists, vendors distributors and publishers were arrested,questioned (and) detained. In some of the cases, two women and a baby were arrested on account of their husbands and father.Those arrested were never seriously prosecuted in court, nor did the authorities previously complain to the Press Council about the stories in question (the Press Freedom Committee, 1993).*

The Committee went further to note that:

> *In the course of 1993, the Government was not contented to police journalists and the press house, they went a step further. They planted their agents in the press house and major printing companies who kept them informed about cover or stories being investigated by those magazines they had targeted as hostile to the government. The security agents then traced this (sic) publications and preempted their circulation by impounding them (Press FreedomCommittee 1993:3).*

Another strategy adopted by General Babangida to contain the opposition was recourse to the juridical powers of the state. Several anti-press and anti-opposition legislation were unfurled by the administration at this period. For instance, in 1993 alone, five of such decrees, promulgated and signed into law, are notable here:

(a) Decree No. 23 of 1993 which proscribed the Kaduna based Reporter group of newspapers

(b) The Treason and Treasonable Offences Decree 29, 1993 which provided for death sentence for convicts who by word or writing disrupt the general fabric of the country or any part of it;

(c) Confiscation and Prohibition from Circulation of Newspapers Decree No. 35, 1993 empowers the President to seize and prohibit the circulation of any publication that he considers injurious to national security.

(d) Newspapers Registration Decree No. 43, 1993 prescribed stringent conditions including a non refundable deposit of N250,000.00 for the registration and re-registration of newspapers in the country.

(e) Publication Prohibition Decree 48, 1993 proscribed 17 publications including all of the Concord, Punch, and Sketch groups of newspapers among others (Press Freedom Committee, 1993:5).

These decrees were signed in one full sweep effective July 12 1993. This state of affairs was bound to claim some casualties. The first casualty was the press itself. It suffered serious credibility deficit as; "Ethics... suffered. Reporters and their editors did not bother to cross check or get the other side of stories before publication. Stories were planted and adverts (were) carried as (sic) investigative stories. The media reached (sic) a state of anarchy" (Press Freedom Committee, 1993:6).

Another casualty was the credibility of General Babangida and his

administration. Too much intervention with the political transition programme, howsoever altruistic, had only reinforced the widespread perception that the General did not want to quit the scene. Allusions were made to the use of state funds to entice the then National Assembly to urge General Babangida to resign his commission and continue in office as a civilian President. He was also alleged to be the sponsor of the Association for Better Nigeria (ABN) that was campaigning for the cancellation and postponement of future presidential elections and instead wanted Babangida to continue in office. The General had however, denied these allegations. Notwithstanding this, the attempt by General Babangida to organize another presidential election after the annulment on June 23 1993 of the June 12, 1993 presidential election result was not acceptable to politicians sympathetic to him, a little less those in the opposition. The directive to the press to re-register in line with Decree 43 of 1993 was equally all roundly rejected. "The Government lost control, the more it resorted to repression, the more it attracted press 'scud missile'" (Press Freedom Committee, 1993:6). In an apparent move to diffuse tension, General Babangida had eventually decided to 'step aside' on August 26, 1993 and handed over power to an Interim National Government (ING) headed by Chief Earnest Shonekan, hitherto Chairman/Managing Director and Chief Executive of the United African Company, (UAC) Nigeria PLC, probably the largest trans-national corporation (TNC) in the country. The choice of Chief Shonekan, who had until then no previous experience in government, may be a strategy to divide the corporate rich bloc of the indigenous bourgeoisie as well as to split the ranks of the imperialist powers supporting Chief M.K.O. Abiola.` While Abiola is an alumnus of the American trans-national corporation,

International Television and Telecommunication (ITT), Shonekan came from the British owned UAC (Nig) PLC. This strategy was eventually to prove successful at least in two ways: First, it succeeded in dividing the rank of the 'June 12 Mandate' organized around Chief Abiola. The 'June 12 Mandate' became evidently split with some of its prominent personages such as Chief Ebenezer Babatope, Alhaji Lateef Jakande, Chief Dapo Sarumni, etc accepting cabinet appointments in the ING. Second, this action resulted in mutual suspicion within the entire opposition. E.g Campaign for Democracy (CD) undoubtedly one of the strongest pro-democracy groups then, split on allegation of corruption and arbitrariness against the leadership of Dr. Beko Ransome Kuti. The combination of these factors whittled down the opposition to military rule, a condition which the Abacha administration which supplanted the ING in a bloodless coup de'tat exploited to gain its initial legitimacy.

In any case, the legality of the ING was seriously questioned when a Lagos High court declared it illegal as the decree establishing it was not promulgated nor signed into law by its progenitor, General Babangida before his premature exit. A military coup on November 17, 1993 led by General Sani Abacha, Defense Minister and Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff under General Babangida since 1987 and who survived in the same status into the ING administration, terminated the latter to make way for himself as he assumed the mantle of leadership as Head of State and Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces.

On the whole it may be seen therefore that , the basis of the running battle between General Babangida and the (now dominant) section of the Nigerian press had nothing to do with the consistent aspiration for democracy in the country. This much has been

recognized by a cross section of professionals too. Muhammad Suleiman has argued that "Because the press in Nigerian is still wallowing in the hang over of its anti-colonial cause, ethnic and sectional motives have now replaced colonialism as excuse for the running-down-of-government syndrome in the name of struggling for democracy" (interview with Suleiman, 1995)

An editor of a privately owned newspaper, Mr. Emeka Omeihe too did not believe the Nigerian press, by their conduct in the period under review, were really dependable in the national aspiration for lasting democracy. He observed that:

> *...We don't even have a unity press (sic). The media in Nigeria is(sic) being dominated by a section of the country. Sometimes they foist their interest...The ownership structure of the print media also influence the events. They see democracy as one ethnic bloc replacing the other. But real democracy is all about nation building; not the time for the West or East or North to produce the president, but the best Nigerian to rule...(interview with Omeihe, 1995)*

This view was similar to Amatokwu (1995) and Olugbemi (1995) who both argued that the mass media in contemporary Nigeria were not in earnest working to enshrine democracy in the country. Amatokwu pointed out that modern Nigerian journalism was not more than political pamphleteering. For Wada Maida (1995), there is the admission that the mass media do really have a role to play in enshrining democracy in the country but which, for now, they were not playing.

The fact that the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential elections has often been cited as the straw that broke the camel's back in the relationship between Babangida and (a section of) the press, and for lining up behind the sanctity of the election results,

some publications and even journalists suggest that this in itself amounted to a struggle in defense of democracy. But observers have reasoned that the June 12, 1993 election was itself an abuse of democratic processes both in the sense that it was coming in the aftermath of the arbitrary annulment of the presidential primaries of the two political parties involved and also that June 12, 1993 election was highly monetized. They reasoned that these evidence point to the anti-democratic character of the processes that led to the June 12, presidential election. Hence, supporting the outcome cannot be democratic since the exercise itself was not democratic, they conclude.

6.06 SUMMARY

In the preceding pages, an attempt has been made to test the hypothesis that the press coverage of selected policies and events in the period January 1, 1992 through September 10, 1993 would be unfavourable to the General, his administration and policies. Evidence arising from the sample, has supported this hypothesis. The finding indicates that the press tended to be more unfavourable than favourable in their coverage at this time.

Subsequently, relying on the theory of hegemony we have located the basis of the conflict between General Babangida and a section of the press to the intra-bourgeois class squabbles. In this squabble which capitalized on the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential election results as the immediate cause, a squabble which left deep political crisis across the country, the Corporate rich bloc in alliance with sections of the petty bourgeoisie and a section of the labour unions was seen pitched in battle against the military oligarchy indeed with the bureaucratic bloc. The press, seen here as essentially

instruments for class politics, became organically mobilized in the conflict. Thus, they became mobilized to fight an intra-class war over issues that affect the major blocs within the ('national') bourgeoisie.

The political crisis which is described above and which eventually descended over the nation challenged the legitimacy of the Babangida administration's continuity in office and simultenously, questioned the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie in the polity. The insistence by sections of civil society that the result of the June 12, 1993 presidential election which General Babangida annulled remained a very controversial issue till today. But more importantly, it seriously provided a rallying point for opposition against military rule in favour of a government of national polity (GNU) and a sovereign national conference (SNC) to re-design the future of the country, central to which is power shift (from the north) to the south. Bureaucratic bourgeois hegemony became perceived as the sine qua non of northern domination of the nation's political life while a power shift (with all the processes involved) is presented as an irreducible minimum for peace and unity in Nigeria

This state of affairs in the period 1992 - 1993 resulted in a crisis of hegemony; a condition defined by Gamsci as one in which the extant order is dying while the new is yet to be born .

In the next chapter, a broad summary of the study along with major conclusions about hegemony and/or its crisis and the manifestation of same in the Babangida years will be presented. The implications of the major conclusions of the study to the course of

further research and scholarship, and power and politics in Nigeria beyond the Babangida years will also be suggested.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

7.01 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, effort will be made to present a summary of what has been done in the previous chapters and thereafter draw relevant conclusions. In addition, these conclusions will be critically examined in relation to two things: first, the theory of hegemony in Nigeria, and second, state and press relations in the Babangida period. In addition, the implication of the findings, as presented in the conclusions drawn, will be presented in relation to further research and scholarship and to power and politics in Nigeria beyond Babangida.

7.02 SUMMARY

This is a study about the process hegemony in the tenure of General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida , President and Commander-In-Chief of the armed forces from August 27,1985 through to August 26, 1993. Specifically the study centres on two research problems viz: first, examine the theory of hegemony, its constituent elements, instances and varieties and manifestion, and second, document and explain how the Babangida administration, particularly the class (faction) it represented, used the press to establish hegemony and the crisis that developed therein in the period from August 27, 1985 to August 26, 1993.

Subsequently, relying on the (Marxist) theory of hegemony as framework of analysis, relevant data were gathered from three main sources: books, journals and similar

materials in the library from where information about basic concepts and variables in the study were generated; interviews with the President himself as well as media executives from whom relevant first hand information was solicited and obtained . Third, a content analysis of a systematically selected sample of the press (as units of analysis) was undertaken. Furthermore, basic concepts in the study were all operationally defined in the context of the adopted theoretical framework. Accordingly, hegemony which is a fundamental concept here, was defined as a form of social consciousness borne of a conflictual relationship manifest through intellectual and moral leadership exercised at the political, economic and socio-cultural levels of society by the dominant group, which along with domination based on force, constitute the necessary condition for the possession, consolidation, sustenance and exercise of power. Furthermore, five points were identified and stressed about this conception of hegemony. These points are first, it situates hegemony, along with domination, as part of a quality in the superstructure; second, that hegemony is by nature basically ideological (intellectual and moral); third, that hegemony exists in diverse forms and levels, notably, political, economic and socio-cultural; fourth, that hegemony is a factor of group (therefore, class) relationships and; finally, neither hegemony nor domination can exist independent of the other.

In the study also, a thorough historical review of emergence of the Babangida administration as part of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie is undertaken. It was deposed in the study that Nigeria is a neo-colonial entity rooted within the world capitalist system. Consequently it is held that this political economy has given birth to a state structure that is controlled, at one level by the capitalist class (which is constitutive of both foreign and

indigenous factions) which exercises power over and above other classes and; at the other level by one of two blocs - the bureaucratic and, the corporate rich - within the indigenous faction of the capitalist class exercising power at any point in time though to lesser extent always co-opting elements of the other bloc. Consequently, the period under study was one that witnessed the dominance of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie under General Babangida and, before then, under General Muhammadu Buhari.

In addition, the study reviewed the processes leading to the emergence of the administrations of General Buhari and his successor General Babangida. Subsequently, it is suggested that both Buhari and Babangida in essence represented the bureaucratic bourgeoisie in Nigeria even though they symbolized different ideas within the military. They differed from one another in terms of their world outlook and styles of governance. For instance, it is the view here that while Buhari was a strict student of the classical view that the military is apolitical and should only intervene in government to restore sanity in the political process, Babangida represented the view that Africa is in a unique situation in which the military, as a disciplined and cohesive group, has a legitimate claim to rule, a notion which he adumbrated in a number of addresses referred to above. Flowing from this philosophical difference, the study further suggested, that that was why Buhari was decidedly regimental in his style of leadership while Babangida chose to combine both suasive and coercive techniques in conducting the affairs of state.

Finally, the study argued that rooted in Babangida's unique style of leadership are three approaches to the press to enhance his legitimacy and promote the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie within the polity. These approaches were: persuasion

settlement' and coercion. A number of the administration's policies and activities were also appraised and their populist rather than popular bases was identified and the point was made that central to all this populism was a craving by Babangida to legitimize his administration and by extension promote the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie in the period under review.

Earlier, the study had examined the Nigerian press as an institution in its historical evolution, more especially in the period under review. It was pointed out that although the Press were deeply rooted in the petty bourgeoisie in their origin and latter development but they were guided by a philosophy that was acquiescent of the capitalist social order and therefore, bourgeois. Accordingly, it is held here, as Miliband did while partly paraphrasing Marx, "that 'the class which has the means of material production at its disposal' does have 'control at the same time of the means of mental production and that it does seek to use them for the weakening of opposition to the established order "(Miliband, 1977:50).

Still earlier, the study further revealed the operation of Babangida's tripodal approach in courting the press which , as an institution, the General venerated more for its perceived potential as opinion moulder than its real powers in same in relation to the legitimation of his administration and at the same time the promotion of the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie which he represented.

In chapter four, the study adduced evidence from a content analysis of a sample of the press specifically on their coverage of the August 27, 1985 military coup that brought Babangida to power, in order to establish the character of coverage as to whether or not it

was favourable to his administration and therefore, facilitatory of the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie in the period under review. The study found out that the character of coverage of this major event was placatory and acquiescent to the administraion. This posture is explained partly in terms of the successful manner of Babangida's style of leadership, more specifically his flattering overture to the press, journalists and media personalities in general. As he has himself pointed out, "when ever you execute a change of government, you must tell the people what they want to hear if they were to endorse the change" (Interview with Babangida in Minna, October 10, 1995). This finding therefore confirmed one of the hypotheses of the study that press coverage of the August 27, 1985 military coup would be favourable to the General. This simply implies that Babangida had successfully induced the press whom he now manipulates in furtherance of his legitimacy project and the promotion of the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie in power.

In chapter five, the study further adduced field evidence on the legitimizing role of the press in relation to Babangida. This time, however, it was to test the hypothesis that the press coverage of (a selection of 26) major events and policies in the life of the Administration from 1986 - 1992 would equally be placatory and acquiescent to General Babangida. Again, the finding confirmed this hypothesis, and following a statistical treatment, the difference in terms of proportion between the reports that were favourable and those unfavourable was found to be significant. The explanation for this was, from the point of view of class analysis, located in the relative unity attained among the various blocs within the bourgeoisie behind General Babangida during the period examined. This

unity was made possible, partly though not exclusively, due to the nature of policies the administration was implementing at this period which, to a large extent was favourable to the bourgeoisie and which subsequently facilitated a modicum of unity within and among its constituent blocs.

Thus, in both chapters four and five, what has been glaring was the steady successes of Babangida's legitimation campaign and the promotion of the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie dominant in power. As I pointed out elsewhere in the study, opposition to the General in this period up till 1992, was simply minimal if any at all.

In chapter six which focused on the period 1992 - August 1993 when the General stepped aside, what Babangida took nearly seven years to construct in terms of his legitimacy appeared to be giving way to widespread opposition. To concretely establish this situation, however, the study identified a set of major events and policies in this last slot of the Babangida tenure and content analyzed the press to establish the character of their coverage there in. The finding ultimately confirmed the research hypothesis in this chapter which stated that the character of press coverage in this period would be negative and unfavourable to the administration. Similarly when the finding was subjected to statistical analysis it was found that the difference between the volume of unfavourable items published on the one hand and those favourable on the other was quite significant.

Seen from a class perspective, this state of affairs which culminated in the unceremonious exit of Babangida may be attributable to the break down in the minimal unity between and among the various blocs within the bourgeoisie, arising from the evident reluctance of the military oligarchy as part of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie as a

bloc and General Babangida as a leader, to fulfill the pledge to relinquish power to a democratically elected civilian administration by August, 1993. Evidence of this reluctance include the General's frequent tinkering with the transition to civil rule programme as well as the deteriorating condition of life arising from the insurmountable economic crises in the country. Accordingly, it is pointed out here that with the annulment of the June 12, 1993 Presidential election serving as immediate cause behind increasing deterioration of the cost of living in the country, General Babangida gravitated from an acceptable, into a detestable, personality. The hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie which he ruled for thus became openly tenuous as state laws were no longer respected while the opposition, now manifest into a coterie of Human Rights and Pro-Democracy groups, garnered strength. The result was the significant weakening of the legitimacy of the Babangida administration; a condition which facilitated its eventual exit.

With regard to the role of the press in this period, it was pointed out that having been privy to the legitimation of the General for most of his tenure, the institution was to reflect the intra-bourgeois squabbles in the 1992 - 1993 period as their content became evidently reflective of the opinion of their proprietors and their respective blocs as they were themselves big time bourgeois elements in the main. It was this reality which strongly lent credence to the veracity of the argument that the basis of the fissure between the press on the one hand and the administration on the other was located more in opportunism than a fervent belief in democracy and the need to institutionalize it in the polity. This is supported by the fact that democracy is, *ab initio*, anti-thetical to military rule; yet the dominant segment of the Nigerian press supported the Babangida

administration for most of its tenure and over looked its negative consequences to the democratic project in the country.

Yet another reason may be the conspiracy by the press alongside General Babangida to consistently down play the activities of the opposition - University Lecturers, students in tertiary institutions and a segment of professionals who constitute the Human Rights and Pro-Democracy groups - only for the press to turn to them when it was convenient to do so in its gambit against the General in the last one year of the tenure of the administration. In this last one year the Babangida administration lost its legitimacy totally and along with that, the bureaucratic bourgeoisie which it represented also went through a crisis of hegemony.

7.03 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Arising from this study which attempted to proffer a materialist interpretation of the theory of hegemony in Nigeria, and in the tenure of General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida in particular, the following points may be made.

First, arising from the study, the entire processes involved in the construction and deconstruction of the legitimacy of the Babangida administration have been elaborated and documented as best as possible while relying on the Marxist theory of hegemony as a framework of analysis. It has been conclusively demonstrated, from evidence adduced and documented above, that hegemony is indeed an ideological variable that may be developed and that may fall into crisis depending on circumstances. What the study has done in the

main therefore, is to trace, establish and document these circumstances in the period under review..

This notion of legitimacy used here in respect of the Babangida administration is in accord with the views and opinions expressed by Weber (1968), Lipset (1966), Morelman (1966) among others. This contradicts the view by Beetham (1991) that legitimacy cannot be created, instead that it is inherent in any power arrangement that emerged upon any of three conditions; viz:

(a) conformity to established rules of the society, both written and unwritten;

(b) the justifiability of these rules in terms of the belief prevalent in the said society; and

(c) institutionalized mechanism for and evidence of consent expressed by the dominated party (the mode of which may be culture bound) (Beetham 1991:15-19).

While sharing the admission by Beetham that none of those afore mentioned conditions may be manufactured, yet it may be argued that these conditions may not be central in the determination of the problem of political legitimacy. This is far from suggesting that those factors identified by Beetham are tenuous or irrelevant therein either.

Furthermore, this finding, which reinforces the notion that hegemony is indeed manufacturable, fits in neatly with an aspect of the basic theoretical claim earlier adopted at the inception of this study. This part of the theoretical claim, suggests, and rightly, that ultimately hegemony is a product of a sustained process of activity and; one that takes place through a multitude of agencies at different moments - political, economic and

socio-cultural-at the superstructural level of society. This shows that hegemonization is a continuous exercise rather than a fixed and piece-meal activity. The evidence in this study shows that even though the Babangida administration had successfully won the initial legitimacy project for most of its tenure, yet he was to loose much of this element in the last one year of same. This suggests that certain factors are necessary to sustain the legitimacy of any given power arrangement at any point in time. Seen from a class perspective, it is suggested that some of these factors include the existence of a modicum of (intra) class unity and; the capacity of the ruling group to meet the basic economic and political aspirations of the citizenry. For, as Gramsci has pointed out for hegemony (and by implication for legitimacy too), that this concept is political/ethical, yet it is also economic:

> *...Undoubtedly, the fact of hegemony presupposes that account be taken of the interests and the tendencies of the groups over which hegemony is to be exercised, and that a certain compromise equilibrium should be formed - in other words, that the leading group should make sacrifices of an economic-corporate kind. But there is also no doubt that such sacrifices and such a compromise cannot touch the essential; for though hegemony is ethical-political, it must also be economic, must necessarily be based on the decisive function exercised by the leading group in the decisive nucleus of economic activity (Gramsci, 1971:161).*

Thus, the intra-class crisis of politics arising from Babangida's frequent tinkering with his transition programme to civil rule and the virtual reality of deteriorating condition of life in

the country arising from the administration's failure to tackle the economic crises that were plaguing the country, were the two factors that facilitated the deconstruction of the administration's legitimacy and challenged also the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie as the dominant group in the country.

The second conclusion is that although it is held here that in the process of legitimation, a multitude of agencies located at different moments are mobilized, by singling out the press here, the study has amply demonstrated the specific role of the press therein. Evidence arising from the study has shown that the press, like other agencies, may by the character of their coverage, present an aspect of the administration either in a predominantly favourable or unfavourable manner. The corpus of the study shows that, at least in respect of the press coverage of the August 27, 1985 military coup that ushered the administration to power and that of a selection of major policies and events up till 1992 were predominantly favourable to the General and his administration. Consequently, the study suggests that this character of coverage had served in both cases to down play adversity to the administration thereby promoting its acceptability (and invariably facilitating the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie it represented) within the polity; and as it has been aptly summed up, "legitimacy or better still, acceptability, is basically a measure of the extent of consent and acquiescence in governance and is, therefore, a first and basic step in the construction or contestation of hegemony" (Agbaje, 1992:14).

One implication for further research in respect of the resolution of this research problem therefore, is that, other studies on hegemony or crisis of it in Nigeria may proceed in similar fashion which should focus on other specific agencies. Such agencies belonging

to different moments of hegemony, may include those Ideological State Apparatuss (ISAs) of Althusser notably -religious; educational, family, legal, political, trade union and cultural (Althusser, 1971:143); or as with Golding, the schools, peer groups, family and the workplace (Golding, 1982).

Again, other studies can be initiated that may be longitudinal in nature. This way, a single agency, such as the press located at the socio-cultural moment of hegemony, may be focused upon at two different time - periods in the life of one country.

In addition, other scholars may choose to focus on an examination of the problem of hegemony as mediated by a combination of agencies. Such studies would dwell on adducing evidence to establish the extent to which each agency within the combination has mediated the process of hegemonization as initiated and promoted by a given political process within the polity.

At the policy plane, the resolution of the same research problem suggests that in formulating a definite strategy to counter the hegemony of any dominant group, policy makers must accord attention to all the multitude of agencies since hegemony is mediated by all of them rather some or one of them. In other words, to challenge the beneficiary of a given process of hegemonization, its victims must evolve a systematic strategy that takes into consideration all the agencies at once rather than one or some of them. This. as the study has established, is necessary as all, rather than some, agencies are mobilized in the process of hegemony.

Finally, in respect to the pattern of politics in the post Babangida period, the examination of the problem of hegemony from a class perspective as has been done in this

study, has demonstrated that the condition that resulted in the eventual deconstruction of Babangida's legitimacy in the last one year of its tenure had also at the same time broken the modicum of (intra) bourgeois class unity built earlier in the tenure of the general. The study has shown that at the peak of the post-'June 12' crisis, the battle line was drawn between the political and ethno-regional grouping drawn either ways from part of the bureaucratic and corporate rich blocs of the bourgeoisie revolving around Chief M.K.O. Abiola, the presumed winner of the annulled presidential election on the one hand and the military oligarchy (of the bureaucratic bloc) on the other. With the press as site of the battle for legitimation and hegemony, the heat of this intra-class battle became manifest in the character of mass mediated messages. Each medium became rooted on the side of its proprietor(s) and the bourgeois faction they belong to in the fray. The decision therefore by Babangida to step aside by handing over power to Chief Earnest Shonekan as Head of State and Commander-in-Chief in an Interim National Government (ING) was believed to be a last ditch strategy to perpetuate and further divide the rank of the bourgeoisie as much as the coming to grasp with the reality of the deteriorating state of his legitimacy in the polity. This scheme, which would be critical later in shaping the nature of the political equation, first within the (contending blocs of the) dominant bourgeois class and; second between the same class on the one hand and a loose alliance of popular organizations of the petty bourgeoisie and/or the working classes on the other, apparently appeared, as was pointed out earlier in chapter six, to have achieved its objective even if minimally in two ways. First, it succeeded in dividing the rank of the 'June 12 mandate' organized around Chief Abiola. The 'June 12 mandate' became evidently split with some of its prominent personagies accepting cabinet appointments in the ING which was put in place as an alternative to the validation of the mandate. Second, this action

resulted in mutual suspicion within some section of the opposition against dictatorship of the military oligarchy seen as component of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie when eventually, the then secretary for defense of the ING and, simultaneously Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Sani Abacha, staged his successful military coup against the ING on November 17, 1993, the change of government was allegedly done with the fore-knowledge of prominent 'June 12' adherent including Chief Abiola himself who perhaps viewed it as good riddance of the ING and a possible way to re-validate the 'June 12 mandate'. And with the subsequent appointment of more pro-Abiola stalwarts as ministers in the Abacha administration, there was the weakening of the opposition to end military rule. Consequently, at the intra-class plane, the opposition to the military oligarchy already weakened by internal fissures, predominantly horse traded eventually with the military administration of General Sani Abacha. Abacha's National Constitutional Conference (NCC) took place to the chagrin of the opposition. And, now that a new transition programme to civil rule has been promulgated by the Abacha administration and with the implementation of sections of this programme already with the full involvement of personalities across the bourgeois blocs, the opposition to the military from the corporate rich bloc, now holed-up apparently in the south - western part of the country and the few members in exile abroad, seems to have petered out. The process of re-unification across the blocs became once again topical as a National Reconciliation Commission (NARECON) headed by Chief Alex Akinyele, a former information minister under general Babangida and a prominent traditional chief from the south - western part of the country, was constituted and inaugurated by the Head of State. The Abacha administration too was soon to run out of legitimacy as it increasingly became corrupt,

incept, dubious and at the sametime ruthless. Like the Buhari administration, its leadership style coupled with a notion similar to Babangida's that the military in Africa are legitimate contenders for power Abacha's self-succession bid not only washed away the vineer of legitimacy and credibility there was initially but totally wasted the pale hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie. Indeed it may be argued that under Abacha, there was politics but no hegemony. In other words,, domination based on force became the dominant feature of politics under Abacha as the country became isolated in the international community on grounds of human right abuse and corruption with the opposition virtually controlling moral and intellectual leadership in the polity.

The implication of this for the politics of the subordinated classes is that they must direct their cultural campaign towards the further erosion of the legitimacy and hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie in the leadership of the country. This should be first as a rallying point for a broad based opposition rooted in the working classes and which will also include marginalized sections of the bourgeoisie. This project should, in essence, be part of the grand strategy of any organized opposition first to military rule and indeed to the hegemony of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie as the dominant bloc and subsequently to the bourgeoisie as a class. Here in lies one more implication arising from this study.

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Appendix I

A LIST OF NIGERIAN NEWSPAPERS, 1880–1937

LAGOS NEWSPAPERS

Name and frequency of publication	Dates	Editors	Owners
Lagos Times (f/w)	10 Nov. 1880–24 Oct. 1883; 6 Dec. 1890–Oct. 1891	Agbebi, 1880–83; W. E. Cole, 1890	R. B. Blaize
Lagos Observer (f)	4 Feb. 1882–12 July 1890	J. B. Benjamin	J. B. Benjamin
Mind (irregular)	1887	Ademuyiwa Haastrup	A. Haastrup
Eagle and Lagos Critic (m)	31 March, 1883–31 Oct. 1888	O. E. Macaulay	O. E. Macaulay
Mirror (w)	17 Dec. 1887–24 Nov. 1888	P. A. Marke	P. A. Marke
Iwe Irohin Eko (f)	3 Nov. 1888–16 July 1892	A. W. Thomas	A. W. Thomas
Lagos Weekly Times	3 May 1890–28 Nov. 1890	J. P. Jackson	R. B. Blaize
Lagos Weekly Record (w)	Jan. 1891–27 Dec. 1930	J. P. and T. H. Jackson	J. P. and T. H. Jackson, 1891–1913; 1914–30
Spectator (w) *Lagos Echo* (w)	1 July 1893–(?) Sept. 1894–97	? S. M. Harden(?)	? Lagos Printing and Publishing Company Limited
Lagos Standard (w)	16 Sept. 1894–28 Jan. 1920	G. A. Williams 1894–1919; J. A. White 1919–20	G. A. Williams 1894–1919; R. A. Williams 1919–20
Lagos Reporter (w)	23 Aug. 1898–18 July 1899	P. Mason	P. Mason

Name and frequency of publication	Dates	Editors	Owners
Wasp (w)	17 March–Aug. 1900	P. Mason	P. Mason
Nigerian Chronicle	20 Nov. 1908–26 Mar. 1915	Chris Johnson	Chris and E. T. Johnson
Astrological Mercury (irregular)	1909	Adeoye Deniga	Adeoye Deniga
New Age Herald (m)	1910	Adeoye Deniga	Adeoye Deniga
Nigerian Times (w)	5 April 1910–30 Oct. 1911	J. Bright Davies	J. Bright Davies
Herald Alore (m)	27 March 1913–(?)	Adeoye Deniga	Adeoye Deniga
Nigerian Pioneer (w)	18 Jan 1914–25 Dec. 1936	Irving 1914; Kitoyi Ajasa	K. Ajasa
Times of Nigeria (w)	13 Jan. 1914–20 June 1915; 6 June 1917–3 Nov. 1924	J. B. Davies, 1914–1920; Walter Edwin, 1920; Adamu I. Animashaun, 1920–24	J. B. Davies, 1914–1915. Limited Liability Company, 1917 Mohammedans, 1920–24
African Messenger (w)	10 Mar. 1921–4 Nov. 1928	E. S. Ikoli	E. S. Ikoli
Eko Akete (w)	7 July 1922–6 Apr. 1929; 4 March–14 Oct. 1937	Adeoye Deniga	Adeoye Deniga
Nigerian Spectator (w)	19 May 1923–27 Dec. 1930	R. A. Savage	R. A. Savage
Nigerian Advocate (w)	1 Aug. 1923–27 Dec. 1930	S. H. Braithwaite	S. H. Braithwaite
Eleti Ofe (w)	7 Feb. 1925–28 (?)	E. A. Akintan	E. A. Akintan
Advanced Opinion (w)	Aug. 1924–(?)	?	?
Nigerian Labour Bulletin (m d)	1924; 17 Mar.–23 June 1930	J. A. Olushola	J. A. Olushola
Lagos Daily News (d)	9 Nov. 1925–14 Jan. 1926; 1927–(1940)?	V. Babamuboni, 1925–26; J. A. Olushola, 1927; Herbert Macaulay & Frank Macaulay	Herbert Macaulay and J. A. Caulerick
Iwe Irohia Osose (w)	1925–27	T. H. Jackson	T. H. Jackson
Nigerian Daily Times	1 June 1926–(Present day)	E. S. Ikoli 1926–29; A. A. C. Titcombe, 1930–38	Nigerian Printing & Publishing Co. Ltd, 1926–36; West African Newspapers Limited, 1936–48

Name and frequency of publication	Dates	Editors	Owners
Eko Igbekin (w)	1926–27	E. N. Awobiyi	E. M. Awobiyi
Nigerian Daily Telegraph (d)	12 Nov. 1927–10 Dec. 1937	H. A. Williams, 1927–31; Deniga, 1931; Duse Ali, 1932; Akaje-Macaulay 1932; Ikoli, 1934–35; Antus Williams, 1935–37	H. A. Williams, 1927–30; Nigerian Press Limited, 1930–1937; Aboyade Cole, 1937
Akede Eko (w)	Jan. 1928–(1953)	I. B. Thomas	I. B. Thomas
Nigerian Evening News (d)	1 June 1929–1 Nov. 1929	I. B. Thomas	I. B. Thomas
Nigerian Daily Mail (d)	14 Jan. 1930–2 June 1931	E. S. Ikoli	E. S. Ikoli
Lagos Daily Record (d)	1 Jan.–27 Aug. 1930	T. H. Jackson	T. H. Jackson
West African Nationhood (d/m)	18 Oct. 1930–31 Dec. 1934; Nov. 1932–Sept. 1933	G. E. Spencer	J. C. Zizer
Nigerian Daily Herald (d)	29 April 1931–32	E. Ronke Ajayi (Miss)	H. A. Williams
West African Sunday Digest (w)	5 April 1931–1934	J. C. Zizer	J. C. Zizer
Comet	21 July 1933–(1944)	Duse Mohammed Ali	Duse Mohammed Ali
Nigerian Evening Standard	5 July 1934–(?)	W. E. Akaje-Macaulay	W. E. Akaje-Macaulay
West African Pilot (d)	22 Nov. 1937–(present day)	Nnamdi Azikiwe	Zik Press Ltd
PROVINCIAL NEWSPAPERS			
Aurora [Calabar] (w)	Jan. 1914–17	W. Coulson Labor	W. Coulson Labor
Nigerian Herald [Onitsha] (w)	1921	?	?
Dawn [Aba, Calabar, Port Harcourt, Enugu] (w)	22 May 1923–18 Dec 1937	W. Coulson Labor	W. Coulson Labor
Yoruba News [Ibadan] (w)	15 Jan. 1924–(1945)	D. A. Obasa	D. A. Obasa
Egba National Harper [Abeokuta] (m)	Sept. 1926–Sept. 1927	A. Folarin	A. Folarin

Name and frequency of publication	Dates	Editors	Owners
Nigerian Observer [Port Harcourt]	4 June 1930–32	L. R. Potts-Johnson	L. R. Potts-Johnson
Nigerian Protectorate Rum [Onitsha] (w)	22 Sept. 1930–(?)	S. Cole Edwards	S. Cole Edwards
Nigerian Echo [Aba] (w)	6 April 1933–13 Nov. 1934	A. Charles Howells	D. Joseph Emmanuel and A. C. Howells
Nigerian Weekly Dispatch [Onitsha] (w)	1933	S. Cole-Edwards	S. Cole-Edwards
Abeokuta Weekly News [Abeokuta] (w)	1934	D. O. Oke	D. O. Oke
Ijebu Weekly News [Ijebu-Ode] (w)	2 Sept. 1934–(25 Nov. 1940)	J. A. Olushola	J. A. Olushola
Nigerian Eastern Mail [Calabar] (w)	Aug. 1935–51	J. V. Clinton	C. W. Clinton
African Advertiser [Calabar] (w)	27 Dec. 1935–(1942)	M. T. Oduntor Nottidge	M. T. Oduntor Nottidge
Nigerian Provincial Guardian [Oshogbo] (w)	21 Mar. 1936–(9 April 1938)	J. B. Layeni	J. B. Layeni
Ojumare Egba [Abeokuta] (w)	7 Dec. 1935–5 Dec. 1936	S. K. Adenekan	D. A. S. Bamgboye
Nigerian Messenger [Onitsha] (w)	6 June 1936–(?)	?	?

d – daily.
w – weekly.
f – fortnightly.
m – monthly.

Source: Omu, Fred I.A, (1978), Press and Politics In Nigeria, 1880–1937 (Ibadan History Series), London: Longman. (PP252–255).

APPENDIX II

Major Press Laws in Nigeria, 1903 – 1983

S/No.	*Name of Decree/ Law/Ordinance, etc.*	*Date Enacted*	*By Whom*	*Major Provision/Type of Restriction*	*Present Status of this measure*
1	Seditious Offences Ordinance	1903	British Colonial Administration	First enacted as an ordinance in 1909 now criminal Code cap 42 as 50 and 51 Defines sedition and seditious publication and prescribes penalty for offences under it.	Still in force
2	Newspaper Act Cap. 129	1958	British Colonial Administration	Stipulates the requirement (₦500 and sureties) to be met by anyone willing to establish a newspaper.	Still in force
3	Seditious Meetings Act No. 48 of 1961	1961	Nigerian First Civilian Government'	Lists meetings to be deemed seditious and prescribed penalties for contravention.	Still in force
4	Defamation Act No. 66 of 1961	1961	Nigerian First Civilian Government	Sets out statements that may amount to defamation and the defences that may be available in each case.	Still in force
5	Defamation (Amendment) Act No. 1 of 1963	1963	Nigerian First Civilian Government	Substituted the words 'Part III' for the words 'Part II' in subsection (2) of section 9 of the principal, Act. i.e. the Defamation Act. 1961.	Still in force
6	Defamatory and Offensive Publication Decree No. 44 of 1966.	1966	The Military Regime	Extended the definition of publication in relation to defamation.	Still in force
7	Official Secrets Act No. 29 of 1962	1962	Nigerian First Republic Civilian Government	Gives protection to Official information protection to defence establishments with power conferred on the police to search (with warrant) on suspicion, premises in an endeavour to gather evidence which contravenes the Act.	Still in force
8.	Official Secrets (Amendment) Act. No. 39 of 1962.	1962	Nigerian First Republic Civilian Government	Based on the whole concept of 'Keep our Secrets Secret'	Still in force

9	Cinematography Act No. 7 of 1963	1963	Nigerian First Republic Civilian Government	Empowers the Minister of Internal Affairs and the Federal Film Censorship Board to regulate and control film and filming in Nigeria.	Still in force. The 1963 Act. is in the process of amendment so that it can be amended to censorship of television films and cassettes.
10	The Constitution of the Federation; Adaptation, of Laws (Misc. Powers) order, LN 112 of 1964.	1964	Nigerian First Republic Civilian Government	Based on the 'Special Order of Government'.	Still in force.
11	News (Amendment Act.) No. V	1964	Nigerian First Civilian Government	Prescribes that all newspapers in Nigeria to establish offices in Lagos and file signed copies of their papers with the Federal Ministry of Information. It also made provision for penalties for the publication of 'false' rumour, etc.	Still in force

S/No.	*Name of Decree/ Law/Ordinance, etc.*	*Date Enacted*	*By Whom*	*Major Provision/Type of Restriction*	*Present Status of this measure*
12	The circulation of newspapers Decree No. 2 of 1966	1966	The Military Regime	Had the effect of lifting and prohibition of bans on newspapers in any part of Nigeria	Repealed by the Constitution of the Fedral Republic of Nigeria (Certain Consequential Repeals etc., Decree No. 105.
[redacted]	Newspaper (Prohibition of Circulation) Decree No. 17, of 1967	1967	The Military Regime	Empowers the Head of State of Nigeria to ban the circulation of any newspaper in Nigeria if the Head of State feels that its unrestricted circulation may be detrimental to public interest.	Abrogated by the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Certain Consequential Repeals etc.) Decree No. 105 of 1979.

APPENDIX III

DRAFT CONTENT CODE SHEET

1. Edition: _____

2. Distribution of materials by content types:
   Editorials( ) News ( ) Features ( ) Cartoons ( )
   Pictures ( ) Others ( )

3. Classification of content types by subject matter:

Subject Matter / Content Type	Economy	Politics	Culture	Health	Recreation	Conflict and War	Crime	Social Welfare	People	Labour	Others
Editorial											
News											
Features											
Cartoons											
Pictures											

4. Categorization of content types by direction in relation to General Babangida and his administration.

Direction / Content Type	Favourable	Unfavourable	Neutral
Editorial			
News			
Features			
Cartoons			
Pictures			

APPENDIX E IV

FULL TEXT OF AN INTERVIEW CONDUCTED WITH GENERAL IBRAHIM BABANGIDA (RTD) FORMER PRESIDENT & COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF NIGERIA (AUGUST 1985 - AUGUST 1993) ON OCTOBER 10, 1995 AT HIS RESIDENCE IN MINNA, NIGER STATE IN THE COURSE OF PREPARING THIS THESIS

Q: Sir, to what extent can you say that the military should not govern? Would you say that this notion is realistic to contemporary Africa?

IBB: I do accept the notion that military rule is an aberration. But then one also has to look at the whole concept of military rule in Africa. We should recall that military rule started gaining prominence in Africa back in about 1952 when the military took over power in Egypt. It became more pronounced in the mid 1960s. There was a wind of change blowing in Africa and that seemed to have something to do with the development that a lot of African countries were becoming independent.

In the case of Nigeria, six years after independence, the military intervened. Immediately after the intervention in Nigeria, the entire West African sub-region and quite a number of other African countries also began to see the whole concept as the "in thing" at that time. But that does not mean that the military should continue to interfere in government. I still maintain and I still believe that it is an aberration. But then we are a developing continent or developing countries, these things have to happen in the course of development. Even some of the advanced countries had gone through similar stages. But I think there is a remarkable change; *coup d'etat* was rampant in the 60s, 70s and up to the period in the 80s. Now the situation is changing. The military itself is realising that it is no longer fashionable to have a military government. People are increasingly becoming aware, they want to participate in their governance. The best hope of this is democracy. You will find invariably the military is husbanding or midwifing the whole process of democracy.

While I still maintain it is an aberration but I still believe that it is the circumstances of development in most African countries that create the condition of this situation.

Q: What was your vision for the country when you took over?

IBB: We were quite clear in our mind; we were confronted with two main issues: economic development and political development. In the political field, we knew we have experienced various forms of politics, of governance and so on. But because of the diverse nature of our country, we didn't get it right.

But I think the presence of the military has helped a lot in trying to bridge the gap, in trying to remove ethnicity in the country... it brought a lot of things in the field of development. So in a sense, I have always maintained even when I was in the office, that every military man

has every reason to be very proud that he has made very meaningful contribution to the development of this country. In any case, we are part and parcel of the Nigerian society. Whatever we did is our own contribution to the society. But having said that we still realise and I still believe even when I was in the office that the military has assigned role by the constitution of this country. That must be religiously followed because our constitution say so. Every military realises that it cannot run away from the whole concept of democracy. Otherwise, as you move forward, people will become more agitated, they will be interested in trying to run their affairs by themselves, they would want to be in the decision making process and so on. So what hope do we have?

The only hope is democracy. In a sense, when we came we were quite clear of what the country needs but because we knew what went wrong we tried to put them right. Because we knew what we needed, there are certain areas that are absolutely necessary but the decision making process didn't make it to be realisable. In our case in the military, the decision making process is much easier as say in the civilian polities era. Having put all these things, then we have what we may call the settled issues of contemporary Nigeria. We will therefore have no business continuing to play a role which is not specifically our own.

Q: Prior to August 27, 1985, did you contemplate any possible problem about your plan to take over power from General Buhari?

IBB: One shouldn't miss the point that before a military contemplates taking over government from the civilians or from the military itself, there has to be what I always refer to as frustration in society. In most cases that the military intervened in our country, the ground have been provided, the governments at that time provided the very fertile ground for possible military take over.

If you recall in 1964, 1965, there were a lot of crises in this country: the Tiv riots, the problem of the Western region, the problem of election rigging, lawlessness, strikes and many other negative manifestations. These culminated in what we now refer to as the January, 1966 *coup d'etat*. Immediately after, the coup was interpreted to be too one sided and the government that came at that time didn't last long. By July, 1966, it had to leave.

Then we were lucky we had a stable period between 1966 - 1975 (a period of nine years). That period witnessed all sorts of things. The military succeeded in keeping the country one - for there as a civil war for three years. The military was able to maintain it. While it is fighting a war, the aspect of development also received considerable attention.

After the war, then, of course, the society again started becoming agitated, for reasons, may be, of human nature. They wanted change. They wanted democracy. They wanted polities. There were all sorts of things. The normal problems that you normally get in Nigeria when a government seems to be there for too long. So in 1975, there was a change in government. Again within a short period, we lost our illustrious son. That government kept on until it fulfilled its promise of returning power to a democratically elected government in 1979.

From 1979 to 1983, I don't need to tell you about the so many things that happened. But what is interesting in most cases, you find that the civilians, if I may refer to that, are always clamouring for military intervention.

When we practiced democracy in the past, the Nigerian doesn't have the patience to loose an election, as far as he is concerned, because he has lost, let everybody loose. Of course, there are a lot of situations that have to do with security and declining law and order in the country. Quite rightly, again, the military intervened at that time because the circumstances at that time brought the necessity for change.

Invariably, there was the same thing during the period January, 1984 to August 1985. There was a frustration in the society during that-period. So, there is a good fertile ground for military intervention. Again, as a result of the society's intervention, we came in 1985 and ran through, thanks be to Allah, up to 1993 (for about eight years).

Q: When you were taking over, didn't you at any stage anticipate any possible resistance from the Nigerian society?

IBB: No, like I told you before for a coup to succeed there has to be a frustration in the and because there was frustration in that society at that time, the chances of success in any *coup d'etat* are always brighter.

Q: What exactly was your perception of the Nigerian nation before assuming power in August, 1985?

IBB: I was grown up and was aware of things around me when Nigeria became independent. So, I knew we wanted a strong united nation, an open society, where people could struggle on their own to make a living; free enterprise society. This was my vision, where I can move from Minna and go to a remote part of the Rivers State or any of the states in the federation and live there happily to feel that I am a Nigerian.

What also helped us about our vision about this country is the military profession. This is the only institution I think in the country where a collection of people from diverse tribes, diverse religions, from different cultures, different backgrounds, all come together and they have one common objective: the defence of this country. They are not interested in whom you are, as long as you are in uniform, we don't care so much. It is a very closely knit cohesive society. That has always been our ideal perception about how a Nigerian society should like. It is a mini Nigeria within the military. And we want to see that mini Nigeria grow into a greater Nigeria within the large segment of the society.

Q: Prior to becoming Nigeria's Head of State in 1985, can you recall your notion of the place and role of the Press in relation to governance?

IBB: I must first of all say that if you see the development of the press in the 40s, 50s and the 60s, they did very well. The press, the trade unions and the politicians at that time fought fiercely for the independence of this country. Therefore, they played significant role in the building and development of this country at the initial stage which all patriotic Nigerians will appreciate and give them credit for what they have done that brought about our independence. Well, after independence, that is a different thing altogether.

But personally, I would attribute that to a sort of transition. You see you fought against the colonialists up to the time they gave you independence. Even though they left, the mentality of fighting a colonialist power was very much there. There hadn't been any formal reorientation to disabuse the minds of people to accept the reality of our independence.

I think the freedom went ahead, mercifully, because the government cherished press freedom at that time and allowed it. We fought and gained independence. We probably derailed a little bit after getting independence. We should have also fought to keep the country one, to make it united, to try to be the watchdog of the society, the mirror of the society, everything that comes out should reflect the inspiration, the yearnings of the majority of the people of this country. In all honesty, I don't think we have succeeded in establishing that. Until quite recently, we are beginning to realise that the institution is capable of destroying this country. Destruction of this country is not what the press wants. Thus, the various periods in which the press came in must be taken into context in trying to make a balanced and objective analysis of how you will gauge the press as far as their performance is concerned.

Q: Did you therefore find it imperative to cultivate the friendship if the press preparatory to the event of August 27, 1985?

IBB: Definitely once you are involved in governance, you are involved in trying to sell an idea; you are involved in trying to make your views and thoughts known about how this country can move, you need the press. Therefore in the process, you need to have some very good understanding and very good working relation because they are the people who will transmit these ideas to the society. I see them as a potent source of mobilising the entire citizenry of this country towards making this country great. So, it was necessary at that time to cultivate a very good relationship with the press.

Q: How exactly did you do that?

IBB: I have been rather fortunate in the course of my career. I have travelled wide in this country. I have participated in a number of things - seminars, courses (outside and inside of the country) and because I move a lot in the country, I was able to make friends. My friends cut across the entire nation, is not limited to one part of the country. In this process we made a lot of friends, so it wasn't really difficult entirely to cultivate a very good relationship.

Q: How would you describe the initial response of the press to the event of August 27 1985?

IBB: The press have been supportive when we came in and even more supportive when we abrogated the famous Decree No.4. This was a clear indication then of our desire to provide an unfettered freedom of the press.

Q: It has been argued that Decree No.2 which you inherited from your predecessor served the same purpose for your regime what Decree No.4 served the Buhari regime. Is this a fair assessment?

IBB: No, it is most unfair. In fact, there is no basis for comparing the two decrees. If you look at Decrees No.2 and 4, the wordings, the context, what they want to achieve are completely different. Decree No.2 empowers the Head of government to keep anybody in detention for a certain period of time when the security of the nation is threatened or something that is not to the interest of the society or to the interest of the government itself. Decree No.2 more or less gives you wide ranging power within your constitutional role because the constitution has assigned you the responsibility of protecting the State. Any measure that you have taken to protect the state from acts of sabotage, of terrorism, acts of bringing the society into disrepute or something....

But Decree No.4 just talks about what you publish, what you shouldn't publish, whom you should accuse, whom you shouldn't accuse. So, the two are just not the same.

Q: After settling down in office, how would you assess the subsequent conduct of the press to your administration in the first few months of tenure?

IBB: In the firs few months, the press was good. They gave us all the support, they gave us all the coverage that we needed. I think it was very good. Our success at the very initial stage could be attributed to the fact that we had a very vibrant press who came along with us. We really appreciated what they did.

Q: Thereafter did you continue to....

IBB: Don't forget thereafter I am dealing with the same people that I dealt with in 1985. They remained the same people. But like in all countries, in the process, you had to go through a running battle. All sort of things happened. If you recall in 1989 we had a running battles - the SAP riots, destructions, students' riots and so on and so forth.

Thus, cultivating them became necessary so that the society and the press could be able to see the other side of government or rather the government side of the story. So, we found it necessary to cultivate the press with the view of getting maximum understanding of the government position so that people don't have a distorted view of what the situation was.

Q: How exactly did you do that Sir?

IBB: You see... I know you, getting to talk to you shouldn't be a problem but there must be a mutual trust and mutual understanding. I don't find it difficult to keep away information from an editor-in-chief, publisher or people very high up in the press. You can always talk to them, they can always ask you questions they want to know.

Secondly, we maintained the tradition of trying to brief them on what is happening, try to interact with them to find out what is happening with them. This is just what happened.

Q: Would you attribute any role to the press in the initial response of Nigerians to your cardinal policies such as the Economic Emergency Programme, SAP, States creation, etc?

IBB: Yes. They did well. To be very honest, before we introduced the economic reforms, the press was up and doing in trying to get the people to understand the issues involved. They were up and doing in trying to fashion out ideas and trying to get the minds of the people to focus on particular issues. I think they did that extremely well in fairness to them. That has helped in carrying out, if you take for example, the IMF debate - those were really highlighted.

The press did very well in highlighting the issues. Anybody who has a view to air, they allowed him to say it and so on. A typical Nigerian will like to make noise. We like participating in seminars, conferences and doing a lot of talking. We provided the environment. The same thing with the Political Bureau. So, you have the economic aspects, the political aspects....

By the time we came out, we were reasonably confident that we had enough to gauge the mood of the nation. We were able to know where the nation would like to move from that point of view. After all these, of course, we introduced the economic emergency. We told the nation why we had to do that. Credit must go to the ordinary Nigerians. They bore the brunt very heavily, but they were able to ..., they were determined because they put the country first.

The same thing with the members of the armed forces. You remember we even cut their salaries and that is their own contribution.I think we have virtually gotten everybody on board especially from 1985 when we introduced the economic emergency in October, 1985 and then to 1986 when we introduced the Structural Adjustment Programme and the Political Bureau debate.

Q: When the *Newswatch* magazine was proscribed for publishing the Political Bureau Report before it was officially released, it was reported that the responsible government officials approached the editors not to publish the report. Sir, one may like to know about possible publications that are to appear in newspapers or magazines? Was the government, in any way, mounting surveillance around media houses to learn when they were about to publish what may be offensive to government?

IBB: Well, that is a very tough one. Government is government. Don't forget, government has at its disposal a lot of facilities and means with which it could monitor the entire society, the press inclusive. Probably we would know what is happening in the press, we know what is happening in the labour movements, we know what is happening in so many fields. To be able to continue to protect and maintain the integrity of this country, these are things that government has to do. So, it is one of those things that made us know that this thing is going to be there in advance.

Q: Looked at broadly and on the whole, how can you assess the role and performance of the press at the inception, middle and exit of your regime?

IBB: The three phases present three distinct and unique situations. The phase one which is the beginning, may be from 1985 to 1989, I think the going was Ok, it was tough but Ok. There was mutual respect, mutual understanding, a mutual conviction, a mutual objective and so on.

But again don't forget, any government, any time has to contain with various situations. In between, government had to take various unpopular decisions and in the process you are bound to loose friends, you are bound to loose a lot of friends. You will win only very few but the loss is greater. When the consequences of our actions like the SAP began to unfold (thank God we warned the public that it was not going to be easy, we were honest enough to tell them that it was not going to be easy) agitations started. We had all sorts of issues - students riots, SAP riots - these are now the consequences of some of these actions. Of course, society, perhaps did not have the capacity to withhold.

We tried to introduce in the economic field, the concept of self reliance that people have to source their raw materials from within the country. If you cannot, you fold. People who are dependent heavily on importation found that they are gradually loosing out. Suddenly, there emerges a group of discontented people and therefore that brings about agitation. That was towards the middle.

Towards the end of the administration, there was politics, elections were held. Of course, we held on up to certain level. It didn't turn out the way some people wanted. So you find that they have a role to play in each of the stages whether positive or negative. The press contributed immensely.

Q: At the personal level were you reading some of the things being written about you in some sections of the press?

IBB: Believe it or not I do. I devote very considerable time especially in the morning to go through the magazines and newspapers. Of course, it is interesting to sit down to read some of these things. I was the subject of discussion, but what is nice, what is interesting is to see that somebody is writing about you. He has never been able to talk to you to find out your own side of the story. Somebody is writing about you and he thinks he is authoritatively doing that, he

hasn't asked you, he hasn't cross cheeked with anybody. I derive a lot of pleasure and understanding in the sense that those who are writing are doing what I will refer to as just imagination or fiction. But it serves their purpose because they want to dish it to the ordinary public. It is a way of getting the public to be disenchanted with a government, to be disenchanted with individuals.

But I have always believed that once your conscience is clear, it is a temporary thing. It was a hell of a bloody trying period. My worry at that time, I had children who could read and write. Children who were reasonably conversant with reading Nigerian papers. My worry at that time and I have been grateful to God was that these children would be reading some of these things. They were not president. They just happened to be children of the President. They do read about their father and what they read might not be true.

I was worried about the psychological trauma that they were going to go through. But I have been lucky, God has been very kind to me. That did not influence them because I have told them that they may read a lot of things but they have every reason to be very proud of their parents. It is in the course of our duty that we have come through this. I think they showed remarkable understanding.

Q: In the last six months of your regime especially, you appeared to be against a very hostile section of the press, did you regard that section at the time as constituting itself into the opposition to your government?

IBB: Not really opposition. Ok, opposition in the real context because they now chart a course which is inconsistent with what we are trying to put across and they want that course at all cause to be followed. So, I agree with you that they would be seen by everybody else as the opposition to the government.

Q: What was your response to the new role taken up by the press at the time?

IBB: I thought everything being what it is time will come when sanity will prevail and somebody will say wait a minute, let's us have a second look at these things. Were we really right? Were we really doing the right thing? I hope in a not too distant future this sort of thinking will prevail and then they can have a second look at the various roles each and everyone of them played.

Q: Rightly or wrongly, some people have accused your administration of employing diverse propaganda techniques in trying to win the hearts and minds of Nigerians to support the programmes set by the regime. Sir, out of office, now what can you say about this an the use of propaganda in the Nigerian media?

IBB: Propaganda, I don't know whether it is the right word. All the same, I think every government that comes whether LG, State or Federal government will have to reach out to the public. It would have to sell its programmes to the public, ...convince the public that what it is selling them is the best. In the process you will have to say all the good things about your programmes. You have to be honest also to say Ok, having said all these, from experience, these may be the consequences. It will be for a specific period of time.

There has to be a constant flow of information. Ours is what I will refer to as an open society. People are always yearning for news. They want information. They want to know. So, a government must be up and doing and make sure that its activities at various levels are fully covered, fully reported, fully explained and fully-sold. It is necessary. You call it propaganda but I will rather say communication should be stronger between government and the governed.

Q: Your regime was popular for its declared commitment and protection of human rights, yet, it also recorded a high number of journalists arrest, promulgation of laws that restricted press freedom, confiscation of publications and the banning of newspapers and magazines. Sir, how can you reconcile this paradox?

IBB: I did say in 1988 or 89 that we cherish Press freedom but it does not mean that the press should put up unreasonable demands either to the government or to the society. We also insisted that your freedom terminates where mine starts or my freedom terminates where yours starts. In other words, there has to be some mutual understanding.

You can call me a fool. You should allow me to tell you that I am not a fool. If you give a wide ranging coverage that I am a fool, you should be gracious enough also to give a wide coverage of why I think I am not a fool. You must be fair to the man on the other end, or to the government... If you want to hit at government, make sure you find out the true position so that if the report is there, it helps the ordinary man, a man who is searching for truth, a man who is searching for a good analysis, for historical reasons should be able to read and say, Ok, I feel this writer is very balanced.

What I am trying to impress upon is that your job could have been easier if you put up things in their perspective and allow the people to judge. But you try to judge on behalf of the people... without allowing the other side or without giving adequate coverage to the other side is what is unacceptable.

Q: Are you worried about the implications of the press coverage on the history of your regime when it is finally written?

IBB: No. History has a means of changing events. You see when we talk of history, we are not thinking of what happens now or in 1992, 93, 94 or 95. It is a generation thing.

The history of governments in this country will continue to be written in the next fifty years, in the next 100 years. So one hopes that the people who are going to come after us are

going to be people who are reasonable to ask questions. And that is the process of getting the history corrected. It is a matter of time. This happens to virtually everybody, be it in religion, politics or even in commerce.

You may live ahead of your time, which at the risk of being accused of being immodest, our regime was ahead of its time. We propounded a very clear vision of what we wanted this country to be - a place where everyone uses his God given talent for the purpose of his own development and that of the country. The job of the government is to make sure that it provided the environment for individual development within the society.

Q: To what extent was your regime guided by public opinion as expressed through the mass media?

IBB: That is a very good question. What we used to do if we wanted to sell a programme, we normally fly a kite. The moment we do, then the country, the media and everybody, starts talking about it. We gauge the reading from what people are saying or from what editorial comments were made as far as these are concerned. The programmes that we really love and want to get it through, we first of all fly kite-official leaks, if you may call it that. Then suddenly, Nigerians will pick it and start talking about it. We will watch and see the trend of the discussions. If it is going to be popular, we accept it. If we anticipate problems, we delay it. By the time our package is out, people must have exhausted their ideas about it. They must have discussed it, they must have said what they wanted to say about it and that must have given us the guiding principle.

Q: On the whole, did you enjoy working with the Nigerian press?

IBB: In all honesty, I did. They have been very supportive except during the last days. And that I can understand and I don't grudge them. I can always take any reporting on any subject you want to talk about. I enjoyed doing that.

Q: What other remarks would you like to make on the relationship of the State and the media in Nigeria?

IBB: They should see themselves as partners working for the progress of this country in the greater interest of the members of the society. That is the first and foremost. Just like we soldiers have got to defend the territorial integrity of our country, the press also has the responsibility to protect the territorial integrity of the country not by using tanks and bullets and rifles. After all, you say that the ***pen is mightier than the sword***. So, creative writing and powerful pens should be put at the disposal of the society in trying to shape the society and handle the country.

Of course, you can have all your quarrels in the country. But when anything touches on Nigeria and the Nigerian society, the press should not compromise. Under normal circumstances,