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The Dilemma of Press Freedom in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Critical Analysis of Recent State Media Relationship

Introduction

The current tidal wave of democratic transition in Africa seems to offer hope for an end to oppression, corruption, authoritarianism and human rights violations that characterized post-independence African political formation. However, recent attacks against the press by the state appears to indicate that multi-party politics and elections alone do not ensure democracy. For democracy to take roots in the new African political dispensation, various institutions of democratic society such as the press must remain free from the extra-legal and arbitrary actions of the state.

This paper critically analyzes recent attacks against the press in sub-Sahara Africa within the context of press freedom. The paper uses those attacks to demonstrate that the road to democracy in Africa is a long and hard one. Attacks against the African press clearly underscore the seemingly unending violations of human rights on the continent. This paper therefore makes a critical examination of recent restrictions and attacks against sub-Sahara African press in order to illustrate the ambivalence and paradox in the on-going democratization process.

The paper's objectives are two-fold: (i) To examine extra-legal measures utilized by the state in attempts to restrict freedom of the press in sub-Sahara Africa; (ii) To analyze the rationales for restrictions of press freedom in sub-Sahara Africa.

The paper begins with an operational definition of the concept of, press freedom, so that the concept can be understood when used in this study. This is followed by a description of the measures utilized to attack the press as well as restrict journalists' right of press freedom. After that, the paper critically analyzes the rationales for attacks against the press, and restrictions of press freedom. The study concludes with recommendations for policy implementation.

Concept of Press Freedom

Even though every nation has made constitutional provisions guaranteeing press freedom, the concept has been interpreted differently by media practitioners and scholars across cultures. Interpretations of the concept of press freedom given by two African professionals at a conference in Strasbourg underscore this point. Of press freedom, one said: 'It is not a question of the right to dissent but of the obligation to contribute,' while the other participant, championing the cause of freedom said: "The prisons are crowded with courageous journalists who are not prepared to accept dictation as to what they may or may not print."¹

Weaver defines press freedom as: i) the relative absence of governmental restraint on the media; ii) the relative absence of governmental and other restraints on the media; iii) the absence of restraint on the media and also the presence of those conditions necessary for the dissemination of a diversity of ideas and opinions to a relatively large audience such as enforced right of access to newspapers and radio stations.² Merrill notes that press freedom is basically press autonomy; freedom from outside control in the professional activities of the news media. As far as Merrill is concerned, "maximum journalistic autonomy is the imperative of journalism."³

Nixon shed some light on the concept of press freedom by defining a free press system. According to Nixon, a free press system is one in which private owners and independent journalists are free to supply news and opinions to the general public under the statutes of libel and decency which are applicable to everyone and not capable of arbitrary and discriminatory interpretation by the ruling power.⁴ In other words, the major criterion is the degree of control normally exercised by any official agency which has the power to

interfere with the dissemination of opinions and information in the press. Lowenstein observes that a definition of press freedom would identify a "free" and "controlled" press. He argues that:

A completely free press is one in which newspapers, periodicals, news agencies, books, radio and television have absolute independence and critical ability except for minimal libel and obscenity laws. A completely free press has no concentrated ownership, marginal economic units or organized self-regulation.

A completely controlled press is one with no independence or critical ability. Under it, newspapers, periodicals, books, news agencies, radio and television are completely controlled directly or indirectly by government, self regulatory body or concentrated ownerships.⁵

A free press is one that is free from government control, according to Weaver, Buddenbaum and Ellen-Faire.⁶ These definitions are summarized by Atkey who argues that freedom of the press is the absence of prior government censorship, and following publication no prosecution for free expression other than on widely accepted principle of the general law of jurisprudence, and a guarantee of non-interference with lawful circulations.⁷ Atkey's definition of press freedom is succinctly stated by Schramm, who in admitting that society itself exerts some restraint on the press, contends that controls on the press should rest with ownership and the courts. Even when control of the press is left in the hands of media owners and courts, Schramm warned that media owners and the courts must not act irrationally or heavy-handedly. He said that:

In general, countries in Western democratic traditions believe that there should be a minimum of control on the press, and that such control as there is should rest with ownership, which we hope will limit their attention to such offences as libel, obscenity and sedition, presenting a clear and present danger.⁸

The clear and present danger that Schramm mentions in his definition as well as the guidelines and rationales by the Supreme Court of the United States in establishing some

controls on expression are well analyzed by Gilmore and Barron⁹ and Baffon.¹⁰

In an examination of freedom of information as an international problem, Wei explains that press freedom is: (i) the prohibition of government interference with the press in the form of censorship and similar previous restraints; (ii) the principle that any restriction on press freedom must be applied or subject to review by the courts and that the courts alone have the right to impose penalties.¹¹ Such penalties as Schramm states should be limited to such matters as libel, obscenity and sedition. Wei's definition is also articulated by Gastil who contends that press freedom is simply freedom from any of the various forms of censorship.¹²

In May 1994, two journalists and a technician working at Radio Kayira in Mali were arrested and detained by government security operatives. Adama Kon and Adama Konate, program hosts at the radio station, were accused by the Malian government of violating a closure order against the radio station dating from May 6, 1994 when their station and Radio Jamana were shut down by administrative order for "disturbing the peace" and 'lacking authorization to broadcast.'

On June 20 that year, May Ellen Ezekiel, publisher of the weekly, *Weekend Classique*, was arrested and detained by the state police in Nigeria, following the publication in the June 12 issue of an article which reported that junior officers of the Nigerian army were angry at Gen. Sani Abacha.¹³ Earlier on April 7 and 9, three editors at the *Newswatch* - Ray Ekpu, Dan Agbese and Yakubu Mohammed - were arrested, following the publication of an interview with a retired army officer who claimed that Gen. Abacha had no intention of returning the country to a democratic rule. The three journalists were granted a presidential pardon on April 14, 1994. In the wake of the abortive coup of March 1995, state security agents arrested and detained several journalists including George Mbah of *Tell*, Ben Charles Obi, editor of the *Weekend Classique*; Chris Anyanwu, editor of *TSM* magazine.¹⁴ They were later sentenced to life imprisonment in mid-July, a punishment the Nigerian junta later reduced to fifteen years imprisonment. The journalists were released from detention in August 1998 after Gen. Sani Abacha's death. On July 3, 1995, police in Lagos raided the offices of the daily *AM News*, arrested and

detained Lekan Otunfodunrin. Two days later, the police returned to the newspaper and whisked off another journalist, Babafemi Ojudu, without a warrant.

In January 1994, authorities in Ethiopia arrested and detained sixteen journalists in connection with articles they published criticizing the government. The detainees were editors, publishers and journalists of independent and mostly Amharic language magazines such as *Ethiopsis*, *Dewol*, *Muday*, *Fendisha Mogad*, *Wot*, *Beza*, *Aimiro* and *Tomar*.¹⁵ On October 10, 1994, two Zog journalists, Kelmeme Bogala and Tewedros Kebede, were arrested and detained without charge. Earlier on October 4, Kumsa Burayu and Tolera Tessema, editor and deputy editor of Oromo-language magazine were arrested and detained following a publication in their magazine of a military communique from the armed Oromo Liberation Front (OLF). By January 1996, the number of journalists and managers of publishing houses held in detention and those already sentenced to prison terms had come to twenty-four.¹⁶

Angolan security agents arrested and detained Mariano Costa of *Imparcial Fax* on September 20, 1994, following the publication of his report about the UNITA oppositionist movement. After his release, the phone lines in his office were cut. In October the police in Uganda arrested Wafula Oguttu, editor of *The Monitor* after he had published a story about President Museveni reprimanding three of his ministers. The government contemplated but dropped charges of defamation and released the journalist. On April 14, 1995, the editor of the *Citizen*, Lawrence Kiwanuka, was arrested in connection with an article in his paper which examined internal turmoil in the Ugandan intelligence service (ESO) and the participation of the national regular army in the fighting between the Rwandan Patriotic Front and forces of the erstwhile Rwandan government.¹⁷

On March 11, 1994, the editor of *The Express* in Tanzania, Pascal Shija, was arrested after the publication of an article titled "Is Tanzania a Garbage Dump"? The government said the article was capable of exciting disaffection against the state.

On March 30, 1995, Gambian authorities arrested and detained Pap Saine, director of the weekly *Le Point*, and two journalists, Badara Sowe and Brima Ernest. The government's arbitrary action followed the publication in *Le Point*, of a series of articles about a riot in the central prison in Banjul.

Earlier on February 15, Davis Iber, President of the International Society for Human Rights, was detained for three days after the publication of his article in the *Daily Observer* in which he criticized the government.

In the same month, Sierra Leonian police officers from the Central Investigation Department arrested Rowland Martyn, a journalist with the weekly *Week End Spark*. The journalist was detained for ten days and questioned about the photograph that appeared in March 10, 1995 issue of the paper which showed a Sierra Leonian army captain who defected to the Revolutionary United Front (RUF).

On April 13, 1995, the editor of *Independent Vision*, Siaka Massaquoi, who also is the president of Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ) and Max Comeh, a journalist on the paper were arrested and detained by government operatives in Freetown. They were arrested in connection with a front-page report in the *Independent Vision* titled "Police Beg Driver to Board Taxi as Rebels Advance." The story said government soldiers in a town under attack by the RUF begged a taxi driver to help them escape from the fighting.¹⁸ Later on August 22, two editors Paul Kamara of *For di People* and Vandi Kollon of the *Echo* - were arrested following the publication in their papers of reports about the military governments plans to attack rebel bases.

In Congo, security forces arrested and detained the editor-in-chief of the weekly, *Le Choc*, on June 22, 1995 for undisclosed reasons. The government action followed the publication of a satirical article titled 'The Union of Warlocks' in the previous week's edition of the paper.

In Zambia, security operatives arrested and detained two journalists with the *Post*, Fred M'membe and Massautso Phiri, on June 19, 1995 for insulting the president which said the president had a Zairean mistress. On March 9 that year, Modeste Mutinga, editor of *Potentiel*, a thrice-weekly independent newspaper in Zaire was arrested for undisclosed reasons. The newspaper which is close to the opposition had published series of articles critical of the government. Later on April 1 and 18, zairean authorities arrested two journalists with *Le Point Zaire*, Belmonde Missinhoun and Nestor-Mario Mbuilu, for insulting the attorney general in an article.¹⁹

In Malawi the publisher and editor of the *Tribute*, Akwete Sande, was arrested on November 22, 1995 for not

revealing the source for an article in which he said that Vice-President Justin Malewezi's bodyguards were plotting to assassinate the president. In that same month, authorities in Togo arrested the editor-in-chief of *L'Eveil du Peuple*, Fulbert Altisso, for publishing an article on the killing of four civilians by the military on September 29 that year.²⁰ Earlier on March 6, two editors and a reporter of the *Swaziland Observer* - Vusi Sibisi, its editor-in-chief; Cyrial Slamini, its news editor and Martin Matse, a reporter — were arrested and detained without charge. Sources at the newspaper said the government action was not unconnected with a story published at the end of February 1995 which was critical of the Swazi Prime Minister²¹

In Chad, soldiers entered the offices of the weekly *N'Djamena Hebdo* on June 1, 1995 and arrested the director, Dieudonne Djonabaye and his assistant, Yaldet Oulatar. They were beaten up in prison and released after one night. On May 4 that year, the paper published an article which said the Chadian army employed Sudanese mercenaries. The soldiers also destroyed office equipment in the paper.

Imprisonment

Another measure utilized to restrict press freedom is the imprisonment of journalists for publishing information from the opposition or for "insulting" the president and top government functionaries. For example, on March 24, 1994, five journalists with the opposition daily, *La Voie*, in Cote D'Ivoire - Abou Sangare, Freedom Neruda, Jacques Prejean, Cesar Etou and Souleyman Senn - were sentenced to one year in prison for insulting President Bedie. Their article said that the president was demanding 10 billion CFA francs from France for the funeral of the late president, Felix Houphouet-Boigny. Earlier on February 24, Hamed Bakayoko, publisher of *Le patriote*, was sentenced to one year in prison for insulting the president, following the publication of an anonymous article which questioned the legitimacy of President Bedie's government.²²

In early 1995, De Be Kwassi, a journalist with *La Patrie* in Cote D'Ivoire, was imprisoned for writing an article said to be insulting to the president. The Ivorian Court of Appeal, on April 12 that year, rejected a plea for pardon by the journalist

who later embarked on a hunger strike to protest the one-year imprisonment sentence.²³

Martin Gbenouga, the managing editor of the opposition bi-weekly *La Tribune des Democraties*, was sentenced to five years on May 6, 1994 for insulting the Togolese president. The punishment was sequel to an article which said that President Eyadema had subjugated the country to France, and called for him to be tried for high treason.

On March 25, 1994, Tefera Asmare editor of the weekly *Ethiopsis*, in Ethiopia, was sentenced to two years imprisonment for publishing an article, 'Facism in Tigray,' which officials said was critical of the government. His punishment was later reduced to an eighteen month suspended sentence. On June 1 that year, Mulugetta Lule, vice-chair of the Ethiopian Free Journalists Association (EFJA) and editor-in-chief of *Tobia*, was fined 10,000 Birr and given a one-year suspended prison sentence for publishing a story which said the armed group, Kegagne, had killed about six hundred Ethiopian people's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) soldiers. On March 24, 1995, Andarge Mesfin and Tekle Mesfin, reporters with the weekly *Teenager*, sentenced to eighteen months and one year respectively for publishing a communique and several other political documents from the oppositionist Oromo Liberation Front. And on July 6, Twedros Kebede, editor of the *Zog*, was sentenced to one year in prison for 'printing groundless allegations and rumors' about the activities of armed opposition groups.

In Nigeria, a special military tribunal sentenced some journalists, including Chris Anyanwu, editor of the Sunday *TSM* magazine to life imprisonment. The Nigerian junta said Mrs. Anyanwu had a tip off on the abortive coup d'etat of March 1995 but did not make it known to the government. The journalists' punishment was reduced to fifteen years imprisonment each.²⁴

Two journalists of the weekly *New Breed* in Sierra Leone - Julius Spencer, managing editor; Donald John, acting editor along with the paper's general manager, Alusine Basiru and sales manager, Alfred Conteh - were imprisoned on August 14, 1995 for publishing an editorial that criticized the government. The editorial asked the government to respond to an article in the Swedish paper, *Expressen*, that had accused government officials of corruption.

Two days after the imprisonment of the Sierra Leonian journalists, the editor-in-chief of the *Post* in Cameroon, Paddy Mbawa, was jailed in police unit in Doula for insulting the chief of police, Jean Fochive. On the same day, the editor-in-chief of *Le Messenger*, Pius Njawe, and one other journalist of the paper were given suspended prison sentences of two months and a fine of 300,000 francs CFA (US\$555) for insulting Fochive. The government said the journalists published articles that accused the police of financial embezzlement.²⁵ Later on October 27 that year, the managing editor of *Le Nouvel Independent*, Ndzana Seme, lost his appeal against a one-year prison term and a fine of 100 million CFA francs (US\$350,000) for insulting President Paul Biya, and exposing corruption in the police force.

On September 28 that same year, Souleyman Diallo, managing editor of *Le Lynx* in Guinea, was given a three-month suspended sentence for offending President Conte when he published a cartoon in the August 14, 1995 edition of the paper. He was fined two and one half million Guinea francs (US\$5,100).²⁶

Harassment

The harassment of journalists is another measure used by the state to restrict the right of freedom of expression in the African media. Journalists in sub-Sahara Africa perform their professional duties under a hostile climate of official intimidation, interrogation, anonymous threats, physical attacks, torture and demotion or outright dismissal from their jobs for publishing antigovernment news, alternative views or opposition's opinions. On June 13, 1994, for example, Beko Tamboura and Moussa Fofana, publisher and editor-in-chief of the independent weekly *L'Observateur* in Mali, were summoned to the office of the deputy police in Bomako where they were interrogated for more than two hours about the sources of an article which cited confidential documents from the national police directorate proposing the establishment of a security force for urban security operations.²⁷

In Angola, Leopold Baid, editor of the daily *Imperial fax*, was interrogated on May 19, 1994, by the police to disclose the source for a story on police involvement in corrupt sales of cars. In the same month, Ric Kinayelko, editor of *Batuque*

Amana, an opposition newspaper, was attacked in his home by persons dressed in army uniforms. In September Antonio Gouveia, a member of the Angolan Journalists' Union (SJA), received death threats following the publication of his reports in an August issue of *Concio da Semana* about South African mercenaries fighting in Angola's civil war. In December, Gustavo Costa and Aguiar dos Santos, stringers for the Portuguese publications, *Publico* and *Expresso*, also received anonymous death threats following their investigations of corruption along the corridors of government in that country. On January 17, 1995, the director of the outspoken *Imperial Fax*, Richardo Demello, was shot dead on the stairs of his apartment in Luanda. Demello frequently accused prominent Angolan figures of corruption. He was also a critic of the UNITA rebel movement. Therefore, his death may not be unconnected with his criticisms of the government or the quasi government of the rebel UNITA.²⁸

On April 20 that year, the police in Cameroon held Thomas Eyouma, editor-in-chief of the independent weekly, *Dikalo*, and subjected him to intense interrogation over an article which linked the names of two ministers with containers full of bank notes in a ship that arrived at Doula from Europe.

On April 8, 1994, the police in Zambia interrogated Bright Mwape of the *Post* and threatened to charge him after he quoted a former minister as saying that President Chiluba was "a twit." Section 69 of the Zambian Penal Code makes it an offense intentionally to publish or broadcast insults against the president. In Lesotho, Rabuka Chalatsi of the private weekly, *MoAftika*, was fatally shot on August 17, 1994 by security forces while covering a demonstration outside the royal palace in Maseru to protest King Letsie's sudden dissolution of parliament.

In Zaire, Pierre Kabeya, a journalist with the weekly *Kin-Matin* was found dead with signs of severe torture on the night of July 8, 1994, after delivering an article for publication on the 1990 massacre of protesting students at Lubumbashi University. In November that year, Alie Badara Sheriff of the *Daily Observer* in Gambia was badly beaten by security forces because he was mistaken for Rodney Sieh, a journalist with the *Observer* and the BBC. When Sieh was later found he was dealt a beating of his life. In the same month, another

Observer reporter, Abdullah Savage, was attacked by soldiers on his way to interview former government ministers.

In Malawi, the editor of the weekly *Independent* David Nthengwe, was beaten up and detained for three days in September 1994 by security forces for undisclosed reasons. On June 6, 1995, police raided the offices of the editor of the daily *Le Nouvel Independent* which is also the home of its editor, Ndzana Seme. Two journalists and nine office workers were physically attacked, following the paper's publication of an article about corruption in the Malawian police.²⁹ In the same month in Cote D'Ivoire, the publishing manager of *La Voie* and *Nouvel Horizon*, Abou Sangare, was summoned to the offices of the security minister, General Kone, and beaten. The beating was provoked by an article in the satirical magazine, *Bol Kotch*, which referred to the minister's response to student unrest.

In mid-August 1995, a bomb exploded outside the home Mamadou Ndaiye, editor of the weekly *Le Temoin* in Senegal. The editor had written a front-page editorial condemning the southern separatist Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance.

Another form of harassment is dismissal, demotion or re-assignment of journalists to non-editorial positions. On May 17, 1994, for example, leaders of the Independent Union of Journalists (SAJES) in Senegal — Cheikh Fall, Djib Diedhiou, Jacques Diouf, Abdallah Faye and Ibrahima Diouf — were demoted for their union activities, following the creation of the SAJES. In Kenya, two reporters with the *Nation*, Alex Cege and Julius Mokaya, were dismissed in January 1995 shortly after the government threatened to ban the paper. Cege was dismissed because of his story which said a minister had bought an office block at less than its market value. Mokaya was sacked because of his report which quoted lawyers who criticized the attorney-general as the main obstacle to re-writing the Kenyan Constitution. And in Congo, the editor-in-chief of the state radio station, Mitte Miet Likidi, was dismissed from his job on July 5, 1995 for broadcasting an embargoed story about planned salary cuts in the civil service. Ironically enough, the story had been published in several international media received in Congo.

Confiscation and Proscription

In Cameroon, authorities seized the March 7, 1994 edition of *Le Messenger* for publishing articles on the conflict with Nigeria over the oil-rich Bakassa Island. The government said the articles had not been cleared prior to its publication - and the editor, Pius Njawe, was accused of "not respecting censorship." A month later, the governor of the coastal province, Ferdinand Edima, banned the April 6 edition of the paper for "disturbing public order." In the cover story of that edition, *Le Messenger* discussed the 10th anniversary of the 1984 abortive coup in that country. It was the fourth time within a week that copies of that newspaper were seized.³⁰

About a year later - on May 15, 1995 - the sword of damocles fell on *Le Messenger* again when 12,000 copies of the paper were seized as they left the presses in Doula. It was the third day running that Cameroonian authorities confiscated an issue of the paper. Its editor explained the action was intended to bankrupt the paper. The January 13, 1995 issue of the newspaper was also seized by the police because of a cartoon it printed concerning the pregnancy of President Paul Biya's 25-year old new wife.

On March 13 that same year, the Ministry of Territorial Administration suspended the *Provice Hebdo* for failing to conform to censorship guidelines which require two copies of every issue to be deposited with the authorities prior to publication. The government action followed the paper's publication of an article in its March 17 issue on President Biya's marriage.

In Gabon, the transmitter of the opposition-owned Radio Liberte was blown up on February 22, 1994 after a pre-dawn raid by security agents. The government action followed the station's backing of a general strike called for February 21. The station's broadcasts had been repeatedly jammed prior to the raid. On March 14, 1995, the offices of *L'Effort Gabonaise* were sealed off by security agents, and on April 20, the interior minister ordered the national printing press to cease printing *Le Bucheron* and *La Griffé*. The two papers reprinted articles from the French press on the court case against an Italian tailor on trial in France for setting up a prostitution ring whose clients, the papers said, included President Omar Bongo. Notably enough, however, the National

Communications Council overturned the ban five days later, and the papers resumed publication.³¹

In Mali, government security operatives closed down the opposition Radio Kayira on February 17, 1994 after its February 3 broadcast in which opposition leader, Mamadou Maribatrou Diaby, accused the government of incompetence and called for a military intervention. The government said it took the action to maintain public order.

On January 14 that year, the Kenyan government banned the book, *Kenya: Return to Reason*. The book, written by opposition leader, Kenneth Matiba, is critical of President Daniel arap Moi and his government. The ban followed a raid by 200 armed police officers of the premises where the book was being printed. Authorities confiscated 15,000 copies of the book banned under the Prohibition Publication Act.³² In March 1995, the government also banned another publication, *Lnooro*, a Kikuyu-language diocesan newsletter. The government also confiscated *Nuru* the publication of the banned human rights organization, Mwangaza Trust, in the wake of a crackdown on the opposition, mainly leaders of the Ford-Kenya.

In Nigeria, government security operatives raided the Academy Press, printers of the independent *Tell* magazine on January 2, 1994, and confiscated 50,000 copies of the publication, following a cover-page story titled "The Return of Tyranny: Abacha Bars His Fangs." In August that year, the government promulgated Decree nos. 6, 7 and 8 of 1994 that banned the *Concord*, *Punch* and *Guardian* publications. The *Concord*, Nigeria's largest and widest circulating independent publication and the *Punch* were shut down on June 11. The government action came soon after *Concord's* publisher, Moshood Abiola, declared himself president, and demanded that Gen. Sani Abacha should resign and uphold the results of June 12, 1993 presidential elections believed to have been won by the business tycoon. Abiola was arrested and has been in jail since then. The government said it took the action because the two papers were stockpiling arms in their premises, an allegation it failed to prove. The *Punch* was shut down on August 14 that year after its publication of a front-page story about a power struggle within the factions and fractions of the ruling military junta.

In Senegal, the government placed a one-year ban on the Paris-based weekly *Jeune Afrigue* on June 2, 1994. At the end of that month, the police in Tanzania raided the premises of Business Printers in Dar-es-Salaam and demanded to see articles about to be published in the weekly *Wasa*. The action followed rumors that the paper was running a story alleging that the Prime Minister had accepted bribes. However, it turned out that the paper had no such story, and the police called off its raid.³³

In the same year in Ethiopia, the government turned down an application by *The Express* to publish daily; and by April, several newspapers in the country were forced to cease publication in the wake of new austere press measures, including the banning of the sales of publications on the streets. The publications affected included the monthly *Muday*, *Alef*, *Asmero*, *Ruh* and *Mahlet* as well as the weekly *Moget*, *Tomar*, *Beza* and *Twaf*. On June 6, 1995, *La Patrie* in Cote D'Ivoire was banned for three months. And on July 11 that year, the Council for Communications in Niger banned private and public television stations from broadcasting reports on the institutional crisis in that country in order not to exacerbate tensions between the head of state, Mahamne Ousmane and the Prime Minister. On March 9, 1994, the police in Guinea raided the offices of Radio Frequence Gandale, the country's first independent radio station, and shut it down without explanation.

Deportation

While African journalists may be arrested, detained, imprisoned or physically attacked, international journalists covering the continent are deported in attempts by the state to restrict the right of freedom of expression. For example, John Lawrence, an Australian journalist and training editor with the *Daily Nation* in Kenya was deported on July 11, 1994. The Moi government did not give any explanation for its action. The deportation order stated that 'his continued stay in Kenya was contrary to national interest.'³⁴

Earlier on April 9 that year, Geraldine Brooks, *Wall Street Journal* reporter, was arrested in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, where she was covering a story on the Ogoni crisis. Brooks was held incommunicado for some days before being deported. Later

on October 30, Kenneth Best, managing editor of the *Daily Observer* in Gambia, was deported to Liberia. The Gambian government explained that he illegally employed Liberian workers. But a more pragmatic explanation is that the *Observer's* calls for the junta to set a time table for a return to civil rule may have triggered off Best's expulsion.

Prior Censorship

Prior censorship remains mandatory in some countries. Cameroon is one. Every publication is required to submit stories to a board of censors who must approve all stories before publication. One report notes that: "all page-proofs must be shown to censors before they go to press."³⁵ One writer observes that "despite President Biya's promises of 'freer expression,' publications are subjected to prior censorship by government-appointed censors vested with the onerous responsibility to read and approve the contents of newspapers, including such mundane stories as road accidents."³⁶ On March 22, 1995, armed police surrounded the headquarters of the opposition Union of Democratic Forces (UFDC) in the capital of Younde to prevent Mogo Beti from a public discussion of his new book, *France Against Africa*. The book criticizes French development aid programs in its former colonies.

In Gambia, the government has placed censorship on political commentaries in the press. On August 3, 1994, the Armed Forces and Provisional Ruling Council (AFPC), promulgated the Political Activities (Suspension) Decree. The law gives the junta far-reaching powers of censorship and states that "no person shall engage in any political propaganda by means of a newspaper publication."

On June 8, 1995, a government official entered the newsroom of the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) and ordered that unedited footage of a presidential press conference be played in full on the evening television news - even though the NBC is supposed to be editorially independent.

Other measures utilized to restrict press freedom include the enactment of newspaper registration laws. The high costs of registration as well as the payment of exorbitant security deposits prior to publication of a newspaper makes it

impossible for the ordinary citizen to enter the print media business. In Nigeria, Decree no. 43 of 1993 which is still in effect provides for newspaper registration.³⁷

In Zaire, a new tax on newspaper publishing went into effect on September 10, 1994. In Sierra Leone, the government on March 30, 1994, enacted new guidelines requiring annual registration of newspapers with the ministry of information. The guidelines also stipulate that newspapers must show evidence of having paid business and income taxes (the head of state never gets to show his own).

Analysis and Discussion

Thus, African press is attacked, and journalists' right of press freedom, restricted in order to stave off the inclusion of opposition views and news in the media. African journalists claim that one of the hallmarks of their practice is the attainment of objectivity - the inclusion of all sides to a report. Although many countries are allowing multi-partyism, African leaders are still vehemently intolerant of opposition views. Some of the leaders, including Mobutu Sese Seko, Omar Bongo, Eyadema, Daniel arap Moi, Paul Biya etc have been in office for decades, and have become so intoxicated with power and intolerant of opposition that attempts by the press to include opposition views or anti-government opinions draws hostile official responses. Such responses are carried out in the forms of attacks against the press and restriction of press freedom. This is the reason for the closure of *La Verdad* in Equatorial Guinea, and *Society, Finance, Economic Review, The People*, and *The Nairobi Weekly Observer* in Kenya soon after Daniel arap Moi's election as president of Kenya.

Another reason for which the African press is attacked is because of the state's intolerance of criticism of official actions and policies. During the Valentine Strasser regime in Sierra Leone, for example, the *New Breed* was shut down and six of its journalists were arrested because of an article in the paper that questioned the involvement of the president in an alleged diamond smuggling scheme.

In Nigeria, several publications were banned and copies of *Tell*, seized time and time during the Babangida regime because the publications criticized the contradictions in the program of transition to democracy between 1990 and 1993.

For example, Babangida first promised to hand over political power to an elected government in 1990. He did not do that. Instead, he made a second promise and said he would do so in 1992. Following the botched elections in the presidential primaries in September that year, Babangida on October 19, 1992, announced that he had again postponed the hand over until January 2, 1993. He did not keep to that promise either as he further shifted the date to August 27, 1993. When the media criticized these contradictions, the government responded by rolling out three laws aimed to curb freedom of the press. They were the Offensive Publications (Proscription) Decree 35 of 1993, the Newspapers Etc. (Proscription and Prohibition From Circulation) Decree 48 of 1993 and the Newspapers Decree 43 of 1993. The first two banned some publications, including *Tell*, *Daily Sketch*, and *Abuja Daily News*, while the latter required all publications to be registered with the government.

The present Sani Abacha regime also closed down the *Concord*, *Punch* and *Guardian* for more than one year because of the papers' criticisms of the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential elections, and his failure to hand over power to M.K.O. Abiola who clearly won the 1993 elections. In Kenya, the seizure of 10,000 copies of issue 17 of *Society* on June 14, 1992 and the detention of its editor, Pius Nyamora, was sequel to the magazine's criticisms of some of President Daniel arap Moi's official policies.

The point being made here is that press freedom is restricted because of press criticisms of official policies and actions. Attacks against the press therefore constitute part of the efforts of the ruling aristocracy to remain perpetually in power. In this respect, one American journalist noted that limitations placed on freedom of expression constitute part of the methods utilized by leaders in developing countries to stay in power.³⁸

Another explanation for the restriction of freedom of expression is because African leaders are aware that a free press would readily unearth the staggering proportions of ineptitude, graft, waste, mismanagement, corruption, bribery, embezzlement, lack of accountability and the illegal private capital accumulation inherent within the factions and fractions of the ruling African bourgeoisie. In this regard, Michel Epe, former editor of Cameroon's *Le Messager* said that

"independent papers are an impediment to the government, because they make public certain facts that could obviously reveal more truth, and they shed light on certain practices that have been in existence for a number of years."³⁹ This point is also articulated by the publisher of the *New Argus* in Uganda, Chris Opio, who said of African officials: "The corrupt ones are trying to cover up their corruption by shutting those papers that criticize them."⁴⁰

The staggering proportions of corruption in African governments can be put in some perspective with examples from three or four countries. In Nigeria for instance, every commission of inquiry which probed the activities of government officials since the struggle for the nation's independence has found gross corruption at all levels of the civil service.⁴¹ The commission of inquiry that probed the activities of officials of the Yakubu Gowon administration after it had been overthrown by Murtala Mohammed in 1975 found ten of Gowon's twelve governors guilty of corruption.⁴² The other two governors were later found guilty of favoritism and other illegal activities. During Gowon's regime also, the value of wasted public funds in the then Western state went from 11,143 naira (about \$17,000) in 1972 to 67,598 naira in 1973.⁴³

A commission that probed the Shagari government after it was toppled in December 1983 also found that officials of that administration enriched themselves corruptly. It was found that government officials enriched themselves corruptly through the "Jaguar deal," a 1983 trade agreement between the Shagari administration and British Aerospace for the supply of Jaguar fighter aircraft at the cost of three hundred million British pounds. The commission of inquiry discovered that British Aerospace paid twenty-two million pounds in bribe to top officials of the Nigerian government.⁴⁴ The commission also found that the then Federal Minister for Finance, Victor Masi, among other corrupt practices, received a \$2m-bribe in return for a government guarantee on foreign loan. The governors of the then 19 states except Lagos, were also found to have improperly enriched themselves with public money: the governor of the then Anambra state, Jim Nwobodo, stashed \$10m from the state treasury; and the governor of Kano state, Sabo Bakin Zuwo, tucked away \$6m in the ceiling of his house.⁴⁵

Companies that are unable to pay bribes to top government officials, lose contracts in Nigeria. For example, General Electric and Electronics in U.S.A. lost a \$1.8b-contract in the mid 1970s because it refused to give a "dash" (tip) or "kola" (bribe) in connection with the award of the contract. The contract went to ITT and Siemens of West Germany.⁴⁶ The burning of several government buildings in the 1980s further attests to corruption in official quarters in Nigeria. After the overthrow of President Shehu Shagari in December 1993, the 37-storey Nigerian External Telecommunications (NET) building in Lagos, the tallest building in Africa, was deliberately set on fire to conceal evidence of bribery and fraudulent activities of government officials. Of corruption in Nigeria, the novelist, Chinua Achebe, said: "Corruption in Nigeria has passed the alarming and entered the fatal stage.....,"⁴⁷ while another writer concluded that "the story of governments in Nigeria is largely the story of corruption....."⁴⁸ Writing on the corruptive propensity of government officials in Nigeria, Agbese said:

*The magnitude and prevalence of the various cases of "abuses" and 'corruption' in the Nigerian defense procurement process ... amply demonstrate that these 'abuses' and "corruption" are not aberrations and isolated deviations from the norm. On the contrary, they are the predictable and systematic features of a strategy of private capital accumulation that inordinately relies on the control of the state.*⁴⁹

The "ONAFITEX deal" in Zaire is another example that can help put corruption in Africa in perspective. In 1973, the ONAFITEX (Zaire's national textile enterprise) purchased thirty ultra-modern cotton-treating plants in the United States of America for \$7.5 million. At the end of the transaction, members of the Zairean government delegation that made the purchase cornered \$450,000 worth of commissions into their private pockets.⁵⁰ In Zaire, every official transaction affords government functionaries opportunities for illegal private capital accumulation. In 1994, for example, the regional commissar of Shaba received \$ 1 00,000 a month in prebends, and a salary of \$20,000.⁵¹

What *Time* magazine once wrote about Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko helps put the level of corruption among

African leaders in deeper perspective. The magazine said that:

Mobutu's personal fortune, built on a network of private business, pilfering of public resources and, skimming the foreign aid that has flowed into his country, has been estimated at \$5 billion. He has bank accounts in Switzerland and other countries, an apartment on Avenue Foch in Paris, a palatial villa at Cap-Martin on the French Riviera and other residences in Spain, Portugal, Morocco and Senegal.⁵²

Komer noted that: "The value of public resources taken into private ownership by the Mobutu clan and other members of the ruling class can be estimated as roughly equivalent to Zaire's external debt.⁵³ What Komer and *Time* magazine wrote about the Zairean leader are confirmed by Chapin who also wrote about the president's illegal capital accumulation. Chapin said:

The debt of the country is 5 billion dollars, and coincidentally that is the estimate of how much General Mobutu and his family have stolen from Zaire. He owns no less than seven chateaux in Belgium and France, as well as palatial estates and residences in Spain, Italy and Switzerland. He owns buildings in Ivory Coast, Presidential mansions in each of the country's eight provinces, and a palace in his own province. No one knows how much he has in Swiss banks, and he has exclusive use or ownership of numeral ships, jet planes (including a Boeing 747), at least fifty-one Mercedes, and so on He also owns shares in every major foreign company in the country, in the banks, and (takes commissions of) 5 per cent of the country's minerals paid to his overseas accounts. Thirty per cent of the country's operating budget flows through the Presidential office with no further accounting.⁵⁴

The findings of the over forty commissions and investigative bodies appointed by the National Liberation Council (NLC) in Ghana, following the overthrow of President Kwame Nkrumah also underscores the depth and breadth of corruption of African governments. The findings of the special commission of inquiry headed by Justice Fred Apaloo revealed that the late Ghanaian president did not only use public money to distribute largesse to his favorites, he also set up special government agencies, such as the National Development Corporation (NADECO), Ltd., the Guinea Press,

the Ghana Bottling Company, the National Paper Distribution Organization (NAPADO) etc through which he siphoned public resources into his private coffers.

During the hey days of the late president's administration, properties purchased by the government from a Greek businessman, A.G. Leventis, through NADECO, Ltd., was deliberately inflated so that \$2.4m could be turned into the president's pocket. It was also revealed that the president corruptly enriched himself with 'gifts.' For example, when one Henry Djaba was under prosecution for fraud allegedly committed in collaboration with officials in the Ministry of Agriculture, he presented Nkrumah with a Mercedes Benz sports car, a bulletproof Mercedes Benz 600, \$50,000 in cash and a \$3,000-glider in the hope for a quashed indictment.⁵⁵

Hutchful observed that between 1970 and 1980s, a number of highly placed government officials and senior military officers in Ghana were engaged in a frenzy of corruption which included misuse of import licenses, awarding contracts to their girlfriends and other favorites, and taking dubious loans.⁵⁶ Of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) loans made to Ghana, one writer said: "In the atmosphere of corruption ... the loans failed to make any improvements in the living standards of our people. Many of the loans found their way into the pockets of politicians and other officials."⁵⁷

In Niger, a commission of inquiry appointed to investigate corruption in the civilian government overthrown in 1992, found widespread corruption in the deposed government, resulting in the dismissal of a hundred government officials in June 1992 for various corrupt practices.⁵⁸

The Beccles-Davies Commission of Inquiry which investigated the activities of Joseph Saidu Momoh's government in Sierra Leone after it had been ousted in a coup in April 1992, learned, for example that the former APC Minister for Transport, Communication and Tourism, Dr. Raymond Kamara, diverted \$370,000 for his private use through a company in Hamburg in March 1992.⁵⁹ Cases of corruption in French-speaking countries have been analyzed by Dumont,⁶⁰ while Greenstone⁶¹ has described corruption in Kenya and Uganda. Corruption among the ruling bourgeoisie class in East Africa is so rampant that members of this class

have earned themselves the derisive Swahili name, "Wabenzi."⁶²

Therefore, the pragmatic reason for attacks on the African press and restrictions on journalists' right of freedom of expression is to stave off exposure of corruption, bribery, extortion, embezzlement, smuggling, graft and other vices endemic within the factions and fractions of Africa's ruling bourgeoisie.

It is the fear that a free press can readily expose corruption and such ills as the "Sarafina" and "Inkathagate" scandals in South Africa that further help explain the utilization of extra-legal measures to restrict press freedom. The "Sarafina" scandal in South Africa involved the media exposure of a Health Department authorization to spend nearly \$4 million on a traveling musical about AIDS called "Sarafina 11". The revelation embarrassed the government and caused the department to cancel the production. "Inkathagate" scandal involved the revelation in Johannesburg's *Weekly Mail* (now *Mail and Guardian*) in 1991 of how the white minority government's security forces were secretly fueling much of the so-called "black-on-black" violence that took thousands of lives in that country. At the end of the series of the "Inkathagate" press reports, the police minister was fired, the all-powerful chief of South Africa's defense forces was demoted and the embarrassed then President F.W. de Klerk ordered a halt to the operations.

Another explanation for attacks against the press, and restrictions on journalists' freedom of expression can be understood from an examination of the pattern of media ownership in Africa. The point being made here is that if we know who owns and controls the media, then we can understand why freedom of the press is restricted. More than 98 percent of the electronic media in Africa is government-owned. This is because individuals do not have the resources to establish, operate and maintain radio-television stations. The few who have the capital — mostly stolen from public treasury — are reluctant to invest in an industry that would not yield profits overnight. The influential newspapers in many countries are also mostly government-owned. Nigeria may serve to illustrate this point. In 1975 the Federal Government acquired 60 percent of the shares in the then privately-owned *Daily Times Limited*, publishers of the *Daily Times*,

Sunday Times and other weekly and monthly publications. Also in that year, the government took over total ownership of the New Nigeria Limited, publishers of the influential *New Nigerian* and the vernacular *Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo*.⁶³ The Nigerian government's latter additions of *Timesweek*, a weekly news magazine and *Poise*, a women's magazine in the *Daily Times* group of publications clearly demonstrates African governments' interest in media ownership. This point is also underscored by the Zimbabwean government commissioning in March 1992 of a new building and printing press for the ZANU-owned Jongwe Printing and Publishing Company. In many African countries the most influential and widest circulating newspapers are government-owned and controlled. The government also owns as much as 90 per cent of the publications in some countries like Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Liberia and Niger.

The contention here is that government ownership of the press provides political leaders with greater impetus to restrict the dissemination of information and ideas in the media. This point can be illustrated with the apprehension of many Nigerian journalists that the government's acquisition of the country's once most influential newspapers would affect freedom of the press. In a letter-to-the-editor, one concerned Nigerian wrote: "I wonder how on earth we are going to have freedom of the press in Nigeria. The *Daily Times*, which was the chief champion of the cause of press freedom, is indirectly being bought by the new regime. It is acquiring a 60 percent holding."⁶⁴ One scholar also contended that government involvement in media ownership signaled the beginning of censorship in Nigerian press.⁶⁵

We articulate the contention that government ownership of the press provides political leaders with greater leverage to restrict freedom of expression in the media. As far as government owns and controls most of the media and employs the journalists who work in the media, it will dictate what will be published and what will not be published or broadcast. This is because whoever pays the piper dictates the tune. Be that as it may, this paper also recognizes that government ownership of the media does not constitute the sole basis for restriction of press freedom. This is because it is even on the private press that more attacks and restrictions have taken place as in the cases of *Le Nouvel Horizon*, *La Voie*

and *Soire Info* in Cote D'Ivoire; *Independent Vision* and *For di People* in Sierra Leone; *Potentiel* in Zaire; *La Tribune des Democrates* in Togo and *TSM, Concord, Punch, Guardian, Tell* and *Newswatch* in Nigeria and *Le Messenger* in Cameroon.

Another explanation for government crackdown on the press is the failure of the media, especially the private media, to completely comply with the "developmental" role that African political leaders contend the media should play. To the extent that the press fails to fully perform "developmental" function, it becomes a "traitor," and therefore attacked.

African leaders argue that given the conditions of scarce resources, a colonial legacy and an illiterate population, a watchdog function of the press can too easily lead to internal chaos and instability.⁶⁶ This sentiment was echoed by Lord Thompson of Fleet who owns a number of media in the developing countries. At a 1965 Assembly of the International Press Institute, he said that: "Having regard to these circumstances ... we must accept the fact that the new governments, must, on occasion, take such steps as are necessary to ensure that irresponsible publications in developing nations ... do not cause chaos in the country."⁶⁷

The late Kenyan Minister of Information, Tom Mboya, argued that the African press must primarily perform a 'developmental' function (taking part in national development) because of the peculiarity of the socio-economic and geopolitical circumstances in Africa. Mboya asked:

*Does this press in Africa recognize that in our special circumstances it has a duty to Africa and that in fact we expect it to make its own constructive contribution towards our general efforts? Can the press in Africa afford to behave and write as though it were operating in London, Paris or New York, where the problems and anxieties are entirely different from those current in Africa?*⁶⁸

Of the role of the press in Africa, Mboya said:

*It must recruit and train local people rapidly, and it must identify itself with the African aspirations, understand and share our anxieties and join us in the task of nation-building. It must learn to treat Africa in her own context on the basis of her people's emotions These things it must do, or face the charge of traitor.*⁶⁹

The developmental role of the press was also well stated by President Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana in an address to the Pan-African Union of Journalists when he said that: "The Africa press has a vital part to play in the revolution which is now sweeping over the continent. Our newspapers and information services must reach out to the masses of our people to explain the meaning and purposes of the fight against colonialism, imperialism and neocolonialism."⁷⁰ The Ghanaian president iterated this view of the function of the African press on another occasion, and said that:

The true African revolutionary press does not exist merely for the purpose of enriching its proprietors or entertaining its readers. It is an integral part of our society, with which its purposes are in consonance. Just as in the capitalist countries the press represents and carries out the purpose of capitalism, so in revolutionary Africa our revolutionary African press must present and carry forward our revolutionary **purpose**.⁷¹

The one-time head of information in Zaire, Albert Bolela, explained that the revolutionary role of the African press is to create conditions under which socio-economic and political development can proceed smoothly.⁷² Some writers who have explained the developmental function of the press include Ng'weno,⁷³ Aggarwala,⁷⁴ Lent,⁷⁵ Mazrui,⁷⁶ Schramm,⁷⁷ Pye,⁷⁸ Lerner,⁷⁹ and Ugboajah.⁸⁰ The occasional failure of the press to perform a developmental function helps explain why the state frequently attacks the media. It also explains why the state attempts to restrict journalists' right of expression through the use of such extra-legal and arbitrary measures as detention, demotion and torturing of journalists as well as closure and confiscation of the media.

Conclusion

Restrictions on the right of freedom of the press in sub-Saharan Africa indicates that the media and journalists are still mangled and mauled by the state, despite the fact that many of the countries now profess to be truly democratic. Government officials explain that extra-legal and arbitrary actions used in attacks against the press are intended to make the media 'responsible,' and to protect national security.

But our contention is that these reasons do not adequately explain why the press and journalists in Africa are attacked. We argue that the more pragmatic rationale for the restriction of freedom of the press is to stave off the dissemination of opposition views and news as well as the corruption, bribery, embezzlement, ineptitude, lack of accountability, inefficiency, graft, mismanagement, waste and other vices endemic within the factions and fractions of Africa's ruling bourgeoisie.

Notably enough, the greatest threat against press freedom is not so much the enactment of a body of repressive laws or the utilization of diverse repressive and arbitrary measures as the absence of judicial independence and lack of courage, morality and professionalism by some African journalists.

There is hardly a separation of powers in sub-Sahara African political formation. In many countries, the judiciary is almost directly under the executive branch. Appointment to the bench is often done as an executive favor to well known individuals and sycophants with unquestionable loyalty and obsequious servility, rather than on the basis of character, experience and integrity. As further executive favors, some members of the bench are given [luxurious] cars with chauffeurs, superbly furnished magnificent homes in low density parts of town, gardeners, chefs, nannies and house-helpers. The executive in some instances awards contracts and distributes money and largesse to some judges. As a result of all these, many judges lack the ability to make legal decisions against the state in cases brought by journalists who feel that their rights of freedom of expression had been violated by the state. The implication of this is that many journalists and publishing houses are not encouraged to institute legal actions against government officials who violate their rights of freedom of expression. Therefore, the state continues to perpetrate violations of the right of freedom of the press, using all manner of extra-legal measures.

We therefore argue that the ability of the judiciary to resist executive favors; its willingness to assert its independence as well as its courage to interpret the law without external pressure, fear or favor can always defeat the most draconian measures by the state to suppress the dissemination of pluralistic views and information in the press.

This study also argues that the loss of independence, courage and objectivity by some African journalists contributes to the threat against freedom of the press. The quest for material benefits and private capital accumulation by many journalists — perhaps as a result of economic hardships - has eroded the independence, credibility and objectivity of many journalists. Some journalists use their positions as stepping stones to “lucrative” political appointments. The more journalists accept such favors, the more sycophantic they become. That can be a greater threat to press freedom even more than a body of repressive press laws.

Three examples from Nigeria can be used to illustrate this point. The first is that of Tony Momoh, former editor of the *Daily Times* who became unable to speak up against the government’s restrictions against the press during his appointment as federal minister of information. This is because to do so would have earned him dismissal as minister and therefore, loss of the free government house, car and other privileges he enjoyed as minister. Also, Nduka Irabor, former assistant editor of the *Guardian* whose controversial one-year imprisonment by the military government drew unprecedented public support and sympathy, did not hesitate to take up appointment as press secretary to the junta after his release from prison. As press secretary, Irabor did not only help explain and defend the junta’s policies but he also announced the military government’s annulment of the results of the June 1993 presidential elections. The third example is that of M.C.K. Ajuluchukwu, a well known and respected veteran journalist. When the Babangida junta appointed Ajuluchukwu as chairman of the newspaper licensing and registration board, following the enactment of Decree 43 of 1993, with responsibility to register and license all publications he did not hesitate to take up the offer. Of Ajuluchukwu’s acceptance of the government offer, one writer said: “It is ironical that M.C.K. Ajuluchukwu, a veteran Nigerian journalist who spoke out against restriction of freedom of expression time and time during his forty-seven years as a journalist, readily accepted to preside over a board that licenses newspapers.”⁸¹

The harsh economic conditions in the sub-Saharan African region helps explain why some members of the judiciary and journalists accept favors from the state that may conflict with

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- ³ John Merrill, *The imperative of freedom*. New York: Hastings House, 1974, p. 26.
- ⁴ Raymond Nixon, "Factors related to freedom in national press systems," *Journalism Quarterly*, vol. 37, 1960, pp. 13-28.
- ⁵ Ralph Lowenstein, *Measuring world press freedom as a political indicator*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Missouri, Columbia, 1967, p. 45. See also Ralph Lowenstein, *World press freedom*. School of Journalism, University of Missouri, Columbia, 1967; Ralph Lowenstein, *PICA: Measuring world press freedom*. School of Journalism, University of Missouri, Columbia, 1966; Ralph Lowenstein. *World press freedom*, 1967, School of Journalism, University of Missouri, Columbia, 1968.
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- ⁷ R.G. Atkey, "The law of the press in Canada," *Gazette*, vol. 15, 1969, pp. 105-124.
- ⁸ Wilbur Schramm, "Communication and change," In Daniel Lerner and Wilbur Schramm (Eds.), *Communication and change in developing countries* (pp. 5-32). Honolulu: East-West Press, 1967, p. 9.
- ⁹ D.M. Gilmore and J.A. Barron, *Mass communication law: Cases and comments*. St. Paul: Minnesota, 1979.
- ¹⁰ J.A. Barron, *Freedom of the press for whom? The right of access to mass media*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973.
- ¹¹ M.T.K. Wei, "Freedom of information as an international problem," In H. Fischer and J.C. Merrill (Eds.) *International and intercultural communication*. New York: Hastings House Publishers, 1970.
- ¹² R.D. Gastil, "The comparative survey of freedom," *Freedom at Issue*, January-February 1978, pp. 3-19
- ¹³ *Index on Censorship*, September-October, 1994, pp. 244-245
- ¹⁴ *Index on Censorship*, vol. 24, no. 4, 1995, p. 181.
- ¹⁵ The sixteen journalists who were arrested included Asrat Dantew and Daniel Kifle of *Fendisha*. Daniel Tafesswe of *Wekte*, Atensai Tafesse of *Mogeda*, Mayik Kassaye of *Beza Tesfaye Berehanu* and Yohannes Tefera. Others were Kinfe Assefa, Girmay Gebre-Tsadik, Mulugeta jigo, Nesanet Tesfaye, Mesele haddis, Meleskachew Amha and Berrehane Mewa. See *Index on Censorship*, vol. 23, nos. 1-2, 1994, p. 237.

- ¹⁶ *Index on Censorship*, vol. 25, no. 1, 1996, p. 175.
- ¹⁷ *Index on Censorship*, vol. 24, no. 3, 1995, p. 188.
- ¹⁸ Ibid. Massaoui had also criticized the country's youthful military rulers for celebrating Christmas of 1994 with pot-smoking musicians while rebels launched an offensive. See *IPI Report*, January-February 1995, p. 18.
- ¹⁹ *Index on Censorship*, vol. 24, no. 4, 1995, p. 192.
- ²⁰ *Index on Censorship*, vol. 25, no. 1, 1996, p. 187.
- ²¹ *IPI Report*, March-April, 1995, p. 55.
- ²² *Index on Censorship*, vol. 23, no. 3, 1994. See also *Index on Censorship*, vol. 23, nos.1-2, 1994, p. 236.
- ²³ *Index on Censorship*, vol. 24, no. 3, 1995, p. 173. See also *Index on Censorship*, vol. 24, no.4, 1995, p.174.
- ²⁴ Chris Ogbondah, "Military autocracies and suppression of expression in Africa: The 25-year example from Nigeria," paper presented at the 22nd Annual Third World Conference Foundation, Chicago, Illinois, March 27-30, 1996.
- ²⁵ *Index on Censorship*, vol.24, no.5, 1995, pp. 173 and 186.
- ²⁶ *Index on Censorship* vol. 24, no. 6, 1995, p. 175. See also *Index on Censorship*, vol. 25,no.1, 1996, p.172.
- ²⁷ *Index on Censorship* , vol. 23, nos. 4-5, 1994, p. 244.
- ²⁸ *IPI Report*, January-February 1995, p.19.
- ²⁹ *Index on Censorship*, vol. 24, no. 4, 1995, p. 172.
- ³⁰ *Index on Censorship*, vol. 23, nos. 1-2, 1994, p. 233.
- ³¹ *Index on Censorship*, vol. 24, no. 3, 1995, p. 174.
- ³² *Index on Censorship*, vol. 23, nos. 1-2, 1994, p. 242.
- ³³ *Index on Censorship*, vol. 23, nos. 4-5, 1994, p. 251.
- ³⁴ *Index on Censorship*, vol. 23, nos. 4-5, 1994, p. 243.
- ³⁵ *IPI Report*, February-March 1995, p. 18.
- ³⁶ Chris Ogbondah, "The tribulations of Afrias media: A study of one aspect of human rights abuses," paper presented at the International Communication Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), Atlanta, Georgia, Summer 1994, p.16.
- ³⁷ For the details of Decree no. 43 of 1993, see e.g., Chris Ogbondah, *Military regimes and the press in Nigeria, 1966-1993: Human rights and national development*. Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1994.
- ³⁸ *IPI Report*, December 1992, p. 23.
- ³⁹ *IPI Report*, September 1992, p. 47.
- ⁴⁰ See *IPI Report*, October-November, 1993, p. 51.
- ⁴¹ For some understanding of corruption in Nigeria's civil service from the 1950s to early 1990s, see e.g., Dickson, Agedah,

- Corruption and the stability of the Third Republic*. Lagos: Perception Communications, 1993.
- ⁴² See Billy Dudley, *An introduction to Nigerian government and politics*. London: Macmillan, 1982.
- ⁴³ For an understanding of the value of wasted public funds in the former western state of Nigeria, for example, see Paul Lubeck (Ed.), *The African bourgeoisie: Capitalist development in Nigeria, Kenya and the Ivory Coast*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1987, p. 170.
- ⁴⁴ For the details of the "Jaguar deal," see *West Africa*, March 26, 1984, p. 691.
- ⁴⁵ For the details of the tribunal's report on the magnitude of corruption in the Shagari government, see *Views and decisions of the Federal Military Government on the report and recommendations of the Justice Mohammed Bello Judicial Tribunal of Inquiry to the review cases of persons convicted under Decree no. 32 of 1984*. Lagos: Federal Government Printers, 1986.
- ⁴⁶ See *Forbes*, Dec. 1, 1976, pp. 51-52. And for a detailed discussion of the 'dash' practice in Nigeria, see e.g., Ronald Wraith and Edgar Simpkins, *Corruption in developing countries*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1964, pp. 11-52.
- ⁴⁷ Chinua Achebe, *The trouble with Nigeria*. Enugu: Fourth Dimensions Publishing Company, 1983, p. 38.
- ⁴⁸ See *Newswatch*, Aug. 25, 1986, p. 11.
- ⁴⁹ Pita Agbese, "Defence expenditures and private capital accumulation in Nigeria," *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, vol. 23, nos. 3-4, 1988, p. 285.
- ⁵⁰ S. George, *A fate worse than debt*. New York: Grover Press, 1988, p. 114.
- ⁵¹ J.F. Byart, *The state in Africa: The politics of the belly*. London: Longman, 1993, p. 78.
- ⁵² *Time* February 22, 1993, p. 54.
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- ⁵⁴ J. Chapin, 'Zaire: Mobutu's kleptocracy rules while the people starve,' *Food Monitor*, no. 37, 1986, pp. 106-107.
- ⁵⁵ Victor LeVine, *Political corruption: The Ghana case*. Stanford, California: Stanford University, 1975, p. 29.
- ⁵⁶ E. Hutchful, "A tale of two regimes: Imperialism, the military and class in Ghana," *Review of African Economy*, January-April 1979.
- ⁵⁷ See *West Africa*, March 15, 1985, p. 750.
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- ⁵⁹ *West Africa*, Sept. 7 -13, 1992, p. 1539.
- ⁶⁰ Rene Dumont, 'Remuneration levels and corruption in French-speaking Africa,' In Monday Ekpo (Ed.), *Bureaucratic corrugation in Sub-Sahara Africa: Toward a search for cases and consequences* (pp. 401-410). Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1979.
- ⁶¹ J. David Greenstone, "Corruption and self-interest in Kampala and Nairobi: A comment on local politics in East Africa," In Monday Ekpo, (Ed.), *Bureaucratic corruption in sub-Sahara Africa...*, pp. 261-274.
- ⁶² 'Wa" is a Swahili prefix that means "group of people,' and "Benzi" is coined from Mercedes-Benz cars. See Neil Jacoby et al, *Bribery and extortion in world business: A study of corporate political payments abroad*. New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1977, p. 13.
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