UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT: THE NIGER DELTA

CASE STUDY: 1900-1977

by

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ABSTRACT

The thesis examines the processes of unequal development in the Niger Delta of Nigeria from 1900 to 1977. The evolution of inequalities in the region is analyzed with reference to the evolving economic and socio-political structures of the area within the national and regional contexts. Emphasis is focussed on the processes through which changing socio-economic and political forces have perpetuated regional inequalities.

The colonial and commercial policies created the initial inequalities in the Niger Delta and corresponding locally dominant but externally dependent social groups who took over power at the time of national independence. These groups used their control of state apparatus to further their own economic interests within the context of international economy. The resulting conflicts among these various groups for control of the national and state surplus resulted, among other things, in further distorted spatial development of the region.

Although the Niger Delta has been the major oil-producing region in Nigeria for the past quarter-century, a greater proportion of it is still one of the least developed areas of the country. Given the socio-political relationships prevailing among the various groups, then, any solution to spatial inequality will remain difficult to attain. For proportional development of the region, more decentralized approaches to regional development are considered.
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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Problem

The thesis is concerned with the historical development of the Niger Delta in Nigeria, a region dissected by the distributaries of the River Niger (see Map 1). The area is occupied by cultural minorities and the most numerous group is the Ijaw. In 1975 the region had an estimated population of 3 million in a country with about 75 million in that year. The average density of population of the region in that year was about 110 persons per square kilometre, which was above the national average of 65 persons per square kilometre. Besides, the region has never been constituted as a single administrative unit since the colonial period.

In the pre-colonial period some of the coastal settlements such as Bonny, Opobo, New Calabar, Brass and Akassa in the Niger Delta were among the most important commercial centres in the Trans-Atlantic Trade, not only in Nigeria but also along the West Coast of Africa. Briggs has noted that in the 1850's, during the busiest periods of the River Niger, there appeared to be twice as much traffic here as in the upper parts of the Rhine. The prominence of the region in that period is in sharp contrast with the present situation which finds it one of the least-developed regions in the country.

The study concentrates on the years 1900 to 1977. As development, or underdevelopment, is an historical process,
researchers in Nigeria hold divergent views on the trends of the initial period when regional inequalities started in the country. Mabogunje has argued that regional inequality in the country is a recent phenomenon, dating back no further than when the country started to industrialize in the 1950's. Udo, on the other hand, maintains that recent industrial growth in Nigeria has merely accelerated inequalities; that the processes had started well before then. Specifically, Ogundana has observed that:

The recent decline of the ports in the Niger Delta which were in the pre-colonial period important centres of trade and politics, made the Delta itself a lagging region during the colonial era.

Full colonial administrative apparatus was established in Nigeria about 1900. Up to 1893, the British authorities were still "striving to conclude a number of treaties with local chiefs in order to have a stronghold" in the area that is now Nigeria. It was not until 1900, after the revocation of the Royal Niger Company Charter in 1899, that colonial administration was firmly established in Nigeria.

Towards the end of the colonial era, the Willink Minority Commission (of 1958) also noted the Niger Delta was in a deplorable state of development, as the Commission reported: "It is poor, backward and neglected and the whole of Nigeria is concerned." The Commission, therefore, recommended the establishment of an advisory group and the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDB) was set up in 1960 for a period of ten years. The board was to advise the Federal Government and the Regional
Governments, the Mid-West and East, which had jurisdiction over the region, on how to develop the area.

However, the NDDB "did not hold its first meeting until March of the following year, and two years after that it had not got beyond assembling five expatriate experts (an agricultural officer, a soil scientist, a forestry officer, a civil engineer and a fishery expert), seven launches and eight powered dinghies". By 1967, at the outbreak of the Civil War (1967-1970), the work of the board ended virtually without achieving any substantial success in improving the state of development of the area.

At present, the Niger Delta produces about two thirds of the national crude petroleum production. The first oil well in Nigeria was discovered in 1956 at Oloibiri in the Niger Delta, and since then it has been the leading producer of oil in the country. In 1977, oil accounted for 93% of the country's foreign exchange earnings. Between 1960 and 1977, there have been one civilian and two major military governments in Nigeria, a period which is long enough to make some significant impact in remedying the adverse effects of colonial economic policies. Yet not many changes have occurred in the state of development in most parts of the region.

There are, however, recognizable variations in the state of development of the different administrative units, and between rural and urban centres in the Niger Delta. What development is and how it is to be measured is not conclusive.
However, traditionally, the Gross National Product (GNP) per capita has been the yardstick of measurement of levels of regional development. In recent years, it is becoming apparent that these measures are far from satisfactory as real guides to whether life is getting better or worse. The United Nations Organization (UNO) has realized the obvious faults in those traditional indices and has adopted composite measures. The UNO indices for measuring development, among others, include levels of provision of safe drinking water, public transport, health, education and employment statistics.

In addition to the problem of choice of indices, there is also the problem of scarcity of data in the developing countries. Despite the obvious difficulties of collecting data in Nigeria, six variables, pipe-borne water supply, educational and health facilities, density of road networks, retail and wholesale establishments, and percentage of industrial employment (see Table 1), based on 1970 data are taken to indicate the spatial variations in the state of development in the Niger Delta. The situation since then might not have changed significantly to upset the basic pattern of inequality in the area. Rather, concentration of development at Port Harcourt increased especially after the War in 1970 as it began to function as the capital of the Rivers State. It is realized, moreover, that these variables can by no means summarize development which is a multidimensional process.

Map 2 shows that Yenagoa-Brass and Western Ijaw Divisions
Table 1

VARIABLES INDICATING INEQUALITIES IN THE NIGER DELTA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-regions</th>
<th>No. of Health facilities per capita</th>
<th>No. of schools per capita</th>
<th>Road density per square Km.</th>
<th>Wholesale/Retail establishment per capita</th>
<th>Pipe-borne water '000 Kw per capita</th>
<th>Percentage of population engaged in manufacturing</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Ahoada</td>
<td>20.68</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>63.45</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Bori</td>
<td>15.36</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>38.30</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Degema/Opobo</td>
<td>13.50</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>16.33</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Port Harcourt</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>18.00</td>
<td>156.77</td>
<td>33.25</td>
<td>15.01</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Western Ijaw</td>
<td>12.68</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>8.68</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Yenagosa-Brass</td>
<td>10.35</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>8.92</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
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</table>

MAP 2: LEVELS OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE NIGER DELTA (1970)

KEY
- REGIONAL BOUNDARY
- DIVISIONAL BOUNDARY
- NO. OF HEALTH FACILITIES PER CAPITA
- NO. OF SCHOOLS PER CAPITA
- ROAD DENSITY PER SQUARE KILOMETER
- WHOLESALE/RETAIL ESTABLISHMENTS PER CAPITA
- PIPE-BORN WATER 000 WATT PER CAPITA
- % OF POPULATION ENGAGED IN MANUFACTURING

Source: Prepared from Table 1
are the least-developed parts while Port Harcourt Division is the most developed in the Niger Delta. Warri, which is historically and geographically part of the Niger Delta, is excluded because the data available to me was based on administrative divisions, and Warri Division is outside the study area. However, Port Harcourt and Warri are as developed as the majority of urban centres in the country, while the areas outside these centres are among the least-developed parts in the country. The poverty of the areas outside these two centres has created both political and socio-economic problems in the region and the country as a whole.

Politically, inequalities in the Niger Delta have created a history of separatist movements which are relatively still active. In 1958, towards the end of the colonial rule, political leaders in the Niger Delta put forward a twofold argument, both economic and historical during the Willink Commission, to justify their demand for a separate state within the Federation of Nigeria, but no state was created. Instead the Niger Delta Development Board was established. In 1966, the late Adaka Boro led a violent revolt and declared a Delta People's Republic which was put down after two weeks of sporadic fighting with the Nigerian Mobile Police Force and the Army.

The people of the Niger Delta perceive the underdevelopment of parts of the region as a result of ethnic discrimination, since it is a region of national minorities. The Ijaw, the largest group in the area, were only 1.5 million people in 1963
compared with the Ibo, Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani who had a population of between four to six million for each group in that year. The Ijaw in particular, therefore, feel strongly that the entire region should be grouped together as a state instead of being subdivided into other areas outside the Region (see Map 3), so as to enable them to take decisions for the proper development of the area. This notion has created its own contradictions. The other cultural groups in the region are fearful of Ijaw domination so that each cultural group in the region, for example, the Port Harcourt State movement, has begun to make demands for a state of its own.

Economically, the few ports which survived the colonial period in the Niger Delta have further declined and are almost non-operational. In most developing countries, port areas are generally highly developed locations, so that the decline of some of the ports has created serious economic problems. In addition, the transportation system has never been effective. The slow and inadequate hand-paddled canoe transportation system in the riverine areas in particular, slows down economic activities and the provision of social facilities which we have observed in Map 2.

The thesis therefore attempts to explain the causes of these inequalities in the Niger Delta in an historical framework, particularly in the provision of transportation network which is an important variable in the process of development.
MAP 3: POLITICAL CHANGES IN THE NIGER DELTA

KEY

- - - - - - - - - - STATE BOUNDARIES
- - - - - - - - - - NIGER DELTA BOUNDARY

Source: Niger Delta Basin Development Authority, 1978
I.2 Literature Review

The literature dealing with the issue of unequal development in the Niger Delta tends to attribute spatial inequalities to topographical constraints, and to lack of motivation of the people in some parts of the region of the need for a higher level of achievement. In addition, the Willink Commission attributed it largely to lack of natural resources. However, since the discovery of oil in large quantity in the area, emphasis has shifted from the latter to the first sets of factors.

Udo has claimed that the cause of unequal development in the Niger Delta is from topographical constraints, as he remarked: 15

Already, there are loud grumblings that so far the Delta has benefited least from the oil industry. The righteous indignation of the people to this situation might appear to be misplaced since the neglect of the Delta can properly be blamed on its difficult terrain.

This approach illustrates the theory of environmental determinism which had earlier been popularized among others by the works of Semple and Huntington. The theory assumes that the level of development or underdevelopment of a given region is functionally related to the amount of natural resources and the extent of environmental constraints. There is no doubt that the physical structure of some parts of the Niger Delta, riddled by an intricate network of distributaries of the River Niger, does impose some limitations on the equal development of the various
parts of the region, particularly in a country that lacks adequate technology and perhaps finance.

In recent years, some scholars have, however, indicated that physical constraint is a secondary factor, and it is no longer the most important underlying cause of regional disparities. Viner has pointed out that regional disparities at the international level come from differences in the level of technological development, the rate of capital accumulation and foreign trade, and argued that environmental factors are relatively less important. Ullman has also observed more generally that development and underdevelopment are not entirely related to the physical and natural resource conditions of a place; rather, development is geographically uneven, occurring first at some points on a geographical space. Slater has gone further to criticize the theory on the grounds that it is ahistorical, and also for neglecting the role of interest groups and the world capitalist economic system which create and maintain regional disparities in the developing countries.

Udo himself was unable to use the theory of environmental determinism to explain unequal development in other parts of Nigeria. For example, he attributed the decline of Calabar, which was also an important pre-colonial port with a different physical environment from that of the Niger Delta, to colonial politico-economic policies. This indicates that his environmentalist approach lacks the elements of a general theory. Besides, the problem of regional disparity is not peculiar to
the Niger Delta but can be observed also in other parts of the country although it may be in varying degrees. As Ajaegbu has stated,\textsuperscript{20}

One major issue in Nigeria's development today is that whilst some development is happening, albeit slowly it is uneven, some areas are doing relatively well, others are lagging behind or depressed.

Thus, although the theory of environmental determinism recognizes the importance of physical factors in the process of development in parts of the Niger Delta, it lacks universal application. It neglects the structure of the international economy and the human dimensions in the decision-making process of "what" and "where" to develop.

The other theory is sociological. In 1976, Ofonagoro advanced a sociological explanation for the problems of the Niger Delta.\textsuperscript{21} He argued that the underdevelopment of parts of the Niger Delta comes from the lack of response of the people in those parts to new economic opportunities created through colonial relations. He went on to explain that at the initial phase of the colonial era, the people in the coastal areas, in Bonny and Degema, were merely interested in white collar jobs in the colonial offices and trading firms rather than engagement in other productive activities, such as trading and subsistence fishing for which the area was highly suitable. He illustrated his argument further by comparing the success of the hinterland Ibos, the Ibo-Aro middlemen, with the failure of the Niger Delta middlemen who were both active partners in trade in the pre-colonial era. His argument implies that the levels
of spatial development of the various regions in Nigeria were dependent on differences in the motivation for achievement among the cultural groups.

A similar 'lack of response' theory has been used in explaining the predominance of the Ijebu, a Yoruba sub-cultural group, in Nigeria, in the commercial spheres compared with other Yoruba. Akeredolu-Ale has argued in this case that the proposition was inadequate and attributed the success of the Ijebu to their proximity to Lagos and the poverty of their environment which made them dependent on trade. As regards the Ibo mentioned earlier, Dike has stated that the Ibo homeland is poor and over-populated and, therefore, they are hardworking and a highly migratory people.

It is not certain how environmental factors alone can explain fully the variations in spatial development. In fact, Harris has concluded from his study in Nigeria of the various ethnic groups, that there was no group with greater entrepreneurial ability than any other, "since individuals from different cultural groups have had differential opportunities to obtain certain strategic skills and experience and face different sets of potential opportunities". The conclusion of that study indicates that economic relations are not free from human relations so that spatial inequalities cannot be fully explained on the basis of sociological or cultural differences.

We have noted from the trend of the above argument that each of the theories, or a combination of both, are insufficient
to explain the complex factors involved in "development". It is, therefore, necessary to explore other spatial theories of development to have a wider insight into the causes of development or underdevelopment.

One of the most important of the spatial theories is the general equilibrium theory of development. Some variants of the theory postulate that regional inequality was an essential feature in the early stages of industrialization which tends to phase out over time. The equilibrium level, it is argued, would be achieved by forward and backward linkages if free market forces are left to function uninterruptedly. Myrdal criticized the theory that equal development cannot be attained without government intervention through economic policy working to reduce unequal development. His reason was that once growth is initiated in an area, inequality would be accelerated further by cumulative processes—concentration generates further concentration. His solution, however, has the implication that state regional policy has to be interpreted as being unambiguously directed towards counteracting regional inequality to serve public interest.

Contrary to Myrdal's view on Government intervention, the results of planned development exercises in the Third World countries are usually disappointing despite the formal commitment of these governments to equal development. The seven types of inequalities identified by Slater in the developing countries point to the inadequacy of planning in these countries.
instance, since national independence in 1960, Nigeria has carried through some National Development Plans, yet regional disparities have continued to widen. Some countries have gone further to adopt the "growth pole" strategy as a basis of practical planning programmes. There are doubts, however, about the effectiveness of this strategy in reducing inequality particularly as it is often difficult to identify growth poles.

Ul Haq has put the blame of the failures of planned development on the inadequacy of the methods of development planning:

The very institutions which economists created for promoting greater growth and capital accumulation seem to have frustrated all the attempts made to achieve better distribution and greater justice.

But that reason does not seem to be conclusive either, because it tends to neglect the role of the planners as well as other interest groups who influence the planning process itself both internally and externally.

Many Third World leaders, on the other hand, attribute the failure of development attempts for achieving their desired goals to foreign control of the productive resources of the national economy. In 1961, two Federal Ministers in Nigeria admitted that the Nigerian economy was not in Nigerian hands but rather was subjected to almost total control by multinationals so that they were constrained from effecting radical changes. Holland seems to agree that multinationals do undermine the ability of the state to regulate industrial
location, even in the advanced countries. Peripheral regions are thereby ignored in the location of industries, and this has resulted in the widening regional disparities in recent years. 31

In the case of Nigeria, Osoba has observed that the multinationals have local support in their locational behaviour because of the benefits for local groups as commissioned agents within the international economic system. 32 Armstrong and McGee also argued, more generally, that the linkage between the local interest groups and the multinationals causes the colonial urban centres in the Third World countries to grow out of proportion to all other regions, since both parties use the urban system as the major institution for accumulating capital. 33 They argue further that it is in the interest of these two groups that the rural areas are preserved as centres of the reserve army of labour for the industrial sector, as well as to save scarce resources to satisfy their financial interests.

This framework of analysis of inequality which incorporates the multinationals and the dominant interest groups collaborating through the urban system is a variation of the dependency analysis. The dependency analysis was first suggested by scholars of the Latin American countries as a reaction against the traditional theories of unequal development between the developed and the developing countries. 34

Implicit in the dependency analysis is the historical dimension which explains the factors that facilitate the multinationals in their domination of the peripheral countries, and
also why unequal development is a greater problem in the Third World countries than the more technologically advanced ones. The underlying argument centres upon the notion of metropolitan dominance of the international economic system. It also emphasizes the collaboration of the local dominant interest groups with the metropolitan multinationals.

I.3 The Organization of Analysis

The analysis of the thesis is based upon the dependency approach. It is, however, better described as an organizing theme of the various development theories, incorporating them in an historical framework rather than a theory of its own.

Of the literature on dependency analysis, Dos Santos has used a flexible and adaptable approach which appears to be a useful basis for understanding the economic history of the Niger Delta since colonial rule. According to Dos Santos, \(^{35}\)

External domination in a pure sense, is in principle impracticable, domination is practicable only when it finds support among those local groups which profit from it.

Thus he argues that the analysis of unequal development in the developing countries, "should seek out the concrete relationship prevailing in these countries". The decision to adopt a particular development strategy is determined by the interest of the dominant socio-economic groups who stand to profit from it. For, \(^{36}\)
Rationality is defined by men, and men exist in history in concrete societies and social groups. In other words, the rationality of an economic or political measure can only be defined on the basis of an understanding of the social system in which it is taken.

He therefore rejects a mere superficial description of geographical features which is not accompanied by a theoretical analysis of society as a whole.

Dos Santos' approach is useful for three reasons relevant to this case study. First, it places emphasis on the international economy and the decisions of interest groups as the major influences in regional inequality and not on technology, physical constraints, the geographical location of resources and sociological differences among ethnic groups. Secondly, it appears a flexible approach, applicable at any scale, connecting the international, national, regional or the micro-level of analysis provided one uses a comprehensive approach to the study of the society. Thirdly, its emphasis on the society permits the identification of contradictions within and between interest groups so that one would not assume undifferentiated dominant social groups.

The purpose of the thesis is specifically to provide an historical analysis of the socio-economic and political factors which created and still maintain unequal development in the Niger Delta, and to suggest ways of reducing their adverse effects. This will be done by a flexible application of the approach outlined above.

The analysis of the evolution of regional inequalities will
be at three levels: the incorporation of Nigeria and therefore
the Niger Delta into the world capitalist system through colonial
relations; the role of the dominant interest groups at the
national and local levels, and the urban-rural relationship.
These scales of organization are based on the recognition that
unequal development in the study area cannot be explained fully
without reference to the international economy, the national
economic history and economic decisions taken at the national
level. The main focus will be the factors that determine the
colonial and post-colonial policies of development and their
effects on the evolution of transportation network and
consequently, regional inequality.

The thesis is organized in accordance with the approach
outlined above and the structure reflects the methodology I have
adopted. Chapter II describes the pre-colonial and the present
economic structures of the Niger Delta. It is comparative in
nature. It compares and contrasts the pre-colonial, the modern
and the subsistence sector of the economy of the region. In
doing so, a fairly detailed description of the physical
environment is also included.

Chapter III discusses the consequences of colonial economic
policies with regard to agriculture and commerce and their
effects on the development of transportation and urban systems,
and the decline of the pre-colonial coastal ports.

Chapter IV is concerned with the role of the dominant
interest groups after the colonial era in perpetuating the
inequalities created by the former. The emphasis is on the intra-group conflicts among the dominant interest groups at the national and regional levels. These arise from the groups' dependency on state power to collaborate with the multinationals. The other social groups, such as the working-class and the peasants in the population, are discussed whenever possible where their interests are affected.

Chapter V considers alternative development approaches to the development of the region and the pattern of distribution of power that would make the strategy work. Chapter VI, in concluding, restates the basic problems standing in the way of effective development of the region and the means required to overcome them.

The main methodology lies in an historical description, both quantitative and qualitative, of the economic and political policies and their implications in generating inequalities in the Niger Delta. Maps, tables and graphs are the major geographical techniques used in illustrating the direction of changes.

The major sources of information for the study are government documents, books, articles and newspaper publications. The collection of most of these documents for the study was done during the summer from July to August 27, 1979. In addition, materials from personal interviews with government officials, village heads, farmers and fishermen are incorporated. The interviews were conducted to identify to what extent peasant farmers and fishermen have benefitted from the Governments'
rural development programme between 1976 and 1977 and the exploration of oil in the region.

The range of information is, however, limited. This is because of lack of comprehensive data on the Niger Delta as well as comparative data with the rest of Nigeria. In Nigeria there hardly exists any reliable data, and those that may be available are generally incomplete or, in many cases, there are very obvious inaccuracies. Data collection for the Niger Delta is further compounded by the frequent administrative changes in the region (see again Map 3). Besides, certain details are likely to be omitted in order to give a straightforward account, since the period covered by the study is inevitably long.
FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER I


3. The Eastern part of the Niger Delta (now Rivers State) has been described recently as, "Near expensive oil production installations are impassable roads and neglected schools. It is one of Nigeria's least-developed states though it produces 64 percent of the country's oil wealth". *West Africa* No. 3268, 10 March, 1980, P.427.


8. The Willink Majority Commission (1958) was set up to ascertain the fears of the minority groups in Nigeria when the British were about the terminate their authority, and to recommend if possible the creation of some states in the country. See also Willink Minority Commission Report 1958, P.94.


12. Historically, Warri is an Ijaw town. The original inhabitants, the Ogbe Ijaw were asked by the Colonial Administration to leave the area when the site was chosen by the authorities for development. Unfortunately, when the treaty for the use of the land was signed, the British signed it with the Olu of Itsekiri and since 1933 there has been a suit filed against the Government and the Itsekiri Land Trustee - Suit No. W/14856, in the High Court and even today it has not been decided because of the political implications. See also Ikime, A. Niger Delta Rivalry, Itsekiri-Urobo Relations and European Presence 1884-1969, 1969, P.255.

13. The two parts of the argument are as follows:
   a) "That the people in this area share a way of life dictated by the physical circumstances of the country in which they lived and that they were united by fear of neglect at the hands of a government which did not understand their needs and who in any case put the needs of the interior first.

   b) That when the British first came to this area, they made treaties of trade and protection with the local chiefs; these were of a special nature and different from the treaties made with other chiefs inland. The British Crown undertook to provide protection and to deal with foreign powers, but the treaties did not provide that the Chiefs should surrender to the British government a Sovereignty which could be transferred to any other authority. If Her Majesty's Government saw it fit to end the treaties then the Chiefs of this area were normally entitled to revert to their original status."

   See Our Case 1969, P.7.

14. The late Adaka Boro, ex-President of the Student Union University of Nigeria Nsukka, Nigeria, and two others Northingham Dick, and Samuel Owinoru were tried for treason against the country and were condemned to death during the late General Aguyi-Ironsi's Military Government in 1966. They were granted general amnesty by General Yakubu Gowon when he came to power in a counter coup later in 1966. Isaac Boro and Northingham Dick died while fighting on the side of the Federal Government in 1969 during the Civil War. See also Professor Tamuno, T.A. "Patriotism and Statism in Rivers State": African Affairs,


30. The Ministers were Zanna Bukar Dipcharima (Trade) and Waziri Ibrahim (Economic Development) who made these statements in the House of Representatives in 1961, see full details in Osoba, S. "The Deepening Crisis of the Nigerian National Bourgeoisie". A Review of African Political Economy, No. 13, 1978, P.63-77, Pf.64.


34. It is generally stated that R. Prebisch was among the first to argue that the problem of the Latin American countries in the development attempts was their dependency on International Trade, and later it was developed by Frank, A.G., 1966. "The Development of Underdevelopment" Monthly Review Vol. XVII, September 17-31. Frank's argument was that capitalism had underdeveloped Latin American economies, instead of developing them; and the bourgeoisie of these countries have become passive accessories to foreign control and unable to challenge this control.

36. Dos Santos, T. ibid, P.61.

37. The main focus of the personal interviews was to find out how loans for farmers and fishermen were being allocated particularly in the Operation Feed the Nation Programme in the Rivers State of Nigeria between 1976-77. Unfortunately, there was already a Government investigation into how the funds were disbursed so that little statistical data was made available to me. The result was that I could interview only a limited number of the recipients of the loans to clearly identify the manner in which the loans were given so that the restricted information I was able to gather is incorporated in Chapter IV.
CHAPTER II: HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

II.1 Geographical Bases of Economic Activities

The topography of the Niger Delta results from its geological history. It is generally low-lying and intricately dissected by the distributaries of the River Niger. The Delta covers an area of about 7,965 square miles. Of that, fresh water alluvial swamps cover about 2,730 square miles, Saline (Mangrove) swamps 2,460 square miles, beach-ridge terrain 500 square miles, and an oligocene-pleistocene coastal plain which is part of the plateau of Eastern Nigeria covers about 2,275 square miles. The morphology of the Niger Delta is similar to the entire coastal area of Nigeria, extending to Badagry in the west and to Calabar in Eastern Nigeria, although it is much more complex in the Niger Delta.

The Niger Delta is a geosyncline or an embayment. It results from subsidence of that part of the African plateau during the cretaceous period. During the subsidence a canyonlike valley was created, and forms the foundation of the present Delta. It is flanked by higher-lying plateau land at either side. The plateau consists of sediments accumulated in the Miocene-pleistocene period and these sediments display unconformable contact with the older tertiary and cretaceous sediments.

The geosyncline has been filled with sediments eroded from the plateau and sediments of marine origin. These sediments of fluxiatile and fluvio-marine origin have accumulated to a depth of about 10,000 to 13,400 metres. The sediments have suffered from slight deformation causing sub-surface
anticlines, synclines and faults. These slightly deformed sediments contain the oil deposits.

Climatically, the Niger Delta is within the zone of double maxima rainfall which gives rise to luxuriant tropical forest with thick undergrowth and climbers. Rainfall is heaviest in the coastal region. Brass, Bonny and Opobo in the coastal areas receive 3,678 mm, 4,298 mm and 3,640 mm of rainfall respectively. In the centre of the Delta rainfall decreases to 3,112 mm at Abobiri, 3,124 mm at Oporoma in the freshwater swamp area. Further inland rainfall decreases from 2,450 mm at Port Harcourt to 2,297 mm at Alewete.

There are four physio-ecological zones in the Niger Delta: coastal beaches-sand ridges, mangrove, freshwater zones, and a coastal plain (Map 4). Near the sea is the coastal beaches-sand ridges zone. This zone is made up of about twenty major ridges curved in a discontinuous chain, often broken by estuaries and looped around the Delta from the Opobo River to that of the Benin River. These ridges which are formed from an interplay of fluvial and marine action are estimated to have started between 5,000 and 2,000 years ago and vary from about 75 metres to 16 kilometres in width.

The mangrove swamp is a vegetated tidal flat with red mangrove trees. There is an estimated 34,000,000 tons of mangrove trees which even at an annual usage of 600,000 tons will still keep the forest in "perpetuity". At present, they are very seldom used except for firewood and as local
building materials.\textsuperscript{10} The drainage is reticulate with dendritic channels which are in continuous connection by means of flood channels between every part of the tidal flat.\textsuperscript{11}

The freshwater zone is a low-lying area and the mangrove zone gradually merges into it. Rivers are highly sinuous, forming series of levées and ox-bow lakes. The river banks in this area are annually flooded between August and November by waters from the River Niger. It is a typical equatorial rain forest with tall trees and climbers.

The coastal plain is on the North East of the region, while on the North West, it merely marks the edge of the Delta. This zone is drier than all the other parts of the Delta. The equatorial forest in this area has been greatly modified by more farming activities.

Population in the Niger Delta is not evenly distributed. Population is very sparse in the mangrove zone with a density of between 10 to 20 persons per square kilometre, although the eastern part of the zone, the region around Abonnema, Buguma and Bakana are some of the most thickly populated parts of the Delta with a density of 100 to 175 persons per square kilometre. Buguma has a population of more than 100,000, otherwise population is concentrated on the narrow coastal beaches and sand ridges zone. Based on the 1963 census figures, the most densely settled part is in the North East, the area around Bori (see Map 5). There has been no officially accepted census figures in Nigeria since after 1963 because of census malpractices such as inflation of population figures.\textsuperscript{12}
MAP 5: NIGER DELTA POPULATION DISTRIBUTION IN 1963

TOWNS:
- ABOVE 180,000
- 100,000
- 25,000
- 10,000

Legend:
- OVER 200
- 140–200
- 80–140
- 20–80
- UNDER 20

Source: Nigeria Year Book, 1972-1973
Apart from the occasional concentration of population in some parts of the region, the Delta is generally a sparsely populated area. In contrast, the Ibo heartland around Owerri has a population density of about 350 persons per square kilometre. In Yorubaland and in Northern Nigeria around Kano, population densities vary between 200 to 250 persons per square kilometre.

An important aspect of Nigeria's population count is that there have been no officially accepted census figures since 1963 because of census malpractices such as deliberate inflation or undercounting of population of different areas. This is because population numbers are seen as political instruments of control and domination since political parties in Nigeria are still based on sectional ideologies. Even those compiled by the colonial authorities are equally questionable because of the manipulation of figures to suit Northern Nigeria.13

The spatial pattern of development in Nigeria, however, is not strictly dictated by the initial densities of population as we shall notice in chapter III. Therefore, sparsity of population in the Niger Delta cannot be put forward as the basic cause of underdevelopment.
II.2 Pre-Colonial Economy (Ca 1700-1900)

Between Ca 1700 and 1900 the coastal city states of Opobo, Bonny Brass and New Calabar were the busiest centres in the trans-Atlantic trade in West Africa, but from the colonial to post-independence period, the region became one of the least developed parts of Nigeria. Traditionally, the main occupations of the people were fishing in the coastal areas and farming in the hinterland. In addition, salt was also produced in the coastal regions in two ways. The simplest source was from heating sea water to dryness and the residue was used as salt. The second and the most important source was by burning the young roots of the red mangrove tree to ashes, allowing water to pass through the ashes and the solution was heated to dryness and the residue made into a cake-like salt called "Izofu." The "Izofu" was one of the most important articles of trade used for the purchase of domestic slaves, food and other valuable items of trade from the hinterland and for payments of bride price.

The prominence of the Niger Delta in the commercial sphere however, began during the slave trade. Between 1752 and 1799, of the 281 slave ships with a total of 108,378 slave capacity which left Liverpool, England, for the Nigerian coast, 75% of these ships with 76% slave carrying capacity were destined for the Niger Delta ports of Bonny and New Calabar. Table 2 shows
TABLE 2

PALM OIL IMPORTED INTO U.K. FROM WEST AFRICA,
1790-1853, TO THE NEAREST TON

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>tons</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>tons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1790</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>1822</td>
<td>3,188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1791</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>1823</td>
<td>3,270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1792</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>1824</td>
<td>3,699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1793</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>1825</td>
<td>4,268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1794</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>1826</td>
<td>4,953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>1827</td>
<td>4,712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1796</td>
<td>-*</td>
<td>1828</td>
<td>6,328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1797</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>1829</td>
<td>8,996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1798</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>1830</td>
<td>10,673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1799</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>1831</td>
<td>8,164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>1832</td>
<td>10,890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1801</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>1833</td>
<td>13,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1802</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>1834</td>
<td>13,495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1803</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>1835</td>
<td>12,817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1804</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>1836</td>
<td>13,832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1805</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>1837</td>
<td>11,165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1806</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>1838</td>
<td>14,069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1807</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>1839</td>
<td>17,172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1808</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>1840</td>
<td>15,773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1809</td>
<td>749</td>
<td>1841</td>
<td>19,854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1810</td>
<td>1,288</td>
<td>1842</td>
<td>21,009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1811</td>
<td>1,177</td>
<td>1843</td>
<td>20,394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1812</td>
<td>582</td>
<td>1844</td>
<td>20,728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1813</td>
<td>-*</td>
<td>1845</td>
<td>25,042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1814</td>
<td>967</td>
<td>1846</td>
<td>18,023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1815</td>
<td>2,064</td>
<td>1847</td>
<td>23,467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1816</td>
<td>1,192</td>
<td>1848</td>
<td>24,986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1817</td>
<td>1,385</td>
<td>1849</td>
<td>23,768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1818</td>
<td>1,465</td>
<td>1850</td>
<td>21,722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1819</td>
<td>3,702</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>29,224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1820</td>
<td>873</td>
<td>1852</td>
<td>25,395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1821</td>
<td>5,124</td>
<td>1853</td>
<td>31,457</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Records destroyed by fire.

Sources: PP. 1845 (187), xlvi, An account of the Quantity of Palm Oil annually imported into the United Kingdom from the Western Coast of Africa, since the Year 1790, to the 31st day of December 1844. P.P. 1854 (296), lxv, Return of the Quantities of Tallow, Palm Oil, (etc.). Imported into the United Kingdom during the Years 1844 to 1853 inclusive, specifying the Quantities imported from each Country.

exports of palm oil from West Africa to the United Kingdom between 1790 and 1853 and in 1856, of the 37,198 tons exported, 18,344 tons or 49.3% were exported through Bonny, New Calabar and Brass in the Niger Delta. Map 6 shows the proportional volume of palm produce exported at each port in that year.

The importance of the Niger Delta in the pre-colonial period was due, in part, to the strategic location of the region to the Atlantic trade and the commercial acumen of the people of the area. The estuaries of the distributaries of the River Niger provided an easy means of communication with the hinterland at a time when boats and inland waterways were the most important means of transportation. Settlements at these estuaries of the Delta formed suitable entrepôts for the import-export trade at the time. In the 1840's, Liverpool trade with the Delta employed about 736 Englishmen to ship annually between 12,000 to 15,000 tons of palm oil. By 1873, there were 26 firms which maintained 55 trading establishments in the region and at Old Calabar.

To take advantage of the increasing import-export trade, these early centres of trade in the Delta: Bonny, New Calabar, Opobo and Brass (otherwise referred to as the Niger Delta City States) organized themselves into family-based trading organizations, known as the "Wari" or family system. Jones calls this system a "canoe house" which he defined as "a compact and well organized trading and fighting corporation capable of manning and maintaining a war canoe". In an era of monopolistic
trading organizations, some measure of military authority was required to maintain hegemony over market areas so as to prevent intruders. Thus a "canoe house" besides transporting goods to and from the coast to the interior markets, existed to defend monopoly trading rights. Apart from the direct involvement in the trade, the rulers of the City States also devised a toll or comey that was paid by the European trading companies at each port which yielded additional revenue. However, this trade soon became a source of intervention in the Niger Delta by the British.

The British became involved in the Niger Delta after 1849 on the pretext that their nationals trading in the area needed protection. According to Dike, the British involvement in the area was necessitated by the violent clashes between the middlemen (the Niger Delta City States) and the European traders in the area. The violence, Dike added, resulted from disputes arising from debts which were demanded by the European traders from their middlemen allies who owed heavy sums of money through the practices of the "Trust System" of trade.

The trust system involved giving goods out on credit to the African middlemen by European traders in return for the sale of palm oil in like amount to the creditor. It was not however, a unilinear credit trade arrangement; the middlemen also gave out goods on credit to European traders. Morel remarked in 1902 that:

Giving out is not invariably confined to Europeans. Native chiefs have been known to give trust to
Europeans up to 1,000 cases of palm oil, in days too, when palm oil was worth £15 per puncheon. This would represent a credit of £15,000.

Gertzel has also argued that the main cause of friction between the middlemen and the European traders between 1800-1896 was the former's attempts to break into the export trade. The middlemen's efforts to engage in direct export trade with Europe dated back to the 1850's, if not beyond, when indigenous traders exported their produce through a Liverpool mail-boat. British direct involvement and colonization of the Delta in 1885 were therefore, the outcome of commercial interest.

The dominance of the Niger Delta in the commercial sphere was not significantly eroded at the very early stages of colonial rule between 1886 and 1900. Between 1899 and 1901, for instance, Forcados, the new Marine headquarters of the Royal Niger Company in the Delta, was the leading port in the country (see Table 3). Before 1900 there were no ports which were designated major ports to the detriment of others as it is today, rather there were occasional ports decline and concentration. Ogundana identified four periods of such port activities and the relative importance of each port (Figure 1). The first three periods fall into Taaffe, Morrill and Gould's initial phase, characterized by scattered trading centres along the coast, and the "period of Imperial diffusion" is the phase (B) period of penetration lines. The dominance of the Niger Delta started to decline from the imperial period and consequently the ports and the region stagnated economically.
# TABLE 3

THE NIGER DELTA PORTS AND THE EXPORT-IMPORT TRADE 1899-1900
RETURN SHOWING THE NUMBER AND TONNAGE OF VESSELS ENTERED AND CLEARED AT EACH PORT OF SOUTHERN NIGERIA FROM APRIL 1, 1900, TO MARCH 31, 1901, AND THE CORRESPONDING PERIOD OF 1899-1900

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ports</th>
<th>1900-1901 Entered No.</th>
<th>Registered tonnage</th>
<th>Cleared No.</th>
<th>Registered tonnage</th>
<th>1899-1900 Entered No.</th>
<th>Registered tonnage</th>
<th>Cleared No.</th>
<th>Registered tonnage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old Calabar</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>187,531</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>185,271</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>144,278</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>140,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opobo</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>72,677</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>70,577</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>79,835</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>79,947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonny</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>239,947</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>235,392</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>145,489</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>143,072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Calabar&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>49,020</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>47,190</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>69,558</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>69,558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brass</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>72,504</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>76,017</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>70,799</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>70,799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akassa</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>61,652</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>61,454</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7,555</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7,555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forcados</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>247,622</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>246,148</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>197,879</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>199,801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total for all ports</strong></td>
<td><strong>642</strong></td>
<td><strong>930,953</strong></td>
<td><strong>638</strong></td>
<td><strong>922,049</strong></td>
<td><strong>455</strong></td>
<td><strong>715,393</strong></td>
<td><strong>452</strong></td>
<td><strong>711,692</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Closed as Port of Entry October 1900; all vessels entering and clearing at Bonny.  
<sup>b</sup>All vessels cleared at Forcados, this figure includes Warri, Benin and Sapele.

Source: NA/E, CSE I/I/I. Appendices to Report by H. L. Searle, Collector of Customs, to Secretary, Southern Provinces, 1901.

FIGURE 1

SYSTEMS OF LEADING PORTS IN NIGERIA

Reference

- First port of period indicated
- Second
- Third
- Usually subsidiary ports

All figures 1-6 refer to periods

PERIODS
1. Early Portuguese Period 4. Rise of Lagos
2. Biafra Diffusion 5. Imperial Diffusion

Source: Ogundana, O. Odu vol. 3 No. 2 1967 p. 67
MAP 7: OIL WELLS IN AND AROUND THE NIGER DELTA

KEY
△ OIL WELLS
— Pipeline
* Tanker terminal

Sources: Foreign Scouting Service (1973), and NNPC Bulletin (1979).
II.3 The Modern Economy - The Petroleum Sector

The Niger Delta is the most important oil producing area in Nigeria today. In 1977, Nigeria ranked fifth among the member countries of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and seventh in the world in the production of petroleum. In that year, Nigerian average daily production of crude petroleum was 2.1 million barrels. This is a slight fall from the 1974 production which was 2.4 million barrels and also well below that of Saudi Arabia with 9.5 million barrels a day. There are estimated reserves of between 20-25 billion barrels of crude oil in the country and most of these reserves are in the Niger Delta. There are also about 1.4 trillion cubic metres of gas reserves of which at present only 2% is utilized by industries, the rest being burnt off. These oil and gas reserves are trapped in the Anticlines formed in the late tertiary deposits in the Niger Delta geosyncline which was formed in the cretaceous period.

The Niger Delta and its periphery accounts for virtually all the known oil wells in the country (Map 7). In addition, the "Offshore Niger Delta is regarded as one of the most prolific oil producing prospects in the world", of excellent quality with very low sulphur content. In 1967, the Niger Delta accounted for 74% of crude oil but fell to 67% of the total oil production in the country in 1979. This does not represent an absolute decline in the production but it is a result of growing production of oil outside the Niger Delta.
Financially, petroleum is the most important export commodity in the country. From 1963, oil production rose sharply from 6.9% to 93% of total export-earnings, or 75% of foreign exchange earnings and 85% of total Federal Government revenue in 1977. Figure 2 illustrates the contribution of oil production to the total foreign exchange earnings from 1963 to 1977. Nevertheless, the contribution of oil to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was about 45% in 1974. This is because of heavy foreign involvement in the production which results in repatriation of profits and wages. Planners of the Third National Development Plan (1975-1980) expect the contribution of oil to the GDP to fall from the 45% in 1974-75 to 32% in 1980 although absolute contribution of oil is to increase to N10,724 million ($18,982.2 million US) in 1979-80. The expected reduction of oil's contribution to the GDP is based on the calculation that the other sectors of the economy, such as agriculture, manufacturing and construction would increase to reduce the role of oil.

The construction of the oil refinery at Port Harcourt in 1965 further helped to conserve a greater proportion of capital which would otherwise be used in the purchase of refined oil. "By 1967, the annual value of petroleum imports replaced by refining crude oil in Nigeria was about N28 million ($49.56 million US) and by 1971 alone such imports substitution was estimated at about N36.00 ($63.72 US) million". Nevertheless, more than 95% of the total oil is still exported as crude
FIGURE 2

NIGERIA: OIL CONTRIBUTION TO FOREIGN EXCHANGE 1963-77

mostly to the United States of America and Western European countries.\textsuperscript{40}

The petroleum industry also offers employment although this is relatively small in comparison with the role of oil in the country's economy. In 1976, the oil industry employed a total of 4,500 Nigerians in the service sector and its ancillary firms. The number represents only 1.3\% of total Nigerians employed in the modern sector.\textsuperscript{41} However, there are plans to construct additional refineries at Warri and Kaduna, and a liquid gas project is being planned for the Bonny Terminus which would provide additional employment opportunities. Furthermore, the oil industry has led to the establishment of a Petroleum Training Institute in 1975 at Warri and few scholarships and opportunities for technical training are made available.

The exploitation of oil which is concentrated in the Niger Delta has, however, made no significant impact in the development of the Niger Delta. The industry is concentrated at Warri and Port Harcourt; all the oil wells are connected to these two centres by pipe lines so that the industry provides virtually no employment opportunities for people living in the areas of production.
II-4 The Subsistence Economy

The nature of the subsistence economy in the Delta is closely related to the physiographical and ecological zones in the region. The major occupation in the coastal beaches—sand ridges and mangrove zones is fishing and trading. Fishing is done in three areas: in the open sea, in the estuaries and in the creeks. To facilitate productivity and eliminate lengthy journeys, fishermen usually establish temporary or semi-permanent camps close to fishing grounds and this usually results in numerous villages. In 1967, the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDB) reported that the Niger Delta has the best fishing grounds in Nigeria and "the coastal waters of the Delta may be regarded as a fish pond" although the fishing grounds are not as rich as those of the United States of America.42 Despite this favourable report very little has been done to adopt better fishing methods. Fishing is still done mainly with the hand paddled dugout canoe and various types of simple fishing nets. Fish catches from these traditional methods are small and as a result a fisherman's personal income is low. The estimated income per fisherman in the mangrove zone area in 1966 was just over £55 or $121.00 US which was considered better than that of a farmer in the freshwater zone.43

The freshwater zone and the coastal plain are mainly farming regions producing food crops such as plantain, cassava, cocoa yams and maize. The freshwater zone has been described by experts as the "rice bowl" of West Africa so that if rice cultivation is developed, the Delta could "produce enough
rice to feed not only West Africa but also to export". The NDDB experimented with the SML variety from Surinam at Peremabiri between 1961-1965 and since then the Delta has shown the highest yield in the country with between 3,400 and 5,650 Kg per hectare. But rice production is still limited to the experimental form and it is not yet widely cultivated by the peasant farmers.

The most lucrative economic activity in the freshwater zone is the tapping of palm wine from the raphia palm and distilling it into gin, locally called "Kaikai". It was estimated by the NDDB in 1966 that there were about 300 million raphia palm trees in the region with a potential annual production of more than two billion litres of locally distilled gin which will yield more than N20 ($35.4 US) million per annum. The gin is produced in large quantities and exported in drums not only to other parts of Nigeria but also to countries such as Cameroon and Gabon. Throughout the Colonial era to 1967, production was made illegal in favour of imported alcoholic drinks, and only after the civil war in 1970 that production became legalized.

The coastal plain is the most important palm belt and agricultural zone in the Niger Delta. In 1964, the year with latest available figures, about 51% of total palm kernel bought by the Eastern Regional Marketing Board in the Delta region came from Abonnema port which served that area. This percentage excludes palm kernels transported to Port Harcourt by land.
Typical Riverine Scene with several rivulets
Source: Resources and Wealth 1969 P7

The Mangrove Forest
Source: Resources and Wealth op. cit. Pl3
Oil Palm Tree in the Coastal Plain area
Source: Resource and Wealth P18

The Raphia Palm tree in the Fresh Water Zone
Source: Resource and Wealth P33
Traditional means of Transportation in the Delta; it has not changed significantly since the Colonial period

Source: Mockler Perryman 1902 P.106

Fishing in the creeks with the cast net

Source: Resources and Wealth P.9
Despite these economic potentialities of the Niger Delta no significant attempts have been made to increase production or to improve the transportation system to aid economic development in the region. Photographs 1 to 6 show the general physical environment, vegetation, transportation systems and the subsistence economic structure of the region. Small scale fishermen and farmers have not yet been sufficiently encouraged to adopt new and better methods of production to improve their living standards. Thus, the Niger Delta can be classified as a vast rural area occupied by subsistence producers while Port Harcourt and Warri have developed as enclaves of a modern economy.

The focus of the next chapter is an historical analysis of the consequences of the incorporation of the Niger Delta into the capitalist world economy through colonial relations and the evolution of the present spatial patterns we have observed in the introduction.
FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER II


10. The Mangrove tree is also used as Railway shippers, and pit prope for the Enugu Coal Mine. In 1965, a Swedish firm requested to purchase 20,000 tons of mangrove timber annually but it is not certain if export was made before the country went into crisis in January 1966. This was reported by the Chairman of the NDDB, late Chief S. I. Anthony. See Federal Nigeria, 1965, Vol. 3, No. 5, P.27.


15. This information is part of an oral history of Foropa told by the Late Mrs. Kalabo Alamene in 1956 and has since been recorded. She was one of the oldest people at Foropa at the time and was one of the most celebrated traditional historians of the town at the time. She died in 1963. See also Crowder, M. The Story of Nigeria 1966 op. cit. P.80.

16. See Latham, A.J.H., Old Calabar 1600-1891, 1973 P.21. In these records, Bonny had 52% of slave ships with 56% slave capacity, Old Calabar 25% of ships with 24% of slave capacity, New Calabar 23% of ships with 20% of slave capacity.


22. Dike, K. O. ibid, P. 92.
23. Dike, K. O. ibid, P. 103.


30. Ibid, P. 38.


34. Calculated from The Oil Rich Rivers State, op. cit. P. 7.


36. Currency conversions in the study are based on 
   in Nigeria 0.8 British $1.77 US.


43. Fishing gears used by local fishermen include cast net, drift net, Linning, Onyima and Ota traps, Mudskipper traps, sea bonga drift. See also Scott, J.S. NDDB. Report on the Fisheries of the Niger Delta Special Area, 1966, P. 30-42 and P. 7.


CHAPTER III: COLONIALISM AND ITS REGIONAL CONSEQUENCES
1900-1960

III.1 The Motives of Colonial Economic Development in Nigeria

The uneven development in the Niger Delta which we have observed in Chapter I is, in large part, the history of the consequences of colonialism. The international political and economic forces that led to the creation of Nigeria and other African countries are familiar. The main aims of British colonialism in Nigeria may be summed up in two parts. One was to create and maintain political, economic, moral and material conditions necessary for the exploitation of tropical agricultural products and minerals for industries in Europe. The other was to secure the country as a market for manufactured goods of the metropolitan industries.¹

The colonial authorities, therefore, clearly defined the division of labour. The peasant-grown crops were to be purchased by European trading firms and to be transported to the world market by European owned and managed railways and ships.² The implication of these policies is the colonial preference for capitalist strategy of development based on private enterprise conducted through European trading firms in which the colonies were to be financially self-supporting.³

In this strategy, the decision-making process in the colonial administration was monopolized by expatriates so that as late as 1955, 55% of all senior posts in the civil service
were held by expatriates and had only 22.5% Africans, while in that year there were 22.5% or 550 vacancies in this cadre of administration (see Table 4).

Economically, the strategy was to concentrate on the development of the native-grown products and on the exploitation of minerals. These colonial policies, in the field of agriculture and minerals, transport and commerce, created the initial uneven economic and social development with spatial impact on the Niger Delta.

III.2 The Exploitation of Agricultural and Mineral Resources

Colonial extraction of export products like cocoa, palm produce, cotton, groundnuts and minerals in Nigeria for the international market was the basis of unequal development that has affected the Niger Delta. The extraction of these crops was the main focus of development. However, cultivation was left in the hands of the peasants while production was stimulated through fiscal policies in terms of introducing the British currency, taxation and foreign trade, conducted through foreign firms. There was a division of labour from the production stage to the international market process; Europeans were excluded from establishing plantations and Nigerians from engaging in processing, packing, sorting and grading of their produce for export. In this type of watertight division of labour, Nigerians, other than the peasants, could participate mainly as middlemen between the peasants and the foreign firms.
# TABLE 4

PERCENTAGE/ACTUAL DISTRIBUTION OF SENIOR POSTS OF THE FEDERAL CIVIL SERVICE 1945-1960

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participating Groups</th>
<th>1945</th>
<th>1948</th>
<th>1955</th>
<th>1960</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expatriates</td>
<td>58.4 (1,300)</td>
<td>60.6 (2,296)</td>
<td>55.0 (1,350)</td>
<td>22.2 (864)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africans*</td>
<td>3.4 (75)</td>
<td>6.5 (245)</td>
<td>22.5 (550)**</td>
<td>59.1 (2,304)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacancies</td>
<td>38.2 (850)</td>
<td>32.9 (1,245)</td>
<td>22.5 (550)</td>
<td>18.7 (732)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Percentage</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Actual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available Posts</td>
<td>2,225</td>
<td>3,786</td>
<td>2,450</td>
<td>3,900***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Africans include West African Officers from Gold Coast and Sierra Leone.
** All Southerners. Approximate figures.
*** The total should be 3,900 and not 4,000 as in the source of data.

The growth requirements of the products, however, are self-evident in regional specialization of production. The Western Region of Nigeria became noted for cocoa, the Northern Region for cotton, groundnut, and benniseed, while the Southeastern parts including the Niger Delta for palm produce.

In the Niger Delta, the oil palm produce (palm oil and kernel) were the only products required in the international market while rice and fishery potentials as we noted in Chapter II were seen as having little value. The Delta as a whole was not so much endowed with the palm produce; production was much more abundant in the Ahoada and Ogoni Divisions, and to a lesser extent in the freshwater zone. In this complex spatial pattern of production, colonial development efforts were mainly directed towards the optimum areas of production neglecting the less favourable areas in the region.

The Department of Agriculture introduced new crops, new varieties, better planting techniques and existing species were improved. Export of agricultural crops increased when the construction of the two sections of the railway were completed after 1930 (see Figure 3). Between 1900 and 1927, the country's exports rose by 50% by volume and 700% by value. In 1900 agricultural products accounted for 92% of the export trade and by 1954, it was still contributing 73% of domestic exports in the country. Acreage of land devoted to the cultivation of export crops also increased.

The purchase of agricultural products was monopolized by
FIGURE 3

GROWTH OF AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS 1900 - 1960

European trading firms. By 1928, there were about eighty-three such trading enterprises in the country. The monopoly was maintained through market sharing agreements among the companies and legalized by colonial authorities. Between 1934 and 1937, there were the Merchandise and Ration Commodities Agreements by which the purchase of agricultural products, imported goods and locally produced food stuffs used by the European population in the country were controlled. In the 1943-1944 produce-buying season, the expatriate share of the exports was roughly 99%. The United African Company (UAC) and its subsidiaries bought nearly 74% of palm produce while African merchants had only 0.47% (Table 5). Until 1949, 85% of all import-export trade was still in the hands of European firms, 10% in Levantine and Indian firms and only 5% by African firms. With such monopolistic practices the foreign trading firms made huge profits. For example, between 1936 and 1937, in boom months, price differences for per ton of cocoa between Nigeria and the United States of America was as high as 93% (Table 6). In this way the UAC and its subsidiaries were making between 200 and 300 million pounds turnover annually in West Africa.

In the Niger Delta, the UAC was the major buyer of agricultural produce through its sub-stations at Patani, Bomadi, Yenagoa, Amassoma, Ogbia-Ayanma, Joinkrama and Elele. Palm produce bought from these stations and from stations up the River Niger were transported to the Delta ports of Forcados-Burutu, Opobo and Abonnema. These sub-stations and ports
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shippers</th>
<th>Palm Oil</th>
<th>Palm Kernel</th>
<th>Cocoa Lagos-Benin</th>
<th>Cocoa Calabar and Victoria</th>
<th>Groundnut Kano</th>
<th>Groundnut Niger and Benue River</th>
<th>Groundnut Benniseed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AC Ltd</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>54.87</td>
<td>37.51</td>
<td>84.45</td>
<td>40.77</td>
<td>71.06</td>
<td>56.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ollivant G.B.</td>
<td>8.14</td>
<td>8.02</td>
<td>10.02</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>5.60</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Companies controlled by UAC:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>73.34</td>
<td>62.89</td>
<td>47.53</td>
<td>87.91</td>
<td>46.37</td>
<td>71.06</td>
<td>56.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All European</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>99.2</td>
<td>94.24</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>71.36</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levantine</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>5.76 +500 tons</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>28.63</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>1060 tons</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100 plus</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 6
COCOA PRICE PER TON DIFFERENCES
BETWEEN LAGOS AND NEW YORK FROM 1936-1938

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period in months</th>
<th>Cocoa Price per ton in $US</th>
<th>Price differences $US</th>
<th>Percentage difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 1936</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1936</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 1936</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1936</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1937</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 1937</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 1937</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 1937</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1937</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1937</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1937</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1937</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 1937</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1937</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 1937</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1937</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1938</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 1938</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 1938</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 1938</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1938</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1938</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1938</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Calculated from Chukwemeka: *African Dependencies* 1950, P.101
became the commercial centres where imported clothes, salt, stockfish and other household goods were sold and bought. In addition, four of the seven bulk palm oil plants were located in the Niger Delta at Burutu, Abonnema, Port Harcourt and Opobo. 16 The bulk oil plants provided storage facilities for palm oil and purified it before pumping it into ocean or coastal tankers for export.

For the greater part of the Niger Delta, however, colonial authorities neither improved local fishing for which the area had the natural advantage, nor encouraged the production of salt which some parts of the Delta had depended largely on for exchange in pre-colonial times. Instead, there was a heavy importation of salt and Norwegian stockfish. 17 Besides, when the railway had reached Northern Nigeria, the dried "mangala" fish from Lake Chad was much more easily transported in greater quantity to the southern urban centres than fish from the Niger Delta which had poor transport facilities. The competition from these two sources of fish supply with that of the Niger Delta rendered fishing unprofitable and both fishing and salt making declined in the coastal areas of the Delta. 18

In the field of mineral exploitation, colonial authorities claimed total ownership over minerals. Various ordinances were passed to allow expatriate firms to dominate the sector. The first ordinance was made in 1902 after the Colonial Office in London had revoked the rights of the Royal Niger Company to mineral deposits in its area of authority, although the company
was paid a cumulative sum of 2.5 million pounds from 1906 to 1944 from Nigerian resources. As a result of competition and the de facto monopolization of deposits by the technologically superior foreign companies, by 1923 native mining had disappeared.

In the late 1950's when petroleum was discovered in the Niger Delta, new legislation was enacted which conferred on the Federal Government an exclusive control of all mineral resources. This legislation made mineral rich areas poorer while areas of agricultural production were allowed total control of such resources and were to be allocated a further 50% of all centrally collected revenue on agricultural products. The social and economic implications of the differences in the control of these two resources by the Federal Government on the Niger Delta and for the political instability of Nigeria in the post-independence period will be discussed in Chapter IV.

III.3 Transportation and Commercial Policies

Some of the most important factors arising from the emphasis on a primary products exporting economy and which contributed to the uneven economic development in the Niger Delta were the colonial commercial policies and the patterns of development of transport systems to meet the profit motives of the metropolitan industrialists and merchants. The major determining factors of rail routes in Nigeria were to move agricultural products for export and for military control of the country.
The railway lines therefore followed the important areas which produced export commodities and connected these areas to the coastal ports of Lagos and Port Harcourt (Map 8). The construction of the Eastern line led to the decline of the pre-colonial coastal ports in the Niger Delta while new trading posts developed in the hinterland. Centres such as Port Harcourt, Aba, Umuahia, Enugu, Jos and Kaduna never existed before the colonial period grew. The Western line laid the foundation for the rapid growth of Lagos to become the largest industrial and urban centre in the country. The pre-colonial urban centres which were not served by the rail system declined and only those that happened to be along the route survived.

The decline of the pre-colonial ports in the Niger Delta was therefore a direct consequence of the colonial pattern for the provision of a transport network. In 1912, there were fourteen ports in the country; by 1950 there were only seven, and over this period Lagos and Port Harcourt became the major ports. "It was the choice of both Lagos and Port Harcourt as bases for rail transport that gave them the conclusive advantage over the other ports in the competition for significance at the beginning of the modern period". The Lagos branch of the railway started in 1897, and between 1906 and 1909 Lagos had developed as the major port (see Map 9) — in contrast to its position in the pre-colonial period (see again Map 6).

The port of Bonny, which was one of the most important in pre-colonial times, began to decline immediately after the
MAP 8: NIGERIA RAILWAY & EXPORT CROPS

MAP 9: NIGERIAN PORTS - VOLUME OF TRAFFIC
1906 - 1909 (AVERAGE)

Source: Ogundana O. Odu Vol. 3 No. 2 19
opening in 1917 of the Port Harcourt rail terminus, 72 kilometres up the Bonny River (Map 10). In 1916, imports through Bonny were 390,575 pounds but these fell in 1917 to 42,982 pounds, while in that same year Port Harcourt was able to record imports of 311,748 pounds. By 1928 Bonny had become insignificant and recorded only 38 pounds in port duties (see Figure 4).

Unfortunately the ports of Brass and Akassa were also abandoned. In the early 1900's, it was found that the River Forcados was the main stream of the River Niger and not the River Nun where Brass and Akassa had developed. The Royal Niger Company therefore transferred its headquarters from Akassa to Forcados when by 1893 the Company had already used its monopoly charter of 1886 to eliminate all other companies formerly stationed in these ports.27 "By 1906, the dock had been moved and in 1933 the customs house and the Post Office".28 In fact, the ports of Brass and Akassa were closed to foreign shipping by Colonial Office order in 1921.29 The reason given for the official closure of the ports was that the entrance to them had offshore bars which presented dangers to shipping.30

But initially, Lagos and Port Harcourt, which are now the most developed ports in the country, had no special advantages over other sites. Indeed, they also had dangerous offshore bars which necessitated expensive surf-transhipment which was a characteristic of most ports in Nigeria, although in comparison with Brass and Akassa, the former are connected to the mainland
Source: Rivers State Map on Settlements, 1975.
FIGURE 4
PORT HARCOURT RAILWAY AND THE DECLINE OF BONNY

SOURCE OF DATA: OFONAGORO 1976 P. 151
while the latter are separated from it by many creeks. Lagos became safe for foreign shipping only after the construction of a mole in 1917 to keep the entrance open, and this further aided its development into the principal port of the country.\textsuperscript{32} It also had no healthier climatic conditions than other coastal towns to favour its choice as the capital. Tamuno cited Mabogunje (1968) that Lagos was "the most notorious of all the white man's graves on the West African coast",\textsuperscript{33} yet it became the headquarters of the country from the 1890's on. The choice of Lagos as the national headquarters was advantageous to its growth because throughout the history of Nigeria earlier colonial headquarters such as Lokoja, Jebba, Zungeru and Calabar and Asaba and Forcados-Burutu under the Royal Niger Company had flourished and then declined with changes in their status.\textsuperscript{34}

Governor Ralph Moor had in 1897 and 1901 suggested alternative rail termini which he considered better placed than Lagos and Port Harcourt. In 1897, he proposed that Forcados, "with its deeper and more navigable entrance than Lagos be made the outlet for railway into the hinterland west of the Niger"\textsuperscript{35} which could have run across the Niger Delta. But this was turned down by the Foreign and Colonial Offices on the grounds that the construction of the Lagos railway line had already started.\textsuperscript{36} In 1901, Moor again proposed that an Eastern line of the railway system was necessary to connect Calabar to Kano through Ikom and Ibi on the Benue and also emphasized that Calabar had a better estuary than Lagos (see Map 11). "But when the Eastern
MAP 11: ALTERNATIVE RAILROAD PROPOSED
BY GOVERNOR R. MOOR IN 1897 & 1901

---

**KEY**
- Railroad proposed by Ralph Moor
- Existing Railway

---

railway was eventually built, Calabar was not chosen as the Eastern terminus, nor, was much thought given to Moor's route". 37 The choice of Port Harcourt in preference to Calabar resulted also in the relative decline of the latter. 38

The study on transport development in Ghana and Nigeria by Taaffe, Morrill and Gould indicated that variations in physical landscape were relatively unimportant in determining the development of a transport network. 39 The exploitation of agricultural and mineral resources; and for the mobility of administrative staff were the major factors in determining the development of rail and road network. 40 In the riverine parts of the Niger Delta which had natural inland waterways for the transportation of agricultural products and administrative staff; colonial authorities were only concerned with the clearing of creeks while by 1930 the mainland areas in the Eastern Region had developed a close network of roads linked to the railway system (see Map 12). Thus the transportation system in the country was not articulated to benefit the coastal areas of the Niger Delta.

The lack of integration of the different modes of transportation to complement one another later proved detrimental to the development of the coastal part of the Niger Delta. One of the factors was the commercial policies made to serve the interests of the UAC and its subsidiary, the Niger River Transport, which had the monopoly for the transportation of goods along the River Niger. 41 The upper part of the River Niger has
shoals and shifting sandbanks so that during the dry season, from November to April, shipping was highly restricted in certain areas. To compensate for the long period of idleness, river freight charges were made generally higher than rail.42 This had the effect of diverting products from the inland waterways to the railway. In 1948, railway haulage had the largest share of the country's total import-export trade,43 so that in 1950 inland waterways carried only 13% of the national trade. In the mid-1950's that share had declined to only 9% which indicated that river ports not connected by rail or road network were already in decline.44 Furthermore, conditions for shipping agricultural produce discriminated against some ports according to freight charges levied at various ports in the country. Freight charges on the main ports at Lagos and Port Harcourt were the lowest and the smaller ports the highest. According to Ogundana:45

Transhipment of cargo to and from the minor ports may attract additional charges, as was the case of the Western Delta ports in Nigeria after the Second World War. Traffic to and from these ports which was transshipped to Lagos incurred a surcharge of fifteen shillings (N1.50) per ton.

The differential pricing for commodities led to the diversion of produce from the minor ports to the main ports. For instance, palm produce was diverted from Opobo in the Eastern Delta to Port Harcourt which was designated as a terminal port so that by the end of the colonial period, Opobo port had been closed to shipping.46 In this way the minor ports in the Niger
Delta came under the influence of Lagos and Port Harcourt ports and the coastal areas and the ports in the Niger Delta started to stagnate economically. 47

III.4 Urbanization and Industrialization

The present industrial centres in Nigeria are of colonial origin. Most of these urban centres, as a result are along the railway lines. The all important criterion for grading urban centres was the number of European populations so that nearly all the second-class urban centres from the 1917 to 1955 Colonial Township Ordinances favoured the European trading posts, mining and administrative centres. Lagos, the capital was the only first-class township. 48 "The list itself did not remain unchanged for very long" 49 and appeared to depend on how a township continued to serve the commercial interests of the trading firms and the colonial authority.

In the Niger Delta, Forcados, Warri, Port Harcourt and Opobo were classified as second-class; and Ahoada, Burutu, Bonny, Brass and Degema were third-class townships in the 1919 list. 50 But because of the unfavourable colonial transportation and commercial policies, Forcados, Burutu, Bonny, Brass and Degema gradually declined since they no longer effectively served the interest of the commercial firms and the government, and consequently, with the passage of time they were eliminated from the list. By 1950, only Port Harcourt and Warri had electricity and water supply among the townships which were in the
1919 list. These towns designated as townships in the country became the centres of growing employment and business opportunities. Besides, "in these towns were concentrated the schools, the sanitary system, the hospitals . . .".

Although the manufacturing sector was not encouraged, the World War created conditions for minor processing to be done in Nigeria. The reason for not encouraging manufacturing except as a means of serving the interest of metropolitan industrialists was also to avoid labour problems. According to the first Governor General of Nigeria, Lugard, "a Government would be wise not to hasten the advent of factory system in Africa . . . when trade is slack with the consequent unemployment, discontent will be rife and there will be no lack of labour leaders eager to organize agitations on the worst models of the West". But when primary processing of agricultural and forest products and the manufacturing of soft drinks, cigarettes and assembling plants started, most of these activities were located in those urban centres such as Lagos, Ibadan, Port Harcourt, Abeokuta, Jos, Kaduna and Kano mainly along the railway line that have received at least the minimum industrial infrastructure.

However, until 1950, manufacturing accounted for only 0.5% of the GDP, and Nigeria was in the lowest position among all the countries that published their national accounts in that year.

The growing employment and business opportunities of the rail line urban centres attracted migrant population and between 1921 and 1931 they grew at a rate of 5% annually. For example,
Port Harcourt which came into existence in 1913 grew to 7,185 in population by 1921. By 1931, it had reached 27,000 and in 1953 it had risen to 59,512. With the rise of Port Harcourt and the decline of the other Delta ports, the young and those who had acquired wealth in the boom days of the coastal ports migrated to Port Harcourt. In the 1920's Chief Ikoroma Owiye and Tom Big Harry who were among the migrants from the other Delta areas were some of the most successful businessmen in Port Harcourt. "Chief Ikoroma Owiye was the first African in Port Harcourt to buy a car and he had also owned shops and launches on the creeks".

The people of the Niger Delta were noted for their high business acumen, particularly the Kalabaris who were among the participants in the pre-colonial trade. They were also highly enthusiastic about adopting some of the requirements of the new economic system which they had been in contact with since the pre-colonial period. They were the first to realize in the 1860's that the new economic system required the acquisition of a Western type of education. According to Ayandele, the people of the Niger Delta: Unlike anywhere else in Nigeria, during this period they bore half the initial expenses of mission establishment as a necessary price for the privilege of having missionaries from the hope that their commercial positions would be improved through the education of their children. (emphasis mine)

But because of the political and economic structures which evolved in the period, the people of the Niger Delta were unable
to use their talent to the extent that would restore the lost locational and economic advantages of the pre-colonial period. Politically, the Niger Delta as a unit was negatively integrated into the economy and the national system. First, from 1935 it was divided into Western and Eastern Delta to form part of the Western and Eastern Regions that were respectively dominated by one single large ethnic group. For example, until 1963, the population of the Niger Delta was less than 10% in the Eastern Region while the Ibo were 55%; Ibibios and Efiks accounted for about 35%. It became even more difficult in the 1940's when political parties were founded on ethnic bases, which formed "invisible government" and as platforms for training political leaders. Each political group struggled to control the existing urban centres in their ethnic homeland so that when Ibo influence in Lagos was successfully neutralized by the Yoruba based Action Group in the 1940's, Ibo considered Port Harcourt as a counterpart of Lagos.

Port Harcourt, therefore, became the centre of communal politics in the Eastern Region. The relationship between communal politics in Port Harcourt and the decline in the influence of non-Ibo in the city has been analyzed in detail by Wolpe: *Urban Politics in Nigeria* (1974). The struggle over the control of Port Harcourt still continues even now especially as it is the capital of the Rivers State (the Eastern Delta) and provides the basis for understanding the relationship between the Ibo and the Rivers State on one hand, and that between the
Ijaw who live mainly in the riverine areas of the Delta and the Ibo-speaking Ikwerre of the Delta on the other. The effect of this struggle on the development of the Niger Delta in the 1970's will be treated in Chapter IV.

Second, the numerical superiority of the Ibo and the nature of the political system, however, soon gave the Ibo an opportunity to control virtually all the market stalls and market associations in Port Harcourt. The system soon developed structures which were similar to those which Stavenhagen has described as happening between the Ladinos and the Indians in Mexico. Thus, the rural dwellers who came to Port Harcourt to sell their subsistence products were further impoverished by the market associations in the city.

The market associations could use their monopolistic powers to force the unwilling rural producers to sell their goods at cheaper prices than what was obtained at the markets in the city. On many occasions where a producer refused to sell his products cheaply and wished to sell them in the city markets, this might result in violence which could destroy partially the fragile dried fish from the coastal region. By the time the complainant could get the assistance of a policeman, the offender might have escaped and the remaining members of the association on the spot of the incident would swear by anything to deny their knowledge of the accused. These associations could also send their members to buy fish in the villages in the riverine parts of the Niger Delta and sell them freely in the
city markets and elsewhere. In these ways, the members of the fish marketing association in Port Harcourt dominated both the buying and selling of fish in the Niger Delta. The nature of marketing continued, thus, until the Nigerian Civil War started in 1967.

In the introductory chapter we noted that Ofonagoro had argued that the poverty of the Niger Delta resulted from the people's "lack of response" to the new economic conditions under the colonial rule. But so far we have noted that economic relations are generally social relations and the apparent inability of the Niger Delta pre-colonial middlemen to compete with their Ibo counterparts in the colonial period was not because of lack of need for higher achievement but from the political and social changes that were created by the colonial economic and administrative system.

III.5 Spatial Implications

At the end of colonial rule in 1960, within the Niger Delta, regional disparities had emerged. Port Harcourt and Warri and their immediate surrounding areas had become the most developed parts of the region with necessary industrial infrastructures and therefore fulfilled the locational criteria of the post-independent dominant socio-economic groups.

By adopting a capitalist strategy of development based on private interest motive, the provision of transport facilities
as well as the development of ports by the colonial authorities were carried out in such a way as to maximize profit in the short term. The areas which did not produce export crops, minerals, and non-port areas were neglected. The strategy also affected commercial policies which further contributed to the decline of the early ports in the Delta and accelerated the development of Warri and Port Harcourt. Concentration of functions in port and urban areas led to further concentration of people and these urban dwellers developed new means to exploit the less developed rural areas all of which created unequal spatial and social development.

The coastal areas of the Niger Delta were also underdeveloped educationally. The Ijaws who live in these areas "had by 1930 retrogressed from an educationally advanced to a backward state, at least in comparison with the major inland tribes" because of poor means of communication and the zoning of areas of influence by the Missionaries which prevented the more enthusiastic Catholic Missions from penetrating into the area. Table 7 illustrates regional variations in education by 1952/53 in the Eastern Region and in the Niger Delta. Although the percentage of general literacy was highest in the Niger Delta (Rivers) in the Eastern Region, percentage with higher academic qualification was only 5.2%, while in Owerri province it was 14.0%. Within the Niger Delta, the inequality among the various sub-regions was also high. Port Harcourt and Degema Divisions had 37.6% and 15.8% respectively while Ogoni
TABLE 7

REGIONAL VARIATIONS IN LITERACY IN THE EASTERN NIGERIA AND THE NIGER DELTA 1952/53

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eastern Region Provinces</th>
<th>with Standard II-IV or higher</th>
<th>literate in Roman Script</th>
<th>Total % of literacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Onitsha</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owerri</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rivers (Niger Delta)</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calabar</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ogoja</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Variations in the Niger Delta

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-regions</th>
<th>% literate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ahoada</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brass</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degema</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ogoni</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port Harcourt</td>
<td>37.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: 1) Coleman, J.S. Nigeria: Background to Nationalism California Press, Berkeley, 1963, Table 15

Division had only 5.3% of its population with Standard II or higher education in that period. These differences could be translated into economic terms as has been observed by Lydall that "societies in which education is more equally distributed, will exhibit a wider dispersion of earnings than those in which it is more unequally distributed." 70

In sum, colonial economic policies led to the unequal provision of basic needs throughout the region. The problems of the Niger Delta at the initial stage, in large part, were externally induced. The present is a legacy of the past which created social forces that maintain that economic system.
FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER III


2. See Usoro, J.E. NJESS op.cit. P.123.


20. The ordinances regulating mining in the country stipulated that an applicant for mining lease should have sufficient working capital and should produce a "report on the matter made by competent engineer". The ordinance further stated that "the agent left in charge of the mining lease, the lease of which is absent in Nigeria, should be a European and likewise the engineer in charge of the plant". See Bower, P. in Perham(ed) op.cit:10 and Liedholm, Carl. "The Influence of Colonial Policy on the Growth and Development of Nigeria's Industrial Sector", in Eicher and Liedholm (ed), Growth and Development of Nigerian Economy, 1970, P.52-61, Pp.56.


The Royal Niger Company bought up the African Associations Group including plants, machinery and factories valued at 7,500 and 5,033 shares considered fully paid at 10 per share.
34. Tamuno, T.A. op.cit. P.97.
39. See also Llyod, P.E. and Dicken, P. Location in Space, A Theoretical Approach to Economic Geography (Second Edit.), 1977, P.158.
42. Turton, B.J. Ibid. P.328.
44. Turton, B.J. op.cit. P.329.
47. Ogundana, B. loc. cit. P.83.
53. Liedholm, C. in Eicher and Liedholm (ed). op.cit. P.57,58
55. Liedholm, C. op.cit. P.54.

67. The entire account of what happened between the rural crop producer, the fishermen and the Marketing Associations in Port Harcourt is based on personal experience. I travelled on several occasions by boat which were transporting fish to Port Harcourt between 1959 to 1964. The practice is still continuing at Port Harcourt, this time an additional Association has come into existence, that of locally brewed "gin sellers Association".


69. The Niger Delta was under the influence of the Church Missionary Society from England led by Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther. But disputes between the African and the White hierarchy of the Organization led to the splitting of the Mission. The Niger Delta area came under the influence of the Niger Delta Pastorage Church which became dependent mainly on the contributions of the local churches so that the building of secondary schools could not expand fast, see Ajayi, J.F.A. Christian Mission in Nigeria 1841-1891; the making of a new elite, 1965. P.162-179.

CHAPTER IV: SOCIAL CLASSES AND UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT: 1960-1977

IV.1 State Power and Class Interest

Between 1962 and 1980, Nigeria has carried through two National Development plans, and the third plan ends in 1980. One of the objectives of the Second (1970-74) and the Third (1975-80) Development plans was to develop a "just and egalitarian society". The Second National Development Plan explained further that a "just and egalitarian society puts premium on reducing inequalities in inter-personal incomes and promoting balanced development among the various communities in the different geographical areas in the country".\(^1\) Despite this stated objective, development has been concentrated in few urban centres which are within what would be termed "industrial triangles": the Jos-Zaria-Kano Zone in Northern Nigeria, the Lagos-Ibadan Oshogbo Zone in the West, the Benin-Sapele-Warri Zone in the Midwest and Port Harcourt-Onitsha-Enugu Zone (see Map 13).

The solution to this spatial inequality, it is suggested, is further effective government intervention.\(^2\) The solution assumed that state power was autonomous from the economic interests of the dominant social classes in the society and from external factors which influence locational decisions in the prevailing pro-capitalist economic system in Nigeria. In reality the "state is an organization for the pursuit of economic ends of nations"\(^3\) and in the process, it tends to lose its
MAP 13: THE INDUSTRIAL ZONES IN NIGERIA

Source: Ajeagbu H.I.
Urban and Rural Development in Nigeria, 1976 p. 58
autonomy and becomes a condensation of class relations. The state, in this economic relationship, provides legitimacy for the actions of the dominant class.

Cardoso and Paletto have explained how the link between the dominant interest groups and the State is maintained:

An economic class or group tries to establish through the political process a system of social relations that permits it to impose on the entire society a social form of production akin to its own interests, at least it tries to establish alliances or control of other groups or classes, in order to develop an economic order consistent with its interests and objectives. The mode of economic relations in turn sets the limit of political action.

In the Third World countries that adopt either State capitalism or State socialism as in Nigeria and Tanzania respectively, in which the State distributes economic and social rewards, economic and political powers are inseparable. Hence, Dowider has remarked:

One cannot really define a strategy by simply enunciating the areas of economic activity which will be given priority in the economic policy. A strategy is defined by its class structure.

In addition, the pattern of distribution of the dominant classes and the subsequent power structure in the government of a country would tend to influence the subsequent evolution of regional development.

The focus of this chapter is to identify the effects of the alliances of the dominant socio-economic groups with foreign firms, and the alliances and conflicts among the dominant interest groups on the development of the Niger Delta. The
analysis of unequal development in the Niger Delta cannot be explained from what happens in the Delta alone without incorporating the decision-making process at the national level. This is because in Nigeria, as in many other Third World countries, the central government is the most powerful authority in economic development. The other interest groups in the country will be identified where necessary.

IV.2 Historical Development of Dominant Socio-economic Groups

The historical development of the dominant socio-economic group which emerged in post-independence Nigeria is very recent, dating not very far beyond the post-war period. In the colonial era, because of the strict division of labour both in the administration and commerce, Nigerian businessmen thrived only in the interstices of an economy dominated by European firms. The Nigerian dominant socio-economic groups therefore could prosper only through clientage relationship with the foreign firms and the colonial state apparatus.

These local interest groups, however, won for themselves some concessions from the colonial authorities in the 1940's when they formed political parties and protested against their exclusion from both the political and economic spheres of the country. These classes of the Nigerian society began to get loans from the Colonial State. The administrative bureaucracy was also incorporated through the Haragins Salary Review Commission in 1951 which allowed Nigerian senior civil servants to
retain many privileges of the colonial administration. Another result was that in 1952, and again in the 1958 Industrial Acts, expatriate firms were given incentives to switch to the industrial sector and to leave more of the services and the retail sectors for Nigerians. In consequence, before the Acts, the UAC which had only two industries in 1948 in the country, had in 1965 increased its number of factory plants to twenty-eight (Table 8).

However, the surplus from agriculture which these groups of Nigerians had hoped to use, fell soon after 1960 because of the down turn in the price of agricultural products in the international market and consequently output also declined. The contribution of agriculture to the national economy also decreased from 75% of the total export trade in 1960 to 17.6% in 1971, particularly with the rapid growth in the output of oil (see Table 9). Since the oil sector is controlled by multinationals, the dominant interest groups could profit only through collusion in foreign trade by purchasing what they considered "development". Consequently, Nigeria became a "trading post" manned by indigenous commissioned agents for foreign firms. The Nigerian Head of State, General Olusegun Obasanjo had commented in 1977:

We are fast becoming a nation of agents and middlemen with the attendant easy money and corruption! The result is that many simple industrial products which can and should be produced domestically are still imported. The corollary is not only gross under utilization of both our human and material resources, but also a perpetuation which the
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Year of start-up</th>
<th>Fixed capital (1000s)</th>
<th>UAC equity %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African Timber &amp; Plywood</td>
<td>Timber and plywood</td>
<td>1948</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Breweries (3)</td>
<td>Beer and minerals</td>
<td>1949</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor Woodrow</td>
<td>Building contractors</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Joinery (3)</td>
<td>Woodwork and furniture</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prestress</td>
<td>Prestressed concrete</td>
<td>1954</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nipol</td>
<td>Plastic products</td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raleigh Industries (3)</td>
<td>Cycle assembly</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle Assembly Plant</td>
<td>Bedford lorries</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minna Farm</td>
<td>Pigs</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Construction Co.</td>
<td>Building contractors</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. A. Thread</td>
<td>Sewing thread</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. A. Portland Cement</td>
<td>Cement</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. A. Cold Storage</td>
<td>Meat products</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walls</td>
<td>Ice cream</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vono Products</td>
<td>Beds, mattresses</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cement Paints</td>
<td>Cement paint</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinness</td>
<td>Stout</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fan Milk</td>
<td>Reconstituted milk</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nigerian Sugar Co.</td>
<td>Sugar and by-products</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>3,800</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norspin</td>
<td>Cotton yarn</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pye</td>
<td>Radio assembly</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitafoam</td>
<td>Foam rubber products</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. J. Seward</td>
<td>Perfumery and cosmetics</td>
<td>1964</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bordpak</td>
<td>Fibre board cartons</td>
<td>1964</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kwara Tobacco Co.</td>
<td>Cigarettes</td>
<td>1964</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associated Battery Mfgs.</td>
<td>Vehicle batteries</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crocodile Matchets</td>
<td>Matches</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textile Printers</td>
<td>Printed textiles</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>3,250</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 9
CONTRIBUTION OF AGRICULTURAL EXPORT IN RELATION TO TOTAL EXPORTS IN NIGERIA FROM 1958-1971 $MILLION US

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Exports</th>
<th>Contribution by Agricultural Sector</th>
<th>Percentage Contribution by Agricultural Sector</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>235.6</td>
<td>185.7</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>284.08</td>
<td>219.00</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>293.1</td>
<td>220.7</td>
<td>75.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>301.08</td>
<td>222.00</td>
<td>73.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>290.28</td>
<td>199.5</td>
<td>68.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>327.3</td>
<td>220.4</td>
<td>67.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>372.6</td>
<td>228.5</td>
<td>61.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>465.7</td>
<td>215.9</td>
<td>46.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>493.3</td>
<td>221.3</td>
<td>44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>421.4</td>
<td>206.03</td>
<td>48.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>364.6</td>
<td>200.7</td>
<td>55.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>556.8</td>
<td>205.0</td>
<td>36.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>.776.1</td>
<td>208.9</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>1133.5</td>
<td>199.1</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

commission agents would like to maintain to our national detriment.

The Head of State classified these commissioned agents into four categories. These various groups are however, not homogeneous both within each category and between categories because of the historical background of their development which has created several contradictions with varying degrees of antagonism among them as a class.

Factions Among the Dominant Socio-economic Groups

The divisions among the dominant interest group are a colonial legacy. Under the colonial rule the emergent socio-economic groups perceived that the control and appropriation of resources lay in a greater part with the control of political power and they therefore supported the colonial authority after 1935 in dividing the country into three regions. By 1949, the groups had broken up into three major factions, the North used the Islamic religion as the most cohesive force to form the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) while the West and the East used mainly ethnic sentiments. For example, the Action Group (AG) of the West was based on a cultural association, the Egbe Omo Oduduwa. Although the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon (NCNC) was said to be a national party, in reality it lost its national identity and became a tribal party supported by the Ibo National Union when Dr. Nnamdi Azikwe became the President of the NCNC.
The dividing up of the dominant interest groups was to maintain their socio-economic status and to be in an advantageous position to appropriate public resources. In the late 1940's, the various colonial commodity Boards had accumulated reserves by withdrawing, sometimes as high as 40%, from the potential income of farmers (see Table 10). These reserves were meant for stabilization of producer prices, for development and research purposes in the proportion of 70%, 22½% and 7½% respectively. But as soon as the dominant groups became in control of each of the regions in the 1950's the formula was scrapped off and the reserves were divided up among themselves in the form of loans and consequently the reserves became a source of political control.

In the North, the aristocratic Hausa-Fulani in the feudal hierarchy struggled to maintain their status which had been retained through the Indirect System of Administration in the colonial era. Moreover, in the North, Western education was confined mainly to the sons of these leaders, while in the South education was applied universally and the Northern leaders wanted to retain these privileges by following a path of northern separateness. Thus, the North and the West, which were the richest agriculturally, producing groundnut, cotton, benniseed, and cocoa respectively were opposed to any legislation that would reduce the existing 50% derivation formula in revenue allocation. At present those groups from the North and the West are among the most vocal groups opposed to the same
TABLE 10
TOTAL ACCUMULATION BY NIGERIA REGIONAL MARKETING BOARDS 1954-61 (£'000)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Eastern Region</th>
<th>Northern Region</th>
<th>Western Region</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transfer from Commodity Marketing Boards</td>
<td>11,464.1</td>
<td>32,651.8</td>
<td>42,897.2</td>
<td>87,013.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Trading Surplus</td>
<td>10,736.2</td>
<td>3,202.7</td>
<td>14,303.9</td>
<td>21,837.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excess of other Income over Expenditure</td>
<td>1,718.9</td>
<td>2,451.2</td>
<td>5,349.1</td>
<td>9,519.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23,919.2</td>
<td>31,900.3</td>
<td>62,550.2</td>
<td>118,369.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

revenue allocation formula when oil became the major source of Federal revenue. \(^{26}\) The East was the poorest and, therefore, was much more concerned with controlling the Federal Government by claiming to be a national party. \(^{27}\)

The emergence of the regional political parties created a situation in which competition for resources and rewards at the Federal and Regional levels became determined by political, religious and ethnic affiliations. In every region, therefore, the dominant socio-economic groups from the ethnic minorities began to form political parties and demanded the creation of their ethnic homelands into regions/states to enable them to compete for resources. \(^{28}\) In the Niger Delta, it led to the founding of the Niger Delta Chiefs' Congress which demanded the creation of a Rivers State in 1958, as we noted in the Introduction. After their failure, the Congress was converted into a political party, the Niger Delta Congress (NDC). The Capital of the Rivers State was to be Port Harcourt, the most important port in the Eastern Region. But, unfortunately, two groups have claims to the land where the city is built. The land is claimed by Okrika (an Ijaw speaking people) and the others are the people of Diobu (a people who speak Ikwerre). Wolpe has recorded some of the methods used by the Eastern Region to secure its control of Port Harcourt. \(^{29}\) The most important method was to divide and rule by persuading the Diobu to say that they were Ibo. Thus the decision of the Willink Commission in 1958 was that "Port Harcourt is Ibo." \(^{30}\)
The decision of the Willink Commission has created a faction among the dominant socio-economic groups in the Niger Delta itself, the Diobu versus the people of Okrika, on the ownership of Port Harcourt. Under the Eastern Region, the cleavage was not significant in the face of Ibo domination. But after the creation of the Eastern Delta into the present Rivers State in 1967, and most especially after the Civil War, the dominant groups revived the cleavage as a means of creating opportunities to allocate resources to their benefit. The cleavage, which was originally between only two communities, Diobu versus Okrika, has now become what is known as the "land" and "riverine" area politics.

IV.3 The Development Strategy

Colonial concessions to the nascent dominant socio-economic groups in the form of loans, political power, and bureaucratic promotions towards the end of that era, made this group of the Nigerian society to become "one with the British". Thus, at the time of political handover, all would-be leaders appeared to have become collaborative with the colonial power:

The elites agreed with the British on the dynamics that should operate in Nigeria; all the educated elites were collaborators... their disputes arose mainly on the means for the execution of the political, social, cultural and economic notions that they shared in common.

The dominant socio-economic groups who took over power from the colonial masters, therefore, had no new development strategy,
but aimed to "pursue the task of economic development in the context of an ideological orientation which essentially accepts the developmental precepts of the metropolitan bourgeoisie".34

The technological inability of the dominant groups made import-substitution industrialization approach an acceptable policy of development. The approach is supposed to solve three problems:35 (i) the training of skilled industrial labour forces and the transfer of technology; (ii) the creation of jobs and reduction of unemployment, and (iii) conservation of foreign exchange with consequent amelioration of balance of payments and balance of trade difficulties. The aims were to be implemented through the use of the State apparatus. The alliance of the dominant groups therefore "prepared an inventory of needs and ambitions which it purchases as 'development'".36 During the heyday of agriculture, these needs and ambitions were bought with the agriculture surplus extracted from the peasant farmers. Since 1970 oil has replaced agriculture. The major consequence of this approach has been the collapse of agriculture and currently Nigeria, which was the world's largest exporter of palm oil and groundnut in the late 1950's and early 1960's, is now a net importer of both commodities.37

The conventional idea of import-substitution industrialization is based on the Lewis-Fei-Rains model of development.38 The main theoretical assumptions of the model are that if funds extracted from agriculture are used to accelerate the development of the urban sector, the expansion of this sector will
attract a supposed "surplus" labour of the subsistence sector which is characterized by zero or very low productivity to provide cheap labour for the industrial sector. As labour migrates from the subsistence sector to the urban sector, productivity of agriculture would increase, and eventually the rural areas will equally be well developed. To achieve those aims of import substitution, the practical approach was that of "development by invitation" which has been repeated by every successive government in the country. For example, in 1965 the first Prime Minister, the late Sir Abubaka Tafawa Balewa repeated his earlier appeal,\(^{39}\)

Recognizing the vital role which overseas capital and skill could play in the rapid development of the vast resources with which nature has endowed Nigeria all the five governments of the Federal Republic have adopted a concerted approach towards overseas investment.

The "development by invitation" has to be directed by "State capitalism" which permits joint ventures between Federal or Regional/State governments with foreign firms. The State could establish industries, and offer loans to indigenous businessmen to own industries, a system which certainly would allow the distribution of rewards by the State. There are three related implications in this approach: (i) international capital would invest with a profit motive so that location of industries will be guided by that interest in order to maximize profit; (ii) resources demanded in international trade that could be rapidly developed to pay for machinery and other
equipment, and (iii) since the State controls the finance from external trade, the control of the State apparatus is vital for appropriating the surplus in terms of loans and benefits from industrialization.

To meet the locational needs of international capital, besides reaffirming the incentives of the 1952 and 1958 Industrial Acts, such as free transfer of profit and capital, tax incentives and protective tariffs, the various Regional Governments established industrial estates, built contiguous to the already-developed colonial commercial centres. In the early 1960's each of the regional factions of the dominant socio-economic groups that had developed under the colonial period competed for a share of industrial enterprises. The animosity that developed among the various factions was such that the Federal Government became "not only neutral but indeed negative" in taking account of spatial consideration as a factor in development planning.

The main focus of the Economic Development Planning Strategy was the concentration of economic activities in very few places. For instance, under Stolper, the Architect of the 1962-1968 Nigerian First National Development Plan, dispersion of economic activities was considered a means of reducing funds for additional investment because it would incur extra transport costs and subsidies that would slow down growth. Moreover, import substitution industries use very limited local inputs, therefore, feasibility studies also emphasized the size of
existing internal markets and calculated costs and benefits on the basis of imported inputs. Between 1961 and 1965 the import substitution type industrial sector had accounted for about 80% of all industrial establishments in the country.\textsuperscript{44}

On the other hand, the approach to agricultural production was based on higher taxation of peasant farmers\textsuperscript{45} and the provision of more feeder roads in areas producing export crops. The results were the widening of the income gap between the rural and urban populations and a general concentration of development in the urban areas. For instance, in the 1970-74 National Development Plan only 17.9% of the capital expenditure was allocated to the rural areas where about 75% of the population lived (see Table 11). The food crop producing areas were the most neglected in the provision of roads.\textsuperscript{46} In 1962, of the ten Federal Government roads approved, two were in the Greater Lagos area; four were within the cocoa producing areas, one between Port Harcourt and Aba, another along Onitsha and Enugu, and two in Jos area where tin was being mined.\textsuperscript{47}

One of the implications of the development approach which is directed mainly towards the provision of transportation system in the export crops and mineral producing areas is that road network density, as was observed between 1910 and 1975 (see Map 14), has increased mainly in those areas. The second is that it led to stagnation in food production in the country, particularly after 1970. For example, using 1961-65 averages as the base period, the index of food production declined from 113
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Total Planned Capital Investment million</th>
<th>Urban Based Investment million</th>
<th>Rural Based Investment million</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Industry</td>
<td>86.1</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Electricity</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>40.3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Water Sewage</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Town &amp; Country Planning</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Education</td>
<td>138.9</td>
<td>98.4</td>
<td>40.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Health</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Social Welfare</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Others (including agriculture)</td>
<td>373.1</td>
<td>307.7</td>
<td>65.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>780</strong></td>
<td><strong>640.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>139.5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MAP 14: DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSPORT NETWORK IN NIGERIA
(1910-1975)

per capita in 1971 to 83 in 1975. To solve the problem of food shortage, "the Federal Government had been favourably disposed towards food importation since 1970 so that in 1977, food imports accounted for 15% of the country's total imports (see Table 12). The effect was that since 1973, inflation has been soaring at about 35% in the country. A National Food Supply Company was formed in 1970 to import food to be sold to the public at cheaper prices, but rather the imported foodstuffs were sold to members of the dominant interest groups who later sold to the public at market price. Thus the low income groups were further exploited by that method.

The Niger Delta which has the highest potentials for rice production in West Africa as we noted in Chapter II, has been left without good means of communication. Any meaningful self-reliant development must ensure local food supply as well as the overall development of the country. The importance of the provision of effective means of communication in the Niger Delta as a priority in the development of the region was recommended strongly by the NDDB in the 1963/64 Annual Report to the three governments--the Federal, Mid-Western and Eastern Regions. 49

In commissioning this survey, the Board is mindful that the provision of a road network in the area apart from having a most beneficial effect on the area itself, would also transform the economics of the people living along and to the west of the whole length of the Nun because the nearest road would be brought so much nearer to them.

The Board recommended therefore among other roads, the Patani-Bomadi, Yenagoa-Oloibiri-Nembe road and Yenagoa-Oporoma
TABLE 12

VALUE OF FOOD IMPORTS IN NIGERIA
FROM 1958-1977 IN MILLION US DOLLAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total imports</th>
<th>Food imports</th>
<th>Percentage of food imports to total imports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>365.56</td>
<td>40.04</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>392.48</td>
<td>45.76</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>474.98</td>
<td>52.58</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>489.5</td>
<td>49.94</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>447.04</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>456.72</td>
<td>48.18</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>558.58</td>
<td>45.32</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>605.22</td>
<td>50.6</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>564.08</td>
<td>56.78</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>490.16</td>
<td>46.86</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>423.72</td>
<td>31.24</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>547.14</td>
<td>45.98</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>832.04</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>1186.9</td>
<td>96.8</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>1089.2</td>
<td>104.72</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>1347.28</td>
<td>139.04</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>1911.14</td>
<td>170.29</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>4107.18</td>
<td>324.94</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>9046.4</td>
<td>929.28</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>12842.5</td>
<td>1926.3</td>
<td>15.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

road in the riverine parts of the Delta. It also recommended to the Federal Government the improvement of postal and telegraphic communication in the area. The Federal Ministry of Communication replied that it had engaged an internationally reputable firm of consultants to study the communication problems of the whole country and until the report was made available, no consideration could be given in isolation to any part of the country. Thus because of this rhetoric the Board ceased functioning without getting approval for its recommendations on communication when the Civil War started in 1967, and was officially dissolved in 1970.

A more serious attempt to develop the Eastern part of the Niger Delta (now Rivers State) started during the second military administration in the country when the Civil War had ended in 1970. Between 1972-1975 the military government of the Rivers State commissioned the Dumez (French) Construction Company to carry out a feasibility survey on the roads recommended by the NDDB. By 1975 a number of the roads approved had already started, and in the riverine area these roads were to be connected by a system of canals. The cost of these roads varied with the number of bridges to be constructed and the first set of roads, as indicated in (Map 15), were to cost about $99 million US. 

In late 1975, the Federal Government took over some of the road projects in the Niger Delta. The roads taken over by the Federal Government included the East-West Road, Yenagoa-
MAP 15: THE RIVER STATE TRANSPORT NETWORK PROGRAMME (1972-1975)

KEY
- Railroad
- Road
- Proposed Road
- Proposed Canal


Note: The map shows the transport network in Rivers State, with key locations and the proposed transport network, including railway, roads, and proposed roads and canals.
Oloibiri-Nembe-Brass which were estimated to cost $29,772,055 US and $32.92 million US respectively. But most of these road projects were halted when General Gowon and his administration were toppled in a coup in 1975 which brought General Obasanjo's military administration into power. The next section will assess the factors responsible for the lack of approval of the NDDB recommendations in the 1960's and the abandoning of the 1975 road projects by the new military administration.

IV.4 Class Relations and Conflicts

The continuation of the colonial uneven development of the Niger Delta in the national independence period is, in large part, due to class alliances and conflicts among the dominant interest groups at the national and regional levels which emanated from their collusion with foreign capital through the State apparatus. For example, 52

A foreign businessman is successful in Nigeria not because he offers a competitive price, high quality produce, efficient services or the commodity which best suits local needs. A businessman is successful because he had made contact with the right middle-men and gets access to the right Government officials who finds the foreign firm's proposal attractive. The main competition then, is for access to officials of state.

Turner has described two ways by which the State officials collaborate with foreign industrialists for their benefit. 53 One is a "Commercial Triad" which is an arrangement involving a top level government official, a middleman, usually a
business-man and the foreign industrialist. The second is a "Commercial Dyad" which involves only two: a State official and the foreign industrialist. Each of these methods involves the giving of money or a partnership in the business.

It could be argued that a development process based on that type of collusion can hardly lead to the restructuring of the economy of the country to bring about equal development. In addition, it is bound to create conflicts and alliances between those groups that control the State apparatus and those that do not. Those who controlled the State apparatus in the country since independence have done so through political platforms which in Nigeria are not based on ideology but mainly on ethnic background or by the use of military force. They are therefore likely to be less concerned with the overall development of the country. The perpetuation of unequal development in the Niger Delta will be analyzed by assessing the role of each government.

The Civilian Administration (1960-1966)

One major effect of class interest of the dominant groups on the Niger Delta was the further acceleration of economic decline in some parts of the region. The control of the Nigerian economy by the UAC had once been one source of animosity for the colonial administration by the then growing dominant interest groups. Thus at the time of national independence there was a takeover of all the UAC produce buying stations by
the various Regional Marketing Boards. From this period, the appointment of licensed produce buyers was based on political affiliations and no longer on economic competency so that station after station of the UAC former substations where the local people sold their palm produce and bought household goods were closed down due to lack of finance and incompetent management. The rural communities which had been incorporated into the world economy were left without being provided with new institutions to fulfil those roles.

The closure of these stations meant the reduction of personal incomes of the producers, the problem of structural changes to other forms of livelihood and also the reduction of the volume of produce transported to the Delta ports of Abonnema and Burutu. In addition, the colonial policy of differential commodity pricing at various ports and freight charges between minor and major ports continued until after 1967. Furthermore, between 1960 and 1965 both Lagos and Port Harcourt were further developed and expanded at a cost of $19.8 million and $6.6 million US respectively which had the effect of increasing their influence over the minor ports. Consequently the economy of the rural communities and ports in the region were bound to decline.

In addition, the failure of the NDDB road projects in the Delta to get approval before the Civil War in 1967 could be attributed to intra-class struggle among the various factions of the dominant interest groups. We have noted in the
introductory chapter that the Niger Delta was divided into two parts; the Western and Eastern Delta from the colonial period to 1967. The West was under the Mid-Western and the East under the Eastern regional governments and these two governments were controlled by the NCNC which had its leadership in the Eastern Region. On the other hand, the Federal Government was run by a coalition of the NCNC and the NPC from Northern Nigeria but there was a growing conflict between these two parties during the period 1960 to 1966. The growing conflict between the two parties in the NPC-dominated parliament had already forced the Eastern Region to make plans to secede from the Federation since 1964 before the secession attempt in 1966. 58

During the 1960-1966 period, it was the declared intention of the NCNC Government in the Eastern Region that the distribution of amenities such as schools, roads and hospitals should be based on the reward-deprivation principle in which an entire community could be deprived if it would not support the party in power in the region. 59 Development planning has never been free from political control and Stolper has remarked that during that period "politics quite naturally had priority" in economic development in Nigeria. 60

The NDDB was caught up within that combination of politics and development. The Board was created as we noted in Chapter I because of the demand of chiefs and interest groups from the Niger Delta (the Western and Eastern) for the creation of a Rivers State to avoid being dominated by other groups. That
state was to include Port Harcourt and this led to the development of animosity between the Ibos and the people of the Niger Delta. Besides the conflict that arose out of the ownership of Port Harcourt, the Niger Delta Chiefs Congress was converted into a political party known as the Niger Delta Congress (NDC).

Unfortunately, the NDC was in alliance with the NPC, having agreed between themselves that if the former won the majority of seats in the Niger Delta in the 1960 and subsequent Federal Elections, the Rivers State would be created. In the 1960 elections the NDC gained only one seat. Although the NDC failed to secure the required number of seats in the region, the demand for the creation of a separate state was quite strong until the climax was reached when Isaac Boro declared the "Delta People's Republic" in 1966. Moreover, the NDC used the NDDB as a campaign issue and claimed that the Board was created through the efforts and the genuine concern of the founders of that party to seek ways to remedy the detrimental effects of earlier colonial economic policies and Ibo domination in the region. It was therefore unrealistic to expect that the recommendations of the NDDB could be easily approved since the two NCNC-controlled regions had concurrent powers with the Federal Government in the control of the NDDB.

Although there is no official document on which to base a conclusion that the Board could not get its recommendations approved because of political differences, there is no doubt
that the NCNC government in the Eastern Region was not favourably disposed to it. For example, the Chairman of the NDDB, the late Chief S.I. Anthony, who was a supporter of the creation of the Rivers State was among the first to be shot and killed along with some of his relatives in 1967 just at the beginning of the Civil War and before the Board was officially dissolved in 1970. Besides, it was the struggle between the NCNC and the NPC to control the Federal Government that led to the constant rigging of elections with resultant very heavy shedding of blood. As a result, the 1965 Western Region election led to the military coup on 15th. January, 1966, which was planned by Ibo military officers since 1964 that plunged the country into the three-year's Civil War.

The Military Administration (1967-1977)

i) Government under General Yakubu Gowon (1967-1975)

This period could be considered as the most progressive era compared with those of previous governments and the one that followed immediately after, in an attempt to bring about an overall development in terms of improving transportation system in the Niger Delta. During this period the Eastern Delta which was part of the Eastern Region was constituted as the Rivers State by a 1967 decree when the whole country was constituted into twelve states just before the Biafra secession in the same year. The Rivers State did not commence to function properly until after the Civil War in 1970, because the region
was part of the "Biafra" and it was constantly being threatened by the rebel forces. Thus the effective period of development effort was from 1970 to 1975. The analysis in this section is confined to the Rivers State in order to illustrate the effects of regional class alliances and conflicts on unequal development since the Western Delta was still under the Midwestern State during the period covered by the study.

The failure of the 1970-1975 transport development plan in the Rivers State was, as we have noted in section 3, caused by an interplay of class conflicts at the national and regional levels. In 1974, the people of the Western Delta renewed their earlier demands of 1958 to be joined to the Rivers State. This demand led to counter reaction in the Rivers State where a section of the population who are not Ijaw demanded also a "Port Harcourt State". The other ethnic groups, mostly the Ikwerre and Ogoni, in the already Ijaw-dominated Rivers State, were fearful of further Ijaw domination since the Western Delta is entirely Ijaw. This would mean the reduction of the ability of the non-Ijaw speaking members of the dominant interest groups to compete for rewards and appointments through the state apparatus. Thus the non-Ijaw speaking members of the dominant interest groups originated the demand for a "Port Harcourt State" to consist of Ahoada, Port Harcourt and Ogoni Divisions (see again Map 2) to be separated from the rest of the Rivers State.

To justify the creation of the "Port Harcourt State", 
the faction from that part of the State put forward two accusations against the Rivers State Government. One was that the government was concentrating development and political appointments in the Ijaw homeland comprised of Degema, Yenagoa and Brass Divisions which are mainly in the coastal areas of the State. And second, that the development of a road network in the coastal areas was too expensive and should be stopped or that part be separated from the rest of the State. The Rivers State Government, however, replied to these allegations by publishing a detailed distribution of political appointments, road development, health facilities, schools and loans between the coastal and the inland areas. Map 16 indicates that the inland areas with about 46% of the population of the State had received much more share of development than the coastal areas with a 54% of the population. Unfortunately, during this period of conflict among the interest groups in the Rivers State, General Yakubu Gowon's administration was removed by a coup led by General Murtala Mohammed, in 1975.

ii) Generals Murtala-Obasanjo Administration (1976-7)

Transportation development policies during the new regime were similar to those of the colonial period when improvement of communication systems was centred around urban centres and export crop producing areas. In the Niger Delta, the development of transportation networks, particularly outside Port Harcourt area, was virtually stopped. The road networks that were under construction both by the Federal and State Governments
MAP 16: THE RIVERS STATE SHOWING MEDICAL FACILITIES - 1975

REPRODUCED FROM NIGERIAN TIMES JAN. 4, 1975 RIVERS STATE GOV'T. REPLY TO DR. OBI WAI'S ARTICLES.
were neglected and became overgrown with weeds.

The new Federal Military Government gave two reasons for delaying the construction of the roads in the Niger Delta. One of the reasons was there were not enough funds, and second, that the roads were to be resurveyed and upgraded to trunk "A" Federal roads. But it was a "boom" period of road construction in other parts of the country. In 1977, the Federal Government gave several contracts for road construction and other expensive projects to Dumez and other construction companies, a single one of which was much more expensive than the cost of all the roads the Federal Government had decided to take over in the Rivers State during the Gowon's administration. Besides, by 1976 the regime was already contributing $16,483 million or 33% of the $50,203 million US to the budget of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), (see Table 13), an organization which at the present level of technological development in West Africa will only favour the multinationals and the dominant interest groups, and to increase the already existing uneven structural, regional, sectorial and social development.

For the Niger Delta, the Federal Government, instead of developing the transportation system, created another advisory board, the Niger Delta Basin Development Authority (NDBDA), similar to the inefficient NDDB to advise the Midwest (now Bendel) State, the Rivers State and the Federal Government on how to develop the region. In addition to the deprivation of
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Area (Sy Km) ('000)</th>
<th>Population ('000)</th>
<th>Coefficient Base, 1974 Percentage Contribution</th>
<th>Contribution in Millions of $</th>
<th>Total Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benin</td>
<td>112.6</td>
<td>3 112.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>1,293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape Verde*</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>294.1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>0.431</td>
</tr>
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<td>Gambia</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>523.7</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0.186</td>
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<td>Ghana</td>
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<td>9 866.0</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>0.932</td>
<td>5,560</td>
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<td>Guinea</td>
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<td>4 406.0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0.207</td>
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<td>Guinea Bissau</td>
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<td>Ivory Coast</td>
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<td>4 599.8</td>
<td>2.1</td>
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<td>0.905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>923.8</td>
<td>62 925.0</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>2,346</td>
<td>14,137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>196.2</td>
<td>4 136.3</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>0.386</td>
<td>2,327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>71.7</td>
<td>2 983.0</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>0.315</td>
<td>1,896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Togoland</td>
<td>56.0</td>
<td>2 222.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0.257</td>
<td>1,552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Volta</td>
<td>274.2</td>
<td>6 032.0</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0.136</td>
<td>1,121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL 6 142.0 115 332.9 100.0. 7,102 43,101 50,203

Notes: The contributions stated in millions of dollars have been converted from SDR's as at May 18, 1977. 1 SDR $1.1623 (US). *Cape Verde has been exempted from contributing to the budget of the Community and the capital of the Ecowas funds until 1980.


the Delta of effective transportation system, there was also a plan by the Federal Government which was supported by the dominant socio-economic groups from the areas which had benefitted from the 50% derivation revenue allocation formula to scrape off even the 20% derivation which has resulted from earlier reductions from 50% to 45% in 1967, and to 20% in 1975 for the oil producing states (see Table 14).

There is no substantial evidence to show on the part of the new Rivers State Government that efforts were being made to persuade the Federal Government to construct those roads taken over by the previous administration. 70

What is certain is that, the new Military Governor appointed to the Rivers State invited into his cabinet some of those who demanded for the "Port Harcourt State", including the secretary to the Military Governor, who became automatically the head of the State Civil Service. It was the members of the Rivers State Study Group, an organization made up of University Lecturers and other intellectuals in the Rivers State that sent petitions and delegations to protest to the Federal Government about its intention to scrape off the 20% revenue allocation and the failure to continue the road development projects of the former military regime. Part of a petition sent to the Federal Government in 1977 by the group read: 71

The greatest need of the Rivers and Bendel States is a network of roads to bring the Riverine Areas of the States into a closer contact with the rest of the country. Dutch experts recommended this 12 years ago while surveying the Niger Delta. Now that the Ring Road in Lagos Island and Badagry
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue Source</th>
<th>Former allocation Formula</th>
<th>New Allocation (from 1st April, 1975)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Import Duties of Motor Fuel</td>
<td>Approximately 91% to State where consumed</td>
<td>Zero to State where consumed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Approximately 9% to Distributable Pool</td>
<td>100% to Distributable Pool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Import Duties on Tobacco</td>
<td>100% to State where consumed</td>
<td>100% to Distributable Pool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining Rents and Royalties on On-Shore</td>
<td>45% to State where production occurs. 5% to Federal Government.</td>
<td>20% to State where production occurs. Zero to Federal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td>50% to Distributable Pool</td>
<td>Government. 80% to Distributable Pool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-Shore Production</td>
<td>100% to Federal Government. Zero to Distributable Pool</td>
<td>Zero to Federal Government. 100% to Distributable Pool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excise Duties</td>
<td>50% to Distributable Pool</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50% to Federal Government</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N.B. Funds from the Distributable Pool would be distributed quarterly to the States.

Expressway have confirmed that road development is possible anywhere in Nigeria, it is recommended that . . . as a gesture of goodwill for the past sufferings of the communities in the oil producing areas of the Niger Delta to amend Decree No. 37 of 1976 on the Niger Delta Basin Development Authority, making road development a No. 1 priority in the area.

In the meantime, the few roads approved for the area by the Federal Government now starving for lack of funds (while roads are being built all over the country with funds from the Niger Delta) should be financed without further delay in the interest of justice to the people of the Niger Delta.

These petitions and delegations did not change the policies of the Federal Government in any significant way. The Rivers State Government also did not continue with the previous state road projects in any effective way. Although there is no official document on which to base a conclusion that class conflict at the regional level was instrumental or gave room for the Federal Government to totally ignore transport development in the Delta, yet it cannot also be concluded that the conflicts were not instrumental. It might also be argued that the nature of the regional conflict and the lack of reaction of these very groups when the region was deprived of development by the Federal Government indicated that the dominant interest groups at the regional level were struggling for personal gains. The struggle was over the control of the state apparatus rather than a genuine feeling that a section in the Rivers State was being deprived.

For example, the regional dominant interest groups adopted various methods to exploit their rural communities whom they argued they were protecting from neglect by Governments. The
personal interviews I conducted in the summer of 1979 among farmers indicated that they were being exploited. Compensation paid by the oil companies for damages to farmlands, economic crops and trees, and other structures benefitted mainly those who had no land claims in these areas. Financial claims were made through an alliance between the wealthy and influential people in the communities and the clerks from the Land and Legal Divisions of the oil companies (locally known as Damage-Clers).

In areas where compensation was to be paid for destroyed crops the richer members of the community arranged to make secret payments to the clerks handling the claims. When the claims were settled these rich people would receive back approximately one and a half times their bribes paid to the clerks. This additional 50% would be subtracted from the total agreed amount of compensation allocated to the entire community, and thus, the honest farmer, whose crops and farms had been damaged during oil exploration, received commensurately less than the real calculated value of his lost assets.

Another important method of exploitation of the rural communities by the dominant socio-economic groups was also explained by some farmers and fishermen during the interviews. Between 1976 and 1978, the Federal Government launched a "produce your own food" campaign called Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) with an estimated cost of $3.9 billion US. In the OFN programme, farmers and fishermen were to be given...
fertilizers, improved seedlings and fishing nets, outboard engines, canoes and loans which the recipients were expected to pay back. The equipment was to be given to co-operative societies and those individuals who have surveyed reports of their farmlands.

The significance of the conditions for granting loans and other equipment to farmers and fishermen was that only wealthy farmers and other wealthy people who could survey their farm-lands benefitted from the project. The result was that farms which never existed were surveyed, inspected and approved. Some of the so-called "farming co-operatives" which got the loans had their headquarters at Port Harcourt which is more than 154 kilometres away from the areas they were said to be in operation. In addition, part of the funds meant for loans to farmers and fishermen were shared by members of the Divisional Councils who were entrusted with the funds. Bureaucrats in the State Branch of the OFN, in the majority of cases, bought the wrong type of fishing nets; old and defective canoes which were of little use were distributed to fishermen and were calculated as part of the loan. It might be concluded that officials in charge of the scheme were much more interested in the commissions they expected from suppliers and not how useful the materials would be to the recipient to increase his productivity so as to be able to repay the loan. Some of the fishermen in particular, therefore, ended up as debtors with uncertain means to be able to repay the loan.
IV.5 Spatial and Social Implications

The spatial and social effects of development were the reverse of the formal commitment of all the governments in Nigeria to equal development. The areas developed during the colonial period have continued to grow at a more rapid pace than the less developed regions. By 1965, the import-substitution industrialization had principally favoured only fifteen urban centres with 17% of the national population (see Map 17). The National Accounts Survey published in 1974 showed that this small urban population secured 36% of total income. In the urban sector itself 83% of the population belong to the lowest income group, 12% to the middle income group and 5% in the high income group. By 1977 seven urban centres accounted for 82% of the companies registered between 1966 and 1977 in the country.

In the Niger Delta, Port Harcourt and Warri have continued to grow at a rapid pace without significantly transmitting development to their zones of influence. In 1968, 96 of the 98 firms engaged in manufacturing in the Rivers State were located in the vicinity of Port Harcourt. In addition, after the Civil War in 1970, as the capital of the Rivers State, Port Harcourt also became the centre of all higher institution of learning in the state. Port Harcourt and Warri are also the centres of the oil industry with a rapidly growing population. Between 1952 and 1963 the population of the two urban centres grew by 10.5% and 8.7% respectively. Since 1970, because of
MAP 17: INDUSTRIAL LOCATIONS IN NIGERIA - 1965

concentration of oil exploration in the Western Delta at Warri it is considered as the fastest growing city in Nigeria. 79

The closure of the UAC buying stations in the Niger Delta and the continuation of differential freight charges between the minor and the major ports have the effect of maintaining the ongoing decline of the volume of goods passing through the ports of Abonnema (Degema) and Burutu (see Table 15). The decline of these ports has also led to a redundancy of port infrastructure and has created unemployment in those port towns. Abonnema is the hardest hit from the effect of port decline, at present, the bulk oil plant, the timber dressing plant and the stores which took advantage of the port facilities in the past, have packed up. Today, it is a ghost town. The more active strata of the population have migrated to Port Harcourt so that during the week days the population is made up of the old, school children, students and the teachers. Opobo has been kept fairly economically better off by the location of a boat building industry. 80

Neither did the exploration of petroleum help to change in a significant way the pace of economic development in the Niger Delta, due in part to lack of good means of communication and other infrastructures which would make the exploitation of petroleum in the area beneficial to the people. In 1961, just after a year of national independence and three years after the first oil shipment in 1958, the oil companies abandoned their intention of locating the industry in a dispersed pattern over
### TABLE 15

**VALUE OF IMPORTS AND EXPORTS THROUGH THE NIGER DELTA PORTS 1960/4 $'000 US.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Port Harcourt</th>
<th>Warri</th>
<th>Burutu</th>
<th>Abonnema (Degema)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>101,772</td>
<td>9,779</td>
<td>4,756</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>105,070</td>
<td>7,104</td>
<td>5,696</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>104,832</td>
<td>4,776</td>
<td>1,994</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>115,190</td>
<td>3,579</td>
<td>1,520</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>132,253</td>
<td>7,764</td>
<td>14,797</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**A) IMPORTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Port Harcourt</th>
<th>Warri</th>
<th>Burutu</th>
<th>Abonnema (Degema)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>83,659</td>
<td>6,714</td>
<td>10,734</td>
<td>3,157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>84,491</td>
<td>6,961</td>
<td>8,404</td>
<td>2,356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>73,047</td>
<td>9,071</td>
<td>7,588</td>
<td>1,247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>81,877</td>
<td>9,715</td>
<td>9,084</td>
<td>1,569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>83,853</td>
<td>8,741</td>
<td>5,696</td>
<td>1,663</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**B) EXPORTS**

the Niger Delta and moved their bases from Oloibiri and Burutu and other stations to Port Harcourt. Warri is also now benefiting from the concentration. In actual fact, oil company installations which could create employment and employee residents are concentrated in these two centres. We have noted in the introductory chapter that Udo has attributed the concentration of the oil industry at Port Harcourt to "the difficult terrain" of the Niger Delta.

Contrary to Udo's argument, Melamid who has carried out a comparative study of the oil industry in Iran, Algeria, and in more advanced countries such as Canada and the United States of America, has consequently argued that the concentration of the oil companies in Port Harcourt was not influenced by topographical factors of the Niger Delta, and gives two reasons. One of them is that the oil companies preferred Port Harcourt because of industrial infrastructure, port and social facilities. The second is that the legal system in Nigeria, which was inherited from the colonial period, confers on the Federal Government the right over all mineral resources. On the other hand, he added, in Canada and the U.S.A. there is dispersion of mining activities because the legal system allows private or provincial ownership of minerals. In this respect, the recent tendency of the oil industry to concentrate to maximize profit has arisen from lack of proper regulations to check concentration.

Malamid's conclusion is that.
Underdevelopment rather than climate or terrain appears to determine therefore, the evolution of centralized pattern in modern oil production.

In addition, the present attempt to develop Bonny, Onne and Escravous in the Niger Delta as ports to cope with the increasing oil export in the country has further indicated that terrain was not the major factor inhibiting the development of the Niger Delta. Instead, it has demonstrated the extent to which the interests of the dominant interest groups and foreign capital shape regional development in Nigeria. Furthermore, the concentration of the oil industry at Port Harcourt and Warri has indicated that a port well linked by modern means of transport could be a strong force in attracting economic activities to its immediate tributary area of influence. For example, in almost all ex-colonial territories, port areas are among the most developed parts of these countries. Thus the discriminatory port policies adopted since the colonial period have also contributed to the regional differences in the Niger Delta.

In conclusion, "The Delta has an enormous potentiality and the key to its development lies in the opening up of the area by means of an integrated and efficient transport network". Despite debates on the role of transportation networks as either a pre-condition, a concomitant or a neutral factor of economic development, the fact remains that an "efficient transportation system is, in many ways, the life-blood of an economic system". The persistence of the colonial unequal development of the Niger Delta into the post national
independence period comes from the linkage of interests of international capital and the dominant interest groups at both the national and regional levels. These interests created factions among the dominant groups because of their technological dependence; and the resulting conflicts and alliances were important factors at the micro-level of analysis of unequal development. It can be argued that genuine policies to reduce the wide regional variations in the level of development in the region are hardly to be expected given the continuation of these factors.
FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER IV


3. This was Mr. Chamberlain's definition of the role of the State. See Woolf, L. Empire and Commerce in Africa. 1968 P.8.


17. The Head of State, General Olusegun Obasanjo divided the dominant local interest groups into (1) the commercial or business trading outpost agents (2) the bureaucratic trading outpost agents (3) the technical trading outpost agents and (4) the intellectual trading outpost agents. See Osoba, S. "The Deepening Crisis of the Nigerian National Bourgeoisie", Review of African Political Economy, Vol. 13, 1978, P.63-77, Pf.64.

18. Schatz, P.S. Nigerian Capitalism op.cit. P.151. See also Rodney, W. How Europe Underdeveloped Africa, 1972, Pf.224-5. In the 1930's there were 12 modern segregated hospitals for 4,000 Europeans in Nigeria while the African population of 40 million had 52 hospitals.


26. With the oil boom, and the decline in the importance of agricultural produce in foreign exchange earnings, Chief Obafemi Awolowo who insisted on the 50% region of derivation revenue allocation formula has changed his philosophy in the 1970's: He is quoted as saying: "Discussion on revenue allocation which started in 1946 has been bogged down by "various non objective and non quantitative principles such as equity and partisan consideration"...Nigerians have reached a state in their level of awareness where they can no longer allow those considerations to bedevil the issue of revenue allocation" *West Africa*, January 10, 1980, P.175.
31. A litigation filed by the people of Okrika against the Eastern Region since the 1960's has just been decided in 1978 in favour of Okrika to be paid her full share of rents on Port Harcourt.


42. Abayode, O. NJESS, Ibid, P.294.

43. The attitude of economic planning has not changed since Stolper's period 1962-8. In the Second National Development 1970-74, despite in P.30, having stated the general objectives: "a situation where some parts of the country are experiencing rapid economic growth whilst others are lagging behind, can no longer be tolerated", in P.148, the plan also stated industries sponsored by the Federal and State Governments should be cited purely on an economic rationale as a matter of locational policy. The policy clearly favours the already-developed areas since cost-benefit analysis will have to be adopted to decide on least cost location. See Critic of Stolper's Planning Approach. Abayode, O. Foundation of an African Economy: A Study of Investment and Growth in Nigeria, 1966, P.164. And also see Critics of the Second and Third National Plans, The Open University Social Sciences, a Third Level Course: Regional Analysis and Development Government Intervention 3: D342 (14-16) P.7-29, Pf. 26 and Lewis, A.O. "Nigeria's Third National Development Plan 1975-80: An Appraisal of Objective and Policy Framework". Developing Economies, Vol. 15, No. 1, 1977, P.60-79.


45. Agriculture produce was taxed twice. The Federal Government imposed export duties, and the Regions/States that of a purchase/sales tax. See Olatunbosun, D.: Nigeria's Neglected Rural Majority, 1975, P.88-89. The high taxation of the peasants led to a peasant revolt called "Agbekoya Revolt" from 1968 to 1970 in the Western Region


47. See Open University Social Sciences. op.cit. 17

48. See West Africa, No. 90, February 1979, P.86.

49. NDDB Annual Report 1963/64, P.35


51. The roads under construction were: (1) the East-West - an Interstate Highway 170 km at an estimated cost of $29,772,055 US, (2) Ahoada-Degema-Buguma Road, 60 km long, $28,116,321 (3) Yenagoa-Gloibiri-Nembe-Brass Road, 69 km long, $32,92 million, (4) Port Harcourt-Eleue-Alimini Road, 60 km, $11,511,533 US and (5) Ahoada-Omoku-Okwzi, 50 km, $11,114,821 US.


56. Uniform spatial pricing of co-modities at the various ports was changed only after 1967. This was because the Civil War had disrupted the Port Harcourt Port. See Ogundana, O., in Mabogunje, A.L. and Faniran (ed) P.149.


62. See Tamuno, T.A. African Affairs, op.cit. P.264

63. Rivers State Government Printer, Our Case, An Address of Welcome to the Prime Minister of Britain Harold Wilson, 1969, P.22.

64. See Amoda, M. in Okpaku, J. (ed) op.cit. P.174-177.

65. See articles published by Dr. Obi Wali in Daily Times (Lagos) Friday, 20 September, 1974 and 14th November, 1974.

66. The Rivers State Government replied in The Nigerian Tide January 1975 Vol. 5, No. 232 titled "Rivers State Government Speaks on Demand for Port Harcourt State", P3, "a total of 13 members of the State Executive, eight are non-Ijaws, four out of the nine Chairmen of the Public Corporations and Boards are non-Ijaws while three out of five members of the Public Service Commissioners are non-Ijaws". In the publication, photographs and names of every person were published. Of a total of 177,200 ($313,640 US) loans to businessmen:

   i) land area received 102,400 ($181,248 US) or 57.8%
   ii) riverine " 38,800 ($68,676 US) or 21.9%
   iii) State Apéxes 36,000 ($63,720 US) or 20.3%

See Nigerian Tide January 1975 op.cit. Table 1, P.10 and also see Nigerian Tide Saturday, September 1974 and Nigerian Tide January 4, 1975.


69. Cost of construction of Oil Storage tanks in major urban centres $377.4 million US, Ibadan-Lagos Expressway, $153.99 million, see Nigerian Review 1977, No. 7, and also Okene-Kaduna Road $189.39 million (N107 m) and Shagamu-Benin Road $169.92 m (N96 m). See Freud, B. Oil Boom and Crisis in Contemporary Nigeria in Review of African Political Economy No. 13, op.cit. P.94.

70. Commissioner Osawollor, G.H., a member of the Rivers State Cabinet and member of the Port Harcourt State Movement was asked by journalists in a TV Programme in August 1979 what efforts were being made by the New Government to ask the Federal Government to start the construction of the roads. His answer was only that the Federal Government has not resurveyed the roads to upgrade them to trunk "A" roads.

72. In the summer of 1979 between July and August, I interviewed sixty persons, 36 of whom were farmers at Oporoma and Oloiri; 14 fishermen at Foropa, Brass and Akassa, 6 government officials at Yenagoa, Port Harcourt and 4 Lecturers in the College of Education, College Science and Technology, and University of Port Harcourt. The section is based on facts I was told during my discussions with them.


75. Calculated from Nigerian Trade Journal 1966-1977. The percentage of concentration are: Lagos 57.4, Kano 7.00, Ibadan 6.4, Benin 3.2, Port Harcourt 3.1, Enugu 2.9, Onitsha 2.4, Aba 2.0, Warri 1.7, Jos 1.5, Calabar 1.4, Zaria 1.3, Sokoto 1.2, Owerri 1.00.


77. The Institutions of Higher learnings include: The University of Port Harcourt, College of Education, College of Science and Technology.


79. Population of Warri increased from 53,254 (1963) to 130,000 in 1971, see Green, H.A. ibid, P.108.

80. Ogundana, B. in Mabogunje and Faniran (ed) op.cit. P.149.


86. Lloyd, P.E. and Dicken, P. Location in Space, 1977, P.186
CHAPTER V: ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO DEVELOPMENT

V.1 The Need for Alternative Approaches

We have noted from the previous chapters that the major factor perpetuating unequal development in the Niger Delta is the collaboration of the dominant interest groups with external capital within the interstices of the capitalist world economy. These interest groups succeed in their economic activities because of their control of the State apparatus. This conclusion is further supported by Akeredolu-Ale's remark that the underdevelopment of the rural areas in Nigeria illustrates the practical disadvantages of lack of political power among the rural people, while it demonstrates the practical economic advantages of political power held by the indigenous capitalist class.¹

For example, apart from the recommendations of the NDDB, a Japanese firm of consultants, the Nomura Research Institute, put forward in 1975 a "Development Project Package" based on a 'growth pole' strategy (see Map 18) for the Rivers State Government. The Rivers State Government, during the General Yakubu Gowon's administration, incorporated some of the recommendations into the 1975-1980 Development Plan.² But when that administration was overthrown in the 1976 coup, almost all of those projects intended to improve the welfare of the farmers and fishermen, were halted. Thus the structure of distribution of power and unequal development tend to be functionally related.
MAP 18: PROPOSED STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT POINTS FOR THE RIVERS STATE - 1975

Hierarchy of Development
1 = First Order

Interstate Development Strategic Point.

PORT HARCOURT

State Development Strategic Point

Interstate Development Strategic Point

Divisional Development Points

BRASS

20 0 40 Km

Source: Nomura Institute Japan 1975.
A policy to reduce poverty and unequal development therefore, should, as one major element, focus directly on reducing the concentration of power and wealth in the hands of a few.³

The present development thinking is towards the provision of basic needs for the poor. It is estimated that in the developing countries, between 75% to 80% of the lowest income groups of the population live in the rural areas.⁴ Hence a prosperous rural sector is a crucial element in the development process. Besides providing food for the urban towns and markets for industrial produce,⁵ the development of the rural areas should aim at reducing extreme differences in income between the urban and rural areas by stimulating greater rural productive efficiency.⁶ In addition to increased productivity in the rural sector, an articulated regional development plan should also be concerned with the provision of essential needs, the even distribution and accessibility to public services, the creation of new employment opportunities, the improvement of health and educational facilities, and the expansion of a communications system.⁷

To increase the efficiency of the rural areas, Ul Haq has therefore, among other things, suggested that "development styles should be such as to build development around the people rather than people around development".⁸ That suggestion attacks the present model of development in many countries in which the dominant interest groups, including the technocrats, assume that they know best what the nation's problems are, and how best they
can be solved. In this approach, presumably, the people simply have to cast aside their unprogressive ways, understand the government's programmes, and co-operate in their execution for the national good.

According to Umali, however, "development occurs only when basic needs of the poorest are met and their rights to participate in decisions that shape their lives are fully secured". From the results of planned development in Nigeria, it can be claimed that such development has not yet taken place in the nation. Therefore, until identity between the individual and the collective will of the population as a whole is complete, economic policies will always work for the benefit of some and be detrimental to others. Seen in the above terms, the more feasible development approach to the problems of the Niger Delta would be to decentralize development planning to the extent that the local people could make effective decisions, as to what they require and how such needs should be provided.

V.2 The Objectives

A development approach can be defined largely in terms of the objectives of the development process. A strategy designed to reduce inter-personal, inter-regional and intra-regional inequalities must necessarily consist of a complementary set of specific policies which will provide for the attainment of the objectives. The approach applied to the present study should aim to reduce or eradicate, first, the concentration of power,
secondly, the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few, and thirdly, the dominance-dependence structure of the Nigerian economy in relationship to the international economy. It should aim at developing greater economic self-reliance.

The International Labour Office (ILO) has suggested a Basic Needs Approach to development. "A Basic Needs oriented policy implies the participation of the people in making the decisions which affect them", 10 Popular participation in such a development process could involve: 11

i) the provision of certain minimum requirements of a family for private consumption: adequate food, shelter and clothing, household equipment and furniture.

ii) the provision of essential services such as safe drinking water, sanitation, public transport, health and educational facilities.

The interaction of these needs and the population lies in the employment of the people in the provision of goods and services. This approach stresses full popular participation in the provision of goods which will also ensure economic growth. The achievement of spatial and social equity requires corresponding changes in the socio-economic and political philosophies and the planning methodology.
V.3 Elements of the Approach

1) Planning Methodology

In a popular participation-oriented development, the goal is to attain equity in the distribution of goods and services. The core of development planning lies in relating objectives to actual policies, as well as the process of implementation. A plan to meet social equity should, at least in the initial stage of development, supplant those methods of planning in which private motives and interests are the essential features. For, "Capitalism as a power structure is not simply a matter of class as ownership, but also as control. Control over the nature and criteria of investment, its timing and its location, still lies crucially with management—and, in manufacturing, private management—rather than with public authorities. Its criteria—essentially profit—are still private and internal to the enterprise, rather than public, social or external." 12

One of the more serious problems in planning is the conflict in the objectives. In the Second and Third National Development plans in Nigeria, as we have noted, the principle of equity conflicted with the insistence on the application of a certain type of economic rationale in deciding the location of economic activities. 13 This has led to the concentration of economic and social activities in the already developed areas. It is also argued that growth and equity cannot be achieved simultaneously, so that scarce resources should be concentrated to provide the goods and services to permit redistribution. 14
But the fact remains that a policy of popular participation would be far more likely to increase growth rather than of slowing it down. 15

The main focus of planning for such participation-oriented development is to decentralize planning for decentralized development. One of the aims of this approach should be to reduce rural-urban migration. Therefore, the villages where most of the poorest groups of people live would become the targets of development. 16 This would allow planning from below whereby the local people identify their own problems instead of having imposed upon them plans and programmes which do not take cognizance of local priorities. An important factor of decentralized approach to development is the development of a new socio-political system which will incorporate the necessary elements of the strategy to be adopted. In addition, this approach is, in essence, an advocacy for the local control of resources and an integrated rural development to ensure a self-reliant economy. 17

ii) The socio-political system

From the historical evolution of unequal development in the Niger Delta, a pro-socialist political philosophy would be an advantage in reducing the widening inter-personal, inter-regional and intra-regional gap in the levels of well-being in the country. The basic motive behind popular participation in development is to break the individualistic, private ownership-
minded thinking which has led to the concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a few, and instead to create a more co-operative community spirit.

In a pro-socialist system, profit maximization would be regarded as a basis for achieving the social ends of the community. In such a strategy, the economic surplus is mobilized by the expropriation of wealth, and such wealth is then mobilized through full utilization of manpower and other resources for the communal good.18 The main philosophy of the political system should thus be based on collective action.

iii) Local ownership of resources

Collectivization in the development process also implies local ownership of resources whereby the producers of wealth have executive decision-making rights over resources in their areas of jurisdiction. The ownership of natural resources could range from regional ownership to local control over the degree and kind of exploitation, and over the location of their processing.

The ownership of resources should include the right of the local people to decide the rate of compensation, the regulation of waste disposal and other forms of pollution caused by their use. The powers could extend to control over-exploitation, as well as to actions required to check the consequences of externally-induced under-exploitation.19 This control could also extend to collectivization of agricultural land and fishing grounds. Such development involves total mobilization of
resources, the production of goods and services, and the distribution of the benefits of growth.\textsuperscript{20}

iv) The integration of the rural areas

The various economic and socio-political changes are to be unified into an integrated development approach. It is often stressed that the key to a self-reliant economy lies in an integrated rural development. It is a multi-sectoral activity which includes, besides agricultural development, rural industry and the formation and organization of co-operatives, as well as social overhead facilities such as water supply, banks, and adult and extension education. Hence it is argued that:\textsuperscript{21}

Integrated rural development planning involves synchronization of development operations which in turn requires recognition of the systematic character of rurality. ... Rural development must be integrated because the rural system is inherently integrated.

Politically, as the village is the unit of political control, the various villages should be given the authority to democratically elect their own leaders who should be subject to the control of the electors and not of the dominant interest groups. The right of the 'neglected rural majority' to have increased political power in the decision-making process would accelerate the pace of development. The rural people would begin to identify themselves with the processes of development and their objectives. In this way, they become the significant source of creativity in the development of the rural economy.
In the Niger Delta there are two major types of village communities, the fishing and farming groups which are determined by the various ecological zones. As we have noted, settlements in the coastal sand and ridges, and the Mangrove zones are those of fishermen; this is an area south of a line slightly North of Burutu in the West to Nembe, Degema and Opobo in the East, while farming communities lie North of this Zone. The two types of occupations rarely co-exist in a single community because of the relatively sharp ecological differences in the physical environment; the freshwater zone is quite different from that of the mangrove swamps. Thus each settlement could make development decisions according to its occupational character.

The villages already have traditional methods of decision-making processes which involve representatives of each compound. A compound is a family unit which settles in a continuous form but has boundaries with other family units in the same settlement. Each representative, usually the compound chief, reports back to the family members or the family council. The chief of the compound, or the family council, is generally the spokesman for the various compounds in public meetings of the entire village. These spokesmen are normally elected by the family and could be rejected also by the people. Besides the village, there could be three other levels of decision-making process to co-ordinate the general development of the region (see Figure 5).

The second level of decision-making in the Delta is at the sub-cultural, or the clan level. A clan is made up of a group
FIGURE 5
PROPOSED DECENTRALIZED ADMINISTRATION
of settlements which claims common ancestry. In general, settlements belonging to the same sub-cultural group are located closest to each other. The founders of these settlements also claim to have dispersed from the same original home to the present sites; they share the same culture, dialect and customs.

During the colonial period, the clan was a unit of administration. The native courts were based on such historical features so that each clan had its own court and, up until the present, settlements which claim common origin unite in the face of an external aggressor or in cases over land disputes and fishing grounds. At this level of decision-making, a council could be formed from the representatives of each settlement to co-ordinate their common programmes. The clan knows the most senior member of the settlements and the Chief of such settlements are generally crowned by the Government as the Clan-Head, although in recent days, because of financial remuneration as well as politicization of the system, many clan-head posts are filled through elections.

The third and fourth levels are the districts, or the counties and the states where both government officials and the members of the various decision-making bodies should meet to take final decisions on the various projects. At these levels, the community development programmes will have to be co-ordinated to form the basis of the overall development plan for the region. The co-ordination is necessary to allow better resource allocation in terms of location of secondary schools, hospitals, rural
industries, construction of roads and canals, and other social amenities which an individual community cannot finance with its own resources only.

One of the development priorities should be to produce sufficient food through the development of agro-based industries which should produce simple agricultural implements, and also process agricultural and fish products. Increase in the production of food and fish is necessary because the two major occupations in the Niger Delta are highly dependent on each other. The people in the coastal brackishwater zone depend on food supply from the farming areas, and Warri and Port-Harcourt, while they sell fish to these areas.

In the rural areas of the Niger Delta, buying and selling are done through periodic markets where food and fish producers meet to exchange their products through market mechanisms. But food supply from the freshwater zone alone is unable to meet the demands of the coastal non-farming groups. The result is that most food supply to these groups in the Yenagoa-Brass and Western Ijaw Divisions, for example, comes from outside the Niger Delta via Warri (see Map 19). Food supply from Port Harcourt is relatively small. We have noted that instead of the governments of Nigeria encouraging local food production, there is increasing food importation into the country. Besides the inflation arising from high food import levels, Nigerians are under-nourished. For example, the average Nigerian daily calorie intake is only 2,033 K-calories as compared to that of
MAP 19: MAJOR PERIODIC MARKETS IN THE COASTAL ZONES OF WESTERN 
IJAW & YENAGOA-BRASS DIVISIONS

Food Supply Directions

Warri
Port Harcourt
Farming Communities
Fish Supply
Divisional Boundary

Food Supply Source

Source: Prepared from Field Knowledge of the area.
3,200 k-calories per capita per day in the more advanced countries. Thus the development of the productive capacity of the peasant farmer and the fisherman in the Niger Delta is necessary to raise the living standards in the region. In the freshwater zone where the conditions are best suited for the cultivation of rice, the communities should be provided with the necessary education, and encouragement to grow it.

An important aid to efficient rural food production is the availability of relevant technology. Besides being simple, the technology should be easy to operate and repair. It should be accessible on demand, labour intensive, low energy-consuming and inexpensive. This will enable peasant farmers and fishermen to increase their inputs in the production process without much financial strain on their meagre income. That is why the technology should be adaptable to the environment and the particular strategy. In the riverine parts of the region, for example, heavy farm equipment such as tractors can only be useful for the first few months of the dry season, from December to March. At the beginning of the first few rains in April, the soil becomes sticky and soft so that tractors can no longer operate effectively. Thus an appropriate technology is necessary to raise efficiency in food production and this, consequently, will lead to higher income levels among the rural population.

An efficient marketing system facilitated by effective provision of transport networks is important in the process of integrated rural development programmes. We have noted in the
previous chapters that one key detrimental factor which has resulted from the interplay of the world economy and class conflict in causing unequal development in the Niger Delta, is the lack of an effective transportation system. The circulation of food and the effective use of social services depends on the presence of an integrated transport network, not necessarily connecting the rural areas to the capital cities as it is generally done, but one that is well articulated to connect the rural areas themselves. A transportation system which is effectively articulated to connect the various rural settlements will increase trade and contact within these areas, and consequently increase the level of development. For example, buying and selling in the periodic markets usually involve between eight to twenty-four hours of hand paddling to get to them from the surrounding villages. Thus an advocacy for increased food and fish production, and an efficient marketing system cannot neglect the provision of an effective means of transportation in the region.

In addition, the poor transportation system has hampered some adhoc plans made by the Rivers State Government for the Eastern part of the Niger Delta. Between 1973 and 1976, the government provided two floating hospital boats, Florence Nightingale and Kale-Ekule, to serve the remote rural areas in the Yenagoa and Brass Divisions respectively. But these services were irregular, and insufficient, and the boats could not travel in some of the creeks because they are not navigable
by big vessels. Besides, there were frequent complaints of engine breakdowns, fuel inadequacy and a lack of good drinking water in the boats. The doctors and the crew preferred to return to Port Harcourt, and it took a month or more before they returned.\textsuperscript{25} Floating services, therefore, seem to be an unsuitable solution to the problems of these remote areas in the long run.

Thus the provision of an effective transportation system appears to be a crucial factor in any effort to develop the region. But the development of an efficient system in the Niger Delta might be more costly than for some other parts of the country because of need for bridges and soil conditions. This means that there should be sufficient resources for the local communities to plan their own transport network.

One other element in the suggested approaches to development important to the Niger Delta must therefore be the local ownership of resources. We have already noted that the major factor which permitted the oil companies to abandon their earlier plan of a dispersed locational pattern for the oil industry to concentrate at Warri and Port Harcourt, was the Nigerian legal system which confers the ownership of mineral resources on the Federal Government. It is because of the centralized, bureaucratic ownership of the oil industry that the agreements between the oil companies and the Federal Government do not specify the party which bears responsibility in the event of an oil blow-out. The local people have neither the right
over the control of environmental pollution nor to take any effective legal steps against the oil companies when such pollution occurs.26

The rates of compensation for the destruction of trees, crops and other structures are determined by the Federal and State government officials without a thorough knowledge of the importance of the various crops and trees to the locality. For example, a strand of mature raphia palm is paid at only $14.16 US,27 while it is the most lucrative commercial tree in the Niger Delta, as previously noted in Chapter II. If resources were owned locally, the Niger Delta could have, by now, become one of the most developed parts in Nigeria. There are international examples today where there is an increasing demand for greater autonomy over natural resources at the sub-national levels, not only in the developing but also in the advanced countries.28

However, there are two arguments current in Nigeria which have been put forward to support total Federal control of the oil industry, and also abolishing the principle of derivation in revenue allocation which, before the discovery of oil, conferred 50 percent of the revenue from such resource on the producing provinces (see again Table 14). One is that, oil was put in those provinces through an act of nature and not by local initiative; therefore, people living in the oil-producing areas could only claim compensation for commercial trees and crops and other structures damaged during exploitation.
The second is that in Nigeria as a political unit, there should be a policy aimed at achieving a greater equity distribution of wealth throughout the country, and this should be based on population. This argument gains widespread support. But this formula, if followed, will maintain the Niger Delta as still among one of the least-developed areas of the country, because of its small population. The funds arising from this approach will be insufficient to provide the much needed transportation networks.

Besides, the proponents of this line of thought do not put forward a programme whereby every part of the country could be developed with greater equity. We have noted that since independence, the Federal Government has not invested any significant sums in the development of the region, and even existing projects were also halted. The so-called 'equity' policy, it appears, is not guided by any genuine concern for equity in the development of the entire country. Instead, it seems to demonstrate the self-interest of the dominant groups in the disguise of fair-mindedness. For the most vocal voices of these arguments come from those areas which benefited from the boom years of agricultural crops and who consistently defended the 50% revenue allocation formula up to the time of the Civil War in 1967.
V.4 The relevance of the Strategy to the Niger Delta

The decentralized strategy described above, if thoroughly implemented, will be beneficial to the Niger Delta in many ways. One, it would allow the people of each of the component parts of the region to plan and execute its own development programme depending on the priorities of that locality. The neglected parts of the region could, in this way, develop themselves and correct the present imbalance in the provision of their basic needs.

Second, it would help to divert part of the flow of resources from the Niger Delta to other parts of the country. The resources could then be properly directed to the development of the much-needed transportation network in the region. In this way, the myth of the topographical constraints-hypothesis would be dispelled.

For example, the development of the Tennessee Valley in the United States of America, and the reclamation projects on the Dutch coast are international examples of areas with complex topographical problems which have undergone dramatic changes. The Tennessee Valley, before its development, was infested with diseases, soil erosion and devastating floods destroying nearly $700,000 worth of property annually. But it is now one of the highly developed parts in the U.S.A. with industries, excellent means of communication, and is a centre of tourist attraction. The project came through because of the political will of President Roosevelt's administration. In this respect,
Faniran cites Clapp (1965) in noting that "the main reason for controversy with respect to the TVA project is the unexpected level of its success". 32 

The experience of the TVA projects has become an example for developing river valleys and deltas which do not contribute as much to the respective countries as the Niger Delta does in Nigeria. Among the well-known are, the Mekong Valley project in South East Asia, The Volta Dam resettlement scheme in Ghana, which involved hundreds of settlements, and the Kainji Dam project in Nigeria which involved both resettlement and restructuring of the area. 33 These examples indicate that topographical difficulties are no longer sufficient reasons for uneven development. The important factor is the lack of the political will to plan for an integrated development of the country.

Finally, a decentralized integrated approach forwarded here will also lead to a better utilization of the vast natural resources in the area. As a self-reliant strategy, the vast potentials for rice cultivation and fishing, for which the Niger Delta has the best conditions in Nigeria, will be better utilized to enhance the living standards of the people in the region. The schools, hospitals and other social services will also be better provided for serving the communities. With improved living conditions, migration into the urban centres will decrease, since there will be opportunities for full employment.

Development or underdevelopment is primarily a political
problem. The existence of a government whose leaders accept the principles and practices of a participatory democracy would ensure the reduction of wide gaps at the inter-personal, inter-regional and intra-regional levels of development. Such a government would integrate the leaders in government with the mass of the people through a systematic sharing of power at the local, state and national levels of government by testing all policy alternatives and actions from the point of view of their impact on the lives of each community.

As Gutkind has observed on the situation in Nigeria, if the current methods of development practices do not improve, the present frustration among the people arising from the accelerating gap between the rich and the poor, might change from "The Energy of Despair" at present to "The Anger of Despair"; the problem is "how soon" this can be achieved. Therefore, proportional development of the Niger Delta would depend, in large part, on the elimination of the very forces of unequal development by adopting a government with the principles of decentralized development in which the local population would have the right to participate in the decision-making process.

2. For example, 1975-80 Development plan, the Rivers State Government proposed the development of six fishing centres at the coastal region. They were to be organised as settlement schemes each involving 6,000 fishermen at Bonny, Kek, Kula Okpoma, Akassa and Koluama which were to be developed in three phases. For the first phase, the scheme was allocated $2.9 million US. Besides, Bonny Fishing Terminal complex which was proposed by the Nomura Institute was to be developed at a cost of $6.2 million US during the period. Cold stores were to be built in each of the 18 administrative headquarters in the State and supplied with refrigerating vans for effective coverage in the distribution of fish to the hinterland areas. See Rivers State Development Programme of the Third National Development Plan 1975-80, p. 37-38. For transportation networks, agriculture and rural electrification schemes see ibid p.7-36, 44-47, and 56-61.


23. In April 1975, the Rivers State Government sent two bulldozers to clear the permanent site of the Government Secondary School at Ukubie of which I was the acting Principal, but the machines could not carry out their job effectively because the soil had already become sticky and in many cases the equipment just sank down. Since the bulldozers were in the district, however, I persuaded the officer in charge to transfer them to Ekeni-Ezetu which was the site of another school where clearing had to be done, an area situated on the coastal sand and ridge zone, because that part appears drier than the freshwater area. But when we went to inspect the site, we found that it was worse than the first one. The top soil was so soft so that the machine would simply sink into it. Later it was reported that the bulldozers sent to Akassa in the coastal area were similarly unable to operate effectively during the same period.

25. The Florence Nightingale was stationed at Ukubie where (as mentioned in note 23) I was acting Principal of the Secondary School during the period 1973 to 1976. I offered part-time teaching opportunities to every medical doctor who was assigned to the boat to teach human biology and some aspects of chemistry, as the school did not have enough qualified science teachers. Thus I acquired a thorough knowledge of the movements of the hospital boat.

26. The worst oil pollution on record took place on January 17, 1980. A Texaco off-shore well exploded involving an estimated more than 280,000 tons of crude oil. It was judged to have affected 200 towns and villages with a population of some 250,000. It was further estimated that to rehabilitate only eight of the settlements in the Bendal State part of the Delta would cost over $500 million ($885 million US). The report further stated: "it would not be possible to get rid of the effects on marine and plant life in under ten years" West Africa No. 3268, 10 March, 1980 P.439. But Texaco sent only minute relief aid to some of the settlements. The items were as follows:

i) Fishtown was sent: five goats, twelve chickens, five bags of garri (cassava flour) and N90.00 ($159.3 US) to dig two temporary wells for drinking since the oil has seeped into the wells also.

ii) Sanagana: N140.00 ($247.8 US) to dig two wells and another N300.00 ($531.0 US) to purchase fish and garri.

iii) The same amount as Sanagana received was given to Odio.

The Federal Government which received 80% of the oil wealth could not send relief to the affected areas until two weeks had gone by. The Government claims that oil pollution was not an accident and that an accident refers to natural accidents because oil pollution was an anticipated incident in the process of oil exploration. Thus it was the Rivers State that sent N1 million ($1.77 million US) worth of relief before the Federal Government sent N2 million ($3.5 million US) to the States concerned for relief operation in the Niger Delta. See West Africa loc. cit. P.439.

27. Rivers State Ministry of Agriculture (Crop Division) 1979.
28. International examples include; Wales demanding greater control of its water resources, Scotland with its claims to offshore oil, Northern Chile claiming its copper. See Stöhr and Todtling in Folmer and Oosterhaven (eds), op. cit. P.155. In recent years, Provincial Governments in Canada have also opposed to what they term as Federal encroachment onto Provincial rights over resources, e.g., Alberta defending what it calls its own rights to its oil, and Newfoundland trying to gain complete control over offshore fishing and mineral rights.


CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

The historical geography of the evolution of the spatial development patterns in the Niger Delta provides a classic example of the effects of the global economic system in creating both the economic and social forces that perpetuate uneven development. The inequalities in the region are essentially a colonial creation, evolving from the colonial politico-economic policies designed to fulfil certain economic ends. The implementation of these policies led to the economic decline of the important pre-colonial coastal centres in the Niger Delta which were not served by effective means of transportation; and to the rise of new centres at the coastal terminals, and along the railway lines in the hinterland.

The incorporation of Nigeria as an exporter of primary products in the world capitalist economy is the major factor from which all other processes of unequal development emanated. This is largely due to the fact that the export crop economy is determined by the economies of the more advanced countries whence initiatives are generated and resources deemed valuable are defined. This created rich and poor areas in the country. Since colonial authorities sought to develop the resources based on the profit maximization motive, transport networks were designed to move products to the coastal ports, and the movement of administrative and military staffs which would maintain the political stability necessary for the exploitation of resources.
The implication was that the transportation network would continue to increase in the export crop producing regions of the country to the disadvantage of the coastal areas of the Niger Delta which did not produce enough of these crops.

First, in the process of "opening up" of the country for the exploitation of resources, the most important instrument was the development of railway transport between 1897 to 1930. Although water transport gave the coastal areas the initial advantage, it had very little power to revolutionize spatial development without a reinforcement by effective rail and road networks, so that these early areas lost their locational advantage and declined when road and rail networks were developed in the hinterland. Unfortunately, the coastal areas are suitable for producing basically those identical goods, such as salt and fish, which the metropolitan producers were equally eager to sell in the country. Therefore, the colonial authorities were not particularly interested in developing fishing in the area; rather, the importation of the Norwegian stockfish and manufactured salt led to the decline of these activities in the coastal areas.

Secondly, the profit maximization policy was also instrumental in shaping colonial urban and commercial policies by encouraging concentration of economic activities in a very few places. Port Harcourt and Warri, which were developed as urban centres at the edge of the Delta, received the necessary infrastructures for industrial development so that they became the
most acceptable sites for the locational needs of industrialists and the local interest groups of the post-independence period. But since these urban centres developed as enclaves which are little integrated into the local economy, the city dwellers also devised various market associations to control the selling and buying of local foodstuffs, and thereby increased the chain of exploitation of the rural producers. The net effect was the transfer of wealth from the rural population to the urban petty traders. The impoverishment of the rural areas led to immigration into the urban centres which itself created a cycle of reinforced depopulation and impoverishment of rural areas.

The influence of the urban centres, particularly Port Harcourt, was reinforced by the colonial differential commodity pricing policy between the minor and major ports. The prices of produce sold at the minor ports were made cheaper, and the transportation of the produce from these ports to the major ports had additional charges. This policy led to the diversion of produce from the minor to the major ports. In addition, the higher freight charges along the inland waterway also had the effect of diverting goods to the railway system. Both policies led to a decline in the volume of produce transported to the minor ports which depended on the inland waterways. Thus ports such as Opobo, Abonnema and Forcados-Burutu declined, resulting in the further economic impoverishment of the coastal areas.

Thirdly, the colonial economy with its strict division of labour, resulted in a technological dependence of the local
groups. The dependence created the conditions for an alliance of these local interest groups with foreign capital. Technologically-based production created complementarities of interest because the former derived profit as contact groups as well as the satisfaction of their tastes in the production of consumer goods, while the latter derived theirs from the use of their technology and the extension of their markets. However, owing to the lack of capital of their own, the dominant interest groups perpetuated the production of export products in order to appropriate a large part of the surplus to pay for the production of the consumer goods.

The dominant interest groups could not formulate an autonomous development approach either because they lacked the domestic technological productive capacity to process even the local resources. Thus import-substitution forms the basis of industrialization. Since such import-substitution industries are branch plants of metropolitan multinationals and therefore dependent on imported semi-finished goods, locational criteria favour the colonial urban centres. The process has the effect of accelerating the development of the already-developed areas to the detriment of the less-developed areas.

Finally, the regional agricultural production patterns and technological dependence created their own social forces. The regional pattern of agricultural production and the competition for shares of industrial enterprises fragmented the members of the dominant classes. These factions sought a cohesive and
reliable personal following among other things whose aspirations and grievances they easily manipulated to maintain their dominance. The implication is that such factions would show that they are the trusted representatives of the people whose support they enjoy.

The effect is that the distribution of rewards and benefits such as schools, hospitals, roads and political appointments among competing groups became defined in terms of the bases of support. The class conflicts and alliances were also determined by the same forces which came to a climax in the Civil War which claimed nearly a million lives between 1967 to 1970. The use of the very bases of support increased with the decline of agriculture and the rise of the "oil boom" whose revenue is collected centrally and distributed at the determination of the faction of the dominant group that hold the central political authority. Thus individual advancement has become solely dependent on the use of state power which can be attained through the traditional bases of power and by military coups.

The close family-groupings of the dominant socio-economic classes and their relationships with government power has subordinated the autonomy of state power to sectional interests as defined by Huntington. Wolpe has also attributed the subordination of political institutions in Nigeria to the family linkages. Thus political and economic institutions in the country and in the Niger Delta eschew policies which might aim at reducing inter-regional and intra-regional inequalities in
social and economic development. They aim instead at ensuring the distribution of financial resources accruing from the Niger Delta to individuals and the provision of infrastructural facilities necessary for economic development according to class interest, irrespective of the particular needs and levels of development of the various regions and sub-regions.

The existing class alliances and conflicts since the end of the colonial period are the major factors preventing the proportional development of transportation networks in the Niger Delta. The various feasibility surveys have always emphasized that the provision of an effective communication system is the key to the development of the area, yet it has been ignored. Modern economy needs speed to move goods and services at a relatively low cost in order to maximize profit. Thus the slow and hand-paddled canoe system is inadequate to attract any significant economic activity which will generate fast economic development in the riverine areas of the Niger Delta.

From the above analysis of the causes of unequal development, the environmental constraint hypothesis, though an important perspective of analysis, is not the basic cause of uneven development. We have noted that to a greater extent, development or underdevelopment is caused by the social relations determined by the production system and the power structure that evolves from that particular mode of production. The development of the Tennessee Valley, the reclamation of the Dutch Coast, and the other river basin projects are based on
political decisions. The proportional development of the Niger Delta can only be done, it seems, through a political decision. This view has been clearly demonstrated in the various government policies towards the construction of road and canal networks in the riverine parts of the Niger Delta.

Equally, the sociological theory of "response or lack of it" has no sufficient evidence to support its claim. The apparent success or failure of an ethnic community in a wider political and economic system cannot be explained in a closed system without due consideration to the inputs and outputs of the system as a whole. From the above pages, it is evident that the state has been virtually turned into a forum for an opportunistic political party games aimed at consolidating economic and regional class interests. Since each political party was founded on ethnic support, naturally its development programmes could not have been too different from the basis of their formation.

It has been demonstrated that access to resources in Nigeria is, in large part, determined not by the entrepreneurial ability of the various ethnic communities but by the differential opportunities each group has within the political framework. Besides, Robert has also argued that economic development does not occur in a vacuum and that Government actions are equally important in creating uneven development, as are the market forces. However, the emphasis here is not on ethnic differences but on the fact that the various factions among the
dominant interest groups use the regional differences to articulate the masses in their competition for the scarce resources at the national and state levels.

As a solution to the issue of unequal development, radical political and economic changes which affect the entire socio-political system are considered. Social and economic inequalities would be more easily eliminated by adopting a more democratic approach to development centred around the concept of participatory democracy and based, in turn, on the Basic-Needs Approach, as suggested by ILO in 1976. This approach implies the transfer of political and economic powers from a few hands as well as the ownership of resources to the masses who should also decide and adopt practical means to solving their problems. The whole concept hinges on the decentralization of power and wealth to the village unit.

The advantages of this approach to the Niger Delta are many. It would, for the first time, transfer much of the oil wealth which accounts for about 84% of Federal revenue, 95% of total foreign exchange earnings and 45% of the GNP back to the producing areas. That would allow those neglected parts of the Niger Delta to adopt policies to eradicate their problems according to their priority.

The approach would also give a new vigor to the development of the other natural resources in the region, such as fishing and rice production. This is because one of the objectives of the programme is to develop a self-reliant economy to end the
dominance-dependence relationship of the Third World countries within the international economy. Increased food production and full employment would also reduce the present wave of rural-urban migration and therefore create better social and economic life among the rural people. The integrated approach which is also implied in the scheme would also ensure the gradual development of technology in the rural areas and so increase the efficiency of the rural sector, therefore ensuring increased production. The ultimate goal is the increase in per capita income and, therefore, overall development.

In conclusion, the findings in this case study show that unequal development in the Niger Delta is, in large part, a result of colonial economic policies and the persistence of colonial spatial pattern of development into the national post-independence period comes from the linkage of interests of international capital and dominant interest groups in the country. But this relationship is blurred because of the various factions among the local interest groups in their attempt to use state power to appropriate the national and state surplus to their advantage in their process of collaborative "development". These findings could have wider application for other dependent economies. However, each region can be much more effectively explained by the specific historical development of its economy and society.
FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER VI


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