

COMMITTEE FOR ACADEMIC FREEDOM IN AFRICA

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The Committee For Academic Freedom in Africa (CAFA) consists of people teaching and studying in North America who are concerned with the increasing violations of academic freedom that are taking place in African universities and who believe that it is crucial that we support the struggles our African colleagues are conducting to assert and preserve their rights.

The formation of CAFA is inspired by the Kampala Declaration on Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility (November 29, 1990) and by the World University Service Lima Declaration of 1988, which states (Clause 16):

All institutions of higher education shall provide solidarity to other such institutions and individual members of their academic communities when they are subject to persecution. Such solidarity may be moral or material, and should include refuge and employment or education for the victims of persecution.

CAFA's objectives include:

- informing our colleagues about the current situation on African campuses;
- setting up an urgent action network to respond promptly to emergency situations;
- mobilizing our unions and other academic organizations so that we can put pressure on African academic authorities and governments;
- organizing delegations that will make direct contact with teachers and students and their organizations in Africa.

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IN THIS ISSUE OF CAFA NEWS

The World Bank and African Education	2
“Training for Employment”	5
Ethiopia's “Effective” Education	6
Ghana: Student's Resolution	9
Kampala Journal	10
Nigeria: Student Repression Intensifies	13
Zimbabwe: University Autonomy Threatened	14
Tanzania: Removal of Academics	15
Useful Addresses	16

The World Bank and Education in Africa

What can I do?
I must begin.
Begin what?
The only thing in the world that's worth beginning:
The End of the World, no less.

Aime Cesaire, *Return to My Native Land*

Introduction

In the first issue of the CAFA's newsletter we stated that we cannot place the question of academic freedom in Africa in a proper perspective unless we take into account the role played by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) in the restructuring of African education. For the most frequent violations of academic rights occur when African governments implement World Bank and IMF policies and meet the protest they generate. In this article we examine a number of studies the WB has published since the mid-1980s which put forth the "philosophy" that inspires its recommendations for African education:

- *Financing Education in Developing Countries (FEDC)*, 1986.
- *Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth (FCSG)*, 1989.
- *Education and Adjustment: A Review of the Literature (E&A)*, 1991.
- Michael Kelly, *Education in a Declining Economy: The Case of Zambia, 1975-1985 (EDE)*, 1991.

These studies, written by WB staff or commissioned by the WB, as in the case of Kelly's *EDE*, show that the WB calls for a drastic reduction of higher education in Africa, as it has developed in the post-independence period. This reduction is

promoted in the name of higher efficiency and a more egalitarian distribution of educational resources. Yet, the evidence provided and the guidelines prescribed raise serious doubts that these are the actual concerns. More likely, the WB's attempt to cut higher education stems from its bleak view of Africa's economic future, and its belief that African workers are destined for a long time to remain unskilled laborers. This would explain why the WB has made the shrinking of Africa's higher educational institutions the centerpiece of its policy and has identified the improvement of academic life with its reduction.

The World Bank Criticizes Its Critics

The first impact of WB policies on African education was through the implementation by at least 30 African governments in the mid-1980s of the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP), frequently coordinated with the IMF. SAP's conditionalities included the removal of subsidies to students for food and accommodation, a currency devaluation that inflated the cost of educational materials and cuts in government funding of education. But SAP's most devastating impact was on the average family income, which made it difficult for parents to continue send their children even to primary school.

By 1986 the consequences of SAP were all too

visible. Social spending in Sub-Saharan African countries (including education) fell by 26 percent between 1980 and 1985. Statistics showed that enrollment rates were declining in many countries for the first time in their history. Books, from school primers to physics texts, became scarce commodities. Cash-strapped governments, pressured by WB and IMF officials, cut room and board subsidies for secondary and tertiary level students, who had to end their studies or continue in demoralizing living conditions.

For critics of WB/IMF the decline of African educational systems, especially in their formerly world renowned universities, dramatically demonstrated that SAP, far from generating economic growth, threatened the capacity of African societies to reproduce themselves. But the WB has dismissed these criticisms, arguing that the real problem is Africa's post-colonial higher education, which is bureaucratically bloated, inefficient and inequalitarian. African universities are "sacred cows," consuming an undue amount of limited resources, they are an example of fiscal overgrazing, responsible (particularly in times of austerity) for the underfunding of primary education.

The WB undoubtedly commissioned Michael Kelly to study and publicize the case of Zambia because its financing of education seemed to fit this picture. The Zambian government between 1975 and 1985, in the midst of a severe economic decline, following the collapse of copper prices on the world market, increased the funding of the universities while letting that for primary and secondary schools fall (*EDE*: 39). This prompted Kelly to conclude that the WB was correct: "too much was devoted to the refined needs of too few at a higher level, and too little to the general needs of too many at the lower level." (*EDE*: 61). Not only is education financing unbalanced, investment in higher education is inefficient:

"Wastage, proliferation of small institutions, excessively large (especially non-teaching) staff and the nearly universal policy of charging no fees all contribute to high costs." (*FCSG*: 7)

WB researchers also point out that social return to investment on the primary level is 28 percent, while on the tertiary level it is 13 percent. Again, social return to public investment in higher education is 13 percent, while the return to private invest-

ment in higher education is 32 percent. In other words, individual university graduates receive about two and one half times more increased income over outlay than the government; and they receive from the government thirty four times more than what primary students receive. This—the WB reminds us—leads to a very inequalitarian distribution of education expenditures. For instance the "white collar" sector (professionals, government and corporate employees) represents only 6 percent of the population, but appropriates roughly 27 percent of the education expenditures, and its overrepresented at the university level, where 40 percent of students come from white collar families.

Thus the WB would have us believe that SAP is a blessing in disguise for African education. African governments, under pressure from SAP, would have a golden opportunity to "increase the efficiency of resource use," keep in check the demands of the urban elites, whose political clout has distorted sound economic reasoning, and impose a new educational egalitarianism. Typically *E&A* author Noss admits that SAPs do cut public education spending and primary enrollment rates, but he retorts: "even these trends are not *a priori* bad and need to be investigated in more depth"; he suggests that we ask: "to what extent were declining resources allocated more efficiently, and did internal efficiency improve to offset declining gross enrollment rates?"

SAP is credited with creating an environment conducive to improving the quality of African education, which is described as "unacceptably low." How can "quality" be restored? (*FCSG*: 82). The best way the WB claims is to "decrease unit

ERRATA CORRIGE. CAFA NEWSLETTER NO.1

- The University of Dar es Salaam main campus was closed from May 1990 to January 1991, not from 1989 to 1990 as reported on page 1.
- The Pan-African Conference resulting in a Declaration on Academic Rights was held in Kampala, not at Makerere University as reported on page 1.

costs, constrain output, and expand cost sharing by beneficiaries (so as) . . . to free the necessary resources." That is, the surest way to improve African higher education is to decrease investment in the universities (by laying off "unnecessary staff"), decrease the number of students and charge high fees to those who remain. This is a hard program for any government to propose, particularly in the face of a powerful urban elites; but with the help of SAP African governments presumably can appeal to that old dictum "better fewer but better."

The New WB Policy on Education in Africa

By 1986 restructuring education had become for WB a self-conscious supplement to the more general SAP. Thus in *FEDC* it presented a package consisting of three options:

- Recovering the public cost of higher education and reallocating government spending toward the level with the highest social returns;
- Developing a credit market for education, together with selective scholarships, especially for higher education;
- Decentralizing the management of public education and encouraging the expansion of private and community-supported schools. (*FEDC*: 17)

Let us consider each in turn. The "recovering costs" option would reduce students' allowances for room and board, charge tuition fees for university education and thus make more funds available for primary education. Critics might object that introducing fees would reduce college enrollment. But the WB answers that there is so much "excess demand" for higher education in Africa, that charging fees would not deprive universities of qualified applicants. "In Kenya, for example, only 21 percent of qualified graduates found university posts. In Nigeria, the average acceptance rate for university education in 1979-80 was only 16 percent." (*FEDC*: 18).

The "credit market" option would further obviate this problem, since the availability of loans would allow students and their families to borrow on future earnings. This scheme presumably combines efficiency and equity: "competition for places in higher education would no longer be limited to applicants who can pay at the time of enrollment,"

while the recognition that "time is money" would stimulate those who take loans to finish punctually their work. "Decentralization of management" would get the governments — which typically institutionalize "featherbedding" and overstaffing — out of the schools, making them more efficient and cost conscious. And getting schools closer to the grass roots would "mobilize additional support for education from families and local sources," while increasing a healthy competition among schools be they private, religious or community based.

The World Bank's Vision of African Education

The WB promises that this new system, if given time to work, would restructure African education within one generation. What would be the results? The present university systems would be replaced by "programs or centers of excellence" concentrating staff and resources on a regional basis, and producing a small cadre of "high quality" academics and researchers. In the "missing middle" there would be a new type of vocational "on-the-job" and "in-service" training, which would call for "private sector involvement and local efforts (by craft and worker organizations), while retaining overall public management of training." (*FCSG*: 83). The model for this system is the Nigerian National Open Apprenticeship Scheme: "the employer provides training and the trainee works for lower wages," while the government "tops off" the apprentice's wages (\$5 per month) and gives a small incentive to the employer (\$15 a year) [See box on p.5]. As for primary and secondary schools, these would be run by local communities, religious institutions and private companies, taking up the cost of paying for teachers, school equipment and buildings. To further lower costs, primary and secondary-level teachers would forego university training and attend instead "provincial pedagogical centers and training schools," as in a program that was experimented with in Ethiopia under Mengistu [See box on p.6].

The WB vision for African education by 2020 consists mostly of primary education, a middle school system immediately shaped by the needs of the local labor market, and a very selective higher education system, operating at the lowest possible

public cost. Here students would be paying their way through parent's contributions and/or loans, and spending would be monitored by international agencies and foundations, to ensure the most efficient transmission of a knowledge package largely imported from abroad.

Contradictions and Implications

This WB vision does have an air of realism about it. Who, for example, would be against universal primary education or "high quality" university education in Africa? Moreover, the WB's pessimistic premise, "Africa's economic problems cannot be solved quickly," seems to be true. The numerous SAPs sponsored by the WB or IMF in the 1980s have deepened the African economic crisis, and no government has wanted or been able to escape the WB's and IMF's imperatives. Certainly education funding appears constrained by austerity

for the foreseeable future. Thus we should perhaps conclude that the WB's policy and vision is the best of all possible worlds.

However, a closer examination of the WB's policy and vision shows they contradict each other and the facts. Moreover, they are bound to have extremely negative consequences for African education, consequences from which it might never recover.

Factually the WB's picture of campus life is out of touch with reality. On most African campuses student life verges on the catastrophic: with overcrowded rooms, one meal per day, cramped and noisy study conditions and failing water and electricity supply. The police and/or the army is frequently stationed on or near the campus and classes are frequently filled with informers. The faculty lives and works in similar conditions, with drastically reduced, below subsistence real wages, which force them to either emigrate or find extra-aca-

THE WORLD BANK ON "TRAINING FOR EMPLOYMENT"

An example of a training system that combines traditional on-the-job apprenticeship training with formal, theoretical training is the National Open Apprenticeship Scheme in Nigeria. Launched by Nigeria's Directorate of Employment, the scheme, in its first year of operation (1987-88), successfully persuaded public and parastatal enterprises and private sector employers, including informal sector workshops, to take on apprentices. The directorate provides financial and logistical support at 50 naira a month for each trainee and 150 naira a year to the trainer for each trainee. Details of training received and the resulting performance are logged and checked by monitors at least once every two weeks, thus ensuring quality.

The Nigerian example demonstrates the potential for cost sharing in demand-oriented training schemes—the employer provides training and the trainee works for lower wages. Better use of formal training institutions could further lower unit costs, thus allowing more apprentices to supplement practical training, and ameliorate the present scarcity of qualified trainers. Training institutions and trainers benefit from the contact with, and feedback from, enterprises.

There are other similar initiatives. Togo has established regional vocational training centers to boost apprenticeship by providing complementary theoretical training and by supplying teaching materials for enterprises and an advisory apprentice inspectorate. New forms of training are also tested in programs sponsored by German technical assistance. In Sudan and Botswana, three-year apprenticeships are split between practical on-the-job training and theoretical courses in vocational schools. In Zimbabwe students receive one-and-a-half years of pre-occupational training on the job. A training system has been developed in Malawi that combines institution-based training with apprenticeships of two to three years, which lead to competency-based certification as skilled craftsmen or technicians. Part of the training is financed by a head tax on enterprises. Such flexible approaches can strengthen training systems and improve the transition to work for school leavers.

(Excerpt from *FCSG*: 83)

**THE WORLD BANK COMMENTS ON ETHIOPIA'S
"EFFECTIVE IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING"**

In 1983 Ethiopia instituted a 10-Year Development Plan, which assigned a high priority to education. The long-term objectives were to achieve universal primary education, to distribute educational opportunities more equitably between rural and urban areas, and to emphasize practical skills. The government supplied new schools, revised curriculums, distributed new textbooks, and developed training systems.

The reforms also instituted provincial pedagogical centers and regional teacher training. The government is now developing the administrative and planning capacity of regional and *awraja* (administrative subregions) educational offices; seven teacher-training institutes have been built and about 100 *awraja* pedagogical centers. These centers provide school supervision and in-service teacher training, as well as educational support services.

In 1988 teaching training institutes graduated more than 4,200 teachers, compared with 1,200 graduates 10 years before. Because of their proximity to local schools, teachers are able to attend summer or short courses to upgrade their skills without incurring large travel costs.

This model has lessons for others because it encourages the training of local personnel; avoids overcentralized, costly training programs; and is conducive to making teacher training responsive to specific local conditions.

(FCSG: 79)

demographic employment. The administrative overstaffing the WB so inveighs against is frequently the product of trying to keep faculties running with almost no equipment, e.g., sweepers are absolutely necessary during the months of harmattan in West Africa to keep offices operating, since there are no functioning vacuum cleaners, air conditioners or often even windows. No U.S. university students or teachers would consider the lot of their African counterparts remotely acceptable, but the WB adds insult to injury by its picture of profligate academic inefficiency.

There is an even deeper contradiction between the WB's policy and vision. The WB peers into the future and prophesies: "To survive and compete in a competitive world in the 21st century, Africa will require not only literate and numerate citizens, but also highly qualified and trained people to perform top-quality research, formulate policies, and implement programs essential to economic growth and development." (FCSG: 81). Yet its policy guarantees that this 'requirement' will never be fulfilled; for African higher education is *already* on the verge of extinction. Consider the following statistics:

- there are less than 500,000 higher education

students in all of Africa with a population of about 500 million, i.e., there is approximately 1 student per 1000. In Zambia, e.g., in 1980 there was only 2 people in a 1000 that had any higher education training;

- the enrollment rate for higher education in Africa in 1986 was 2 percent; if Nigeria is excluded, the rate would be 1 percent;
- Africa has the lowest higher education enrollment rate among all the world's regions. The Latin American rate was 12 percent, while the average for all the developing countries (African included) was nearly 7 percent.

Thus the African university student is an endangered species, and any policy which further lowers enrollment rates — hovering now near zero — can be labelled "academic exterminism." For any change in education financing that does not guarantee a stable, if not increasing (absolute and relative) number of university students threatens the very existence of a university system in Africa.

By this measure, the WB's policy is unequivocally exterminist. Through defunding higher education, charging substantial tuition fees, and eliminating student allowances, the WB reduces the probability that any qualified student will be able to

attend a university. For the "excess demand" argument and the appeal to credit schemes, which the WB uses to show that university enrollments would not fall in the face of its "cost-cutting," are based on faulty premises. Excess demand and access to credit schemes depend on a crucial variable the WB is committed to reducing through its SAPs: *the average level of real African wages.*

Undoubtedly there is an "excessive demand" for higher education in Africa. Like their peers in every part of the world, African youth see education as key to a better life and a more secure future; thus they make great sacrifices in order to obtain it. But given the steady decline of real wages in Africa in the 1980s and 1990s, one can doubt the existence of excessive *effective* demand, i.e., demand supported by financial resources. How can families and communities afford to pay for secondary and tertiary education when wages are frozen *below subsistence* levels and the WB and the IMF are committed to further reducing the cost of labor? The operation of a credit system granting loans to a large group of students can only work if real wages are substantially increased above their present level. But the very purpose of SAP is to cut labor costs, so as to make African workers more 'competitive' on the international labor market.

This implies that real wages are not expected to rise for a long time to come, *if ever, considering that every other debtor nation in the Third World — from Asia to Africa and Latin America — is being told by the World Bank and the IMF that they have to cut their workers' wages in order to attract 'scarce foreign investment.'*

In an environment where the pauperization of the overwhelming majority of the population is and will continue to be "sound economics," it can be anticipated that only the wealthy will qualify for credit, with the consequence of a dramatic decline in university enrollments and an inegalitarian restructuring of the university student body. WB's rhetoric notwithstanding, we must assume that these are the goals of its recommendations. We can be sure that if families across income levels were able to pay for higher education, the WB would conclude that wages are moving upward and would take measures to reverse such trend.

Another important contradiction between WB policy and vision is the neglected structural link between higher and primary education. In a standard education system primary and secondary

school teachers are supplied by the tertiary level, and adequate ratios between these levels must be maintained if the system is to reproduce itself. If the student-teacher ratio at the primary level is to be kept constant and the number of primary level students is to increase by 5 percent a year, and if 5 percent of the primary level teachers leave every year due either to retirement, sickness, or alternative employment, then the rate of yearly teacher influx from the tertiary level must be 10 percent. *A mathematical simulation, using standard figures found in Africa, shows that tertiary enrollment rates of 1 percent can not even keep a semblance of pace.* In effect, by advising the reduction of funding for higher education, the WB threatens its own alleged policy goal: the expansion and improvement of primary education.

Rarely, however, does the WB admit that the actual results of its interventions in African education belie the reassurances that crowd the pages of its reports. Indeed, the WB rarely admits to any error or takes responsibility for the consequences of its policies. Occasionally it might state that "there appears to be a causal link between adjustment and education" (E&A: iii), but it remains determinedly agnostic as to the positive or negative impact of this link. The following tables will show, however, that the WB had already begun to have an impact on education by 1986.

IAL countries (intensely adjusting) had received three or more Structural Adjustment Loans, or two SALs by 1989, with lending starting in or before 1985 (25 cases of which 13 are African); NAL countries (non-adjusting) did not receive major SALs between 1980-1987 (31 cases of which 10 are African).

Table 1: Per capita education expenditures

	1980	1986
IAL	81.2	73.2
NAL	48.7	90.8

Table 2: Primary enrollment rates (%)

	1980	1986
IAL	94.2	90.1
NAL	86.0	91.1

Tables #1 and #2 show that, early on in the Debt Crisis, the countries that cooperated most with the WB and IMF severely cut their education budgets. This was a move that had an obvious negative effect on the most vulnerable sector: the primary school. Yet Noss insists that "the implications of changes in financing for education quality and equity are unclear." (E&A: iii-iv) The WB hopes, he adds, "[that] by giving the social impact of adjustment programs earlier and more serious attention, the adverse impacts of adjustment can be reduced [and] the need to restructure the public budget under adjustment is an opportunity for governments to evaluate social programs." (E&A: 5) But this reassurance verges on the sadistic, considering that Africa's enrollment rates at all educational levels are the lowest among all the under-developed regions of the world, as Table #3 indicates for 1987.

Table 3: Enrollment rates

	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Sub-Saharan Africa	68	17	1
East Asia	125	45	5
South Asia	89	35	4.4*
Europe, M. East & N. Africa	97	57	12
Latin America & Caribbean	108	49	17

(* as of 1980)
(From WB, World Development Report 1990: Poverty
(New York: Oxford UP, 1990))

Noss's argument is analogous to saying that in a region where daily calorie consumption per person has fallen from 1800 to 1500 a government has the opportunity to ensure that food is more equitably distributed and more nutritious. Where educational possibilities are already extremely limited, as in Africa, the "hopes" and "opportunities" that Noss appeals to are ludicrous.

Noss also complains about the poor quality of statistics for education and the limited possibility of disaggregating them. But in a number of cases, like Ghana, the results of WB interventions are quite clear. Ghana became the WB's prize experimental subject in West Africa, receiving more SALs between 1983 and 1990 than any other African country, including two Education Sector loans

totally \$84.5 million. The result was that public spending per students and real public spending remained at less than half their 1975 levels throughout most of the 1980s, while enrollment rates declined from 1983 to 1987 (the last year data was available). SAP did not increase education expenditures, but it did decrease primary enrollment rates, invalidating the WB's axiom that the defunding tertiary education is the lifeline of primary education.

Motivations

Why has the WB advised such a questionable education policy in the face of its theoretical incoherence and empirical failures? And why does it ask African nations to flirt with academic exterminism?

One important reason is its perception concerning the weakness and bankruptcy of the African state. WB researchers, academic sociologists and economists are convinced that the post-colonial state in Africa, although seemingly autocratic and centralized, is in reality rather weak, as proven by its inability to guarantee economic profitability and its tendency to overspending and overemploying. Africa's military dictators, one party states and "strong men" may be loyal to European and U.S. capital, but they have not held labor costs down, nor provided a proper environment for foreign investment. Thus the current wisdom is that the less the African state is in charge of the management of African economies and educational institutions, the better. SAP places multinational agencies (WB, the IMF — and at one point, in the case of Liberia, even the U.S. government) in the saddle. The new theoretical interest in "civil society" and the appeals to the need of "capturing the grassroots," at least on a rhetorical level, are a product of this development. (We say "rhetorical" because there has been no serious attempt to introduce the reflections of African most directly affected by the WB's planners into their work. For example, although the authors of *FCSG* make the following claim on page one, "ordinary people should participate more in designing and implementing development programs," no villages, no local wise people nor ordinary folk were involved in the preparation of a book that deals with their future. Indeed, if the grassroots were heard, they might say

EXCERPT FROM RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST, GHANA, ON THE PROPOSED HOSTEL SYSTEM INTENDED FOR THE 1990/91 ACADEMIC YEAR:

We, students of the University of Cape Coast, following the invitation of the committee of Heads of Halls to discuss and propose suggestions for the successful implementation of the hostel system intended for the incumbent academic year and following,

Having assiduously applied ourselves to a most in-depth analysis of its rationale and feasibility against the background of our National Economy,

Noting that the introduction of the loan scheme as an alternative to financing tertiary education is merely a cosmetic camouflage which does not augur well for the full development and exploitation of the vast intellectual potentials of the country for the much cherished National Development,

Conscious of the fact that the loan scheme is not a charitable fund, but a scheme that further worsens the prospects and the plight of the already impoverished Ghanaian worker,

Not oblivious of the fact that the government has refused to test the viability of alternative ways of financing tertiary education, such as the establishment of an educational fund to be contributed to by user organizations,

Dissatisfied about the ambiguity, and lack of a definite government policy on the proposed system,

Shocked at the fact that a government which has openly declared its own lack of faith in the Economic Recovery Programme, could still be intransigently forging ahead with a programme in which it has no confidence,

Convinced that the hostel system and the whole Education Reform package represents a simplistic, orthodox neo-colonial ploy to keep our nation under the firm grasp and exploitation of Western imperialism,

Do hereby observe that:

1. Contrary to the government's pronouncements that have heralded the Economic Recovery Programme, and particularly the Education Reforms, she has not kept faith with the people of Ghana.

2. The laudable programme supposedly meant to make education accessible to all Ghanaians is a mere subterfuge, baseless and hollow in as much as the National Economy is incapable of supporting it.

In the light of the foregoing, students do hereby resolve and swear by the blood of our forefathers who brought true independence, Freedom and Justice to our dear nation, that it be unreservedly and unshakably resolved that:

1. We shall not be party to any discussions aimed at the commercialization of our Halls of Residence and further.

2. That any attempts to forcefully implement the programme, will meet that most ferocious, determined and well organized resistance ever in the annals of the history of student struggles.

3. Urgent and immediate solutions be found to alleviate the untold hardships being suffered by our non-residential students to give some amount of credibility to the government's able (sic) to undertake genuine reforms.

4. Until urgent, lasting and feasible alternatives are worked out for the funding of tertiary education, any further so-called reforms will meet an ungovernable situation.

what many "ordinary" Nigerian people said of the IMF/WB and its SAP, "It is a death pill!"

There is a direct connection between the WB evaluation of the post-colonial African state and its policies towards African education. The main role

of the post-colonial state was to provide African personnel for its bureaucracy, which previously had been staffed mostly by Europeans. The often abrupt departure of the colonial personnel, and the inadequacy of the educational system in the colo-

KAMPALA JOURNAL: IN UGANDA, A LIGHT OF LEARNING DIMS

"There is no motivation for teachers to stay on the campus," said Dr. Sandy Tickodri-Togboa, a senior lecturer in engineering [at Makerere University]. "If I can't support my own kids in school from my university salary why is it worth my while to stay here?"

After a raise awarded by the Government in 1989, lecturers still receive only about 30,000 Ugandan shillings a month, or about \$40. It costs Dr. Tickodri-Togboa about \$30 a week to keep his family in food alone.

Dr. Tickodri-Togboa considers himself lucky: he receives a research grant to supplement his slim salary. But most staff members fail to turn up regularly for class because they are busy making ends meet with two or three other jobs, often of a kind demeaning to academics. A staff survey showed petty trading—raising chickens and selling the eggs, for example—to be the most common outside occupation.

For Mr. Dennis [an engineering student at Makerere] and many of the 5,000 other undergraduates, the economics of attending university seem even more perilous than for the staff, although the Government provides free tuition, free accommodation and meals on campus. Like Mr. Dennis, most of the students come from impoverished rural families who cannot afford the relatively small costs the debt-laden Government is now insisting students pay.

In September, the university canceled Government-financed allowances for stationary, texts and transport to rural homes. In response, the students went on strike, an action that ended in the fatal shooting by the police of two students taking part in a campus rally last month.

"Most of us can only get 10,000 shillings"—about \$15—"from our family," Mr. Dennis said of the allowance he scraped together to finance his first term costs. "My mother sold some millet and ground nuts to pay for me. But you need 50,000 shillings to be self sufficient for the term."

Mr. Dennis spent one-third of his 10,000 shillings on his precious ream of paper that is his basic necessity for class, one-third on soap, toothpaste, salt and sugar, and one-third on transportation to the campus.

Makerere undergraduates complain bitterly about the food. "It's rice, beans, posho," said Mr. Dennis, the last being a thin porridge. "Having it every day is not conducive to study. You just eat it and pray you don't get sick."

Mr. Dennis's dormitory has no running water. Students rise at 5 A.M. to take jerrycans to an outdoor tap—sometimes the nearest working one is off campus—and then lug the water back. Rooms built for two usually hold four.

(excerpt from Jane Perlez's article in *The New York Times*, January 24, 1991)

nal period were the main reasons for the relatively large investment in higher education made by African governments in the post-independence period. National universities were essential to the reproduction of the African state form. But today both that state form and the apparatus of its reproduction are in question. SAPs demand that the state personnel be drastically cut, and not just at the lowest levels. As a consequence, social science and humanities graduates who in the past would be destined to find employment in various bureau-

cratic departments of the state are now facing an epochal period of unemployment. Thus, from the WB's viewpoint, the financing of universities in Africa, whose "output" is doomed to obsolescence is a major economic and political mistake.

Another crucial reason for the WB's hostility to African universities is that students and faculty have often been the sharpest critics of WB schemes and opponents of their implementation. The WB paints this opposition as a self-serving effort by an elite to preserve its privileged position in the midst

of a desperate social crisis. But this evaluation is misleading. Student and faculty unions are frequently the only organized oppositional national forces capable of articulating *general social demands* and criticism. Indeed, any one familiar with the political culture of African campuses cannot help but admire the courage and tenacity many students have shown in opposing dictatorial regimes and economic policies that violate national and continental sovereignty. Unfortunately we must conclude that it is for this very reason that WB does not see a future in investing in university students and teachers in Africa, and has been silent whenever governments have repressed resistance to SAP. We can notice that while imposing on African governments the most stiff cuts on social spending, neither the WB nor the IMF have ever begrudged lavish spending for crowd-control gear or for other imports functional to the modernization of repression.

Could it be that the resistance of many African students and teachers to the WB's definition of knowledge, is the reason for the "poor," "low" quality of African education and for the tendency by WB to suggest that hardly any knowledge is produced in Africa?

"unfortunately, given the present state of higher education in Africa, the continent is unable to prepare itself to take advantage of the expanding frontiers of knowledge."
(FCSG: 81)

The WB conceptualizes the problem of African education as that of making African university students low cost, uncomplaining consumers of knowledge produced in Europe and the US. This, however, is certainly not the fate many African students and intellectuals have accepted, nor have they resigned themselves to the dependent status, assigned to them by the WB, in the world production of knowledge.

The WB and Academic Freedom

The African university campus is today a battle ground for the definition of knowledge, and a test of the WB's ability to impose its will on one of the most sophisticated and combative social groups on the African continent. Paradoxically, for its success it must rely in the much maligned African state, whose police aspect it has contributed to

strengthen in post-SAP decade. Thus the WB is not a helpless bystander of governmental violations of academic freedom in Africa. The WB has a tremendous clout with African Governments; it has convinced them to restructure their economies from top to bottom; it controls the only money practically being invested in Africa. Arguably it could have inserted human rights clauses among its conditionalities. But it has not done so. On the contrary, it has allowed a steep rise in defense spending by African states in the 1980s, and has not changed its policy, even when confronted with the bloodshed the implementation of SAP was causing on and out of the campuses.

In its recently published report *Academic Freedom and Human Rights in Africa (AFHRA)*, 1991, Africa Watch has powerfully described the confrontation anti-SAP protests have led to on some African campuses between students and security forces. The most evident case is that of Nigeria, where in May of 1989 dozens of students were killed in the course of their protest against SAP. Other students were killed and many hundreds arrested in 1990 for protesting against the conditionalities of a \$120 million WB Sectorial Educational Loan to 'rationalize' Nigerian universities.

As Africa Watch reports:

The announcement of the loan set off widespread protests by students, faculty and staff, who saw the loan as an extension of the hated Structural Adjustment Program and a ploy by Western governments to take over the universities. Protestors decried the conditions of the loan, which included cut backs in staff and courses, the phasing out of some departments and an increase in fees. (AFHRA: 47)

Even governments that have publicly committed themselves to expanding the space for academic freedom, once they have embraced SAP, have not been able to escape the logic of repression. For example while President Museveni of Uganda gave a very supportive speech at a conference devoted to academic freedom in Africa in November 1990, Ugandan security forces killed two students at Makerere University on December 10, 1990, when students peacefully protested the cutting of their paper allowance. Instances could be multiplied. *For increasingly the main role of African state has been to provide the police force behind SAP.*

As AFHRA reports many student demonstrations have been targeted against state corruption (Zimbabwe), authoritarianism (Zaire, Togo and Liberia) and the arrests of intellectuals critical of the ruling party (Sudan, Somalia). But political criticism and economic demands invariably join together in the contemporary African climate of crisis and catastrophe. A good example of political-economic interpenetration are recent events in Zambia, the country whose university system the WB's Michael Kelly criticized so severely. A campaign began in May 1990 when Zambian university students protested the killing of as many as 350 students at Lubumbashi University in Zaire. The protests were peaceful and there were no killings or arrests. But:

One month later, at the end of June, protests erupted across Zambia in response to the government's doubling of the price of cornmeal, a staple of the population's diet. In Lusaka, students played a prominent role in the protests and demanded that President Kenneth Kaunda establish a multi-party system and resign. On June 25, police opened fire on student demonstrators. According to witnesses, during the protests at the University, the police fired live ammunition as well as tear gas cannisters into a crowd of several hundred. One student was shot and four others were wounded. (AFHRA: 145)

The AFHRA shows the full range of the struggles African university students and teachers have taken on in the 1980s. In introducing the report, Africa Watch director Rakiya Omaar chastises the North American academic community for not having given support to these struggles and having remained largely unconcerned or ignorant of the violations of their colleagues' rights. She reminds us that:

Long overdue, public expressions of concern by academics can do much to embarrass or to promote a constructive response by a government which has killed a student, detained a colleague or closed a university for political reasons. Elsewhere in our work, we have urged those whose circumstances give them a free voice to defend themselves. African academics and specialists on Africa whose colleagues languish in filthy prisons, without access to a doctor, a lawyer or to their loved ones, can not afford to keep quiet. (AFHRA: 7-8)

We join Africa Watch in this appeal. Let us add that an important way in which we can help our African colleagues is to stress the connection between their condition and the activities of the WB. Not only is the WB often the Prime Mover or *deus absconditus* with respect to academic repression. It is currently the grand master in the reorganization of African campuses. Moreover the World Bank, like the IMF, operates right in our midst, financed by U.S. tax dollars, staffed or advised by academic colleagues. Thus it is arguable that we have a special responsibility to inform ourselves about its operations, particularly when they affect students and colleagues, and a responsibility to make our voice heard if we stand convinced that its purported 'rationalization' of African academic institutions risks destroying for millions of African youth and for years to come the possibility of schooling at all levels. ■

WAYS TO HELP CAFA

- Become a member or a sponsor (membership is \$25 a year);
- Establish a chapter of CAFA at your institution;
- Contribute to our newsletter;
- Gather, circulate, publish relevant information in academic and non-academic journals, newsletters, student papers;
- Organize workshops;
- Help make CAFA visible at academic conferences.

Nigeria: Student Repression Intensifies

Less than one year before a promised transition to civilian rule, the military government of Nigeria has launched a crackdown on students and other opponents of the regime the past spring and summer, throwing doubt on the regime's pledge to bring democracy to the largest country in Africa.

According to human rights groups, hundreds of students have been arrested, some reported tortured and killed and many more are to stand trial on serious charges that are based on little or no evidence.

"Through the use of false accusations, arbitrary arrests and lethal force in suppressing protests over legitimate grievances, it appears beyond doubt that the government has contributed to the violence," said Rakiya Omaar, executive director of New York-based Africa Watch, in a protest letter to Nigerian President Ibrahim Babangida.

The latest events come at a delicate moment in the history of Nigeria and of sub-Saharan Africa. Like other states in the region, the military government of Nigeria has promised to institute democratic reforms and to transfer the reigns of power to civilian control next year. But many are now questioning the sincerity of the democratization process.

"Judging from the Nigerian government's failure to respect academic freedom," noted Karen Sorensen, a research associate at Africa Watch, "it is doubtful that what will emerge from the transition program will, in fact, be a democratic system."

The latest sweep against government opponents in Nigeria, which included the arrests of journalists, lawyers and businessmen, began in late May. According to the Nigerian human rights groups, the Civil Liberties Organization (CLO) and the Committee for the Defense of Human Rights (CDHR), the arrests were ostensibly designed to forestall a nationwide students demonstration on the eve of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) summit which opened in early June in Nigeria's capital Abuja.

The National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS), outlawed since 1986, had presented the government with a list of demands including the unbanning

of student unions, an increase in student allowances, the release of all prisoners of conscience and the democratization of the transition to civilian rule.

The government responded to the demands by arresting student leaders and activists. At the Yaba College of Technology in Lagos, a clash between students and security forces on the night of May 28 left at least two students dead. In the aftermath of the killings, The Guardian newspaper, a Nigerian daily, was closed down for ten days for reporting allegations that government security forces were responsible for the murder of the students.

"By killing these unarmed students, [the] Government has shown that it has no respect for the right to life — the most basic of all fundamental human rights," said Dr. Beko Ransome-Kuti, president of the CDHR.

The police acknowledged the detention of 200 students, but given the clandestine nature of many of the arrests, human rights groups said it has been difficult to determine the precise number held. Students have also been expelled from their universities and trials are now underway with many students facing serious charges.

"[The trials are] taking place against the background of a massive crackdown on student activists by the military regime and we have reason to fear that the students have been falsely accused," said a recent joint press release by CDHR and CLO, adding that the trials "are an integral part of the federal government drive to intimidate and destroy the student movement."

In response to the repression in Nigeria, CAFA has launched a petition to General Babangida, calling on the government to respect human rights and lift the ban on NANS [see insert]. A report on some of the events in Nigeria by CDHR and CLO is also included. For a general overview on the situation in Nigeria, see Africa Watch's *Nigeria on the Eve of "Change," A Transition to What?*, published in October 1991. ■

Zimbabwe: University Autonomy Under Threat

The past year has seen a serious erosion of academic freedom and university autonomy in Zimbabwe as a result of new legislation passed by the national Parliament. These changes represent a serious reversal of a decade of strong commitment to education as a national priority following the advent of majority rule. Further, the new legislation has been passed in the context of a draconian Structural Adjustment Program, opposition to government policies by the country's trade union movement and declining living standards, including the homelessness of thousands and an unemployment rate approaching one third of the entire population. In this context, opposition by students and intellectuals to the ZANU government's economic policies appear to be at the root of attacks on academic freedom.

The Parliament passed the University Amendment Bill in October 1990 limiting debate on key portions of the Bill to two days and limiting the academic community's knowledge of the provisions until the vote. The law, which took effect at the end of the school session just before the New Year, bans the Student Representative Council from holding meetings and demonstrations without the approval of the authorities, allows the Minister of Higher Education to appoint 60 percent of the members of the University Council (the highest executive body at the University of Zimbabwe, the country's only university), gives the Vice Chancellor the power to dismiss any student, lecturer or worker without consulting the University's institutions and for discipline of staff and students without any legal or procedural safeguards.

Zimbabwe's academic community of has spoken out sharply against the restrictions. A statement signed by 60 percent of the academic staff declared, "We reject the purpose of the Bill, which is to impose direct political control over the University." The Student Representative Council called the legislation "heinous" and saw a

threat to "The basic freedoms associated with academia, such as freedom of movement, expression and association." The Workers' Committee, which will have to get the Vice Chancellor's approval from now on for their representative to the Council, as well as the University Technical Association, have opposed the new law, and the Vice Chancellor made clear that the University officially opposes the loss of its autonomy. Students demonstrated at Parliament last October to oppose the Bill and then fought with riot police on campus and launched a long boycott of classes.

Student demonstrations, which have in recent years been critical of official corruption, the decline of student living standards and insufficient grants and loans, and the policies associated with a Structural Adjustment Program begun in 1984, have been a major target of the restrictions. Students went on strike and demonstrated in 1988, when the campus was sealed and students were beaten by police, and again in 1989 when the government closed the University for six months. As recently as April 30, students began a class boycott which lasted several weeks to protest the new law.

The Mugabe government announced a new SAP in February of 1991, involving a 25 percent cut in civil service workers, a relaxation of industrial policy which is expected to eliminate 10 percent of all public and private sector jobs, and efforts to attract greater foreign investment. This plan received the all-important approval of IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus. The IMF approved a \$700-million loan to finance the SAP in April. President Mugabe has also sought outside financing from the World Bank, which played a central role in the installation of US-based, Zimbabwean-born monetarist Mudzi Nziramasanga to run industrial policy. Mugabe also met with Desmond Krogh, Governor of the South African Reserve Bank, in April. The World Bank is financing a new electrical power grid which will link South Africa and Zimbabwe.

In addition to students, the country's labor movement has opposed the SAP, and strike waves have included railroad workers, teachers and nurses. The Zimbabwean Congress of Trade Unions announced its opposition to the program in June, based on layoffs and price increases which include a 35 percent rise in corn meal (the staple food), 15 percent in milk and 111 percent in gasoline. Ironically, Zimbabwe's import substitution program was seen as successful and a growth rate of 4.2 percent over the last seven years as better than the performance of IMF showcase countries like Ghana. □

Tanzania: Removal of Academics from the University of Dar es Salaam

The Editor, UDASA Newsletter/Forum

On the very day, 2 July 1991, that the University of Dar es Salaam Staff Association had organised a seminar in honor of Professor G.R.V. Mmari, former Vice Chancellor of the University of Dar es Salaam, and three members of the academic staff received letters from the Central Establishment in the President's Office, removing them from the University and requiring them to report to other institutions. They are:

(1) Dr. M. Baregu, Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science and a specialist in international relations. He was appointed Chief Resident Tutor in the Institute of Adult Education.

(2) Dr. C.S.L. Chachage, Senior Lecturer and recent head of the Sociology Department, and a specialist in development and environment sociology. He was appointed a tutor in the Institute of Social Welfare.

(3) Dr. A. Kweka, Associate Professor in the Institute of Development Studies and CCM Party Secretary for Parastatals at the University. He was appointed to the Institute of Educational Management (Mantep) in Bagamoyo.

There is little doubt that the transfer of the three academics as well as that of Professor Mmari is related to the year-long crisis at the University of Dar es Salaam which began in April 1990 when the students raised a number of university and national issues. The academic staff had considered the issues genuine and supportable, and the vice chancellor had tried to negotiate with the students to find a peaceful solution to the crisis. For this both the vice chancellor and the academic staff incurred the wrath of the state. The former was removed in April soon after the students had dispersed at the end of their examinations. The three academics, who are apparently considered among the ring-leaders, have now been removed to clear the decks before the University reopens in October.

However, their removal coincided with the seminar which included the launching of the Dar es Salaam Declaration of Academic Freedom and Social Responsibility of Academics. The Declaration has now been

ratified by six academic staff associations around the country, five of which were represented at the seminar. The transfers therefore provide a poignant occasion for the implementation of one of the articles of the Declaration which states:

"No teaching or researching member of the academic community shall be transferred to another post or position within or outside the institution without her/his prior consent." (Article 30)

In its resolution the seminar declared that the transfers were an "arbitrary and reprehensible" exercise of state powers which impinged on the integrity and autonomy of the University. It therefore called on the government to desist from such interference in the running of the University.

At an emergency meeting of the University of Dar es Salaam Academic Staff Assembly (UDASA) two days later, it was noted that the measure was contrary to the law, regulations and procedures governing the university. The University was set up under a 1970 Act under which the Council is the highest policy-making body and is the actual employer of all the workers. UDASA has therefore called on the University authorities to desist from breaking their contractual obligations to their employees. If they do cut off their salaries or try to evict them from their quarters, the members agreed to withdraw from all university committees as a first step.

UDASA also agreed to carry out a simultaneous legal struggle to safeguard the legitimate interests of its members. It has therefore approached a number of its members with a legal competence, and also set up a fund to which members will be asked to contribute voluntarily 2 1/2 percent of their salaries.

UDASA called upon all sister organizations in the country, and all other organizations and individuals in the country and overseas who are committed to human rights and academic freedom, to take appropriate measures to protest against the violation of academic freedom at the University of Dar es Salaam. □

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National Secretariat
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Anthony Village
P.O. Box 7247
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NIGERIA
Tel.: 960363

University of Dar es Salaam
Academic Staff Assembly
P.O. Box 35050
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TANZANIA

Nigerian Students Defense Campaign
4009 W. North Ave.
Box 38
Chicago, IL 60639

Academic Freedom & Human Rights Abuses in Africa, by Africa Watch provides an important survey of academic freedom in Africa. It is currently available from:

Africa Watch
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(212) 378-8400

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