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But now it is clear that these programs are simply punitive.

By dismantling social programs, they have seriously eroded such standard-of-living indices as infant mortality and education. 28 And of course, they have not produced the promised economic renaissance. After ten years of structural adjustment, â\200\230Senegal, regarded as a "model student" of the IMF and the World Bank -- and rewarded for its efforts with higher foreign aid than its African neighbors -- is in an economic crisis. another generously-aided star pupil, 12.5% of the unionized workforce has been laid off since 1983 and real wages have fallen by over 30% in the last four years³⁰; still, the World Bank resident economist said he could not see Ghana surmounting its economic problems for the next 25 years.

In Ghana,

Privatization has not worked in Africa. One of the main

reasons for its failure is that investors do not want to cope with the crumbling roads, water, telephone and electric systems that are themselves as often as not the legacy of Western policy. Many infrastructural projects were designed to benefit companies in donor countries rather than for their appropriateness. Often; too, Western contractors followed the example of their governments, corrupting African leaders to get the go--ahead for their projects. Longterm (and less profitable) maintenance was seldom included in contracts. And now, because foreign exchange earnings are consumed by interest payments (and corrupt officials), there is no money to order spare parts for upkeep from foreign suppliers.

Foreign exchange is also scarce because, over the past 15

years, world market prices of the basic commodities that constitute the bulk of African nations' export earnings have plummeted. Some Africans view this economic trend as even more debilitating than their crippling debts. And there is no question that their creditors, Washington and its industrialized allies, have total control of the commodities markets.

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After a decade of negative development, Washington has

given no sign of abandoning "structural adjustment" as the bedrock of its Africa policy. Perhaps this is because while privatization and bureaucratic pruning have been economically disastrous for Africa, they have been politically productive for Washington. These blame-the-victim policies have not only provided political leverage, they have undermined assumptions of social responsibility and reciprocity, basic to socialism and to many traditional African societies, sapping the strength of governments to react politically to the insidious policies.

Where economic subjugation might not suffice, US plans for

the 905 included the possibility of military intervention. It was not that post-Cold War Africa was deemed particularly important.

But a military establishment faced with cutbacks (the now all-but-forgotten "peace dividend") was in need of relevant

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who wanted to obtain their liberation through armed struggle,"² was a powerful boost to Libya's prestige. according to the Voice of America, Libya was trying to improve relations with "black African states.",¹ Botswana's President Quett Masire paid a state visit to Libya in July.

It came at a time when, .

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Libya has established good relations with Uganda, whose

president Yoweri Museveni is currently chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). Museveni recently hosted Kadafy for a discussion of Libya's form of government with 278 Ugandan officials. After Kadafy described how the Libyan People's Committees function, Museveni said, "This is something we should think about... [W]e should remember that the original Greek city governments were like this..."

Libya recently announced it would give Rwanda financial and

medical aid to help it settle returning refugees. challenge to Rwanda's ruling Hutu government, which has said it has no room to accommodate hundreds of thousands of Tutsi refugees, several thousand of whom have been fighting an insurgent war.

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Libya has encountered serious adversity only in Ethiopia

and Burundi, which broke relations in 1989 after accusing Libya of supporting comeback plans of deposed President Jean-Baptiste Bagaza. 6 Libyan diplomats were expelled from Addis Ababa last April, after a bomb went off near the Israeli ambassador's hotel room. The two countries were already at odds over Sudan, 7 where Libya is the government's strongest supporter, while Ethiopia,, Israel and the US support the southern Sudanese People's Liberation Army.

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The Decade that Was to Be

As the 90s dawned, two potent weapons, debt and low

commodities prices, were expected to aid Washington in failing moves by developing countries to fill the postâ\200\224~Cold War vacuum with a renewed struggle for more equitable North--South economic relations.

The debts that African governments were encouraged to take

on in the 70s began in the 80s to eat up their export earnings and their hopes of growth and development. With its political control of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, the US was well placed to demand that debtors implement "structural adjustment" programs as a condition for new lending, debt rescheduling, and aid. The public sector cutbacks mandated by the programs were supposed to stop the drain of funds into inefficient state-owned enterprises and overstaffed government bureaucracies.

6. This aide attributed Washington' 5 failure last summer to prevent the wholesale slaughter and subsequent starvation of civilians in Monrovia to the lack of initiative of US diplomats there.

7. New York Times, June 13, 1990.

8. AP, July 31, 1990.

9. Africa Confidential, December 21, 1990.

10. Jeune Afrique (Paris), September 10, 1986; Le Monde, June 16, 1985. Savimbi frequently passes through Abidjan on his visits to the US and Europe.

11. Africa Confidential, December 7, 1990.

12. New York Times, January 1, 1991.

13. Nation, November 7, 1988 reports on government troops massacring civilians and renewed US military aid.

14. Le Monde, November 18, 1989.

15. Africa Confidential, December 21, 1990.

16. AP, December 13, 1990.

17. New York Times, op. cit.

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18. Africa Analysis, June 12, 1987; The Independent (London), Kâ\200\231K December 22, 1989, cited by Star (Johannesburg), in ANC News

— Briefing; BBC Focus on Africa, 1615 UCT, December 18, 1990, FBIS-AFR.

19. UPI, January 2, 1991.

20. UPI, San Francisco Chronicle, May 19, 1990.

21. Voice of America, 1633 UCT, May 18, 1990.

22. JANA (Tripoli), 1646 UCT, July 5, 1990, FBIS-NES.

23. The New Vision (Kampala), October 26, 1990, FBIS-AFR.

24. Kinshasa Domestic Service, 0500 UCT, November 28, 1990, Âf818-AF .

25. UPI, October 29, 1990.

ÂSan Francisco Chronicle, April 6, 1989.

27. Jerusalem Post, April 2, 1990.

provided intelligence to the West African forces,⁵ but the Bush administration is content that Taylor's forces have not damaged

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its installations there, according to a senior congressional aide.⁶ These include a 1, 400 foot tower that serves as a back-up guidance system for nuclear submarines and radio relay transmitters that handle US intelligence and diplomatic communications for all of sub-Saharan Africa.

It is hardly surprising that Libya would back an alternative

to Doe, who welcomed a significant Israeli presence in Liberia. What is extraordinary is the fact that Libya's partners in the enterprise were, until recently, reckoned to be in the anti-Libyan camp. Four years ago Togo reestablished diplomatic relations with Israel, receiving in exchange Israeli bodyguards for President Gnassingbé Eyadéma, who had recently been shaken by an attempted coup d'état. In July President George Bush received Eyadéma at the White House.⁸ At the same time Togo was building an amicable relationship with Libya; the Togolese information minister is reportedly a friend of Libya's foreign minister.⁹

In 1987 when he assassinated and supplanted Burkina Faso's

President Thomas Sankara -- a star in the progressive galaxy and a friend of Libya -- President Blaise Compaoré was welcomed as a - friend of the West. Compaoré was particularly close to President

Felix Houphouët-Boigny of Côte d'Ivoire, himself a close friend of South Africa, the US and of their friends Israel and anti-Angolan guerrilla leader Jonas Savimbi.¹⁰ Last year Burkina and Togo reportedly aided Chadian President Idriss Déby in his successful fight against Washington's man Hissein Habré.¹¹

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When the US cut Somalia's aid in 1989¹² (citing human rights abuses that were bearable before the Cold War ended

Siad Barré turned to Libya and reportedly obtained armored vehicles.¹⁴ According to one report, Libya agreed to supply arms in and advisers in exchange for a Somali pledge not to renew the US lease on military facilities at the port of Berbera when it expires in 1991.¹⁵ Whether the US will want to renew the lease is questionable. Since 1989 it has slashed the staff of its brand new embassy (with three swimming pools and a golf course) from 450¹⁶ down to 30.¹⁷

Barré had previously supplemented his US military aid with South African weapons, pilots and engineers. When insurgent groups pressed their fight to the capital Mogadishu at the turn of the year, South African and "Rhodesian" mercenaries were reportedly still flying for Barre and maintaining his aircraft.¹⁸ Libya, possibly looking beyond the government's clear days, said it was trying to send food into Mogadishu.¹ consistently denied military involvement in Somalia.

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Libya has
Nelson Mandela's visit to Tripoli last spring and his thanks to Muammar Kadhafi for giving "military training to South Africans

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functions. Throughout the 80s Congress had urged it to develop
small military units that could be deployed for "low intensity
warfare."

Now that the Pentagon was searching for purpose, Africans
apparently seemed handy for target practice. In early 1990 the
3rd Special Forces Group, deactivated since the end of the
Vietnam war, was reformed to specialize in Africa. Maj. Bill
Chadwick, the commander in charge of creating the new Green Beret
unit said that in addition to training and advising foreign
armies, units such as his were ready to organize guerrilla wars
or to aid developing countries in stopping them. (He also noted
there was much malnutrition-induced brain damage in Africa.)

Before the Bush administration dropped everything to rush
off to war in the Persian Gulf, one of the key questions about
its Africa policy was how it would handle the continent's almost
unanimous adoption of political pluralism. African students and
activists had been inspired by the way mass demonstrations in
Eastern Europe in 1989 had brought bloodless changes in
government.

In 1990, in country after country, their call for similar

nonviolent change evoked an enormous response from economically
and politically frustrated citizens. Massive street
demonstrations and strikes erupted across Africa, forcing rulers
to make concessions, the cheapest available being to permit
rival political parties to function.

This was not really an ideological struggle. As one

activist in Cote d'Ivoire explained it last March, dissidents
merely hoped that open elections would rid them of a political
clique that had been transferring much of the country's wealth
into personal accounts abroad. They hoped the West would be
embarrassed into supporting them by the contrast between its "
insistence on democracy in Eastern Europe and its laissez-faire
attitude toward Africa.

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Washington had been quite content to deal with the

autocrats it had always supported and to have free elections
continue on the list of human rights that, when it came to
Africa, the US has traditionally ignored. At the State
Department's April 13, 1990 briefing a reporter asked whether the
US would express sympathy for the demands for pluralism in Cote
d'Ivoire and several other countries. "I frankly don't think
we'll want to insert ourselves into the specific situations in
those countries," replied spokesman Richard Boucher.

Later, the administration half-heartedly climbed on the

bandwagon. "The path to development and the path to democracy are
one and the same," President Bush told Togo's president-Eyadéma,
last summer. 6 However, when the US ambassador in Kenya pressed

45. René Lemarchand, ed., *The Green and the Black*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1988, passim., and especially Ronald Bruce St. John, "The Libyan Debacle in Sub-Saharan Africa 1969--1987, pp. 125 and 138 and Jean Emmanuei Pondi, "Qadhafi and the Organization of African Unity, " pp. 139-145.
46. Newsgrid, January 15, 1990; Xinhua, January 18, 1990; Reuters, March 22, 1990; Washington Post, May 27, 1990; UPI, June 20, 1990; MENA (Middle East News Agency, Cairo), 1050 UCT, September 21, 1990 and 1405 UCT, September 28, 1990, FBIS-NES; Reuters, December 4, 1990; .
47. The earliest of these reports came from Reuters, July 9, 1990.
48. Al-Sharq Al-Awsat (London), December 5, 1990, FBIS-NES.
49. AP, January 2, 1991.
50. Africa Confidential, December 21, 1990.
51. Ibid. In the Iran-Iraq war Libya supported Iran. And Iraq was reported to be Chad's second-largest source of aid, France being the first.
52. Reuters, August 15, 1990.
53. Newsgrid, July 31, 1990.
54. Financial Times, September 21, 1990.
55. Reuters, September 21, 1990.
56. Nigerian News Agency/Pan African News Agency, 1123 UCT, December 14, 1990, FBIS-AFR.
57. Senegal's decision was undoubtedly connected with its feud with Mauritania, Iraq's closest African ally.
58. Reuters, October 13, 1990.
59. Newsgrid, December 17, 1990.
60. Xinhua, December 28, 1990.
61. Ibid., December 30, 1990.
62. AP, September 2, 1990.
63. UPI, Los Angeles Times, June 10, 1990.

28. Lgs Angeles Times, "World Report," July 17, 1990: Einaancial
Times, September 24, 1990.

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29. Africa International (Paris), December 1990.

30. West Africa, July 23-29, 1990.

31. West Africa, January 7-13, 1990. Einaancial Times, August 13,
1990 makes the same point.

32. Interviews with businessmen in Nigeria and Sierra Leone,
March 1990; Financial Times, June 19, 1990 (which does not
stress the issue of control).

33. Michael T. Klare and Peter Kornbluh, eds., Low Intensitv
Warfare, Pantheon, New York, 1988; Steven Emerson, Secret
Warriors, G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1988.

34. News & Observer (Raleigh, N.C.) April 15, 1990.

35. Aired on C-SPAN, April 13, 1990.

36. AP, July 31, 1990.

37. New York Times, August 6, 1990; Wire Services compiled by
Newsgrid, a Compuserve data base, August 3, 1990.

38. Africa Confidential, 26 October 1990.

39. Africa Analysis, 26 May 1989.

40. AP, October 29, 1990.

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41. BBC Focus on Africa, 1830 UCT, December 20, 1990, FBIS-AFRL;

42. THIS FOOTNOTE SHOULD BE LIES OF OUR TIMES NEXT ISSUE, BUT I
NEED TO CHECK AND MAKE SURE THAT MY ARTICLE IS IN IT.

43. Israeli Forei n Affairs, December, November, July, march and
February 1990 and December 1989. Ethiopia needed no convincing to
vote against Iraq, which it has long despised for supporting the
separatist Eritrean People' s Liberation Front. There is also some
question about Israel' s urgency to "rescue" the Ethiopian Jews,
who provided a handy pretext for continuing military aid.
However, relatives of the Jews who had been brought to Israel in
"Operation Moses" in 1984 and 1985 were pressing hard for
reunification. So were North American Jewish activists. Congress
also got involved, first at the request of these activists, later
because the emigration of the Jews would deprive Israel of an
excuse for arming the Ethiopian government.

4. New York Times, December 6, 1990.

donations of humanitarian aid because they did not come with the appropriate degree of political support. other countries, had profound objections to the intrusion of "crusader" forces into an Arab dispute.

Libya, like so many

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Certainly now that Libya is a major actor in African

affairs, sooner or later Washington will have to give it the time of day. Of course it is also possible that, when it next turns its gaze to Africa, the Bush administration will blame Libya for the changes it sees there. But it will really have only itself to blame.

When he met with President Bush last July, Togo's President Eyadéma pleaded for a concerted aid plan for Africa like the one the Western nations are establishing for the new Eastern European governments: "The positive evolution which has marked international relations these past few months ... cannot truly bear fruit unless the appropriate remedies are found to the grave development problems facing the Third World in general Africa in particular."

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But African countries know all too well that George Bush's

New World Order does not run to succor -- it is all about disciplining uppity Third World leaders. Logically, Africans may conclude that it is best to keep a low profile and to go their own way. Two years ago, when asked why Washington had not taken up the cudgel against Uganda, whose policies were strikingly similar to those of Sandinist Nicaragua, an aide to President Yoweri Museveni answered that it was deliberate government policy not to advertise those policies.

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Nigeria, whose size and prominence have always permitted it to escape submission (except to "structural adjustment"), is now likely to take an even more assertive role. It has brushed aside US and British complaints that it has not harshly condemned Iraq.⁵⁴ Nigeria has condemned Iraq's presence in Kuwait and called for a diplomatic solution to the crisis.

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Recently Nigeria's President Ibrahim Babangida demanded that the countries of Europe and the Americas set up a massive program of aid and "total debt write-offs" for Africa "because services of our forefathers in the American plantations were unrewarded and unpaid for ... [and] because the exploitation of Africa during the period of colonial rule further impoverished us and enhanced the development of the West."

This new campaign, joined by US African-American leaders, call into question speculation that Nigeria, with its historic interest in regional leadership, might have decided to cooperate with Washington as a counterweight to Libya. Rather, it seems, Africa has begun to relish being left to its own devices.

aid that encouraged it to shun negotiations.

Israel steadfastly ignored Washington's pleas, insisting

that arms deliveries were needed to gain the release of some 20,000 Ethiopian Jews (and, more to the point, that it was a top Israeli priority to keep the Red Sea coast of Eritrea under the control of the government in Addis Ababa). Israel also mounted a powerful lobbying campaign to get the administration to reverse its policy and support Mengistu.

As the Gulf crisis proceeded, that happened. First the

administration announced that its relations with Ethiopia could be normalized once Ethiopia followed through with its agreement to allow the immigration of 20,000 Jews to Israel. Then came reports that Ethiopia's vote on the UN Security Council for Resolution 678 authorizing the use of force against Iraq had markedly improved relations between Washington and Addis Ababa.

At the behest of the Israeli government, Assistant Secretary

of State Herman Cohen traveled to Ethiopia in November for talks with Mengistu and an Israeli official. In December another announcement about a US-Israeli-Ethiopian agreement that the Jews were free to go was used as a vehicle to communicate the news that Ethiopia would be "rewarded" with Israeli aid. (It has been many years since Israel has given anything but military aid.)

This was almost certainly a sign that the US turnabout on Ethiopia was a concession to Israel, given in consideration for, its "low profile" in the Gulf crisis and its having to relinquish the contra war against Libya, very likely in another Iraq-related deal with France.

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everyone," said one congressional aide, when these possibilities were posed to him. Other congressional staffers concurred and a
some agreed that the administration regarded Africa as expendable.

"I have no doubt that they've bought off

That the US should abandon Africa, especially with Libya in

the wings, is worth pondering. Beyond what it indicates about President Bush's lust to humiliate Iraq, what does it indicate about the administration's attitude toward Libya? Toward Africa? Or does it simply indicate the same lack of forethought that destined undereducated US teenagers to kill and die in the desert?

The benefits to Libya have not gone unnoticed. "Now that the

US and France have a lot of their resources in the Persian Gulf, Kadafy is testing the waters here to see what he can get away with," said the "Western diplomat" that the New York Times found to quote in Ndjamena. "Libya, after a long period of hesitation, has begun to reassert itself as a potentially powerful force in the region," opined the paper.

President Daniel arap Moi, one of Africa's few holdouts against pluralism, to liberalize the political system, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs hastened to Nairobi to soothe Moi.â\200\230Washington "does not wish to prescribe the fOrm of government that Kenya or any other country should adopt, " Cohen said.

Why Moi needed placating brings up the intriguing but

probably unlikely notion that the Bush administration has a lingering interest in Renamo, the bloodthirsty proxy force South Africa set on Mozambique soon after it attained independence. The Kenyan government has often been reported to be assisting Renamo. 8 Publicly, the Bush administration is vehemently anti-Renamo. There have been convincing reports that Israel delivers aid to the SPLA in Southern Sudan through Kenya.

Although it has evidenced little enthusiasm for pluralism in

Africa, Washington, with its long tradition of manipulating , elections through the CIA or through the National Endowment for Democracy, cannot be unmindful of the opportunities presented by multiparty elections. There is the ability to play candidates off against each other, encouraging them to sell out more completely and for a lower price. And, handled skillfully, the electoral process can serve as a safety vent for public discontent, while replacing one stooge with another.

Speculation is particularly intense about how the Bush

administration intends to play the elections scheduled for later this year in Zaire. After tumultuous demonstrations earlier this year, President Mobutu acceded to demands for multiparty â\200\230 elections. Although Mobutu is not expected to run, opponents charge he will is positioning himself manipulate the process and control the new government.

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US--Zairian relations have reached a turning point. The

military phase of the CIA's covert war against Angola appears to be ending, and with it President Mobutu's usefulness as a host to the proxy forces known as Unita. Last year, for the first time, Congress was able to prevail over administration arguments that, despite his gory human rights abuses and his "kleptocratic" administration, for "national security" reasons, Mobutu must get his aid. Congress cut off all US aid that flowed to the Zairian treasury (much of which continued on into Mobutu's personal accounts).40 "The State Department would like to be able to do something for Mobutu," said a congressional aide at the time.

Still, it is not clear what the department -- or the CIA --

would like to do, and why. <II need to get some insight from Steve here] Perhaps, the administration wants to maintain a presence in Zaire to counter Libya's increasing influence. Zaire is a potentially wealthy country and most of the Western powers have gone out of their way to maintain a foothold there. During a

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Jane Hunter
January 14, 1991

AFRICA: WHOSE DECADE?

Africa: For all its vast size and its weight in the world,

it was the pea that fell off the president's fork as he bit down on Iraq.

Before the Gulf crisis began last August, it seemed certain that the 90s would be an American decade in Africa. The Cold War was over and the Soviets were going home. European attention was riveted on Eastern Europe. For African governments needing aid there was only one address, Washington, even though its own interest in the continent was waning. Now, the Bush administration is swapping and shuoking its African dominions to build its coalition against Iraq -- and this could well be an African decade that is unfolding, a decade in which Libya plays a leading role.

The most compelling manifestation of this Change has been in Chad. In December a complaisant administration allowed insurgents -favored by France and Libya to topple a key pillar of its African policy, forcing it to hastily dispose of an anti-Libyan contra force it had based there. (See other article)

But the administration has also been strangely silent as

Libya, its old arohenemy, positions itself to become the major benefactor of Zaire, whose president, Mobutu SeSe Sekou, provides political support and bases for the CIA to use in its guerrilla -' war against Angola. During the Reagan years, while US military aid to Africa declined overall, aid to Zaire and Chad, increased, 1 signifying the importance of US covert programs in both countries.

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.In Liberia -- another country that got lavish amounts of US

aid in the 80s, in this case to outbid the USSR and Libya -- US Marines sat offshore for months,2 while the National Patriotic Front (NPFL) led by Charles Taylor consolidated its hold on most of the country. Taylor's backers are Libya, Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso and Togo. Nevertheless, after dispatching soldiers (supposedly as human rights advisers) to help longtime US client President3 Samuel Doe (since executed) in the early weeks of the conflict,

the US has been notably passive.

It has not tried to counter Libya by giving backing, beyond

lip service, to the West African "peacekeeping" forces in control in the capital, Monrovia, or to the interim Liberian government under its protection.4 Charles Taylor has charged that the US

It is noteworthy that only three African countries --

Senegal, Niger and Sierra Leone -- have sent military units to serve in Saudi Arabia. 7 This might be a first indication that Libya's ascendancy is diminishing the influence of Saudi Arabia. and Iran, which have been vying to gain the loyalty of African, 230 Muslims. Certainly it suggests that African governments foresee no reward from Washington for contributing to its war- 224- or even compensation for their already substantial economic losses.

African countries are also using this period to draw

together in a way they were unable to do when Washington was defending the continent from Soviet and Libyan "subversion." Although crippled by its own debt burden, Nigeria has said it would work out ways of helping needier African countries -- by selling them oil cheaply, if necessary. 8 It is establishing a rehabilitation fund for Liberia. 9 And it has established a joint commission with Sudan. 0 Sudan has offered landlocked Chad an outlet to the Red Sea. 61 Libya, for its part, has signed a "unity" agreement with Sudan.

There is a revival again of the idea of the 70s, that many of Africa's crushing problems might be alleviated by increasing South-South economic and political links. "There can be no isolation, there must be interaction," said Uganda's Yoweri Museveni, when he assumed the chair of the OAU. "This decade should close the era of institutionalized colonialism in Africa."

NOTES:

1. Africa Analysis (London), October 2, 1987.

2. The Marines evacuated civilians from Monrovia and from time to time ferried inadequate amounts of food to the capital.

3. West Africa, March 12 22418, 1990; Africa Confidential, April 20, 1990; UPI, May 9, 1990.

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4. AP, September 14, 1990 reported administration support for the decision of the Economic Community of West African States to send its peacekeeping force, ECOMOG, to Liberia. This was reiterated by Assistant Secretary of State Herman Cohen, AP reported on September 20, when Cohen arrived in the area for a brief attempt to negotiate an end to the fighting.

5. UPI, October 22, 1990.

December visit to Zaire (where plans were set for an exchange of ambassadors) Libya's foreign minister noted "the natural resources in Zaire together with the finance which can be attracted from Libya will result in an arrangement which will be the envy of the financial world."

It seems clear that the Bush administration intends to cap

its war against Angola with the election of Jonas Savimbi, the leader of its proxy force Unita. During the congressional debate on aid to Unita last fall, the organization's supporters repeatedly raised Savimbi's demand that any cessation of US military aid be conditional on quickly-organized elections. Unita has also insisted on delaying its disarmament until after the elections.

The Angolan government says it will take as long as three

years to conduct a census and clear the roads of mines (those laid by Unita were supplied by the US and have taken a devastating toll in lives and limbs). Angola also fears it is being set up for an electoral defeat like that the US inflicted on Nicaragua last year: while an armed Unita terrorized the countryside, much as the armed contras did in Nicaragua, the US and South Africa would provide money and technical aid to presidential candidate Savimbi.

Similarly, if nonracial elections are held in South Africa,

it would be unrealistic to believe that the Bush administration would not do its best to maximize the prospects of that country's
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white elite and of black opponents of the African National Congress (ANC).
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This interest may stem from long identification with the

white minority regime. However, absent the active US

constituencies for Unita and the white government (and, fortunately, for the ANC as well), it is unlikely the preoccupied administration would be paying much attention to Southern Africa.

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Humanitarian organizations have likewise prodded the

administration to take an interest in impending famines, especially in Ethiopia and Sudan. But in the case of Ethiopia, these interests have been traded away, to buttress the campaign against Iraq. In a remarkable (yet, as most things African, unremarked) piece of grotesquerie the Bush administration has shifted from bitter enemy to bosom friend of Ethiopia's President Mengistu Haile Mariam.

Until it rushed to war against Iraq, the Bush administration was in the forefront of those calling for a negotiated settlement to Ethiopia's long civil war. An end to the fighting was seen as the best chance for delivering food to as many as four million people facing imminent famine. For months, the administration had pressured Israel to stop supplying the government with military

There is more to it than that, of course. Col..Muamar Kadafy has always pursued activist policies in Africa -- to promote Arab and Afroâ\200\224Arab unity, to spread Islam and to counter the efforts of Israel and Western governments. In the 705 he made some bad .â\200\230 choices, backing Idi Amin in Uganda against Tanzania and backing the Bokassa régime in the Central African Republic (or Empire, as Bokassa called it), which alienated other African governments. The stormy history of Chad, a matter often before the OAU, also harmed Libyan-African relations.

In the early 805 the Reagan administration and Israel put strenuous efforts into spoiling Libyan relations wherever they existed in Africa and Europe.⁴ That was followed by the April 1986 bombing attack, threats to attack a chemical factory at Rabta and the Chad-based contra war..The oil glut of the 805 drove down the price of Libya's sole export and diminished its ability to dispense foreign aid. Ironically, President Bush' 5 moves toward war against Iraq has remedied that by raising the price of oil and the opportunity to sell it.

Although to please Israel, Israel's US supporters and the

domestic "antiâ\200\224terrorist" lobby, the Bush administration continues to inveigh against Libya, its enmity lacks gusto. "The Reagan administration had a phobia [about Libya]," said a Capitol Hill source, "but I don't think this administration is quite as whacko."

Even before it needed to gain Egypt's cooperation for the

Gulf war, the administration seemed open to Egypt's policy of , improving relations with Libya. The two are natural economic ; partners. In 1989 they restored diplomatic relations (broken after Egypt signed the Camp David Accords). They have opened their borders and begun an ambitious set of economic projects...- .For the past year, Egyptian and Libyan military officials have visited back and forth.

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There are reports, confirmed by a senior congressional aide,

One rosy prediction is for a high-level US-Libyan

that Egygt is now lobbying the Bush administration on Libya's behalf. meeting early in 1991, after which the US is expected to announce that it is removing Libya from its list of "terrorist" nations. The year began, however, with the administration's announcement that it was renewing the five-year-old "national emergency" regarding Libya and thus the economic sanctions imposed by the Reagan administration.⁴⁹

This might or might not be related to events in the Gulf. The US is said to have warned "that Libya would be next on the Middle East hitâ\200\224 list if [Kadafy] support[ed] Iraq" and Egypt's promise to lobby the Bush administration was reportedly given on the condition that he stay out of the confrontation. . Libya and Iraq have never been close. Iraq returned Libya' 5

However,