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Amin: his seizure and rule in Uganda.

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AMIN:
HIS SEIZURE AND RULE IN UGANDA

A Thesis Presented
By
James Francis Hanlon

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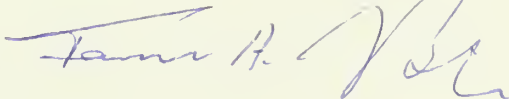
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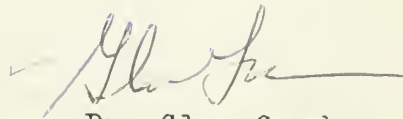
A Thesis Presented
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INTRODUCTION

The following is an exposition of Edward Feit's article in World Politics (January, 1968) dealing with military coups in Ghana and Nigeria. I propose to test this thesis by relating it to Uganda.

With virtually no difficulty small armies in Africa have been able to set aside regimes because the regimes had little or no substance to them.

As Zolberg (American Political Science Review, March, 1969) said, "The most salient characteristic of political life in Africa is that it constitutes an almost institutionless arena with conflict and disorder as its most prominent features." There is much in Zolberg's statement that reflects the situation in Uganda.

The outstanding institutions of Africa are the tribes and the administrative bureaucracy introduced by the colonial powers.

Tribal rulers and colonial magistrates each had a desire for order and stability. Though for different reasons, a cooperation developed that benefited both. Tribal rulers could become more powerful in the tribes since the colonial power guaranteed separation and thereby peace among the tribes. If the tribal ruler did what he was told by the magistrate, he had little fear of losing his position. Since the colonial magistrate had little manpower he left the local administration in the hands of the tribal ruler who had little

concern for other than local administration. Therefore, they helped to make each other legitimate: the colonial magistrate protected the tribal-traditional system against change and the tribal-traditional rulers helped make colonial rule digestible to their subjects.

It was the colonials who brought into existence the very classes that challenged this rule by encouraging Africans to leave the traditional setting for jobs in the factories and the bureaucracy. It is these classes who were neither European in outlook nor strictly traditional in setting that were to become the new political entrepreneurs held in power by political machines that maintained power by bribery and rewards.

Another very important factor is that after World War II the colonial powers left Africa little by little; this created a power vacuum in the traditional-administrative balance that once existed.

Now to the point as to why armies succeeded with little effort. The army is the only "well organized and coherent arm of government".

It is the purpose of this paper to see if the above model holds true in Uganda. The present ruler Idi Amin seized power in January 1971, while the former ruler Milton Obote was out of the country. There was little bloodshed. The army under the command of Amin staged a coup because it felt itself to be threatened by Obote's dependence on the

police for support and his creation of a "special forces" unit.

The army therefore, felt that its very existence was at stake and so took the initiative since there was no other effective power to challenge it.

The most prominent element of Idi Amin Dada's regime is that he wants to stay in power. However, since taking power, Amin has clashed openly with almost all the groups which helped him in his coup in 1971; among the key tribal groups of the West Nile district, only his own tribe, the Kakwa, remain "relatively loyal."

Amin will stay in power as long as he has the support of "his favored Malire mechanized regiment, the unit that controls all tanks and armour in the capital." However, the latest attempted coup (March 1974) involved dissident sections of the Malire regiment as well as other army units. Members of the Lugbara tribe as well as a number of Christian officers tried to overthrow him. The Christians were resentful of the fact that Amin placed the positions of power in the army, and the administration in the hands of the Muslims, The Muslims total 10 percent of the population as opposed to 50 percent for the Christians. Also, the former Colonel Gathafi of Libya, had recently visited Uganda and "made a series of anti-Christian remarks."

The leader of the attempted coup was a Christian and a Kakwa, the former army chief of staff Brigadier Charles Arube.

The strongest group was the Lugbara, about 2,000 army

troops. Amin, it appears, had expected this challenge to his authority for he had already removed the respected Lugbara officer, Lt. Col. Obitre-Gama. On the Thursday preceeding the attempted coup, Amin put on "old coup" commander, Major Juma in command of the Malire regiment; the Lugbara commander was sent on leave.

This move evidently forced the issue. Apparently there was a "plan to assassinate Amin on Saturday night," the 24th of March, but it misfired because he was not where he was supposed to be.

The rebels didn't have a chance as they were out-manned and out-gunned. A purge followed but many escaped; their rallying point could be Lt. Col. Obitre-Gama who is at his home in the West Nile district surrounded by a heavy bodyguard.

A few words about the paper is in order. This paper treats events as they occurred in chronological order. It is believed that this is the best method for developing the major themes of this paper which are: ethnic conflict, lack of an institution of comparable strength to the army, political instability due in large measure to British colonial policies and to their pull-out, and last the inherent weaknesses within the army itself.

CHAPTER I

UGANDA: PHYSICAL HISTORY

Since the overthrow of traditional authority in 1966, Uganda's political system has been based on and maintained by military and police forces.

"Uganda is a political creature of nineteenth century British imperialism and colonialism."¹ In the latter part of the nineteenth century the Buganda kingdom was being torn apart by civil war between Muslims and Christians; however political authority survived because of the recruitment of Nubian mercenaries left unemployed by the collapse of the Egyptian empire in what today is the southern Sudan. (It is often said that history repeats itself, as the Muslims and Christians in Uganda today appear to be in conflict with each other. Also there is a large contingent of Nubian mercenary soldiers in the army under Amin's command.) A protectorate over the Buganda kingdom was formally and peacefully established in 1894 and was extended over most of the country two years later. Before effective British influence began in the 1890's, 'Uganda' meant Buganda kingdom, 'Uganda' being the word for Buganda in Kiswahili.²

"Most Westerners and many Africans continue to interpret political events, particularly conflicts between different groups in an African state, in terms of 'tribalism' and 'tribal' hatred."³ It is less misleading to speak of the area and the relationship of these to the traditional and modern political structures.

Uganda has a total land area of approximately 93,981 square miles of which 16,364 square miles are lakes, rivers, streams, and swamp. For the most part, soil and climatic conditions are excellent. Throughout the country only 22 percent of the land receives under 30 inches of rainfall per year, the minimum required for agricultural productivity, while 72 percent of the country receives from 30 to 50 inches a year. Whereas the other 6 percent gets more than 50 percent in an average year.

Climatic variations divide the country. The southern part of Uganda has two rainy seasons, one peaking in spring and the other in fall. Two relatively short dry spells occur in early summer and early winter. In the north, the two peaks of rainfall merge into one rainy season from spring to fall; there is therefore a very long dry season from November to March. It is because of this long dry season that the north is limited to annual while the south produces perennial and annual crops.

The difference between the abundance of agriculture on the Victoria Lake "shore areas and the low productivity of the north is related to soils as well as to rainfall patterns."⁴ Ironstone is found in all types of soil in the country; this loosely packed gravel lies from one inch to a yard under the soil and because of its adhesive quality helps to prevent soil erosion. In general the land of the north appears to have less ironstone in its soil than does most of the south. Also, since the land is mostly a plateau, erosion from runoff is at a min-

imum but again there would appear to be more erosion in the north because of the movement of the rivers to the north which run off the plateau.

Agriculture "is the source of livelihood for approximately 90 percent of the population. . ." ⁵ Almost everyone grows their own food and food for sale. About "55 percent of the gross domestic product" is contributed by commercial agriculture. Agriculture contributed still more to the gross national product because industry is concerned with the processing of agricultural produce. Another important factor is that agricultural products account for approximately 90 percent of foreign exchange.

The most important cash crops are coffee and cotton of which coffee in "the mid-1960's" contributed about 50 percent of all the foreign exchange and cotton about 25 percent. Uganda's dependence on only two crops for its major source of foreign exchange represents a weakness of which the former ruler of Uganda, Mr. Obote, tried to correct by increasing the role of sugar, tea, and tobacco as cash crops.

Uganda is one of the largest coffee exporting nations in the world. There are two types of coffee grown in Uganda: robusta, of low quality and used for instant coffee, and arabica, of high quality. The latter gets a good price on the international market. But as late as the mid-1960's agricultural production was mainly of robusta coffee, approximately 715,000 acres. It is mostly cultivated in plots of one acre; "standards of cultivation are generally low." ⁶ Consequently, the country

produces large amounts of low-quality robusta coffee. Since there is a constant surplus of this coffee on the international market, the quantity that the country can export is limited by world agreements.

As the price of coffee began to fall in the mid-1960's, Mr. Obote paid producers a price for their coffee that was higher than the world price, thereby stabilizing the producers income and keeping them content for the moment. Although prices continued to fall in the 1960's the producers were still subsidized above world prices so that the government provided them with little incentive to switch to other crops. The world market price for the arabica coffee is higher but as of 1966 only 15,000 acres of it were planted.

"Since cotton is the most widely cultivated cash crop, it represents an ideal crop with which to spearhead the effort to raise cash incomes."⁷ The government of Obote has been trying to increase cotton production because of its high price on the international market. There are over a million acres of land producing cotton. Over 60 percent "of all farm holders in the country" grow cotton. Most of the cotton along with a food crop is grown in the south; little more than 25 percent was planted in the north as of the late 1960's.

The quality of cotton is generally high. The cotton producing areas are divided into zones in which each farmer is free, improved seeds. This helps preserve the high quality pure strains and by the rotations of strains helps prevent disease.

However since output per acre is low, the government of Obote had sought to increase productivity by the use of pest controls, fertilizers, and improved cultivation techniques. "Particular importance has been attached to spraying with DDT which can raise seed cotton yields by 250 to 480 pounds per acre and the use of fertilizers which can raise the yields by over 200 pounds per acre."⁸

Farmers sell the cotton at a fixed price given to them by the government in "advance of the buying season." Until 1966 these prices were above the world market prices but by the end of the 1966 season the Cotton Price Assistance Fund of the government reduced prices until they were more in line with the international market. By 1968 the cotton growers were faced with a considerable lower income.

As shall be seen later, the drop in the prices of coffee and cotton led eventually to Mr. Obote's downfall. The drop in prices was one among many causes for his fall from power.

Mineral exploration has been going on in Uganda since 1919, but not until the past ten years has it been done on a large scale effort. The production of copper is the chief mineral mined; all copper is obtained from one mine at Kilembe. Although copper was discovered in 1906, it was not until the late 1950's that "mining operations were fully developed. . .when the railway extension to Kasese, near the mine, was completed."⁹

The country is also a source of beryllium ore, which is useful as an alloy with copper and other metals and more important is useful as a "provider of nuclear energy."¹⁰ Because of its large deposits, Uganda could become an important

exporter of beryllium.

Industrial minerals and non-metallic minerals are available also. Sand, used for building, and concrete are near the shores of larger lakes. However they have to be transported many miles to construction sites. Stones, such as granite and quartzite, suitable for crushing are present throughout most of the country.

Much money has been spent searching for oil, "so vital to an inland country."¹¹ However neither oil nor any workable coal mines have been tapped. Surface indications of oil and gas exist at the "western rift valley," pointing to the possibility of a quantity for economic profit. As of this moment nothing has been done to exploit this.

The chief towns in Uganda are near Lake Victoria which is "the second largest lake in the world."¹² Kampala which achieved city status in 1962 is not only the capital and the largest town, but it is also the most important educational, medical, missionary, and commercial center of the country. "Kampala is a vernacular name meaning the Hill of the Impala (a type of antelope)."¹³ The gradual improvement in communications and the introduction of coffee as a cash crop insured the early commercial development of the city. Kampala is also an artistic and cultural center with Makerere College on its periphery. The major roads lead into Kampala.

Unlike Kampala which was an important governmental center when the British came in the latter part of the nineteenth century, the towns of Entebbe and Jinja are twentieth century

creations. Entebbe was the British administrative center until 1958 when it was transferred to Kampala. Uganda's international airport is at Entebbe. There is virtually no industry; in the surrounding districts coffee and cotton are the chief crops.

Jinja was the site of the first railroad line built in Uganda. The Owen Falls hydroelectric power station, started in 1957, has much to do with the development of Jinja. It is a center with many industries i.e. a tobacco factory, East Africa's first steel rolling mill, and the Kilembe copper smelter.

The population of Uganda is estimated to be approximately 9 million. Of this about one percent is composed of Indian, Pakistani, European, and Arab settlers. The remainder of the population is African. A large number of the non-Africans are Ugandan citizens who were either born there or "acquired citizenship." "Most Europeans and an estimated 30,000 of the Indo-Pakistanis, however, carry passports until a law was passed in 1968 restricting their entry.

Most Ugandans live in the southern section of the country. Rainfall and soil fertility have affected the distributions of the population. Over 90 percent of the population live in rural areas while the rest are urban dwellers.

With the introduction of cash crops and the development of urban areas in the south, labor migration became an important factor in Uganda. As a result of social and political upheaval in Sudan, Congo, Rwanda, and Burundi, many have immigrated as laborers to Uganda with the prospects of wage

labor very high. Their presence has caused security problems along with the difficult task of introducing agriculture to a pastoral people. "The grouping together of persons who share no kinship ties creates tensions among those who have been accustomed to life in a cohesive group."¹⁵

The majority of the population in the south live near the Lake Victoria area, the western slopes of Mount Elgon, Kigezi District in the southwest, and the lower slopes of the Ruwenzori Mountains on the Congo border; the only region of high density in the north is the West Nile area.

Towns are a relatively new development in Uganda; the largest urban centers are Kampala and Jinja. Governmental activities and the enterprises of non-Africans in commerce and industry are responsible for the existence of urban centers. "The majority of non-Africans, 72 percent, live in urban areas, whereas only about 3.8 percent of the Africans do. Urban-dwelling Africans, however, total three times the non-African urban population."¹⁶

CHAPTER II

ETHNIC GROUPS

As Berge said, "Ethnic pluralism is in Africa to stay."¹⁷ The following is a case in point.

The Bantu people account for two-thirds of the population of Uganda, including the largest tribe, the Ganda which account for more than 15 percent of the population. They live near the northwest of Lake Victoria from which they grow cash crops such as cotton and coffee, as well as their subsistence food crops such as bananas.

Since most of the labor for the subsistence food crops was done by women, this gave men time to raise large armies and to participate in political life. This no doubt contributed largely to the "centralized political organization" in Buganda.

To the east of the Ganda are the Soga who number more than a half of million and who speak Luganda as well as Lusoga. The next largest tribe of the Eastern Lacustrine Bantu is the Gisu who number "about 330,000."

The Western Lacustrine Bantu include the Nkole, the third largest tribe, more than "500,000; the Toro, 208,000; the Nyoro, 188,000; the Kiga, 460,000; the Konjo, 107,000; and the Amba, 35,000."¹⁸

Agriculture is the primary means of livelihood among the Bantu-speaking people.

The Western Nilotic speaking people include the Lango, about 400,000; the Acholi, about 300,000; the Alur, about 130,000;

the Padhola, about 110,000; the Kuman, about 70,000; the Jonam, about 30,000; the Kakwa, a small tribe in the north of Uganda and the southern part of the Sudan; and the Paluo who are included in the Nyoro estimate. Together these people account for approximately 15 percent of the African Ugandan population. The tribes together are called the Luo.

Although agriculture plays an important role in their economy, these people are primarily stock raisers. Cattle are an important element in their social system for "relations between individuals are often based on the exchange of livestock."¹⁹ They live in small separated homesteads of "patrilineally related kin." As a result of the pattern of shifting cultivation, the place of a homestead is changed every three or four years.

The Eastern Nilotic speaking people include the Karamojong, Dodoph, and the Jie, all number a little better than 100,000; the Teso, about 550,000; and some small tribes. These people account for approximately 12 percent of the population. The Karamojong Cluster (Karamojong, Dodoth, Jie, and the Turkana of western Kenya) are stock-raisers. Cattle are valued for social and economic purposes i.e. they play a part in marriages, kinship relations, religious ritual, and the settlement of legal disputes. Since they are necessary for social esteem, people are strongly motivated to having large herds. Cattle are rarely killed for meat--only on special occasions or famine. Intertribal cattle raiding is an essential aspect of their cultural heritage; the government has deployed "security forces" to control the raids. Young men and boys keep

the herds in the pasture land while most of the men, women, and children remain in "stockaded homesteads in permanently settled areas" near the center of the tribal territory. This is in contrast to the Teso who took to cash crop farming (cotton) in 1912.

In Uganda the Central Sudanic speaking people are found in Lugbara and Madi of the West Nile District. There are approximately 250,000 Lugbara, and 85,000 Madi; they account for about 6 percent of the population. "The Lugbara are stockraising agriculturalists, the Madi predominately agriculturalists."²⁰

Intertribal relations vary. For example, Ganda and Soga are culturally and linguistically similar and therefore get along with each other. But tribes of the north are isolated; because they have little contact with outsiders, they tend to be suspicious and distrustful of strangers.

Traditionally pastoralists "do not get along" with agriculturalists and tribes whose language is unintelligible to the other tend to be bitter to each other.

The Asians (Indian and Pakistani) numbered "about 90,000" until President/General Idi Amin Dada forced them to leave Uganda. They as most non-Africans reside in the urban areas. During British rule in Uganda the Europeans were in the highest social positions, the Asians in the middle, and the Africans at the bottom. Because of their economic position the Asians and the Europeans stood out from the majority of the Africans.

The Asians do not form a cohesive community; language, religion, and place of origin are a strong incentive for members to stay in their own group. They marry within their own group and have clothing unique to each group. The majority are Hindus but the Sikhs and Ismaili Muslims are influential groups also. "Gujarati or Punjabi dialects are spoken as the mother tongue by most."²¹

The Goans account for 4 percent of the Asians; they are Catholics and Western in dress and outlook. They speak Konkani, Portuguese and English and "many have responsible positions in the government."

It is characteristic of the Asian groups to organize their own schools and hospitals and in general provide for their own people. The Asian traders and artisans helped to stimulate the importation of consumer goods in Uganda i.e. the print cloth for garments. They also provide much of the private capital for Uganda's expanding industries.

Anti-Asian feelings are strong in Uganda. Because many of the Asians occupy "middle man positions in the economy, such as shopkeepers," the "Africans resent what they regard as an Asian monopoly of commerce and small business."²² Africans distrust the Asians also because they are believed to be "clannish" and hard "to get along with." The reason for the African belief is that the Asians have kept to themselves and therefore have not become intergraded into the African community.

Even with the threat that many Asians may lose their jobs to make way for the African population, many have

not left the country as they regard it as their own country. More than 50 percent of them were born there. In the 1950's three-fourths of the Asians were recognized as British subjects, the rest as British protected persons.

On the eve of independence "about 30,000 Asians applied for Ugandan citizenship" but as late as 1968 more than half of the applications were still pending action. It is clear that the status of the non-citizen Asians as of the late 1960's was very dubious to say the least. They were allowed to stay only if they filed "residents permits" and if they were not kept in proper order, then expulsion from the country would be the outcome. About 200 Asians holding "Indian and British passports" were forced to leave Uganda in March, 1968. (The plight of the Asians in the regime of Idi Amin to be dealt with later.)

CHAPTER III
SOCIETY: ITS CONSTITUENT PARTS

There are about 40 African tribes grouped by language into four categories i.e. the Bantu, Eastern Nilotic, Western Nilotic, and the Central Sudanes. The more numerous Bantu-speaking people are found in the southern part of Uganda. The Nilotic-speaking people live north of Lake Kyoga and the Central Sudanic-speaking people live in the West Nile District.

Most Europeans hold technical and governmental positions in the urban areas as well as Indian and Pakistanis who are involved in business and commerce. "Since independence many Africans have taken over jobs formally held by Indo-Pakistanis and Europeans, particularly those held by noncitizens."²³

The Africans of Uganda live in "scattered homesteads." Only some of the Nilotic people of the north live close together as it was used as a defense against raiding tribes.

The dominant social cohesive elements are family and kinship. It is within this matrix that "most economic and social activities take place." The clan is very important because it has a choice in the "marriage partner" in that intra-marriage within the clan is forbidden. The clan may also set the terms for the inheritance of land and other property as well as enforce "local customs and laws."

Traditionally, the tribes were ruled by chiefs, "each

under the authority of the head of a particular founding clan made up of localized descent groups called lineages."²⁴ The national unitary state of the former President, Mr. Obote and the present ruler Idi Amin have shaken the traditional system through accommodation and adaptation to the central government has remained.

Members of a tribe who speak the same language, (broad dialect differences exist even within the larger tribes) which is generally unitelligible to other tribes, there is no language that all Uganda's understand. Luganda is spoken over a wide area in the southern part of the country and "Swahili, the trade language of much of East Africa," is spoken in the Lango, Acholi, and the Teso districts. By 1968 a majority of "African language newspapers" were written in Luganda.

English is the official language but by the late 1960's and early 1970's there were objections to this colonial inheritance. Also English "is associated with the educated political elite, who had the opportunity to attend schools and learn the language."²⁵ And as former President Obote pointed out in 1967, it was not likely that even 50 percent of the population would have learned the official language within the next 15 years.

Since Swahili is the second language of the areas from which many of the Army recruits come, and since Army personnel have served in other parts of East Africa, where

Swahili is the official language for use in the Army, it is used in the Ugandan Army. As of 1968 it was being taught in many schools and was being considered for use as the official language. Obote thought that Swahili could be "more useful for communication between tribes" than any tribal language and at the same time could serve as a common tongue in East Africa. There was however much opposition to this, especially from the Luganda speaking people in the southern part of Uganda.

Cultural diversity in Uganda is the product of different historic backgrounds. The Bantu-speakers came to southern Uganda "about 2,000 years ago" while the Nilotic-speakers came to northern Uganda "between A.D. 1,000 to 1,500." Sometime in the 16,00's the Nilotic-speakers spread out to most parts of Uganda. It is believed that their movement south forced the Bantu speakers to consolidate themselves into "centralized kingdom-states" for protection.

The Central Sudanic speaking people have been in the West Nile District for centuries. They are culturally linked to the southern Sudan and northeast Congo (Kinshasa) people.

In Uganda there are as many different tribes as there are languages, so that a tribe can be defined by its language. Also "dress and body adornment" are useful as a means of distinguishing one tribe from the other.

There is also physical diversity among the Ugandans. For example, the tribes of the southwest are generally

short and roundheaded while the Nilatic speakers of the north are tall and longheaded. The Central Sudanic and Bantu people are stouter generally and shorter than the Nilatic people.

The Ugandan society patterns itself according to the institutions of the "rural majority and the urban minority." By the use of "modern institutions such as centralized government, education, health services, and the monetary economy, a national social structure is gradually being formed."²⁶ The highest social positions are based upon economic achievement, family position, and educational level. Although social status is recognized, social classes as we know them in the United States do not exist.

The occupation of virtually all the rural people is farming. The status, authority, and wealth of an individual is based primarily on age, experience, and membership in a "recognized family." The rural residents are generally all members of the same tribe. In contrast the urban residents are "ethnically heterogeneous" and economically and socially differentiated. Within an urban setting one can find members of several tribes, as well as Asians and Europeans working together; social mobility is generally good. Because of the sundry cultural backgrounds, members of a tribe or group are socially apart from each other, even though they may work together and/or live in the same neighborhood.

The most important rural groupings are based on common

residence and kinship. However the Sebei and the tribes of the Karamojong Cluster are grouped according to age. The leader of a clan is recognized largely on seniority and family position. Other positions of importance exist i.e. the civil service (which can be achieved through education), a knowledge of English, or other skills. It is easier for those who came from recognized families to achieve new positions because they usually go to secondary and higher grade schools for training that prepares them for the local and national administrative position.

In the rural areas daily cooperation and social intercourse often takes place. Two strong forces of solidarity are marriage and kinship. Residents come and go but all "current members cooperate." If a man helps his neighbor to plant his field, he expects the same when his turn comes. Neighbors consider each other as "social equals." For example, if a person has authority as a local official of the government, he does not necessarily get special recognition in the neighborhood.

Local disputes are resolved by the leaders of clans; the primary aim is to restore good relations in the community in which a fine is paid in the form of beer and meat at a reconciliation feast. Punishment is secondary but refusal to pay the fine may result in ostracism.

The traditional political institutions were chiefdoms. The most successful of these were Luganda, Buyora, Toro, and Ankole. Because the chiefdoms of the Nilotic-speaking

people of the north tended to subdivide, the British found the "hierarchical system" of the Bantu-speaking people of the south more useful as a means of central administration.

As the British extended control of the country to the east, north and west, the Buganda administrations "assumed that leaders of kinship groups would be responsible for their people."²⁷ Thus the chiefs became part of the governmental structure of the British while simultaneously being recognized as traditional rulers.

The chiefs maintained reciprocal economic and social ties with their people. They were given "money and goods as tribute in return for protection, for settling disputes, for assistance when needed, and for sponsoring feasts and celebrations. The ability of the chief to do the latter determined to a large extent the degree to which he would be respected by his people and the British as a ruler. "In the modern governmental system, the higher chiefs, have less contact with the people and are concerned more with paper work than with interpersonal relations."²⁸ The latter is reinforced by their constant transfer from one administrative post to another.

As stated before, less than 5 percent of the population of Uganda lives in the urban areas. Yet, the urban areas are responsible to a great extent for shaping the "national social structure" in Uganda. The political and educational institutions are found there, as well as the major routes of communication.

The existence of the urban centers is due to the efforts of Europeans and Asians to develop the political, social, and economic structure of Uganda. Many Africans living in the urban centers still have ties to the rural areas from which they came. Some have acquired an education and other "skills" that help them to become urbanized, while others are relatives of earlier Kenyan immigrants who had adapted themselves to "industrial and service positions." However, most of the Africans in the urban areas are only temporary residents.

As stated elsewhere, Europeans and Asians occupy many of the skilled positions in business, industry and the public services. Europeans have generally been a higher status group than Asians. Most of the former hold well-paying skilled positions while the latter hold a variety of semi-skilled and unskilled jobs, although of course many are entrepreneurs.

The shape of the urban structure is changing as Africans are increasingly being found "in top-level positions", and "at all social and economic levels." The place of Europeans and Asians in Ugandan society is untenable to say the least. In general Europeans in Uganda are employed only for a "specific time" and are engaged in the process of "training Africans" who will replace them. The desires of Africans to occupy the entrepreneurial and clerical positions, along with the Government's push to "localize job opportunities, has made Asians, especially

those who are noncitizens, uneasy.

Some occupations are more highly regarded i.e. university teaching, law, medicine, civil service, and diplomatic service. The occupations requiring less skill but still highly regarded are those of "clerk" and "driver" respectively.

Participation in public life can be made easier by the ability to speak English. "Education and Government are carried on through the medium of English, and a broader range of activities and associations is available to English speakers."²⁹ Most of the Africans who come to the urban centers cannot speak English, have little or no education, and lack specialized skills. They remain in towns long enough to earn money. Those who stay usually maintain their rural ties which tend to loosen with long urban stays. Since it is difficult to make good kinship obligations over long distances, often "the money earners are reluctant to respond to the monetary requests of poor relations."³⁰

The rural institutions which are brought to the urban areas by the Africans are adapted to the circumstances of new environment. Kin group membership continues to structure interpersonal relations, but often the basis for defining a "kinman is artificially contrived." If a person's kin group is not present, then he may develop ties with distant relatives or non-kinsmen.

The place of residence tends to coincide with occupation-

al categories. African laborers tend to live together on the outskirts of towns, whereas teachers, clerks, and the skilled live in other parts of the town. The two groups seldom mix either at work or in social life.

Religious identification influences interpersonal relations in the urban areas more than in the rural setting. For example, the doctrines of Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism are followed "strictly" by their adherents. Persons of one church or sect participate in "educational, recreational, and social activities."

Most of the urban dwellers are members of one or more associations which perform many of the functions of the rural neighborhood and kin groups. The most numerous associations are those based on tribal identification. For example in Kampala, there are the Alur, Lugbara, and Sudanese Associations and the Luo Union to name a few. There is no Ganda or Soga association because these are the dominant tribes of the area and therefore have no need to promote solidarity.

The tribal associations are very structured in that they have written constitutions, initiation fees, and monthly dues. During the 1950's many of the tribal associations were formed for the purpose of participating in sports. The tribal associations "do not engage in political activities."

Some tribal associations are organized in such a way that they reflect the different economic levels of their

members. For instance in the Luo Union, "top organizational level consists largely of educated English-speaking permanent urban residents "whose chief concern is "establishing schools", and "building community centers." Some of the Luo Union's members are active in public life. However, many levels of the Luo Union act as local mutual aid societies for the African laborers "who generally do not participate in the activities of the larger association and are totally unaware of its existence."³¹

The most important social unit for the majority of the people of Uganda is the family. A person's responsibility to members of his immediate family and to the larger kin group take "precedence over most other commitments and, to a large degree, his life is shaped by and fulfilled through his family."

In the urban areas the supply of labor vastly exceeds the demand for it. The competition, therefore, for high salaried jobs is very intense. The easiest way to eliminate competition in the civil service, the army, the schools and universities, the state corporations, etc. "is by making an ethnic claim to the job and by mobilizing political support on an ethnic basis."³² Ethnic conflict therefore becomes a vicious cycle.

Although their total number is less than 10 percent of the population, it is the "Muslims as well as the people from Amin's area who are getting the jobs--people from the West Nile--left vacated by the Asians."³³

CHAPTER IV
BUREAUCRATS WITH WEAPONS

A. Police

Responsibility for law and order is the task of the Uganda Police Force. The Police Force is directly responsible to the Minister of Internal Affairs whose task it is to administer the laws and emergency regulations designed to "prevent public disorder and potential political unrest."³⁴ In remote rural areas, the customary criminal law is enforced by the local leaders and chiefs.

As of 1968 the Police Force, a multitribal and non-political armed constabulary, was composed of approximately 8,000 men and officers, one of the "smallest proportion of policemen" to population in Africa. In addition to regular police duties, the Force is used as a guard of honor for visiting dignitaries, and although it was founded as a civil force, it has been "assigned military duties." For example, in World War II many policemen "were assigned to British Army units and served" on several fronts "in Burma and East Asia."³⁵

The Force has also been used on border patrols and peace-keeping patrols in the Karamoja District in an effort to prevent cattle-raiding and intertribal fights.

To discharge the sundry duties of the police force, special units given "paramilitary training" were created. As of 1966 the Force consisted of a number of branches with specific functions i.e. the Uniform Branch, performing urban

duties; Special Constabulary; Special Branch and Criminal Investigation Dept; Railway Police; Air Wing Police Tracker Force; and the Special Force Unit to name a few.

The Internal Security Unit formed after World War II became the Special Forces Unit. When former President Obote seized control of the government there were eighteen Special Force Units with fifty men in each one. Since the former President gradually depended more on the Special Force for his power, it is likely that their manpower increased.

"The Special Force is a paramilitary organization trained in commando tactics by Israeli instructors."³⁶

The Air Wing Police Tracker Force which succeeded the Karamoja Constabulary is also "organized along military lines." They as well as the Special Forces Units, and the Army co-operate in efforts to prevent cattle-raiding. Although the raids have become less frequent, still hundreds of cattle are stolen each year and "many" persons are "slain."

In addition, the Special Police Forces have been called upon to protect the borders, especially with the Sudan. "Major problems of security" have resulted from the incursion of more than 60,000 Sudanese refugees. Sudanese security forces have been in search of political and military refugees in Uganda. The Ugandan Government wants to prevent the refugees from using Uganda as a base to attack the Sudan. There is also concern that the refugees are trying to get the support of the Bugandan dissidents in a joint

effort against Uganda and the Sudan. To prevent this, units of the Special Forces and the Army continued in 1969 to patrol and maintain positions near the border and near the refugee camps in the interior. As of 1970 there were about "5,000 Armed Forces" and about "5,500 police and Security Forces" in Uganda.

B. Army

In 1961 the strength of the Army of Uganda amounted to about 1,000 men and officers, the former 4th Battalion of the British King's African Rifles. At that time the training and equipment were all British. The first African to become an officer "entered Sandhurst, the British military academy in 1960."³⁷

By 1964 there were "about 2,000" men in the Army; in that year the Armed Forces Act provided for more expansion and the establishment of an Air Force. As of 1969 the Army totalled 5 battalions or about 7,000 men with an Air Force of about 260 men. There was no navy.

Uganda has since the early 1960's accepted military aid from both the West and the East. British officers commanded the Army until 1964 at which time the Africans they had been training to command took control of the Army. Aircraft and training for pilots were received from Israel, Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet Union.

The primary aim of the Armed Forces is the defense of Uganda's territory from outside aggression. The secondary aim

is to aid the police in order to maintain public order and internal security. As already stated, the most pressing problems are cattle-raiding and the 60,000 Sudanese refugees.

The Constitution of 1967 gave former President Obote the power to determine the operational uses of the Armed Forces. He also had the power to appoint, dismiss, and promote as well as being designated the Commander in Chief. In theory Parliament had the legal right to regulate the latter powers.

To maintain command of the Army, Obote depended heavily on an officer corps which was predominantly composed of his fellow Nilotic-speaking northerners. For example in the Crisis of May 1966 between the Kabaka of Buganda and the national government, it was the Army which moved decisively against the "armed guard" of Mutesa II. The loyalty of the Armed Forces to the central government led by Obote provided him with a necessary means of power; in the longrun, however, this dependence on the Army foreshadowed Obote's fall from power.

Until 1897 the backbone of Uganda's Army was composed of Sudanese regulars and British officers; during that year there was a mutiny because of "dissatisfaction with pay and constant duty on distant patrols." As a result the Sudanese were slowly disarmed and the ethnic base of the Army was broadened to include many Ugandan tribes and the Swahili. In 1900 they were formed into the King's African Rifles. The latter consisted of the 4th and the 5th Battalions of

which the 5th was disbanded in 1913.

By 1930 "all of the major tribes were represented"³⁸ in the 4th Battalion, although the Nilotic-speaking people of the north, especially the Acholi who in 1962 formed the nucleus of the independent Uganda Rifles, predominated. During World War II the 4th took part in the defeat of the Italians in Somaliland and Ethiopia, and in the reconquest of Burma from the Japanese. World War II was the "first time that these African troops had fought outside the continent of Africa."³⁹

In 1926 the 4th Battalion became the 1st Battalion Uganda Rifles. In 1964 members of the Uganda Rifles took the Minister of the Interior as a hostage in a fight to get more pay and increased Africanization of the officer corps. Three days later on January 25, Obote asked for and received British troops who disarmed the Ugandan troops.

Africanization of the officer corps began immediately. Shaban Opolot and Idi Amin were appointed to command the two Battalions of the Uganda Rifles. ["Idi Amin first joined the 4th Uganda British KAR (King's African Rifles) as a private in 1946." In 1961, he advanced by grade to colonel. He served in Burma during World War II and in Kenya during the Mau Mau emergency.]⁴⁰ On July 1, 1964 the Army command was turned over to Opolot who was promoted to brigadier by Obote three months later. Amin served as the Army Chief of Staff. Also the Uganda Air Force was formed under the con-

trol of the Army.

As Commander in Chief, the President, according to the Armed Forces Act of 1964, was to be advised by the Defense Council on things such as command, administration, and discipline. The Council was composed of the Minister of Defense, The Chief of the Defense Staff, the Army Chief of Staff, the Air Force Chief of Staff, and others that "the President may appoint."

By the end of February, 1966 Brigadier Opolot was relieved of his command of the Armed Forces because former President Obote realized that he could not be counted on to support the government. He was replaced by Colonel Idi Amin the then Chief of the Defense Staff who was promoted to Brigadier of the Uganda Army and Air Force as well as retaining his position as Chief of the Defense Staff. Former Brigadier Opolot was discharged from the Army and put in detention. "In April 1968 Brigadier Idi Amin was promoted to major general, and two colonels were given the rank of brigadier."⁴¹

In Uganda, as in many developing nations, the Army has become a symbol of independence. "Independence led immediately, whether one desired it or not, to the creation of an army."⁴² Furthermore "the Army by virtue of its hierarchical setup and its strength based on discipline, it is believed, provides to some extent the requisite atmosphere for creating national unification."⁴³ The Army performs a useful role

in the maintenance of internal security and the protection of its borders, not so much against invasion by any of its neighbors as against refugees looking for a base from which to launch raids into their own countries.

The Uganda Armed Forces were "expected to be non-political." Army personnel "are not permitted to take part in party politics,"⁴⁴ nor are they permitted to run for elected public office. Recruitment is on a volunteer basis; the pay and training "is sufficient" to attract new recruits. "Recruitment has generally been more successful in the north, especially among the Nubian descendants of former British troops, among the Acholi tribesmen, who traditionally seek their fortune away from home as young men, and among those of President Obote's tribe, the Lango."⁴⁵ The high ranks have mostly been filled by the northerners.

Tensions have at times existed between the civilian population and the military. The use of the military in the crisis of 1966 "has residual consequences." For example the Buganda people were against this so emergency regulations were necessary and also the chiefs of other tribes became fearful of the power of former President Obote. The Army has, therefore, tried to "intergrate their members into national life" in order to gain a base from which to make the people of Uganda better understand the role of the military. And at public reviews government officials explain the role of the military to the public.

Military expenditures have risen sharply since 1963 when it was "1.6 percent of the total expenditure" to 1970 when it was about 10 percent. These figures do not, however, represent the amount of foreign aid Uganda has received in the form of arms, equipment, and training assistance, the exact figure of which is not known. Uganda has accepted jet fighter aircraft from the Soviet Union, and a number of Air Force pilots have been sent to the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia for training. Isreal has supplied military expertise and assistance i.e. the first pilots for the Uganda Air Force were trained in Isreal. But since the Arab-Isreali War in 1967, Uganda has regularly voted for the Arabs.

CHAPTER V
SEARCH FOR UNITY

A. Buganda vs. Obote

In the late 1950's just a few years before Uganda became independent there was talk of creating a federation of the East African countries. (This was an effort by the British to find a stable structure before they pulled out.) The Kabaka of Buganda was vehemently opposed to this because it would virtually rob him of all his political power.

In the meantime the British called for elections to be held to decide who would rule Uganda while the British were preparing to leave.

The Kabaka's reaction was a boycott of the elections and an assertion of the right of Buganda to secede from Uganda. The British response to Buganda's right to secede was a flat 'no' and as to the Kabaka's boycott of the elections the British answer was to accept Mr. Benedict Kiwanuka, the President of the Democratic Party, as the winner with only 3 percent of the votes cast in Buganda.

Mr. Kiwanuka then became the chief minister when Britain gave Uganda internal self-government in May, 1961.

This was considered an affront to the Kabaka because he had ordered a boycott of the elections in Buganda. Mr. Kiwanuka's victory, however, made inter-party politics in Buganda inevitable. For soon the Kabaka (the King of Buganda) realized that if he were to maintain power he would have to get in tune with the new political climate in Uganda.

Therefore, the Kabaka Yekka (King Alone) Party was formed. In April, 1962 another election was held: the DP (Democratic Party) won 24 seats, UPC (Uganda People's Congress) led by Obote won 37 seats, and the Buganda Lukiiko won 21 seats. The 21 Buganda Lukiiko representatives (members of the KY Party) were personally hand picked by the Kabaka to represent Buganda in the National Assembly. Since the Kabaka picked the Lukiiko candidates, it was clear that for a political party to have a majority in the Assembly it would need the personal approval of the Kabaka.

It was with the KY, a traditional and ethnic group party, that Obote, the leader of the UPC, a nationalist party, formed an uneasy alliance which led to a coalition central government under which Uganda became independent on October 9, 1962.

Association of a political party with traditional authority in an area meant immediate mass support for the party, but at the expense of national unity. "Most traditional leaders were regional-minded and as such endangered party unity on a national level."⁴⁶ The most important fact was that alliances with traditional leaders were within themselves a danger to unity. For example, the alliance between the KY and the UPC automatically meant the loss of Bunyoro support to the UPC because of the "Lost Countries" issue that Bunyoro had with Buganda.

The following four years (1962-1966) saw the break-up

of the Alliance for a number of reasons i.e. DP speakers constantly referred to the fact that the Lukiiko representatives were hand picked by the Kabaka and therefore alleged that control of the central government was in the hands of Buganda.

Nevertheless, in October, 1963, Sir Edward Mutesa II, the Kabaka of Uganda, was elected the President of Uganda.

It soon became apparent though that the KY was having internal problems. The KY was an alliance between the "traditionalists" and the "progressives". The latter were in general educated men who formed the alliance to defeat the Catholic oriented DP. What the "progressives" wanted was a representative form of government in Buganda and land reform. The Kabaka, of course, wanted the traditional authority to remain. The diametric points of view lead to the splitting up of the KY, as the "progressives" defected to the UPC.

On August 24, 1964, Mr. Obote ended the alliance with the Kabaka; the next day on August 25, the National Assembly approved a government motion setting November 4, 1964, as the date for a referendum to settle the issue of the "Lost Counties." This infuriated the Kabaka and his followers in Buganda, as the "Lost Counties" which were ceded to Buganda by the British in the 1890's were considered an integral part of Buganda. Therefore, on August 31, the KY members walked out of the National Assembly when the bill was passed setting November 4, 1964, as the date to settle the issue of the "Lost Counties!" The issue was decided in November

as the "Lost Counties" voted to return to Bunyoro.

Also to confuse matters at this time, charges were brought against the former Prime Minister Obote and Army Chief of Staff Colonel Idi Amin; it was alleged that they had made illicit deals in ivory, gold, and coffee amounting to \$359,000, with the Congolese rebels. This became a dramatic turning point in Uganda's political history. For fearing his own position, Mr. Obote took control of the government in February, 1966.

When Obote overthrew the Kabaka in the name of national unity and stability, he hoped that this would create support for him outside of Buganda. But the loyalties of the masses, "Especially in the kingdoms of Bunyoro, Ankole, Toro, and Busogo, were not with national causes but with their respective kings."⁴⁷ The suspension of the Constitution was itself viewed as a threat to the kingdoms, as it manifested the power of Obote in overthrowing the Kabaka, with apparent ease.

Mr. Obote encountered further problems as he could not depend on his party. The reason for this is that on February 22, 1966, he ordered the arrest of Ibingira, Secretary General of the UPC and four other members. There was too much confusion in the UPC for anyone to depend on it for political power. Consequently, the attack on the Kabaka's palace led to a political system of government that was unitary and based on the use of military and police force.

The political history of Uganda, the immovable ethnic group loyalties and the absence of anything that could be considered as a national consensus, before and after independence made it necessary for a nationalist like Obote to use force.

To most Ugandan's the "desires, goals, and dreams are for modernization, while their political loyalties are still committed to the traditional values and institutions of government."⁴⁸ Since the peasantry make up about 95 percent of the population, Obote probably saw force as a necessary means of achieving his goal of a united Uganda.

Yet, there was a growing sense of fear and frustration for the material needs of the masses were not met nor did the peasantry abandon their traditional loyalties to their deposed leaders. The government of Mr. Obote, therefore, had to continuously use force to keep control in the hope of creating a consensus. This lack of confidence in the government became evident in December, 1969, when an attempt was made on Obote's life.

While in power, Obote tried to build cohesion with consensus; he achieved cohesion but not consensus. Because education meant so much to Ugandan's, he tried to use it to "promote national consciousness." This new social and political consciousness did not bring about consensus: Obote soon realized that although all Ugandan's were for education, it was only a means to further their own or the groups ends,

and not "national interests." The reason for this is that Ugandan's view education as a preparation for employment, either with the government, local authorities, the commercial sector, or the missionaries. This was typical of colonial education and it changed little after Obote took over. People were "more interested in the availability of education than in its content."⁴⁹ To aggravate the situation, the availability of education has not increased job opportunities so that the most educated man in Uganda is generally uprooted by his education from the traditional way of living. The latter is a source of political instability.

Another problem is that Obote increased the salaries of the army and the police to keep them loyal to him because of their "lack of education and ideological and political commitments."⁵⁰ But to meet the new governmental expenditures the government imposed higher taxes. Meanwhile, the main source of income for the masses, coffee and cotton were in abundance on the international market so that the farmer was getting lower prices for his efforts.

B. Ideology and Force

Although, Obote was powerful enough to eradicate "traditional authority in Uganda," he was destined to hold that power for as long as the police and the army were prepared to enforce his authority.

The Armed Forces entered Uganda's political life with

the mutiny in 1964. Very few soldiers were reprimanded; they were "bought off" by pay raises and better conditions as well as by the Africanization program in the officer corps which was accelerated. The latter saw the rapid promotion of NCO's like Amin.

From now on the soldiers realized that they had the power to make their demands felt by the leaders of Uganda; furthermore, "the failure to punish many of the rank and file leaders of the mutiny along with the NCO promotions weakened the rigid hierarchical discipline of the colonial armed forces."⁵¹ Personal, factional, and tribal considerations became a primary concern in the effort to maintain the military chains of command.

The events of 1966 put a strain on army discipline and cohesiveness even further as the second in command, Colonel Amin, led the armed forces against Buganda and the dissident Ministers and the imposition of the army's will over the hated "southerners" by intimidation created a dangerous precedent.

Until the assassination attempt in 1969 Obote attempted to buy off army support. Thereafter, he attempted to get full support of the army by the Langi and Acholi promotions and by increasing the forces of the GSU. The confrontation between him and Amin was inevitable.

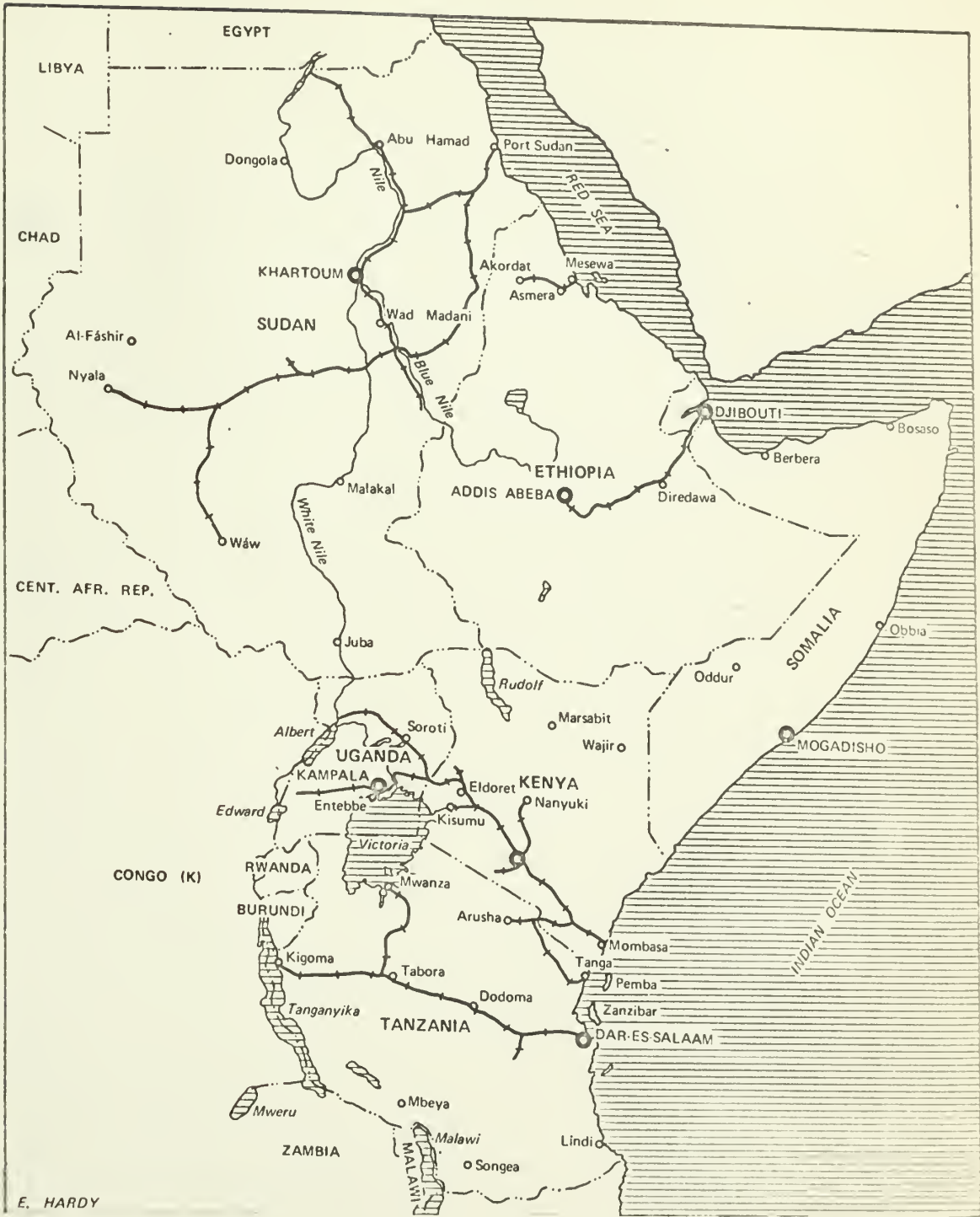
While Obote "was proposing to put all means of production in the hands of the people ('Move to the Left' declared

in late 1969), the people found themselves not only with little direct economic benefits in terms of wages and salaries but threatened with legal actions if they wanted to strike as a means of pushing for better wages."⁵²

It was an effort to improve his position as ruler, to find a basis for national unity, and to devise an ideology for the masses: the forces of feudalism, tribalism, and capitalism (the enemy) were undermining the class solidarity of the 'Common Man.' Behind his solution was an increasing reliance on force and violence.

The tactic behind the "Move to the Left" was to identify class formation as the enemy of Uganda. It seems that it was Obote's purpose to eliminate those he could not trust. After the assassination attempt he trusted no one—Major-General Amin included. As stated before, he accelerated during 1970, the growth of the Special Forces and Akena Adoko's secret police (GSU) and within the army "Langi and Acholi officers were given rapid promotion and an attempt was made to isolate and neutralize Amin. In theory then, Obote was proposing a socialist revolution to provide the masses with an ideology in order to lead them to national unity, but in fact he wanted to strengthen his own position by a realignment of forces composed of the army, Langi and the Acholi, and a younger generation of UPC leaders loyal to him.

Amin, senior public servants, politicians, and party



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officers saw in Obote's 'Move to the Left' a strategy "to exclude them from access to power, wealth, and status."⁵⁴ They also feared their personal safety as well as the domination of Obote's Langi tribe and "to a lesser extent the Acholi over the other tribes."

Obote's 'Move to the Left' was also viewed with suspicion by Kenya as Mr. Kenyatta saw in it a move to deprive Kenya of its economic strength in the East African 'Common Market'; the members of the 'Common Market' are Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. Since Mr. Nyerere of Tanzania was leaning towards Communist China in ideology, and now Obote was proclaiming a leftist orientation, Mr. Kenyatta feared that Tanzania and Uganda would undermine Kenya's economic and political stability. (Kenya is democratic and capitalistic in orientation.)

Another thing which upset Mr. Kenyatta was Obote's "localization" program which resulted in "30,000 Kenyans returning to their homeland."⁵⁵ It is because of this that there was speculation that Kenya might close "the harbour of Mombasa, Uganda's vital outlet to the sea." (Look at map)

Obote while "on his way to Kampala from the Commonwealth conferences in Singapore at which he played a leading role in the campaign to block a resumption of British arms sales to South Africa"⁵⁶ was ousted from power.

In retrospect there was very little in Obote's Charter which was relevant to the agriculture sector of the economy; it was mainly addressed to the urban sector. It was only

those who were at the bottom that "were being asked to make sacrifices i.e. the rank and file bureaucrats."⁵⁷

Some further points are in order to demonstrate the conditions that existed prior to Obote's ouster.

With his popularity decreasing, Obote became less tolerant of criticisms and political acts by his opponents towards the government. The outcome was the Preventive Detention Act and the state of emergency in Buganda; under these conditions the person detained had to be informed of the charges against him but the government did not have to bring him to trial or to make public the charges on which he was detained: hence the "Five Ministers" detained from 1966 until Amin took control of the government in 1971.

In a little more than two years after Obote's coup in 1966, there were more than 50 important political people incarcerated. Sir William Wilberforce Nadiopo, former king of Busoga, former vice president of Uganda and a man with an apparently large following in Busoga, was one of those detained. When Amin seized control of the government, he freed many of the political prisoners. Out of prison, Sir Wilberforce Nadiopo, on March 7, 1971, said that over "4,000 people" had been incarcerated during Obote's nine years in power compared to only "35 people" during the 70 years of British rule.

The assassination attempt on Obote's life on December 19, 1969 thrust Uganda into "ruthless authoritarian rule." There-

after the emergency regulations that had existed in Uganda since 1966 were extended to the whole country. There followed a ban on all opposition organizations and membership societies i.e. the Democratic Party and the Uganda Farmers Voice. On December 20, 1969, Mr. Benedict Kiwanuka, president of the Democratic Party, the only opposition party in Parliament, was arrested. The assassination attempt then forced "one party politics in Uganda."⁵⁸

By early 1970, it was clear that Obote's problems were not just with the masses who viewed his government as an "illegitimate dictatorship," but with the intellectuals who had been sympathetic to his bid for national unity and not a one party state.

Then to appease the neighboring heads of state in Tanzania and Kenya, and opposition at home, Obote in early 1970 said that general elections would be held in April, 1971. But in August, 1970, Obote's party delegate conference "passed a resolution which made the ruling party's leader automatically the country's president."⁵⁹ Since his party was the dominant one and most of the opposition was in jail, this virtually meant his re-election. To make matters even worse he proposed that the president "nominate his own interim successor."

It was becoming "common gossip in Uganda that Akemi Adoka, Obote's cousin and head of the 'secret police' or the general service department, was to be Obote's first choice

for the high court."⁶⁰ The successor had to be a high court judge. Mr. Akena was the most "feared man in Uganda as head of the 'secret police'." Next to Obote he was the most powerful man in the country. It is also believed that he helped formulate the Common Man's Charter ('Move to the Left') which officially put Uganda on the road to socialism.

By the end of 1970, it became evident that Obote did not intend to leave office, so that "forcible overthrow carried out by the only powerful, highly organized and disciplined group"⁶¹ within Uganda--the military was necessary.

Under Obote's dictatorial rule a national consciousness of fear and hatred developed. The masses for the moment saw beyond ethnic group politics. All Ugandans seemed to wish for one thing: the ouster of Obote which came about by his own hand picked military leaders on January 25, 1971. Approximately 70 persons were killed in the fighting. A Kampala radio broadcast on January 25, announced that the coup had taken place and accused Obote of having developed his home region in northern Uganda at the expense of other parts of the country; he was also accused of having pursued an economic policy for "the rich, big men."⁶²

"As Major General Idi Amin Dada, the head of Uganda's military government, put it, 'A great heavy weight had been lifted off the shoulders of the general public and so they went almost wild with joy'."⁶³

There was an immediate desire by farmers, civil servants, workers, and intellectuals to cooperate with the mil-

itary regime of Amin. There was a "promise" of a free general election.

Obote introduced a unitary form of government into Uganda after his coup in February, 1966. However, he was not considered a symbol of unity.

President/General Amin is the first national image of Uganda and a person other than a king or traditional ruler that people from all parts of Uganda regard as a legitimate ruler. In 1971, Amin became Uganda's symbol of national unity.

Will the politics of Amin's regime be dictated by the traditional vs. the national, or is it possible to have mass support for the government? The next half of the paper will attempt to bring this into focus.

CHAPTER VI
ARMY ASSERTS ITS INTERESTS

In 1964, the army mutinies in Uganda stopped short at strikes over pay. However, they bring into focus not only the factors which lead to Amin's military take over, but they also give clues as to the reasons behind the frequency of African army strikes against governments.

The immediate reasons for the coup vary according to the source. One version felt that the army acted to forestall President Milton Obote's intention to use a loyal or tribal section of the army against Major-General Idi Amin and his supporters, and that General Amin's coup was a counter to troop movements ordered by Brigadier Suleiman acting for Obote. (Obote allegedly ordered Langi and Acholi soldiers to kill fellow soldiers who were not loyal to him.)

Another version has it that the plotting for take-over was done by Amin; this was against the background of bitter rivalry between the army command and the special forces and intelligence apparatus headed by Akena Adoka; that the police uncovered the plot; and that orders were given for the rounding up of the plotters but that these were intercepted by Amin's men who were able thus to strike first. And still yet another version provided by former President Obote is that the day before he left for the Commonwealth Conference in Singapore, he ordered General Amin to account for the disappearance of military equipment and for corruption involving sums in the neighborhood of 21 million pounds.⁶⁴

(The Auditor-General's report which was presented to the Government in March 1970, and which, though not officially released, was leaked to a London newspaper in the autumn, uncovered glaring financial ineptitudes in all departments of State, but particularly in the Department of Defense where three bank accounts were heavily overdrawn.)⁶⁵

Which ever of the versions or parts thereof is correct they all lead to one inescapable conclusion: the coup was an act of self-defense by an army command--or at least a sufficiently large section which sided with General Amin in a divided command to swing a coup d'etat--that felt itself perilously insecure. The coup in effect was a pre-emptive strike.

Like almost all African armies, Uganda's was a colonial inheritance, refashioned from the former British officered King's African Rifles in which Major-General Amin had himself once served alongside British troops in Burma and against the Mau Mau in Kenya. It was a force that was traditionally selected from the nilotic peoples of the North, which peoples were, significantly, also those from whom the Obote Government derived its major political support. This composition of the army and the Government's political base was deepened by the 1966 crisis in which the army was used decisively to break Baganda power.

For in that year, when Buganda's challenge to the authority of the central Government came to a head, it was

General Amin who led the attack on the Kabaka's Palace which decided the issue. In the simultaneous crisis inside Obote's party and Cabinet, it was again the army and General Amin who came to Obote's aid.

The army was thus a key instrument of presidential power at the time of the alienation of Baganda support, as well as compensation for an organizationally weak and faction-ridden Uganda People's Party. (There was a growing polarity within the Uganda People's Congress between those who supported Ibingira, the Secretary of the UPC. There was a substantial group within the UPC that was attracted to the idea of change in the top leadership, however, Obote foiled the Ibingira faction which were known as the southern or "Bantu" family; Ibingira was one of the "five ministers" who were arrested on February 22, 1966, for "plotting" against the government.)

The new unitary State fashioned by Obote--from which the kingdoms disappeared, and with them competing systems of political power and, in the case of Buganda, even two competing armed forces--meant that the President could rule without the formerly crucial support of the Baganda, but that the army was increasing its political power in Uganda.⁶⁶

Obote seemed to be aware of the danger of this over-dependence on the army. He resorted to two strategies: first, to form the special force of the General Service Unit in order to weaken the army command as the sole arbiter of phy-

sical power; and second, the formation of the 'Common Man's Charter' was an attempt to make the politics of Uganda leftist in orientation. The 'Charter' was in fact sub-titled 'First Steps for Uganda to Move to the Left', and it proposed to strengthen the public and co-operative sectors of the economy while at the same time attempting to weaken the grip of foreign capital. The perspective was that popular support would in time not only create a momentum for social change but would also bring grass-root support to the party and thus lessen dependence on the army.

The leftward turn went rather slowly. When the coup took place the nationalization program was only in mid-stream. The attempt to turn to the left had the effect of disgruntling those of the elite who preferred a Mercedes Benz to a bicycle, and of preparing them as potential allies of any force that would challenge this direction of government. As everywhere else where the same policy has been tried, the attempts to diversify the armed forces command served to provoke the army rather than weaken it.

In Uganda it was the formation of the GSU and the intelligence apparatus under Akena Adoko--which also collected intelligence about the army itself--that more than anything else incited the army to take over control of the government.

The Uganda army was a very restless one; the government's policy to placate the army after the 1964 Jinja barracks

mutiny and to expand it--not surprising in view of the three troublesome borders, with the Congo, Rwanda, and the Sudan--did little if anything to control this restlessness. The mutineers won their major demands, from increase in pay to the Africanization of the officer corps. The latter meant the immediate substitution of British officers by non-commissioned officers, mostly old army hands from the North, promoted from the ranks.

However, there was much there was much trouble in the army which in part reflected the tension between the small number of Sandhurst-trained men, mostly younger officers and educated Southerners, and the majority of Northerners promoted from the ranks. Several of the "abortive inner-army coups that have occurred since 1965, seem to have been attempted convergences"⁶⁷ between anti-Obote Southern opposition both outside and within the army. For example, in October 1965, a number of "junior officers were court-martialled on charges of secretly moving troops and arms on the capital."⁶⁸ In later years there were other plots, though they remain of rather obscure origin: there were for example strong tugs-of-war in the command that coincided with political tensions, as is the case in Major-General Amin's appointment as de facto commander of the army in February 1966 in place of Brigadier Opolot.

Also because of the policy of diversified training missions, command tension would as a result intensify. Since

the use of one foreign power for training and supplies makes the African armed forces dependent on that foreign power, so, conversely, the use of several sources of assistance is likely to import any difference and conflicts between them into the local commands. (Even the small air force was divided in two: one section using French aircraft but trained by Israel, and the other using MIGs and trained by the Soviet Union.)

During 1970, Obote's attempts to lessen dependence on the army led increasingly to strains between him and General Amin. They are known to have had differences i.e. Obote's policy of forbidding Southern Sudanese secessionist groups from carrying out military operations from bases in the Uganda side of the border. However, their differences arose more from the civil-military equilibrium Obote was trying to achieve than anything else. Three events pointed toward the imminent crisis. First, there was the attempted assassination of Obote in December 1969. Second, a little over a month after the latter incident, Brigadier Okaya, the deputy army commander, was killed; he was a strong Obote supporter so that his death weakened Obote's hold on the army immensely. Third, in October 1970, there were the incidents that culminated in Amin's temporary house arrest and then in his being shoved upstairs to become head of the armed forces-- a move which was supposed to deprive him of his operational control of combat units.

An attempt was made to implicate Amin in the murder of Brigadier Pierino Yere Okoya, Commanding Officer of Uganda's Second Infantry Brigade within weeks after the attempt on Obote's life in December, 1969.

The animosity between Amin and Obote increased further because of tribal frictions within the Army. The frictions were caused particularly by mounting discontent on the part of the Acholi (a warlike tribe who once dominated the Army) and the Baganda (who provided many of the officers) at the heavy recruitment from and hasty promotion of rank and file soldiers from Northern tribes, especially those in Amin's West Nile District. Although Obote, a Northerner, encouraged Amin in his quest for a Northern-dominated Army, the resultant military instability--accompanied by rising economic instability--did little to enhance political stability. Obote's obvious attempts to "neutralize" Amin eventually caused Amin to take action first.

The events that led to Amin's arrest are vague to say the least. One story has it that he tried unsuccessfully to stage a coup; another that his moving of troops to the capital was a reminder to the government that the army was the real power in Uganda.

Whatever the reason or reasons for his arrest there were by this time several incentives for an army coup i.e. the decline in General Amin's functions, and the formation of the 'special forces'. When he gained power, General Amin e-

bolished the GSU and the Intelligence Ministry. He then immediately set about the task of increasing the size of his army; there is a large mercenary contingent of which the "soldiers owe loyalty to him, not to Uganda."⁶⁹

The coup was an assertion of army self-interest, made by officers concerned with material rewards and their professional survival, but also with their autonomous power. Most easily recognizable for this assertion of army corporate interests is the coup where the army has acted as an armed trade union, as the 1964 mutiny in Uganda shows; the issues in this instance were service conditions and low pay. But even where there are more complex reasons for a coup the military invariably sees to its own benefit after the take-over.

It is necessary and inevitable that the civil service work with the army, for no military regime could survive very long without the civil servants running the administration. The bureaucratic strata of society-army and civil service-use up an enormous proportion of the resources of the state. Their interests lie in preserving the artificial standards of the elite of which they are a part as a result of the colonial salary scales they have inherited. Obviously, then since they have a large stake in the economy, explosive political situations have a direct bearing on them. In this light the coup then is seen as a "means to preserve or revamp the State machinery from which they benefit so much."⁷⁰

In general, the coup syndrome is the result of Uganda's,

as well as, Africa's economic dependence. This is the root of the constant political crisis. Political sovereignty is not enough to break the dependence of the colonial situation. Without a developed economy and developed social forces, the new State is seen not only as the seat of government but also as the primary source of employment, the chief agent for the build-up of capital, the principal channel of development funds, and the dispenser of patronage. With all these functions it is to the government then that discontent is focused.

Where economies grow too slowly to absorb all aspirants for elite status, let alone to meet the needs of the conspicuously poor, the heat of successive political crises is generated largely by the "constant flow of contestants for the top salaried and command positions."⁷¹ With independence the politicians take hold of the command positions. When the latter fail to satisfy aspirations or resolve conflicts, power then begins to swing to another elite. The new elite for Uganda in 1971, was the bureaucracy, made-up of the army and the civil service, which derive authority from their direct physical manipulation of the State and their technical expertise in running it.

The army and the civil service, together, make for a very strong contesting layer within the elite group. Due to their colonial origin, when they were institutions manipulated by external controllers, and to the economically rootless nature of indigenous political power in Uganda, the

army and the civil service have a special degree of autonomy from the government and political parties that control it. Their power is thus independent of any ruling party.

A coup once made is easy to unmake by a counter-coup. Uganda's army as in general most armies, represents cross-currents of ethnic, regional, social, and political divisions within the broader community. It is because of this that once the army takes control of the government, it is immediately presented with many problems. Tension develops within the officer corps and in the ranks. Now, there are even wider circles of contestants for office and power and the economic rewards that come with them--as well as soldiers, and civil servants, and politicians waiting in the wings till they can stage a come-back.

New and younger layers of the elite begin to emerge. This is so because, at the crucial formative stages of Uganda's army, it was not the sons of professional or business families who enlisted, but the sons of people generally living in more remote, poorer, and under-developed areas. The coup catapults then into government and opportunity not only for the soldiers but also for their kinsfolk.

Sometimes groups dispossessed of government at an earlier time may find their re-entry to the center of the stage because of a coup--which the Baganda seemingly hoped would happen when when Amin seized control of the government.

As long as the army remains in the barracks its command

structure and its military discipline hold it together, unless of course there is a mutiny over pay. But once the army enters government, the possession of power proceeds to divide it. The source of the division may be either rivalry due to different generations in the officer corps or to promotion bottlenecks.

In Uganda's army the prospects of a counter-coup are strong. The Baganda, Acholi, Langi, Lugbara, and Madi are waiting for their chance, and now it appears that Catholics and Protestants have joined them. (To be discussed later.) A counter-coup need not re-instate the earlier form of government or those removed from power; it could bring forth distinct variations grounded in different expediencies for power. Much depends on how long the military Government by General Amin can stay cohesive.

If Uganda is to return to civilian rule, the problem still remains of formulating a strategy for more rapid and indigenous economic development, and, at the same time, popular mobilization for the social changes that will make this development possible; and of finding counter-vailing forces, and not necessarily armed ones, against the coup making propensity in Uganda's army.

Nevertheless, a couple of things have become very clear. The coup, on January 25, 1971, demonstrated that "the military leaders acted as a veto group, blocking policies which threatened their position."⁷² More importantly "the

option of being apolitical is," no longer "open to African Army officers."⁷³ This is so because one of the "few avenues of political change" is the use or threat of force by the military.

CHAPTER VII
POLITICS WITHOUT IDEOLOGY
(1970-72)

The regime lost much of its earlier support because it not only estranged the Lango, former President Obote's people, but also the Acholi, at one time a powerful element in the army, the Karamojong, the Asian community and, most significantly, the powerful royalist faction of Buganda.

There was hope that the general election that Obote announced would bring about a reconciliation between the Baganda and the rest of Uganda. "The electoral scheme was designed so that every MP would have to contest and gain a significant number of votes"⁷⁴ in four constituencies, one in each of the four Regions of Uganda. (Obote divided Uganda into four districts.) Thus the Baganda, who constituted a region themselves, would have had a say in the election of the Baganda MPs. "By January, 1971, many leading Baganda were campaigning for Parliament, including some of the respected clan leaders."⁷⁵

However, as stated before, events took a dramatic change when General Amin took control of the government on January 25, 1971.

Amin claimed that Acholi and Lango soldiers--two of the regions which contributed most of the strength to the army and the UPC--were moving, by order from Obote, to disarm the rest of the army, so that he had to act to prevent them. This seems unlikely though since Obote was out of the country

at the time along with his head of intelligence Akena Adoko; also Obote's trusted paramilitary police, the Special Force, were not involved in the fighting.

Late in 1970, General Amin had become politically active by identifying himself with anti-Obote elements i.e. the Uganda Muslim Congress led by Prince Badru Kakungulu, a respected Ugandan leader and uncle of the Kabaka, as well as with Obote's former colleague, the Defense Minister and UPC Secretary-General Felix Onama. The latter had in August 1970, made his first moves to unseat Obote by defeating his proposals for a Presidential elections. But Obote outmaneuvered his opponents inside the party, as previously stated, at a special UPC Congress in December, 1970, so that it was clear that if he was to be removed action had to be taken fast.

Amin moved and on assuming power he declared, "I am not a politician but I am a professional soldier. . . Mine will be purely a caretaker administration." He did not proclaim any dramatic change in ideology but said he reacted only to prevent the Langi and Acholi from controlling the army. The '18 Points' given by the soldiers as their reasons for giving power to Amin complained about lack of freedom, violent crime, economic problems, corruption, disunity in Uganda, and neglect of the army. There was a promise to organize elections and hand power back to the civilians.

The first act of the new regime was to free 55 of the 73 political detainees--why the others were not known. At

both the local and the national governmental levels politicians were suspended from office. "Most professional soldiers are reputed to be skeptical of politicians. Certainly the General has excluded them from any control over Uganda's affairs."⁷⁶ The new Council of Ministers was composed mostly of "career administrators" i.e. six civil servants, two diplomats, two Ugandans from the East African Community Corporations and a Professor. There were only two soldiers appointed: Amin and Lt. Col. E.A.T. Obitre-Gama. In order to make them less potent, the Commissioner of Prisons and the Inspector-General of the Police were stripped of their power by making them Ministers.

Amin disbanded the General Service unit (GSU) because he felt that its loyalty was to Obote; however, he replaced it with an expanded "Military Intelligence." By June of 1971, there were approximately 1500 political prisoners in detention in Kampala, "400" of which were members of the GSU.

Although Amin promised freedom to operate for political parties on February 2, 1971, he "abolished Parliament and vested full legislative executive and military powers in himself, and all local authorities were dissolved."⁷⁷ Later the same month while addressing the Uganda Air Force he said that it was his mission to lead Uganda out of a "bad situation" after which he would "organize and supervise a general election" to give Uganda a genuine civil democratic

government. He then declared "we will go back to the barracks and take orders from any Government that will be democratically elected by the people of Uganda as a whole." He said his "mission" would take "less than five years."

On February 20, 1971, Amin took on the title of President while at the same time making himself a full General. Two days later he lifted the State of Emergency that had existed under Obote's Government since 1966. However, four weeks later, on March 23, 1971, President Amin suspended all political activity (Suspension of Political Activities Decree passed 3 days earlier) for two years "as a temporary measure" to give the Government time to restore public order and peace in Uganda. Also, all former MPs and local councillors had to report to the police.

Although the coup itself was virtually bloodless, in the months that followed there is no doubt that thousands of soldiers and civilians died throughout the country. The pro-Kabaka people in Buganda burned many houses and slaughtered herds of cattle of the pro-Obote people in Buganda. A pro-Obote unit continued to fight it out at the "military barracks in Moroto for almost a fortnight;" their effort failed because Obote did not succeed in getting them reinforcements.

More blood was spilled in the Lango and Acholi districts than anywhere else. In February and March there were so many people killed at the Kerume Falls bridge over the Nile

that it became known as the "Bridge of Blood." "The bridge continued to be used as a place for executioners."⁷⁹ In the Acholi area there were arrests, killings, and people disappearing. (For example, the younger son of the Minister for Natural Resources, Wilson Oryema, "disappeared soon after returning to Uganda from military training in Europe.")⁸⁰

Amin's first task was to get complete control of the Army. He attempted to achieve this goal by promoting those men that were "most loyal" to him i.e. one NCO was promoted to major. However, it was mainly the lower-ranking officers who were promoted and not the "professionally-trained middle-rank officers." These promotions which benefited the West Nile region and Amin's own small tribe, the Kakwa, produced disorder in the army.

Obote's own fellow-tribesmen, the Langi, were the first to be thoroughly purged, next came the Acholi who were upset about the favoritism that was being given to the soldiers of the West Nile area. The Langi and the Acholi accounted for over "60 percent of the original army."

During the first part of the year in 1972, there was much friction between the Alur and Madi tribes on the one hand and the Kakwa on the other. There was fighting going on while Amin was visiting West Germany and Libya. The episode was straightened out by the Minister of Internal Affairs. Ernest Obitre-Gama, a member of the Lugbora tribe (largest of the West Nile tribes of which the Alur and Madi are a

part). The incidents occurred at Mutula, and the Uganda-Tanzania border, and at Maline in Kampala.

There were a number of mutinies, the first of which occurred in January and involved the Acholi in the Motorized Regiment. Tribal feeling inside the army is very high as shown by Major Peter Obama's appeal for loyalty to the Amin regime; he was an Acholi officer appealing to the mutineers to accept the new military regime and explaining to the Acholi soldiers that the senior officers of the Lango tribe were using them in order to regain control in Uganda.

At this time in April, 1972, Amin "launched his campaign against Israel,"⁸¹ partly as a tactic to blame Uganda's problems on an outside source and partly as a move to win friends among the Arabs.

There was more trouble, for on June 9, 1972, Captain Avudria-Adami, a Lugbara, was killed. This forced the other Lugbara officers to "close ranks;" there was talk of "revenge and later of overthrowing the government. On June 12, "there were reports of Lugbara units in the army preparing for battle."⁸² At this point Amin came back from his visit to the Sudan on the pleadings of acting President Charles Oboth-Ofumbi.

For 36 hours, Amin "addressed troops and officers." All was calm and he subsequently left to visit Egypt. It appears that the Lugbara were "deterred" from an attempted coup by "lack of leadership" and more importantly by "the

10 percent or so of southern Suahili ex-Nyasa fighters which have been drafted into the armed forces and who are personally loyal to Amin."⁸³

The mutinies continued in July and spread from Mbarara to Moroto to Jinja in which "Acholi and Lango servicemen were shot, hacked and clubbed to death by fellow servicemen."⁸⁴ Also prominent Acholi and Lango citizens in the civil service and in public life were called in for questioning by the Military Police most of whom were beaten and then released. Some were detained especially those arrested during the coup and GSU members; the Detention Decree issued on May 11, 1971, gave power to any commissioned officer to 'suspect' persons; Military Decree No. 15 could make their stay indefinite. To make things worse any member of the armed force could make an arrest "without" a warrant. For a time, the situation around Mbale was very bad because the army became unruly, mistreating important officials like the District Commissioner; furthermore, "civilians used the army to settle old scores."⁸⁵

Dissatisfaction spread also to Karamoja District because of Amin's decision to force these people to wear clothes. There was an outbreak of cholera; the people of Karamoja believed that the outbreak was the result of President Amin's disregard for tradition. At a meeting in Mbale, where officials of the government advocated "wearing clothes, the crowd became hostile and the army had to open fire before making 120 arrests."⁸⁶

It appears that to a certain extent Amin lost control of the army mainly because he concentrated power in the Muslim and Nubian elements of the army and because his pro-Islamic policies alienated the Protestants and Catholics. He also allegedly escaped two assassination attempts on his life i.e. the first in November, 1972, and the other just before Christmas 1972.

The important outcome of the army troubles in 1972, was a reorganization of the command structure of the armed forces. The position of Chief of Defense Staff was done away with; in its place were the new positions of Army Commander, Air Force Commander, and Paratroop Commander. "This meant in effect that it would be much more difficult for any one man to be able to coordinate the three service wings for a coup attempt in Amin's absence."⁸⁷ From now on, when Amin was out of the country, 'operational' control would rest collectively in the Defense Council.

At this time, during March 1972, Amin also created the State Research Department which is an intelligence gathering operation and "appears close to the disbanded GSU" in its role.

His next important move was to suspend Lieut.-Col. Obitre-Gama, a Lugbara, as Minister of Internal Affairs; Amin himself had taken over the portfolio. Lieut.-Col. Obitre-Gama was later given a new portfolio, Minister of Power and Communication; it was probably a move to diminish his popularity with ordinary Ugandans since he would have the im-

possible problem of dealing with taxi driver's strikes and bus services which were very poor. Also the Ministry of Internal Affairs was brought under the Ministry of Defense; in the event of unrest the Police would no longer be able to act as independent forces.

The relationship between the military side of the Government which was dominated by President/General Amin and the Ministers drifted apart rather than together. The Ministers "were allowed very little authority" and since they were all made military cadets, this in effect made them subject to military discipline. "The potentially effective civil servants also failed to find a new sense of purpose."⁸⁸ Amin seemed to take delight in undermining the authority of his ministers for he told the army to arrest anyone-- "even if he be a Minister"--who was engaging in subversive activity. "All statements and policies by his Ministers" had to be cleared by Amin's office before they could be released.

He disbanded the National Service; although the civil servants lost political power, it appears that they "regained most of their economic privileges."⁸⁹ By early 1972, the "nationalized industries" were changed from a 60 percent government/40 percent private ratio to a 49 percent/51 percent ratio respectively. (In December, 1972, Amin announced the nationalization of "all tea estates owned by foreigners and of certain other foreign owned companies."⁹⁰

The coup itself, along with the mutinies that have occurred, as well as the expulsion of Asians (to be discussed later) have had a disturbing affect on the economy. Investment had been lagging and the disturbances have produced a "dislocation of production." Amin's economic policies have stressed "increases in military expenditure at the expense of social and economic projects."⁹¹ Even more detrimonious to Uganda, was the absense of structure in the Government.

President Amin made all of the important economic decisions himself. He was pre-occupied with maintaining power and building support for his regime by constantly touring in all parts of Uganda, so that he paid less attention to economic affairs unless they concerned military spending. Besides, he was a professional soldier and therefore by training was inclined to action rather than paper work. When he did take advice it was more than "likely to be on an ad hoc basis from his military associates than from his qualified civil servants or Ministers, who seemed afraid to advise him in the direction of potentially unpopular measures."⁹²

Since Amin abolished Parliament, outlawed political parties, and took direct control of the local government, he ruled Uganda by "decree" and "through a military junta." The latter in the long run is the inherent weakness in the Amin regime because no stable government can be based on an army whose soldiers have a current record of mutiny, of killing each other, of intimidating private citizens, and of forming tribal barriers among themselves.

However, for now Amin remains in control even though the army has doubled in size since the coup. He is constantly touring in all parts of Uganda so that he is in contact with the people i.e. he likes to get involved in dance displays. He has a curious sense of naivety, as for example, when he accused the Chinese of aiding the Tanzanians in an effort to "invade" Uganda and turned around and invited Mao Tse-tung to a celebration of the first anniversary of his coup.

He seems to take a greater interest in local rather than national problems i.e. he personally tried to ease the bitterness between the Muslim (he is one) and the Christian communities. He is a devout Muslim and through the use of the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council has set about the task of uniting the feuding factions of the Muslim community. He has condemned political interference in religious affairs and declared that his "Government would respect all religions in Uganda. His own role, he said, 'was determined by God.'"⁹³

He also has personally attempted to re-unite the students at Makerere University in Kampala. To do this he made himself the Chancellor but he upheld the right of the Government given it under the Obote regime to intervene in the making of senior staff appointments. In an effort to win over the support of students he said that "his Government had confidence and trust in the students."⁹⁴

In order to deal with the conflicts existing within the National Union of Students of Uganda and other student groups, he proposed to send "senior army and police officers" to the

schools to supervise the elections for student representatives. Ostensibly, he said that he was not only doing it for their support "but that he also wanted them to tell him where he was going wrong."⁹⁵

One is, therefore, led to the conclusion that Amin thinks that Uganda should be run as an army is, i.e. there being a hierarchial structure with good communication between the officers and the men. For Amin is not only the President of Uganda, the General of the Army, the Chancellor of Makerere University, but also the self-proclaimed spokesman for the religious community.

Although they supported Amin initially, by the early part of 1972, the pro-Kabaka and traditional elements among the Baganda began to realize that their traditional system of kingship would not be restored. Amin agreed to their first demand that the ex-Kabaka, Sir Edward Mutesa, who died in 1969 in London, be buried in the Kasubi tombs in Buganda. A state of "national hysteria existed among the Baganda" during the five day holiday from March 30, to April 4, in which an effort was made to link the burial of the ex-Kabaka to the succession of his son Ronald to the Kabakaship.

Since Amin committed himself to the position that the four districts would not be reunited as a single entity, he announced that it would be for the people of all Uganda to decide on the issue of the restoration of the Kabakaship. This was an astute political move since it was clear that the

people in the other districts of Uganda did not want to restore the Baganda to their former privileged position in Uganda. The other three districts including the former King of Ankole supported a republican form of government. The Kabakaship was finished, the kingdoms were not to be re-introduced. President Amin therefore alienated the two million or so Bagandans. Baganda politicians are hopeful that the power struggles within the army between the Acholi and the Langi on one side and the West Nilens on the other may weaken the northern base which the Obote regime secured so that power would revert to Buganda.

In October, 1971, Amin ordered a census taken of the Asian community. Then in December, 1971, he cancelled the "12,000 pending" applications for Ugandan citizenship. The census he said, made it necessary to have new qualifications. He accused the Asians of "disloyalty, income tax evasion, profiteering, and sabotaging the Government's efforts to bring Africans into trading."⁹⁶ In January, 1972, the Asian community insisted in a memorandum to Amin that their right of citizenship was given to them by the Uganda constitution. Amin's reaction was that he did not want an "Indian colony" in Uganda and he suggested that they were plotting with civil servants. The result of this was that Asians began to leave Uganda.

Internal economic conditions did not rob President Amin of his political ambition which was demonstrated by the

mass expulsion of 70,000 to 80,000 Asians with British passports, even though they played a vital role in the Ugandan retail trade. In August, 1972, he ordered all Asians from Uganda by November of 1972; the airlift of the Asians from Uganda to London began on September 13, 1972. President Amin said, "a message from God in a dream"⁹⁷ inspired him to expel the Asians.

Although President Amin had trouble filling the positions left vacant by the Asians, he continued to introduce other drastic measures such as the nationalization of several British companies in December, 1972. The reason for the latter is that Amin soon realized that expulsion of the Asians did not make "the Asian sector of the economy available for African ownership because finance had come from British-owned institutions, and foreclosures had passed control"⁹⁸ from Asian to British hands. Hence, the expulsion of the British which allowed the government of Uganda to expropriate the businesses for distribution to Africans.

In part, the timing of Amin's expulsion of the Asians seems to have a lot to do with the deteriorating relations with Britain. In early 1972, he was unable to get any military equipment or aid on a satisfactory basis. Thirty thousand of the 80 thousand Asians had British passports so Britain was obliged to accept them.

Also at this time Amin sent a delegation to the Soviet Union "possibly to obtain military aid."⁹⁹ By this time he apparently had given up on Britain and Israel and turn-

ed to the Soviets and the Arabs for aid.

Although the "expulsion" of the Asians was in general very unpopular on the international scene, at home and in Africa Amin became somewhat of a hero. In Uganda, it assured him of popular support because in theory there was going to be more money and jobs for the African population. In Africa, he had done what other leaders wanted to do but did not.

CHAPTER VIII
POLITICS AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Shortly after the coup, Amin went to Israel, France, and Britain in search of military equipment and aid.

The Israeli denied his request in July, 1971 for more military advisors; they were already training air force pilots at Entebbe and had established a paratroop training program at Kisoro.

All he received from the Europeans was a British agreement to help build a Military Academy and a negotiation for small arms by the French along with a consideration to help Uganda build its second university.

After accusing the Chinese of aiding Tanzania in an effort to "invade Uganda, Amin received the Chinese Chargé d'Affaires in September, 1971, to request a loan; he, Amin, spoke of strengthening "the good relationship that has existed between Uganda and China."¹⁰⁰

Amin had difficulty getting his regime recognized by the other African states; Britain, followed by the other European states "as well as the Soviet bloc, established normal relations"¹⁰¹ shortly after the coup. (Prince Minister Heath of Britain was no doubt enthusiastic about Amin's coup since Obote, at the Singapore Commonwealth Conference, had opposed the sale of arms by Britain to South Africa.)

The Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity refused, however, to grant the "automatic recognition"

that was due to a member state. There were a couple of reasons for this. First, immediately after the coup, Amin announced that he was not opposed to the British sale of arms to South Africa which aroused bitterness among those states who opposed such a venture. To those states who opposed the latter, it would help the white minority control the black majority. To appease the states concerned, President Amin declared that South Africa was "a threat to the security of the whole of Africa."¹⁰² He added that the only solution to South Africa was a "military one" and he therefore condemned the sale of British arms to South Africa on March 15, 1971. He also called upon the British to use force to bring down the white controlled Government of Rhodesia and pledged Uganda's support to the freedom movements within the OAU. In December, 1971, he proposed to the OAU Defense Commission that Uganda be used to train OAU forces in order to liberate the white ruled-states of southern Africa.

Second, his close association with the "Israeli military advisors" tended to alienate the Arab States. The first Arab state to oppose the Amin regime was Somalia, on January 30, 1971; a Somali representative declared, "we condemn the coup and its leaders."¹⁰³ Uganda was also accused of representing "foreign capitalist-imperialists interests." His policy at this time of nonalignment in the Middle East did little to help his regime gain recognition by the Arab states.

In an effort to repair his regime's relations with the

Arabs, he introduced the Arabic language on "Radio Uganda" and accepted an invitation to visit Saudi Arabia. He also set himself to the task of easing the tension between the Sudan and Uganda. There had been a long standing dispute between the Sudanese Government and Uganda. The Sudanese Government has accused Uganda of aiding southern Sudanese rebels in their attacks into the Sudan. On taking power, Amin protested that Sudanese troops had bombed the Acholi area. (At this time Obote had active support in this district) It was also alleged that "500 Langi" were being trained in the Sudan for guerrilla warfare against Uganda. However, by July, 1971, Amin changed his tactics toward the Sudan--the result was that General Numeiry agreed to establish a Uganda embassy in Khartoum.

By mid-June, 1971, a majority of the African States "were willing to accept-if not yet to recognize-Amin."¹⁰⁴

It is very difficult to assess the foreign policy of Amin's regime at this point, since it appears to be ambiguous and rather fickle. For example, whereas in March, 1971, he condemned South Africa, on September 23, 1971, President Amin announced that he was sending a ten man delegation to South Africa "to study the problems of the African people."¹⁰⁵ He insisted on the freedom of the delegation to meet people in all parts of the country but said he would not go himself. However, on October 1, 1971, Prime Minister Mr. Vorster of South Africa refused to accept the fact-finding delegation

and instead invited President Amin or members of his Government to pay a visit. To this Amin replied that as the Head of State, he would be allowed to meet only those people who had been told what to say. On December 23, 1971, the Ugandan Foreign Minister said that his country "completely and unequivocally" opposed any dialogue with South Africa.

As regards the Sudan, by December, 1971, Amin 'claimed' that fierce fighting had been going on between the Sudanese troops and the southern Sudanese rebels inside Uganda. Amin had allowed Sudanese refugees to enter Uganda as long as they "surrendered their weapons;" he declared that Uganda would not let its soil be used as a base for attacking its neighbors. Nevertheless, by the end of the year, the government of Amin expelled the Sudanese Ambassador. The two countries seemed to be right back to where they once were.

Relations between members of the East African Community which consist of Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania became strained after Amin's coup especially with Tanzania. Many of Obote's supporters fled not only to the Sudan, but to Kenya and Tanzania as well.

Shortly after the coup, hundreds of officers and men loyal to Obote, fled to Kenya and Tanzania; by April their number rose to about a thousand. The large majority of them were Langi from Obote's own area but they were soon joined by Acholi and others. It's their presence that explains Amin's threats to "invade" Tanzania. Tanzania had

become a dangerous threat to Amin because Nyerere had allowed Obote into his country, and because the thousand or so Obote supporters who fled to Tanzania were now at Obote's disposal. In this circumstance, Amin had reason to expect that Nyerere would aid Obote in a counter-coup. At the same time, Amin had to deal with the internal disorders and mutinies throughout Uganda in the months following his coup.

Although Amin may have been justified in assuming that an invasion was imminent, either from the Sudan or Kenya, but especially from Tanzania, "no invasion" came. Tanzania was nevertheless accused of carrying "out subversive and hostile activities against the Government and people of Uganda."¹⁰⁶ When fighting broke out at the barracks of Magamaga, near Jinja, Amin announced that the "guerrillas" had claimed "1,000" Uganda lives. He further stated that in the fighting at Jinja and Moroto the guerrillas "had been assisted by Tanzanians and Mozambique freedom fighters as well as by their Chinese advisors. . . ."¹⁰⁷

In mid-August, 1971, Nyerere accused the Government of Amin sending tanks and troops into Tanzania and announced that "fighting was continuing." On the same day Amin announced that fighting between Ugandan troops and "Chinese led Tanzania forces" "had flared up."

From the very beginning, Nyerere refused to accept the Amin Government as a legitimate one (another cause of the bitterness between Nyerere and Amin). He said that he "would

never agree to sit with killers like Amin in the Authority of the East African Community.

On July 7, 1971, the border between the two countries was closed. As an afterthought, it seems that Amin used the idea of a real or imagined infiltration in the Ugandan army barracks, as a means of creating a sense of national unity.

Amin's political style is one of hard aggressive statements which are off-set by conciliatory talks. While this may give him support in Uganda, it is a policy which made diplomacy difficult in the East African Community. For example, Kenya was concerned about having a tough, aggressive military regime so close to its own territory while experiencing its own political problems. The first sign of Kenyan recognition of the Amin regime did not come until Arop Moi, made an appearance at the Kabaka's funeral.

The bitterness between Nyerere and Amin continued in 1972. "Dr. Nyerere, President of Tanzania, dismissed as 'nonsense' reports that his country was about to invade"¹⁰³ Uganda.

Amin claimed "1,000 Tanzanian troops" invaded Mutukula, a town on Uganda's south-west border with Tanzania. However, Tanzania declared that the fighting on September 17, 1972, was between Amin's troops and dissidents of a Ugandan "People's Army."

The fighting went on for days. Then on September 19, 1972, a Uganda "military spokesman announced that the invasion force" from Tanzania "had been 'completely'"¹⁰⁹ wiped out.

Because the police were mistrusted, "scores of them were killed and beaten up after the September, 1972, invasion"¹⁰⁹

of Obote's People's Army from Tanzania.

The attack on September 17, 1972, under Col. David Oyike Ojok with about 1,000 men failed partly because there was no mutiny as apparently the Obote forces hoped there would be one. Also at this time, Amin was enjoying a lot of popularity because of the expulsion of the Asians.

The outcome of Obote's failure was the "Mogadishu Agreement" which forbade the training of an army in Tanzania to attack Uganda.

Then on November 4, 1973, President Kenyatta announced that as a result of a meeting between President Amin and President Nyerere "discrepancies" had been done away with. (Amin had delivered a message from President Sadat of Egypt to the leaders of Tanzania, Zambia, and Zaire allegedly on the problems in the Middle East.

For the moment at least, it appears that Uganda and Tanzania, or more precisely, their leaders, are able to live with each other.

After the 1967 war, Israeli-Ugandan relations began to cool as Obote's foreign policy shifted toward support for Egypt's cause. The morning after Amin's coup there were many Ugandan air force planes in the sky. "It is possible that some of these planes were piloted by Israelis since the Ugandan air force had few trained pilots."¹¹⁰ It could imply approval of the coup and/or "some deeper involvement." Israel welcomed Amin's coup and promptly gave him military and

economic assistance. Amin's first foreign visit was to Israel.

However, partly because he wanted the support and recognition of the Arab states and partly because the Israeli did not supply him with the aid he wanted, on March 29, 1972, at a "security conference" of the armed forces Amin ordered the Israeli Embassy in Kampala closed and asked its diplomats to leave Uganda within ten days as a result of alleged subversion activity. Shortly thereafter, on April 29, 1972, Amin said that "Libya would train Uganda Air Force pilots and Army personnel, and would also build and equip two 100 bed hospitals in Uganda."¹¹¹

The expulsion of Israelis personnel from Uganda in April, 1972, probably influenced Mali and Niger which also broke off diplomatic relations with Israel. The expulsion of the Israeli had its elements of self-interest i.e. military equipment and aid. There is also the common denominator of an "increasing sense of identity, particularly in those states with large Muslim population, with the Arab cause in the Middle East."¹¹²

In the fall of 1972, after the massacre of Israeli Athletes at the Olympic Games, Amin sent a telegram to the UN Secretary-General Dr. Waldheim as well as to Mrs. Golda Meir of Israel and Yasa Arafat of the Palistinian movement. In the telegram he said that, "Germany is the right place where, when Hitler was Prime Minister and supreme commander, he burned over six million Jews. This was because Hitler and

all the German people know that the Israelis are not people who are working in the interest of the people of the world and that is why he burned the Israelis alive with gas in the soil of Germany."¹¹³

Amin has been given the title the world's "biggest political clown" for making such statements as "the Jews should be wiped out and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is planning an invasion of Uganda."¹¹⁴

He continues to use his simple and individualistic style of government in which he refuses to observe conventional inter-governmental procedures. For example, President Amin sent a telegram to the U.S. on Independence Day 1973, in which he caused very much "offense by wishing President Nixon 'a speedy recovery from Watergate' and urged"¹¹⁵ the U.S. Government to refrain from meddling in the affairs of other countries.

To illustrate the point further, at present Britain is suffering her worst economic crisis since World War II so Amin on December 30, 1973, started his "Save Britian Fund." He said that the purpose of the fund was to "save and assist our former colonial masters from economic catastrophe." Then on January 22, Amin asked P.M. Heath (the former) to send a plane to pick up the "supplies of wheat and vegetables donated to 'Save Britian'." Needless to say, P.M. Heath could hardly have been pleased.

On October 31, 1973, Radio Uganda alleged "that Britian,

the U.S. and Israel were planning a parachute invasion of the country."¹¹⁶ It is also alleged that Amin "threatened to imprison all the Americans including diplomats if the U.S. became involved in the "October Middle East War" of 1973. The result was that the U.S. closed its Embassy.

For his anti-Israeli policies Amin has received political support and financial aid from the Soviets and the Arabs.

On November 10, 1973, the Soviet Union sold Uganda "53" tanks giving Uganda the "most powerful army in East Africa."

From November 14-18, King Faisal of Saudi Arabia was in Uganda. He made mention of a loan to Uganda and praised Amin for his "'brave and courageous support' for the Arab world"¹¹⁷ and assured him that all Arabs were with him in the fight against imperialism and Zionism.

Thirty Egyptian doctors were sent to Uganda and on November 20, a new Libyan Arab-Uganda Bank for Foreign Trade and Development was opened; the Libyan Government holds 51 percent interest. Uganda then "received a gift of 8 fighter bombers from a 'friendly country' according to President Amin."¹¹⁸ The friendly country was thought to be Libya.

The Arab member states of the OAU had been soliciting African support in the Arab-Israeli conflict for some time. Algerian Foreign Minister M. Bouteflika congratulated Uganda and other countries that supported Egypt. The Arab members of the OAU had a "resolution passed which called on member states to take political and economic measures"¹¹⁹

against Israel.

CHAPTER IX

POLITICS OF AMIN: 1973-74

Amin's policies have received much support in Africa: his goal of an all-black Uganda, his action against Zionism and neocolonialist control of the Uganda economy through foreign control, his apparent eagerness to mobilize his army against the minority white regimes to the south, all have helped to give support within the African community. At home, the expulsion of the Asians (which helped to give Ugandans their chance in economic life) has gained him much support, especially in those areas where people have not experienced direct "military brutality."

The introduction of Amin's regime saw two basic changes in the politics of Uganda. First, there has been a shift in the balance of power in that the Kakwa (Amin's tribe), the Lugbara, and the Madi (to a lesser extent) have replaced the Lugi and the Acholi ethnic alliance of Obote's regime by their dominance in the army. Second, "the army has become the means of power"¹²⁰ as well as the chief source of patronage by virtue of its control of the government. Neither of the latter represents a radical change in Ugandan politics since Uganda has a history of tribal power struggles and the army has been a key factor in Ugandan politics since February, 1966. The army, however, has become "the major factor" since Amin's take-over.

Although he is at times difficult to understand, "Amin

has in many ways conformed to the system he inherited."¹²¹ For example, as did Obote, he "has based his power" mainly on "his own tribe" while at the same time attracting members of other tribes with the promise of office and/or wealth. He has managed to stay in power by the use of patronage, the threat of, or the use of force; for instance, he "purged at least 50 officers from the army following the bloody weakened clash between rival tribal military units in Kampala,"¹²² on March 24, 1974. There was an attempted coup by Brigadier Charles Arube, former Army chief of staff who had recently returned from a military course in the Soviet Union. There had apparently been several months of fear and unrest among the 2,000 or so troops of the Lugbara tribe in the north. The unrest intensified when the former Ugandan Foreign Minister, Lieutenant-Colonel Michael Ondonga, a Lugbara, was found floating in the Nile.

It is difficult to say if it was an actual coup or an effort by Amin to eliminate opposition. Amin's decision "to take personal charge of the Defense Ministry in order to reorganize the army" is probably indicative of the latter.

In a message on Radio Uganda, Amin told his soldiers that if they weren't happy with him, "they should kill him or ask him to resign, rather than make the people of Uganda run about during the night."¹²³

Unlike Obote, Amin has not resorted to euphemisms to describe his acts as Head-of-State nor does he worry about constitutional issues since he rules by decree. Although

"he is no revolutionary," he has managed to stretch the Ugandan political system to its limits. It seems that Amin wants to exploit rather than overthrow the existing system.

The politics of Uganda have been relatively unstable because the goals of national unity, political stability, modernization and economic development have not had the institutional background to be implemented. Uganda was further burdened in that Obote was not a charismatic leader nor was he close to the "common man" as Amin appears to be; Uganda also has the problem of ethnic diversity and hostility as well as the assumption that the function of government is to benefit the rulers. "The winner-take-all philosophy was as much a part of inter-tribal affairs as it was of intra-tribal politics."¹²⁴ To be in on the government meant access to power, wealth, and a guarantee of personal integrity; to be outside meant to be loser. Tribal alliance grew in importance as competition for office and jobs became Uganda's rising industry.

On taking power, Amin set himself to the task of creating a new balance of power. It consisted of the Kakwas, the Lugbara, and the Madi; the soldiers from these tribes have come to dominate the army "along with several thousand Nubian, Southern Sudanese, and Congolese mercenaries."¹²⁵ The mercenary soldiers along with the Kakwas have become the backbone of Amin's balance of power; they have virtually been given a free hand in removing the Langi and Acholi from the army. The Nubian are the descendants of black

Muslim Sudanese who settled throughout East Africa after service in colonial armies; they have come from as far as Nairobi to join the Ugandan army. The Southern Sudanese "are mainly Christians" who "have come from refugee camps and re-settled schemes set up in Uganda during the civil war in the Sudan."¹²⁶ It has been "alleged" that the Congolese are the remnants of the Simba rebels from the mulelist rebellion in Zaire (the Congo) in the early 1960's.

It would be an error though to assume that all who were not a part of the new balance of power would not have access to government positions i.e. William Oryema, the head of the police and a pro-Obote man who was involved in the latter's plans to remove Amin, became a Cabinet minister for Amin. There were two reasons for his appointment: he kept the police out of the way during the coup and being an Acholi, he was indispensable to Amin's goal of separating the Acholi and Langi. It becomes clear then that Amin is a practical man set on strengthening his position and anyone who can augment that position becomes useful.

For one thing, Muslims are now in the establishment. This has brought benefits to the Muslim community: they have been given "valuable" land in Kampala; among the rank and file and the officer corps in the army, there is a large contingent of Muslims; "Muslim traders are doing proportionately better in the take-over of Asian businesses."¹²⁷

They have been further aided by the fact that on March 4, 1973, Amin "ordered all businesses except for banks on six

of Kampala's main streets must be run and managed by Africans's;"¹²³ also Radio Uganda announced that "no other national would be allowed to run businesses."

Amin has begun to identify himself with militant Islam in North and Saharan Africa.

Col. Qathafi of Libya, the propagandist of Arab radicalism and hater of communism was the lever in Amin's expulsion of the Israeli. Ostensibly, Amin said he was responding to Col. Qathafi's appeal for strong Muslim ties in the African states in an effort to increase awareness of the Arab cause against Israeli, at the time being brought to world attention by the "Black September" guerrilla unit.

It seems more likely that, because Israeli was at the time "unable and unwilling" to meet Amin's financial demands, he turned to his oil-rich fellow-Muslim in Libya. Uganda was promised an immediate 1 million pounds; with 30 million to follow. This no doubt was a help to Amin since the Ugandan economy was suffering from "financial and security strains."

The new policy of Amin, as well as the African states which followed in denouncing Israel, appears to be a consequence of the fact that the Western world is facing a series of monetary crisis. The Arab states, especially Libya and Saudi Arabia, have plenty of oil-made-idle-money to invest.

It also appears now that Amin has set himself to the

task of enhancing the power of the Ugandan Black Muslims at the expense of the Christians. The letter is not an official pronouncement nevertheless, the Government's relations with Christian churches, and especially the Roman Catholic sect, deteriorated i.e. June 3, was made "a public holiday to commemorate the burning of Ugandan martyrs (Christian)." ¹²⁹

Amin has accused the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Kampala, the Most Rev. Emmanuel Nsubuga of "connections with purported Israeli and South African plots against" ¹³⁰ Uganda.

President Amin, on January 29, 1973, declared, "Any religious leader who brings confusion will be dealt with by a military tribunal." ¹³¹ However, he denounced reports of religious disputes in Uganda as "British imperialists" propaganda.

Then on June 3, 1973 the capital Uganda Government "banned 12 different religious sects" of which two worthy Jehovah Witnesses and the Society of Friends, a Quaker group. It was added that the Anglican, Catholic, and Islam faiths would continue to be supported but that "harboured spies or subversive elements" ¹³² would not be tolerated.

In a move to Africanize the churches (November, 1973) Amin said that the imperialists might get into Uganda by religion again so "on November 30, he ordered 58 Christian missionaries to leave" ¹³³ Uganda, because they entered the country illegally and were found in "strategic places".

Amin has officially denied any policy of harassment to Christians. However, of significance to the Christian com-

community was the fact that the body of the Rev. Clement Kiggunda, an editor of a Roman Catholic newspaper, was found dead in a burnt out car.

From the preceeding, it therefore seems that Amin came to the conclusion that the "essence of exploitation for Africa was not capitalism but racial stratification."¹³⁴ This would in part explain the mass expulsion of the Asian community, the ouster of the British, and the Africanization of the churches.

The point appears to be confirmed by the following: since a part of his own tribe, the Kakwa, live in the Sudan, it is not surprising that he sympathized and aided the Southern Sudanese (Christian and animists) fighters against their Arab-Muslim northern brethren.

Furthermore, this friendship with the Israelis was related to common connections with the Southern Sudanese fighter i.e. the Israeli were providing military aid to the latter for the obvious reason to check the Arabs in the north of the Sudan.

Another significant element introduced by Amin is the declining influence of bureaucracy. With careful scrutiny, it is clear that the civilian ministers are mere cyphers. Since they are members of the army and therefore are under Amin's control, they have been virtually rendered impotent. Also "the rest of the civil service has not been guiding or forming policy so much as trying to make presidential decrees

workable."¹³⁵ In February, 1973, Amin ordered his Ministers to take a month's leave. It is likely that "Amin was using the period during which ministers were on leave to form a new Government of people he could trust and who had firmer backing within the army."¹³⁶ It appears that Amin resents the professionals.

The outstanding element of Amin's regime is that what were once unspoken assumptions are now very clear for all to see and act on. Government benefits those who are in power which at present consist of the armed forces, Amin's fellow tribesmen and black Uganda Muslims. The goal then is to enrich this new ruling group at the expense of the outsiders.

This does not represent a new set of ground rules in Amin's regime; on the contrary, these rules were inherited from Obote's regime but under Amin they have become more explicit. The ground rules then helped to explain the rapid promotion of Kikwa, Lugbara, and Sudanese soldiers to the ranks of majors and lieutenant colonels, the large amount of money spent on "military equipment and recruitment to produce an army of nearly 20,000,"¹³⁷ the massacres of Acholi and Langi troops as well as GSU and Special Force men, and "the 'disappearance' of prominent Ugandans."

Public execution and deaths focused world attention on Uganda in early 1973. A military tribunal found twelve men guilty of "association with guerillas or robbery" and ordered them to be executed in their home districts for everyone

to see.

There was also a list of "missing" persons of which the International Commission of Jurists attacked as "lawlessness"; the Director and the Regional Supplies Officer of East African Railways were reported "missing" thus causing many employees to flee to Kenya. There is a list of 85 "missing" men over a period of two years.

An example of the reign of terror and senselessness that exists in Uganda is exemplified by the following: "A Uganda husband and wife were reported to been sentenced to five years imprisonment for putting down their pet cat: it was called Amin."¹³⁸

In a move to show that his government was going in a new direction, Amin in September, 1973, took away the "army's right to make arrests and directed that only the police with a warrant or military police in uniform could make arrests."¹³⁹

In an effort to maintain control of the Army and by that the government, Amin announced a change in the structure of Uganda's government. Henceforward, Uganda would have "ten provinces", (headquarters in parentheses): Nile (Aua); Northern (Gula); Karamoja (Movoto); Eastern (Mbale); Busoga (Jinja); North Buganda (Bombo); South Buganda (Masoka); Western (Fort Portal); Southern (Mbarara); and Kampala Province which will cover Kampala and Entebbe districts." The Provincial Governors were to be responsible to the Minister of Provincial Administration which was headed by Colonel

Moses Ali, who was himself responsible to Amin.

The government of Uganda would be run by a State Supreme Council which would consist of the President (Amin), the Prime Minister or vice-President who would be assigned "ministerial duties", the Commanders of the Army, Air Force and Navy, the Chief of Staff and the Ministers of Defense and Public Administration. (Prior to this, the key bodies in Uganda were the Defense Council, the State Research Department, the Public Safety unit, and the Special Branch; their names alone suggest a state of "revolutionary" emergency.)

The people were to be represented by the National Forum, which was a "limited return to representative government, although it may meet only four times a year."¹⁴⁰ The National Forum will include Amin, his ministers, a representative from each county, and a municipal representative from Kampala, Jinja, Mbale, and Moska. It is obvious, however, that power was to remain in the hands of Amin and the military.

It was also announced that Swahili would become the national language although English would remain the official language in the mean time. Swahili is used by both the army and the police. Amin wanted to adopt a native language; he suggested Luganda which is spoken by 4 million of Uganda's population of about 10 million. However, Luganda is the language of Buganda and many feared that this might

help to give them back their superiority. Amin must have known this; he probably did it to gain political support and favor from the Baganda.

Amin's government is based on the postulate; he who wins also takes. In the hands of certain elements within the army, this has unfortunately led to the elimination to the losers. However, it should be pointed out that Amin has experienced more substantial threats to his regime than did Obote i.e. the "continued activity of guerrillas" and the recurring troubles in the army.

It is the contention of this paper then that Amin inherited the spoils system along with its fierce competition for office and its ensuing benefits from Obote, but that he has extended the system to its limits. Under Amin, the business of government continues but it follows and does not precede the business of the spoils.

Amin has set a dangerous precedent which may cause his fall from power. Under his rule, force and violence have become the "very foundation" of Uganda's politics.

CONCLUSION

Briefly then, in the confrontation with Uganda in 1966 it was not the Sandhurst-trained officers but the disobedience of the NCO's that ensued Obote's survival. This disobedience Obote honored annually by a special dinner.

Between 1966-71, Obote was careful to fragment the Ugandan armed forces by attracting foreign military assistance from a diversity of donors, and by building up another battalion here, another police unit there. A mistake that "southern" politicians made before 1966 had been to neglect the role of the police as a support group for Obote (it was the police, not the army, that arrested the five "southern" Cabinet Ministers in February, 1966). This chance mistake Obote, now, transformed into a major principle of policy. The Special Force was built as a para-military unit to take over for the army in emergencies such as the one that followed the abortive attempt upon Obote's life in December, 1969. A police air-wing was also created to keep an eye on the air force. However, in January, 1971, it became clear that it was Obote who had miscalculated; Amin's seizure of power was facilitated by a deeply divided army.

After seizing power, Amin's soldiers issued a list of grievances against the Obote regime. In them, they repeatedly denounced the rich getting richer, economic policies leading to unemployment, local security suffering excessively from attacks by bakondo robbers, and Obote's national

service proposals leading not so much to the creation of a counter-vailing force to the army as to the removal of further hinderance to armed robbery. Here are clear signs of urban populism. The Sandhurst-trained officer corp was unsuccessful. Amin's seizure of power brought into the political culture the lower-income urban groups. It is from these people that Amin has recieved much support, especially when he ousted the Asians.

In 1972, the most vociferous opposition to the expulsion of the Asians came from African intellectuals. Only the urban-related groups most likely to profit from the expulsion can positively be said to have supported it. If there is any common element in Amin's present support group, it would appear to be an urban-related one.

Another crucial aspect of the Amin government is the "progressive militarization" of the political scene. It seems that precisely because the "civilian bureaucracy was so much stronger in Uganda for various historical reasons, Uganda soldiers had to smash their way through it before they could achieve the power that they desired. The best comparison seems to be with the "colonels Greece".

But whatever comparisons are made with civil-military relations elsewhere, Uganda, little more than three years after Amin's coup, seems strikingly different from its condition upon his initial assumption of power. Then there was little to distinguish it from the previous regime, ex-

cept, at least initially, a more amenable policy towards British and greater emphasis upon the importance of tribal questions. There was no need for a policy of terror. In the immediate aftermath of Obote's overthrow, the repeal of the emergency regulations created popular euphoria, while at the same time the opportunity for office proved a tempting bait for alternative leadership groups.

Now all is changed: terror against the intelligentsia appears to be at least in part a conscious strategy reinforcing Amin's commitment to the lower urban stratum in Uganda from which so many of his foremost supporters seem to be drawn.

African armies, in contrast to European armies, do not have long traditions. Because of this, many of the African armies are very small and poorly disciplined but they do have organization and the force of arms. This accounts for the apparent ease with which African military coups succeed.

Many African leaders are obsessed with the idea of obtaining status and prestige which is reflected in the fact that where military rulers have taken over there has been an inevitable build-up of the armed forces despite more pressing economic and social needs. Large armies in many African countries are associated with national prestige; so President Amin is spending large amounts of money to build-up his country's military might.

Invariably military leaders pledge a return to civilian

government, but usually they only pay lip-service to this pledge. The excuse they use is that they inherited a chaotic situation and that it has to be rectified first.

It is usually the case that military governments are as dictatorial or even more so than the regimes they replaced.

Military regimes create a false sense of unity and security. The African countries are too segmented ethnically and loyalties are too parochial for anyone to think he can bring about true national unity in a short while.

In many cases the military government resembles its predecessor or in some cases it is worse. The military government of Amin is different from the civil government of Obote only in degree. Amin is stretching the system to its limits whereas Obote was more cautious.

The oldest soldier-politician administration in Africa is that of Houari Boumedienne in Algeria, on May 19, 1965. It would therefore be inappropriate to draw any conclusions as to the longevity of the military regime of Amin. However, to maintain an efficiently run government, the military regime must depend to a certain extent on the bureaucratic and organizational skill of the civil service. The age of specialization has reached Africa; there will therefore come a time when armed coercion alone will not be enough to stay in power.

Without the hindrance of democratic processes, the mil-

itary regime has the advantage that its decisions will be carried out quickly. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that unrestricted authority possibly remains as a prerequisite for effective administration at this time in Uganda's as well as Africa's political history.

One of the methods used by a military leader to remain in control is to take off his military uniform for the civilian presidential one. The military coup d'etat may prove to be a temporary antidote to Africa's economic and political instability.

Finally this paper did not attempt to provide answers for any of the problems facing Uganda today. Those answers will only come in time through error, turmoil, and sweat. This paper did at least bring the problems into focus.

FOOTNOTES

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