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**POWER, PATRONAGE AND “*PRÉSENCE*”:
HOW FRANCE PRESERVED ITS INFLUENCE IN THE
FORMER *AFRIQUE ÉQUATORIALE FRANÇAISE*, 1960-1995**

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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Calls for imperial control of the disorganized periphery are still heard from major powers, and even from smaller states under threat. France has maintained an unmatched level of postcolonial control in many of its former sub-Saharan African colonies since their independence in 1960, demonstrating a masterful combination of military and economic power, for which long-cultivated political and cultural influences have been as important as force projection and financial support. Four dimensions of French “*présence*” are examined (military, political, economic, and cultural), requiring a historical understanding of the inherently unequal power relationships between France and its African clients. This dissertation provides comparative analysis of France’s relationships with four former colonies: Gabon, Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, and Chad. These countries of the former French Equatorial Africa are interesting because, although less prosperous, stable and politically connected to France than West Africa, and less strategically important than North Africa, they were

valuable enough to receive consistent attention from the *Elysée*, military bases, intervention troops, the Franc Zone's bank, and a large contingent of French military, intelligence, financial, and administrative personnel. This quasi-feudal pattern of patronage poses ethical and political dilemmas for a proud European power that sees itself as the womb of democracy. Gaullist political philosophy articulated clear goals of preponderant power and cultural greatness, which bore direct relation to the postcolonial continuity of French policy. In spite of accusations of neocolonialism and imperialism over the past four decades, France's interventions in its *chasse gardée* have rarely been called breaches of sovereignty because they were covered since independence by extensive military and economic cooperation agreements. "Patronage" refers to protection and support, but one's *patron* can demand services in return that can be either reasonable or exploitative. In French, the word "*patron*" means "boss," but can also mean "pattern." France's intention was to shape these nations as well as to rule them. If France could no longer rule Africa in the ancient imperial manner of subsuming whole peoples under its own sovereignty, it remained able to exert enough control to keep its sub-Saharan clients in a condition of useful dependency.

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CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION

Great powers faced a dilemma both during and after the Cold War in their relationships with newly independent nations, which can be clearly illustrated in the context of France's relationship with its former sub-Saharan African colonies. How might the leaders of these powers (*e.g.* USA, France, Britain, USSR, China) make decisions that would maintain and enhance their country's influence and control in peripheral regions of the world, and not be accused of neocolonialism, or even imperialism? After several decades of seeing academic inquiry into imperialistic enterprise sidelined into area studies, critical theory and political theory, the study of empire and imperialism has once again become of interest to mainstream international relations and security studies. It has always been important to understand the formal and informal mechanisms of control by a major power metropole over nations peripheral to the international power structure, and how these are created, maintained, and exploited. It is particularly important to explore the reasons for these mechanisms now that the bipolar Cold War situation has ended, state failure is a constant possibility, and state sovereignty in the periphery is less sacrosanct, either in theory or in practice. Calls for more imperial control of the disorganized periphery have been heard from some leaders and citizens of the major powers, and even occasionally from the small states neighboring states in chaos.

The United States of America, which France 's former foreign minister Hubert Védrine has referred to as a “hyperpower”¹ or at least as a candidate for pride of place among the major powers with neo-imperialistic intentions, has become France’s rival in many parts of Africa where France’s hegemony had been unchallenged. As Védrine agrees, this new US dominance has not simply been a matter of “hard” military force as power is traditionally measured, but also along the “soft” dimensions of power: America’s ability to convince others of its value as a partner and attract people to its political sphere, its markets, and its culture. He says of “hard” and “soft”:

“But these two types of power reinforce each other! This is what I mean when I talk about the Pentagon, the English language, Hollywood, CNN, the Internet, American culture, etc. Soft power, in any case, is not entirely new.”²

A French foreign minister is in an excellent position to make this point, since France’s dominance over its former African colonies since independence has used, with few exceptions, a masterfully well-integrated combination of both types of power.

A commonly used definition of colonial imperialism is simply the expansion of empires by a dominating foreign power, using annexation of neighboring states or by conquering regions or states to bring them under imperial control. This is the relatively neutral definition of empire that leaves aside moral questions about taking the land and resources of others by force (which is theft), and the consequent destruction of local political autonomy and indigenous culture (which is political and spiritual alienation). Hard power can

do the first with sufficient force and organization, but to truly control a culture and a people as well as a land requires the softer powers of economic subsidies, trade, and the products of the dominant culture, including its language, its education, its technology and its access to what the rest of the world has to offer.

Neo-colonialism, as the hegemonic control of independent sovereign states with at least putatively inviolable borders that have been defined according to international agreements, must use both hard and soft power also, but in such a way as to avoid the older label of “empire.” This was France’s dilemma in 1959, on the verge of its careful transition to independence of the 14 sub-Saharan colonies. If it could no longer rule colonies, in the ancient imperial sense of folding nations and peoples into its own sovereign realm, it might yet be able to exert enough control to maintain these former colonies in a condition of dependency as sources of military, political, economic and cultural power.

This work will provide a close historical analysis of France’s relationships with the francophone central African countries, considering the four major manifestations of French power: military presence, political presence, economic presence and cultural presence. In Lasswell’s terms, I will look at what France wanted and why it wanted it, how it got it, whether it got all of it, and how well it worked for both France and its former colonies. The final chapter will look at the most recent French interventions and speculate carefully concerning changes in how France’s presence was projected in Africa during the final decade of the twentieth century.

Nearly five decades of continued French dominance and influence over much of Francophone Africa offers a particularly instructive case with which to study continued great power influence, in spite of France's now-secondary role in world affairs to the USA. Despite the rise of nationalism among its former sub-Saharan colonies, leading to their independence *en masse* in 1960, France has managed to maintain its military, political, economic and cultural influence in these new nations to a degree matched by no other post-colonial power. Most interesting is that French intervention has only rarely been considered to be a breach of the African nation's sovereignty, since such intervention is covered by treaties of military cooperation between France and francophone African nations, and these cooperation agreements cover intervention in order to protect a sitting government. That France could even intervene overtly in more than one of these countries in order to replace such a government (as it did in the Central African Republic), and that this was not challenged in any significant way internationally or among its African clients, is a testament to the longevity of France's ability to shape African affairs. The projection and protection of French military, economic and cultural power was also a major factor, for good or for ill, in the types of leaders experienced by these countries from the schools that educated them to the military interventions that supported them in power.

The federated colonial region of French Equatorial Africa (*Afrique Equatoriale Française* or AEF) encompassed the present-day countries of Chad, Gabon, the Central African Republic, and the Republic of Congo ("Congo-Brazzaville" to distinguish it from the Democratic Republic of Congo). It was

sometimes explicitly compared to the fairy-tale Cinderella,³ as the less loved and more abused of France's dependents. It was certainly less prosperous, peaceful, and politically connected to France than the West African colonies, and less strategically important than the North African colonies, but nonetheless valuable enough to the French to rate multiple military bases, a sizeable military troop presence, a share of the Franc Zone's economic support, and a large number of French citizens *in situ* as military advisers, teachers, intelligence officers, diplomats, bankers and administrators.

Certainly their considerable natural resources made it necessary for France to maintain at least an economic connection with these five former colonies, but oil, uranium, diamonds and timber are only a part of France's reasons for protecting the former AEF as an important part of its sphere of influence after all five became independent countries in 1960. Natural resources alone do not explain France's tenacious patronage of this region.

I will examine France's capability as a great power in Central Africa along several dimensions, which include France's employment of military and security policy, other resources and constraints which have affected France's influence in Africa over time, and France's capacity to preserve a stable peacetime political and economic environment in these former colonies. I will also look at how France shaped the post-independence peacetime environment in Central Africa in order to obtain the resources, strategic flexibility, and global prestige and power in the region that it desired.

The original four countries of the 1910 federation *Afrique Équatoriale Française* (Gabon, Congo-Brazzaville, the Central African Republic and Chad) are the main focal points of this study, because their relationships with France have presented a number of useful examples of the penetration and persistence of French power and influence. France's relationships during this period with some of the francophone countries of West Africa will also be raised briefly, because Central and West African nations share a number of borders, security issues, and economic structures. There were interventions in West Africa by France that made use of French troops based in Central Africa, and *vice versa*, so confining the discussion to one region is not entirely possible.

To describe the shape of France's desired *post*-colonial environment, I use a phrase often seen in the literature on French colonialism, "*la chasse gardée*." This somewhat feudal structural model determined in large part what choices France had, how France responded to instability or conflict, or to the threat of conflict, when France was most likely to respond, and how well prepared France was for the larger-scale, more regionalized conflicts during the period following the independence of its former African possessions.

The phrase is patronizing in almost every sense, and must certainly appear insulting to the people whose countries it describes. A *chasse gardée* is a hunting preserve, or what we might think of as a private game park.⁴ French sources often use the term purely for descriptive purposes, although the more modern and politically progressive sources use it with due irony. In this way, the colonial and even post-colonial relationship between France and francophone

Africa is presented as one in which the responsible lord of the manor cares devotedly for his parks and creatures, in order to preserve their health and security for his own use and pleasures.

A well-run *chasse gardée*, in post-colonial terms, contains human inhabitants who remain convinced enough of the advantages of their living arrangement, and the benevolence of their overlord, that they have little inclination to leap the fence, go into the deer business for themselves as sole proprietors, contract hunting rights out to a competing *patron*, or even evict or kill their protector. The economic advantages of living in the park, security and a stable economy, outweigh the loss of autonomy, the risk of punishment, and the additional chores required in the lord's service.

Another more modern nickname for Africa current among French policymakers is "*le pré carré*," idiomatically translatable as "our own backyard."⁵ The difference in interpreting these metaphorical references to Africa may be that game parks contain animals to be managed, and backyards often contain children to be educated or disciplined. This distinction can be borne in mind when one compares the rhetoric of the colonial period with more modern rhetorical defenses of French interests in Africa. The two terms are equally insulting to the former colonies: their inhabitants are either prey or children, making France either a predator or a parent. "*La chasse gardée*" is more commonly understood and used among Anglophones that study Africa, so I use it here, but "*le pré carré*" is an equally revealing term in many ways,

The word “*Patron*” in French can mean boss or employer, and can also refer to a chief or community leader. It is a frequent term of address in francophone Africa, and has a broader meaning in that context than the English word “patron (as in “patron of the arts,” for instance: one who offers support). “*Le Patron*” is the one who is ultimately in charge, whether it is a company, a country, or a village. The term “patronage” in French refers to protection and direction as much as support. One’s *patron* can demand services in return for such protection, which can be either reasonable or exploitative. Patronage networks based on ethnic, family and community ties are a common feature of African life, and are often based on economic dependency, but can also reflect mutual trust, religious duty and filial obligation. As such, they are sometimes a positive and traditional part of African cultural hierarchies. However, as in many non-African places (including the state of New Jersey), patronage networks can also be formed around common political or economic interests, and the more negative features of these are corruption, bribery, political gangs, and extortion. Both types of patronage networks have been used profitably by the French to maintain their military, cultural and economic power in francophone Africa.

The African model of patronage is therefore a bit differently constructed from the French conception because of the already existing African cultural practice of patronage as practiced by regional chiefs. The two models were compatible, however. France made use of the African model of patronage,

replacing its own local authorities, whether French, or carefully chosen Africans, as *patrons*.

Colonial rule is often distinguished as “direct rule,” where domination is centralized and unmediated by local authority, and “indirect rule,” where, as Mahmood Mamdani puts it “tribal leadership was either selectively reconstituted as the hierarchy of the local state or freshly imposed where none had existed.” According to earlier authors writing about the colonial political economy, the French (as mainly non-settler colonies) were supposed to have preferred the former and the British (as mostly settler colonies) the latter. As Mamdani also makes clear, however, “even historically, the division between direct and indirect rule never coincided neatly with the one between settler and nonsettler colonies.” France’s colonies included a number of places where rule could be characterized as indirect, although ultimately ruled centrally from the metropole itself. Mamdani also characterizes indirect rule as “grounded in a legal dualism” where political and civil inequalities that already existed in African customs could be exploited and widened in order to control local populations indirectly, what he calls “a mediated – decentralized – despotism.”⁶

Arguably, France’s colonial rule in the central African colonies, although certainly “direct” in that local authorities were frequently undermined, destroyed and then reconstructed in French forms, later required the use of its own, trained and cultivated African intermediary authorities in order to insure that French policies were pursued. As Mamdani demonstrates, neither the French nor the British colonial administrations could rule without Africans as middlemen. He

quotes Robert Delavignette, a former Governor-General of Overseas France, as admitting that French administrators “would have been helpless,” not only because African chiefs represented their people in dealing with French administrators, but because they were also needed to represent France itself “vis-à-vis the community.”⁷

Experience in West Africa⁸ had demonstrated that depending on the “*évolués*”⁹ (those “evolved” Africans who, by French legal and social definition, had thoroughly assimilated French culture) sometimes risked radicalizing these leaders and making them less controllable as subjects. While some assimilation of French administrative culture was required in order to create useful African intermediaries, the evolution of colonial Africans into those who might demand all of the privileges and rights of French citizenship had to be controlled.

As I hope to demonstrate, the supposedly “direct- ruling” colonial French may have created the most effective “indirect” rule system of all of the former colonial powers since it continued decades into their post-colonial period. This phenomenon can be linked to the French political philosophy of Gaullism, the strength of the French presidency and the mirroring of this type of centralized executive power in the regimes of a number of the longer-serving francophone African presidents. The relative weakness of France’s own elective legislative body as compared to the power of the Elysée is also mirrored in either weak or completely patronage-bound legislative systems in francophone African countries, although generally France’s *Assemblée Nationale* is the result of much stronger electoral and parliamentary procedures than its African

counterparts. In the French language, words may usefully have multiple meanings: the word “*patron*” can also mean pattern or model. Certainly, France’s intention was to be both pattern and patron.

This feudal pattern of lordship, protection and patronage, and the ethical and political dilemmas it poses for a proud European power which regards itself as the very womb of democracy, are not peculiarly or solely the result of French colonialism. However, the French have distinguished themselves by retaining and exploiting a relationship with their former colonial preserves of which no other power can boast. The relationship is by no means perfectly harmonious, but remains a political and economic force to be reckoned with nearly five decades after the political independence of the African colonies.

An efficient *chasse gardée* relies not only on force, fences, and the economic neediness of the inhabitants. It also requires what we might now call ecological awareness: the ability to sense troublesome conditions that will destabilize a region or destroy the ability of the rangers to control the park.

The rangers themselves are a key element. They must be both faithful and knowledgeable, answering to France and yet understanding African political nuances, networks, languages, and lore. Long-distance management was no substitute for a constant and watchful French presence. French “*présence*” (a key military term), did not just mean showing up, although consistently appearing in the event of a crisis was certainly a feature of it. Much as a lead actor is said to have “presence” when he or she demands and keeps one’s attention on the stage, France maintained its *presence* as first among all of the possible great

nation *Patrons* that competed for the attention of the former French colonies during the years following independence. *Présence* has been pricey, however, and French precedence as Africa's international *Patron* has lately become difficult to maintain in the face of political pressure at home and from France's own African protégés.

Preservation of the *chasse gardée* has been maintained and developed over the long term as a coherent series of policies persisting throughout the administrations of every French president from Charles de Gaulle to Jacques Chirac. The assumptions upon which France's Africa policy has been based since the Brazzaville Conference of 1944 are still discernible in France's African affairs in the 1990s.

This continuous French influence is not simply expressed in military aid. The political, economic, and cultural factors that support and enhance France's military power in central Africa need to be considered as an integral part of its ability to shape the *chasse gardée* in its former colonies. These countries also provide a number of useful examples of where the patterning or shaping went awry, and how France dealt with times that were not peaceful and still maintained its influence in many ways. In the case of Chad, most of its existence as an independent nation has been spent in civil war. France is still present in most of them, although not quite as preponderant in force. Flexibility of *présence* has been almost as important as consistency.

The French political philosophy known as Gaullism bore a direct relation to the continuity and Consistency of French Policy in Africa. Indeed, President

Charles de Gaulle and his followers were French Africa's leaders own *patrons*, both before and after independence. France's ability to maintain its political advantage and continuing patronage after independence lay in its continuing consistency and clarity of vision concerning what it wanted from its former colonies, greatly aided by de Gaulle's articulate formulation of the goals of French great power *grandeur*, and a patience born of preponderant power, historical presence and experience, and a deep understanding of the people and cultures it had ruled. Unlike other great powers which tended to prefer immediate results from their African initiatives, France understood that the *longue durée* of colonial history generally worked to its advantage, because a reliable and predictable (if forceful and parental) overlord was generally preferred to other patrons with short-term goals, less shared history, and less of their wealth and effort invested in the region.

Any examination of France's freedom of action during this century must take account of the structure of the French state, its centralizing tendencies, and the strength of the Gaullist presidency. It is well to realize, however, that these structural components are supported and shaped by a set of beliefs that can be treated as the constraining assumptions guiding the development and intentions of the twentieth-century French state in all its paradoxical duality, as both democracy and empire. While this set of beliefs is often called Gaullism, they are neither inflexibly static nor historically modern. Nor, in spite of the myth of French exceptionalism, do they solely pertain to France, which is not the only

democracy ever to become imperial only to find that its founding principles are in contrast to its actions.

It is arguable that de Gaulle's post-independence Africa policy is a case of empire by other means, but France's history in Africa, and the uses it has made of the continent, show a persistent pattern of assumptions concerning French imperial destiny that pre-dates de Gaulle's entry on the French political scene by nearly a hundred years. Since this study in many ways examines the Central African military legacy of Charles de Gaulle, "*l'homme de Brazzaville*," it is useful at this point to take a closer examination of what, exactly, Gaullism is. Gaullism, as a static set of not-always carefully articulated assumptions and beliefs, should be distinguished from de Gaulle himself, who adapted his policies and actions to several quite different historical phases in French history, while remaining flexible and aware that France's political survival (and his own) would require occasional compromises with stated ideals. He never lost sight of those ideals, but, as Philip Gordon explains,

"Take, for example, de Gaulle's position on French overseas colonies -- "the Empire." Never in the General's long life did he change his view on the importance of French grandeur and the destiny of France's global role. But he was not blind to the fact that World War II released forces in the colonies that could not be contained, even with all the political will he might muster among his compatriots. For this nationalist soldier to preside over the transformation of the empire and become the sponsor of Algerian independence was an extraordinary homage to his willingness to adapt."¹⁰

The ideal of the independent nation-state, its legitimacy, and the autonomy of its institutions, was deeply important to de Gaulle (for France, if not for the African countries). De Gaulle claimed occasionally to support the idea of

Europe as well, but not at the cost of France. Even if France's independence had to be achieved at the cost of its alliances, as was true of its relationship with NATO, it was in the interest of France to retain its independence of action.

Although de Gaulle supported the federation model if France remained the first among equals, as in the French Community plan for Africa in 1958, he opposed vehemently the idea of a federated Europe wherein France would lose some of its priority and autonomy. De Gaulle was not only convinced that France was entitled to be a world power, but also that it was entitled to global dominance because it was France. He admitted that his view of France was often more sentimental than reasonable, but remained adamant that France offered the world an exceptional yet universalizable form of enlightenment that was expressed in its culture, language, and power, and further, that France had a global responsibility to perpetuate its enlightened values and organizing principles by whatever means possible at the time. This vision is of course a version of the colonial *mission civilisatrice*, and not unique to de Gaulle.¹¹ It needs to be considered both an impetus and a constraint to France's actions in Africa because the loyalty of various French politicians to what they perceived as Gaullist truisms directed much of the Africa policy immediately following de Gaulle's resignation and death. De Gaulle's legacy also continued in a less exalted form in the expedient and pragmatic, and sometimes downright dishonorable tactics followed by de Gaulle's Secretary for African and Malagasy Affairs, Jacques Foccart. These will be discussed in a later chapter.

Gaullism's effect on military and presidential culture in France bore a direct resemblance (pattern, if you will) to the forms taken by military and presidential culture in the former African colonies. One feature of Gaullism was to privilege the nation's military and economic security over civil liberties and democratic governance. As I will demonstrate in the cases studied, this has been a conservative philosophy shared enthusiastically by most African military governments. It is arguable that persistent Gaullism in France, even during the Mitterand years when a socialist government was in power, stems from its still-fresh memories of having been a conquered nation. The central African governments' emphasis on military strength supporting a centralized presidency and a consequently weaker parliamentary branch certainly resembles Gaullism in these respects. It also, however serves as a convenient philosophical underpinning to preserving a particular military elite group in power, as happened in both France under de Gaulle and francophone Africa under a number of rulers with a military power base.

Charles de Gaulle's influence on the region cannot be underestimated, and began with his personal friendships with many of the older generation of African leaders during World War II, in which a number of African colonials served. Oddly, although Gaullism as a presidential philosophy and leadership strategy is waning in France itself, the presidents and legislatures of the countries examined in this study all show evidence of having been modeled on the Gaullist combination of a strong, centralized executive power and a correspondingly weaker legislative branch of government. Gaullist presidents

of France, beginning with de Gaulle himself, have had to modify their strongly personal “*presidentialisme*” over time due to the demands of competing parties, the French *Assemblée Nationale* and popular democratic movements in France itself. In central Africa, however, de Gaulle’s personal role model as a hero of his country’s liberation, able for the most part to govern with the support of his military leadership (and able to out-maneuver them when they disagreed with him), whose stated goals of unity and renewed glory for France often meant the marginalization of parliamentary leadership, was a close fit with the philosophy of governance of many of the military leaders who took power in central Africa.

Gaullism, as practiced by de Gaulle himself, provided a strategy for successful leadership which was imported along with everything else France brought to her former colonies, and nourished by a succession of French leaders, whether they called themselves Gaullists at home or not. Without exception, the successive leaders of independent Gabon, Congo-Brazzaville, CAR, and Chad looked on themselves as liberators and often governed either as military leaders or as patrons of their militaries. Supporting, grooming, and maintaining contacts among African leaders, and also among those who might replace them, gave France and the African nations a guarantee of economic continuity and military interoperability even if a government were to be violently overthrown.

So, Gaullist *presidentialisme* flourished in the *chasse gardée*, presidential power was based on personal patronage networks and supported by military force, coups d’état produced yet more leaders with the more extreme tendencies

of Gaullism, and even less parliamentary power for African legislatures, while France rolled with the punches, kept its contacts with African friendly, personally lucrative (sometimes on both sides), and flexible enough to deal with most sides in a given quarrel or coup. France continued to pursue these flexible policies even in the face of a good deal of criticism for its continued support of less-than-democratic and often tyrannical leaders by French and African citizens, and from international governmental and nongovernmental organizations. Nonetheless, this odd synchrony of leadership philosophy helped France to maintain a consistent and continuous level of French power, influence and force projection in its former empire.

Ironically, the form taken by French democracy during the Fifth Republic may have had a powerfully "assimilative" influence on the forms of presidential authority that appeared in its former colonies. De Gaulle's firm belief in the need to centralize the executive power of the French presidency, protecting it from partisan factionalism and political interference, has been mirrored and even distorted by numerous francophone African presidencies whose commitment to that other famous French political ideal, multiple-party democracy, has been either cosmetic or nonexistent. Authoritarian presidencies like those of Hissène Habré and Idriss Déby of Chad, Denis Sassou-Nguesso of Congo (Brazzaville), Omar Bongo of Gabon, and Jean-Bédel Bokassa and General Andre Kolingba of the Central African Republic have been not only tolerated, but also actively supported by France, with little pretense of encouraging evolution toward the French model of parliamentary participation in democratic government.

A Brief Outline: Questions To Be Answered

Despite the rise of nationalism in the developing world, and despite a bipolar distribution of power which relegated France to secondary rank, how did France manage to remain the dominant military, political, economic, and cultural influence over its former Central African colonies? Specifically:

Chapter 2 will address these initial questions: Why was it important to France's international reputation and self-image to retain power in this region after its colonies achieved independence? What were France's specific goals in maintaining this relationship?

Chapter 3 will examine how France created the conditions under which decolonization took place, and what conditions resulted that allowed France's goals to be met. The relevant questions will be: From what conditions were France and the sub-Saharan colonies starting at independence? How did de Gaulle and African leaders construct these military, political, economic and cultural conditions? What did their newfound freedom as "sovereign" nations mean in real terms to them and to France? Chapter 3 will give a brief history of pre-independence conditions in French sub-Saharan African colonies as a preliminary description of how France set the scene for its post-colonial relationships with the sub-Saharan colonies, particularly those four from *Afrique Equatoriale Française* to be studied in more depth: Gabon, the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville), the Central African Republic, and Chad.

Chapter 4 will describe the composition of the French military, political economic and cultural presence in independent French Equatorial Africa since

1960, with particular attention to forces of “*presence*,” forces of “*intervention*,” and the roles played by military, political, intelligence, economic, and cultural “*coopérants*.”

Chapter 5 will go through the four cases in greater depth, and examine how France managed to maintain its power and influence in Gabon, Republic of Congo, CAR and Chad up until about 1995, answering the following questions for each of the cases: How were France’s goals accomplished in the 4 countries, and at what costs? What local constraints existed in each African country? What other great powers stood in France’s way? What international regimes or institutions worked for or against France’s goals in central Africa? What domestic constraints in France itself stood in France’s way?

Chapter 6 will discuss political and economic changes during the 1990s and beyond which have affected France’s presence in central Africa. Was France’s enterprise in central Africa neocolonial imperialism in an entirely negative sense, *i.e.* what were the costs and benefits to the African nations in the periphery? Can France’s continued presence in central Africa be considered a success in France’s terms, and at what present costs?

These questions will be answered by comparing the post-colonial relationships of France with the 4 modern nations of what was formerly French Equatorial Africa (*Afrique Équatoriale Française* or *AEF*) during the four decades following their independence from France in 1960. These four continue to the present day to be among the most politically repressive of France’s former colonies, although there are significant differences among them in degree and

means of expression of tyranny. The combined histories among the four, however, illustrate all of the qualities that support the accusations of neocolonialism made against France during the years after their independence, along all four of the dimensions of French power examined here: military, political, economic, and cultural. While the former colonies of French West Africa offer several current examples of government on more democratic principles where elections are held somewhat more freely and fairly (e.g. Benin and Senegal), the governments of these former equatorial colonies provide four clear cases of how African governments have imported France's strong executive presidency at the expense of their relatively powerless parliamentary legislatures hobbled by patronage and single-party favoritism. One purpose here is to show how this continuing situation has benefited France in these four cases, and to discuss whether these benefits have been worth the effort.

Four dimensions of French power will be considered: **military power, political power, the power to maintain economic stability, and cultural influence**, since it is the combination, interaction, and consistency of all four of these dimensions which have maintained France's influence at such high levels from colonial independence through the mid-1990s. The influence of other great powers active in this region will be examined along these same dimensions in order to gauge France's relative strength as a great power in its former colonial territory.

Answering these questions will require a political analysis of the elements of power and manipulation in these relationships, and also a historically informed

understanding of the military and political relationships and the inherently unequal economic situations of France and its former colonies. France has historically solidified its power over the region during both the colonial and the post-colonial eras by using its military dominance, political understanding of the region, relative economic strength, and over a hundred years of linguistic hegemony and other culturally assimilative practices.

Since its arrival in the previous century, France has never left Africa. The 1881 diary of the French explorer Pierre Savorgnan de Brazza says that he offered Congolese a choice: "White men have two hands. The strong hand is the hand of war. The other hand is the hand of trade," and records that they chose the weaker hand.¹² In reality, these two French hands have reinforced one another, the one heavier at times than the other, but always operating in tandem. The military hand has been the more egregious of the two, although the economic hand has been just as pervasive. French rule in the colonies was established by force, and elements of the French military have been found actively engaged in Africa from 1830 until the present day.

In order to illustrate the military, political, economic and cultural starting points of these four modern nations (Gabon, Republic of Congo-Brazzaville, the Central African Republic and Chad) at independence, it will be necessary to give a historical description of pre-independence military, political, economic, and cultural conditions which influenced the post-colonial relationships promoted by France with all of its former sub-Saharan colonies. For this purpose, some references will be made to non-*AEF* sub-Saharan colonies, particularly

Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal due to their historical importance to France during the pre-independence period and the similarity and influence of their experience of French domination on the four Equatorial colonies studied as cases. (Southern Cameroon was a mandate territory and not at first a federated part of *AEF*, and Côte d'Ivoire & Senegal were part of French West Africa.)

The contributions made by France's pre- and post colonial dissemination of its bureaucratic and educational structures, and many of its cultural products particularly the French language and religion, cannot be underestimated as sources of its continued cooperation with African leaders and governments. As is well known and shown here, however, France did not implant its vaunted founding ideal of democratic governance with any solidity into its former Equatorial colonies, even at independence. In Gabon, Congo-Brazzaville, CAR and Chad, democratic governance is largely mentioned only in the public rhetoric of their presidents, and demonstrated in practice only in the courageous activities of their often-persecuted pro-democracy political activists. Democratic governance in these four countries remains in aspiration and ironic reference, and not reality. There are significant differences among these four as to the degree and types of French manipulation during various periods; however, the story they tell is a consistent one over a remarkably long historical period.

France's manipulation of events in its former African colonies since their independence in 1960 is closely related to the French leadership's perception of France's proper place as one of the major global players during the second half of the 20th century. What France wanted to achieve depended in large part on

what France perceived itself to have lost after World War II (its prestige, power, and influence) and where it wanted to see itself again. Compounding this sense of loss was a three decade bipolar Cold War political era during which France preferred to clear its own path and make its own alliances, showing itself to be the leading power in Europe and independent of either the United States or the Soviet spheres of influence. This meant fending off the military, political, economic and cultural encroachments of both of these major powers in its former colonies, and maintaining its leadership roles in all four of these dimensions in the francophone world, more formally known as “*La Francophonie*.” The next chapter will outline and explain these goals in more detail.

CHAPTER 2:

WHAT FRANCE WANTED

Africa's importance to France should not be underestimated in spite of its currently peripheral position in world affairs. French leaders used their former sub-Saharan colonies, the largest remaining portion of "*La Francophonie*," in order to regain, and then preserve, the political and cultural prestige, economic strength and military capability that had distinguished France on the world stage before World War II. In spite of changes in leadership over time, from the Fourth Republic to the Fifth, from President de Gaulle through the Socialists to the return of overt Gaullism under Jacques Chirac, post-colonial French interaction in sub-Saharan Africa reflected, for the most part, a coherent, consistent, carefully managed and largely bipartisan policy designed to influence, support, and structure these countries not only as sources of strategically important materials, but as an important component of France's military, economic, and cultural sphere of influence.

Maintaining French presence and strength, deterring undesirable conflict in the francophone *chasse gardée*, controlling the outcome of African regional conflicts in its favor, insuring that its African allies pursued foreign and domestic policies desired by France, reassuring its African allies, and protecting its economic and cultural interests required France to pursue a decades-long balancing act between its political interests at home and its continuing need for power and influence abroad.

It was important to France's international reputation, citizen morale, and self-image to retain power in this region after its colonies achieved independence for the following reasons. First, France needed to rebuild its image of military strength as a great power after having been conquered and humiliated during World War II. France needed not only to convince its own people of its renewed greatness, but its fellow great powers as well. This program included maintaining its military influence, territory, and access to allied or colonial troops in as many of its former territories as possible. Also during the 1960s, as part of de Gaulle's plan for France's renewal, France became a nuclear power, an achievement that redefined it once again a great power in the most militarily salient terms of the modern era.

Secondly, France's historically, and doggedly, pursued ambition to be the dominant power within Europe itself was helped by its continuing access to African resources, and its continuing political control over African leaders who would follow French policy. Africa still acted as France's "surrogate terrain,"¹³ giving it options that other European nations lacked since their influence remained confined to a single continent. Africa's physical preservation of France's leadership in exile during the war also provided France with immediate access to non-Vichy-tainted leaders in the aftermath of the war who could help France rebuild her government and revive her national pride after having been ruled by her traditional rival, Germany. France's main competitor for dominance within Europe was Germany, bereft of its former colonies, defeated and

rebuilding itself as well. This insured a leading role for France in post-war continental political and military affairs.

Thirdly, France's equally long-term historical competition with "*les Anglo-Saxons*," first in the guise of the British, but much more recently with the United States of America, would continue to play out as a competition for power, markets, and cultural influence on the African continent. Particularly during the final decade of the twentieth century, francophone Africa became, in the view of the French, one of the most prominent areas of great power competition. This was particularly true in France's relationship with the United States. While the United States, arguably, was only beginning to develop an Africa policy during this period, France's historical defensiveness against its former English-speaking rival on the continent, Great Britain, was transformed with the rise of the US after the world wars into a vocal, active, and pre-emptive defense against American encroachments in its African domain. Although former French Minister of Foreign Affairs Védérine, as noted, called the US a "hyper-puissance," he has also stated that the US, "although lacking a worthy international opponent truly capable of challenging its power, remains incapable of implementing a viable Africa strategy."¹⁴ However grateful the French had been for the liberation of France by Allied troops, French leadership noted the increasingly dominant role played by the United States in world affairs, and delayed as long as possible US military, political, economic and cultural influence in their former colonies. As the US became more interested in francophone Africa's potential for energy resources, military staging areas, and economic investment, France's ability to

protect this encroachment on the *chasse gardée* weakened in the field, and became more expensive financially and politically.

Fourth, the rising economic and cultural power of the United States, and the increasing dominance of the English language in world affairs, represented a more general challenge to all things French. France had a continuing need to demonstrate its leadership as a model of a great civilization as well as a great power. This need had formerly been cast as France's "*mission civilisatrice*", or civilizing mission, to develop its non-European territories into far-flung branches of France itself, to bring its putatively advanced culture, language, religion and way of life to less evolved areas of the world. The "*mission civilisatrice*" had been criticized even within France as having contributed to the destruction of African culture and the devaluing of colonial citizens, and it required revision in its *raison-d'être* as the independence process came to fruition. Continuing French support to post-colonial Africa was now to be understood as a humanitarian mission of economic and social development including military assistance for France's African allies. That it appeared to some to be an egregious continuation of imperial domination, and therefore neo-colonial in intent, was largely a function of France's quite obviously successful retention of influence in her former empire by means of treaties, cooperation agreements, and a sizable military, diplomatic, bureaucratic, educational and economic presence.

Finally, in order to preserve a worldwide French cultural influence, France needed to demonstrate continuing cultural dominance in other countries,

something that other great powers do not necessarily look for as an important and complementary aspect of continuing power, but which the French have considered to be integral to their success. Since cultural preferences influence markets for French goods, global French language media outlets, elite personal contacts with shared history and educational experiences within governments and businesses, bureaucratic structures, shared international religions, and other factors which grease the wheels of French commerce and diplomacy, their importance to the French project is vital.

France's values and preferences, considered historically, are nearly identical to what they were at the end of World War II. William Foltz lists a number of general strategic roles and uses for Africa during the colonial period and beyond, all of which are facets of the *chasse gardée* that France wished to develop, and which have been borrowed and expanded upon here. One of the most salient of these is the idea mentioned above that Africa is a source of “surrogate terrain,” used particularly effectively by France in its continuing attempts to prove that a culture must be exported in order to remain great.¹⁵

France's Specific Goals in Maintaining Its African Relationships

France's preponderant military presence, economic strength and technical capacity underlay and supported all of its other forms of presence, and enhanced its ability to preserve its political and cultural presence as well. The strength of its continued international presence of all types in its former African colonies helped France toward achieving the following more specific goals:

Military goals.

In addition to the helpfulness of “surrogate terrain” mentioned, Foltz also gives some more concrete military goals, including the following¹⁶:

1. **To guarantee access to natural resources and raw materials of strategic value to France** which were located within African nations, particularly the uranium it would need in order to develop its nuclear deterrent, and the oil which would support the defense of France itself wherever necessary. Africa is a source of strategic resources, which France continued to exploit effectively during the 1960s and thereafter.

2. **To guarantee access to strategically important staging areas and base locations** to insure French capacity to intervene internationally in conflicts where French interests were at stake, in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans and within Africa itself. These important locations included Atlantic Ocean port facilities for the French navy, air strips capable of landing French aircraft, and bases for French troops and intervention forces.

Africa has been considered as a potential launching pad for military efforts

directed at other continents. France has not used it in this way since its African soldiers returned from Indochina, with the exception of the base at Djibouti, but parts of French Africa have certainly served during this period as launch sites for actions against other parts of Africa, a pattern that was established as early as the founding of the *Tirailleurs Africains*, as explained in the next chapter.

The African coastline has also been a necessary component of access to

Sea-lanes. Coastal nations, such as Gabon and Congo (Brazzaville), their defenses and resources are a part of the strategic trade and supply pattern. France's relationships with the oil-producing countries on the African Atlantic coast are now a part of this ancient pattern, and the coastal cities of francophone Africa remain key sites of French influence.

Africa has been historically either an obstacle or, more positively, a buffer against potential interference from the Middle and Far East. It has served France well as a place to demonstrate the limits of Soviet power, although this did not mean turning the *chasse gardée* into a model of democratic governance or even socialism in order to fend off the USSR. France developed only those types of governance that were in its interest, providing little support to grassroots democracy and managing generally to co-opt any impulses toward socialism. Those varieties of socialism that did develop in the *chasse gardée*, and their largely military leaderships, were ultimately as containable as those developed in France itself.

Other military goals included:

3. **To demonstrate its reputation as a credible military force,**
deserving of continued status as a great world power.
4. **To guarantee its ability to translate preponderant military force, and speed and flexibility of response, into political leverage,**
intervening with decisive consequences anywhere in francophone Africa, thereby maintaining status quo there in favor of French interests.

5. To preserve a reliable and reassuring reputation as the military security service of first resort for its African regional allies in the event of either external or internal threats to their leadership. According to Pascal Chaigneau, France had a twofold objective in maintaining its advisory presence in African armies: to preserve the free maneuverability and ready networks indispensable to the conduct of military operations, and to guarantee the internal security of each of the participating states.¹⁷

6. To preserve the ability to draw on friendly, available, and Compatibly trained African troops as allies for both internal interventions and international peacekeeping operations. The means to do this will be discussed at more length later, but they included training to maintain African officers and troops at a level at which they could work with the French military with little or no gaps in technical ability or information, and arms transfers and sales to maintain African weapons at a technical level commensurate with what was needed from them for France.

Political goals.

The main political challenges to France in achieving its goals in the *chasse gardée* during the second half of the 20th century were: first, the traditional and ancient challenge of preserving and extending French power and influence against the encroachments of the English-speaking world, often broadly termed "*les Anglo-Saxons*"¹⁸ but personified in members of the Atlantic Alliance, particularly the United States; second, staving off determined attempts at influence in the developing world on the part of the Soviet Union and its allies;

and third, the need to manage impulses toward nationalism in its colonies and offer a form of "independence" which maintained their dependency within the French sphere of influence (what might be seem as a policy of deflecting revolution in favor of cooperative evolution).

The following more specific goals were intended to insure successful outcomes for France in the political sphere:

1. **To guarantee a continuing and consistent intelligence-gathering and networking presence** for preserving reliable "situational awareness" of the military, political and economic affairs of its African allies, and flexibility of options for different types and levels of intervention.
2. **To penetrate the political structures as the primary political advisor** of francophone African bureaucracies, parties, militaries, economic organizations, resource-extraction industries and cultural organizations.
3. **To influence the choice of, and preserve the cooperation of, any African leader who might come to power** in a former francophone colony. Achieving this goal required France to maintain friendly relationships with African military and political elites, which had to include both heads of state, and their possible successors.
4. **To insure that allied African governments pursued foreign policies with other major and minor powers that were congruent with French interests**, and that they followed the directions taken by France in international organizations such as the United Nations and the international financial institutions.

5. **To fend off diplomatic penetration and competition from other major powers**, most particularly the latest great power incarnation of “*les Anglo-Saxons*,” i.e. the USA, and also the growing influence of the USSR and China. Other great powers maintained diplomatic relations with francophone Africa, but the US and USSR mainly concentrated on countries which would provide more resources and influence for less effort. The US and USSR intervened militarily in post-independence francophone central Africa mainly in Zaïre (now Democratic Republic of Congo), a former Belgian country to the south of the former *Afrique Equatoriale* where France’s influence was not as deeply established until the late 1960s. The US, along with Belgium, intervened in Zaïre during the secessionist rebellion in Shaba in the early 1960s. The United States CIA presence in Zaïre, including the Lumumba assassination, was aimed at holding back the ideological influence of the Soviets. The US and USSR shared with France the capability for direct military intervention by air in the former French colonies, but both of the great Cold War powers tended to prefer other kinds of relationships with Gabon, Congo (Brazzaville), the CAR and Chad (e.g., political relationships, military and economic aid, technical assistance, teachers and technicians) which could be combined with what France was already doing in the *chasse gardée*, opening avenues of influence although not pushing France aside as the primary influence.

France's interest in manipulating events in its former African colonies remained connected to the French government's perception of France itself as a major global player. The bitter and quite public rivalry between anglophone and

francophone influences in Africa continues to this day in various forms in spite of the independent status of Britain and France's former colonies on the continent. This rivalry was evident in the competition between France and the United States for influence with President Mobutu in Zaïre, and France's growing influence in the two other former Belgian colonies of Burundi and Rwanda. As Paul Kagame's Rwandan Patriotic Front and its ally, Laurent Kabila's Congolese AFDL demonstrated, however, Rwanda and Zaïre's ties to France were by no means tight enough to prevent insurgent groups with anglophone allies (Uganda, South Africa and others) from trying to cut France out of the picture.

Indeed, the ancient and persistent rivalry with anglophone influences in the *chasse gardée* apparently inhabits French Africa policy to this day in a form that Gérard Prunier refers to risibly but quite seriously as "Fashoda Syndrome," meaning that "the whole world is a cultural, political and economic battlefield between France and the 'Anglo-Saxons'."¹⁹ Fashoda Syndrome may simply be the insecure "other face" of France's confident public expression of its own great contribution to world civilization. The negative part of possessing prestige is the knowledge of how much one has to lose, which France had gained first-hand during the German Occupation and did not wish to experience again. The attraction of Gaullism lay precisely in de Gaulle's ability to inspire France to reclaim its own independent destiny, and his articulation of the idea that glory given to France was justly deserved.

Furthermore, while France's definition of its own national security continued to include the maintenance of its political clout in Africa, it has not

managed to maintain that clout in the former Belgian colonies, possibly because it was not as deeply rooted in Zaïre (DRC), Rwanda and Burundi, but also because the genocide in Rwanda and ethnic war in DRC have demonstrated the limits of French power and made French influence in those countries unpopular at home. Consider the comment of Daniel Simpson, former US Ambassador to Mobutu's Zaïre (now the Democratic Republic of Congo), that "France is no longer capable of imposing itself in Africa.... Neo-colonialism is no longer tolerated. The French attitude no longer reflects the reality of the situation." While there was Africa-wide agreement with Simpson at the time, the French were furious.²⁰

French neo-colonial militarization of its formerly Belgian clients may have increased not only their dependency, but ultimately their political fragility as states.²¹ Of the cases examined here, this is particularly true of the CAR and Chad. France's continuing political manipulation and supply of French citizens to help run these states certainly provided less incentive for its former colonies to develop a strong civil society or political structure independent of their military leaders and other elites who could provide patronage with French support.

Although lacking historical ties to Africa comparable to those of France and Britain, Soviet (and allied Cuban) influence and intervention in Africa was a significant source of concern to France during the period of the Cold War. Soviet policy was primarily pragmatic, supporting anti-colonial groups where there was a reasonable expectation of political loyalty and the acquisition of hard currency from large-scale arms transfers to grateful new African nations. The

USSR also offered training facilities for the former Portuguese colonies of Mozambique and Angola, and for members of South Africa's liberation movement. Clayton suggests that France's limited return to NATO may even have been a reaction to increased Soviet activity in the francophone African sphere of influence,²² most notably in Congo (Brazzaville), and several of its former West African colonies. In the main, however, France's determined and persistent presence in its former colonies made it quite difficult for the Soviet Union to establish itself as more than a minor diplomatic presence and occasional military supplier.²³

Marxism as a philosophy of liberation was admired and even experimented with by several francophone African leaders, particularly in Congo-Brazzaville, which declared a preference for communist government and flirted with the USSR while continuing to cultivate France as their foremost ally. The active attempts on the part of the Soviet Union to exploit these ideological ties, however, made France aware that other nations were ready to fill any gaps left by French inattention to its sub-Saharan interests, so a major political goal was to fend them off.

Other political goals for France in francophone Africa were:

6. To preserve French political (bureaucratic) structure and organizational behavior in competition with both the differing Anglo-Saxon ideals of democratic governance and the Marxist-Leninist ideals of the Soviets and China. This meant maintaining close ties with political elites and providing infrastructural assistance for governments.

7. To preserve the desirability and safety of the former francophone colonies as a place for the French to travel, invest, live, and work by providing security for all French citizens in African countries, and an immediate rescue in the event of attack on French persons or interests.

Economic goals.

France began the foundation for what we might now think of as the “globalization” of its economy early on by acquiring as many far-flung colonies as it did, and making them an integral part of France’s own economic structure. In the early stages, this is was simply building an empire, forcing the inhabitants to exploit their resources on France’s behalf, and extending French economic influence as far across the world as possible. By the independence of its African colonies in 1960, however, France’s intention was to retain these newly separate and supposedly sovereign countries as a functioning part of its own economy. If what is meant by a globalized economy is the linking of independent countries and internationally based companies and banking institutions in a network of co-dependent entities, then the beginning of true globalization for France was the creation of the Franc Zone. The Zone allowed France to support the currency of its former colonies/new allies so that their economic fluctuations would not be as great as their increasingly impoverished neighbors, and to keep the new African economies at a stable level to encourage French investment, African dependency on French markets, and consequent incentives for African nations to give France first choice and

favorable pricing for strategic raw materials and commodities. Specific economic goals included:

1. To guarantee uninterrupted access to African natural resources and the raw materials necessary for the prosperity of France and French economic interests (e.g. timber, diamonds, oil, cotton, uranium for nuclear power plants). The main interruptions were caused by competition from other major powers, and by regional conflicts. The US has been a major competitor in particular for offshore African oil in the Atlantic, which meant that US companies were trying to cultivate relationships with Gabon and Congo (Brazzaville) early on. France needed to discourage these Atlantic coastline oil countries from allowing US companies to drill, and was fairly successful at first, particularly in Gabon, at keeping its own oil company, ELF, the primary client. China provided competition by offering development aid quite early in the post-independence period to CAR, as did the Soviet Union in Congo (Brazzaville).

Although they were not as successful in francophone central Africa during the 1960s-1980s, China's expanded program of investment aid has been much more successful during the 1990s and the present decade. China's intervention and investments have been criticized by Western governments and by human rights groups, but they represent the strongest source of external investment in many of the francophone African nations. What Barry Sautman and Yan Hairong call the distinctive "Chinese model" of foreign investment and infrastructure loans, and the development model known as the "Beijing Consensus" have filled in a number of economic aid gaps and provided a source

of investment that asks no uncomfortable political questions and comes with few strings attached. Sautman and Yan argue that particular aspects of China's links with Africa make the People's Republic of China (PRC) seem a lesser evil than the West in terms of support for Africa's development and respect for African autonomy and sovereignty. However, China has also been criticized for not providing the kind of reliable long-term support that France, as "*patron*," provided for decades.²⁴ France's continuing goal in the new century will be almost certainly to fend off the growing influence of China as an economic partner of choice for African governments.

Other equally important economic goals for France during the decades following African independence were:

2. To insure access to African labor for French economic enterprises in francophone Africa, including farming, building, and manufacturing products for French, international and local markets. Since forced labor was no longer an option after independence, France had to provide incentives in the form of employment for its clients in Africa in order to keep its investments viable.

3. To prevent currency fluctuations that would affect French investments and trading opportunities or disrupt French foreign policy. This particular goal was achieved via the unified Franc Zone with the Central African Franc (CFA) pegged to the French Franc, and also had the additional effect of preventing natural resource price fluctuations from affecting economies in the Zone as much as they afflicted other African nations outside of it. It did

mean that anything that affected the CFA would affect the value of the French franc, and vice versa, but the overall effect was positive for both France and francophone Africa up through the mid-1990s.

4. To preserve the continuing integrity and viability of French-African economic institutions by maintaining a sufficient number of trained and educated African elites to operate the banking institutions, natural resource industries, and other strategically important investments.

5. To preserve uninterrupted access to African markets for French goods. This also meant providing some protection to the African producers in the form of preferential access to French markets.

6. To insure that francophone African governments pursued economic policies that were congruent with French business and investment interests. One of the latest challenges for France as a centralized government with a “*dirigiste*” or statist economy, is that globalization has required the loss of some of France’s state control over its own economy²⁵, let alone those of its former colonies. During the 1990s and forward, France has had to gradually loosen control over the Franc Zone, without losing its influence in ways which will damage France’s ability to maintain its francophone African partners as functioning clients.

Cultural goals.

1. To demonstrate that France remains justifiably one of the world’s greatest cultural centers and producers of exemplary cultural

products. This is the overarching cultural goal that guides France's pursuit of the others listed here. France's identity and *amour-propre* (self-respect) as a nation is tied directly to its culture, and to the superiority of French principles and values as demonstrated by its production of what Gordon and Meunier²⁶ refer to as a republic "based, in theory, on rationality – the enlightened state engaged in the improvement of the collective destiny of the French people." This is certainly the current "spin", as well, of the *mission civilisatrice* for its African colonies, and the justification for keeping its post-colonial African allies as French as possible in their cultural preferences. To do this, France needed to accomplish these other goals:

2. To preserve and expand the markets and opportunities for French cultural distribution from its metropolitan center to the periphery in what remains of *La Francophonie*. This has become an increasing challenge because of the globalized economy and the reach of international corporations which spread Anglophone cultural products throughout the world, however subtitled, translated, assimilated or re-tooled to fit various cultural niches. There is also considerable threat from China, which has strengthened its multi-national reach to penetrate Africa with less-expensive goods and services in competition with those of the French, particularly in the building of infrastructure and transportation industries. The invention of the cell phone has increased the range of local African business competitors as well. France's film industry faces competition from Hollywood both at home and overseas, as well as from India's "Bollywood" film industry that, for decades, has provided a plethora of low-

budget films subtitled for African audiences. African filmmakers and producers have also achieved considerable artistic success and recognition, winning prizes at Cannes, and celebrated at a yearly film festival in Brazzaville. These last, of course, are to be encouraged, since many of the films are in French, and can therefore be distributed in France as well to both French and African audiences.

3. The cultural diffusion problem is not limited to market competition, but evident in all social arenas where France was formerly the dominant culture. **France also needs to deflect and defuse the increasingly pervasive cultural and social influences** of the dominant English-speaking world that is competing for the cultural sensibilities of francophone Africans. France is also competing, as it always has, with whatever elements of African culture that it has not managed to either suppress, or appropriate, or modify to agree with its own.

One might speak of a globalized “McDonalds-Disney Syndrome” as the counterpart to the military and political “Fashoda Syndrome” mentioned above, in the sense that France feels threatened by increasingly dominant cultural hegemony of the English-speaking world: its popular culture, film, literature, art, music, fast food, fashion, and slang. The *Academie Française* fights a continuing battle for the preservation and promotion of what is perhaps France’s most prized cultural product: the French language itself. France feels this threat to its own cultural identity even within France because of the high level of immigration it has experienced from its former colonies, so how much greater is the threat to the cultural roots that it attempted to keep planted within those colonies?

These overall cultural goals were served during the decades following African independence by the following sub-goals:

a. To maintain an “interoperable” joint culture among French and African elites by preserving the primacy of the French language as the language of government, education, commerce, and international affairs, and the primary “lingua franca” used among African elites and leaders whose mother tongues and ethnicities differed.

b. To maintain and support, with French aid and personnel, a public African system of education, from the primary levels, through the secondary *college* and *lycée* levels, to the university level, all structurally modeled on the French system and taught mostly in French, with staffs including a number of French teachers, a curriculum mandating the teaching of French history, language and literature, and a French system of qualifying exams at each level.

c. To continue the strong presence of French religious organizations, particularly Catholic mission schools and churches.

d. To train Africans for a judiciary system that would still be based on the dual French colonial model combining France’s Napoleonic law and African customary law (and recalling Mamdani’s “legal dualism” as cited in Chapter 1).

e. To encourage as much as possible the continued consumption of French cultural products, particularly popular foods, wine, films, literature, and music.

The next chapter will address how colonial France set the scene for its colonies' continuing dependency by making use of its African subjects and resources in various ways during the period from World War I through the independence of all 14 of its sub-Saharan colonies in 1960. A brief history of how the French got what they wanted during the colonial period is important to understanding the starting point of the francophone African countries at independence in terms of how they were still to serve France's interests. They were transformed from colonial subjects into small regional powers that still regarded France as their overall "*patron*," their source of opportunities, resources, and access to power on the world stage, and their first resort when in need of military protection or economic support. They were sovereign nations of debatable sovereignty, independent and yet still satellites of a dominant metropole.

The next chapter will show that France's goals during the *pre*-independence period were to maintain Africans as useful subjects and compliant sources of labor, materials, and surrogate terrain. In contrast, France's overall goals during the *post*-independence period were to maintain French power in such a way as to preserve the francophone African states as military, political, economic and cultural extensions of France itself, to make its African allies as loyally French as possible, yet without encouraging them to be as independent globally as France itself. After the loss of Indochina and Algeria, France needed to find ways to retain the benefits of the *chasse gardée* without appearing to deny Africans formal sovereignty over their nations. It allowed the colonies to

become independent, but treaties framed their new relationship with France and cooperation agreements that offered secure and extensive military and economic benefits in return for African agreements to give priority to French military, economic, and diplomatic interests.

The terms of this relationship required France to hold firm to its priorities in Africa, and to insure the consistency and clarity of approach that had characterized de Gaulle's early vision of the French Community, where France and the new African nations would interact as independent states, but where France would continue to be the first among equals. By the end of the 1960s, a pattern had developed which was to characterize French interaction and intervention in independent Africa for the next three decades. France would intervene militarily in order to guarantee the safety of French citizens, to protect the territorial integrity of its former colonies as presently cooperative allies, to defend strategic natural resources and commercial routes, and to fulfill France's obligations under treaties which became more and more restrictive to both client and *patron* as time went by.

CHAPTER 3:

HOW FRANCE SET THE SCENE DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD FOR GETTING WHAT IT WANTED AT INDEPENDENCE

The most obvious expression of French power in sub-Saharan Africa has been military presence, which also provides the most concrete source of data compared to France's political, economic and cultural influences. Historically, military presence in its former sub-Saharan African colonies has mattered a great deal, and France got most of what it wanted in the way of political outcomes until only recently by using it both as an inducement in the form of protection, and also as a threat. Military presence, furthermore, was not just a matter of troops and hardware on the spot, but a consistent, knowledgeable presence with a coherent strategic plan that was well-integrated with France's diplomatic, economic and cultural presence. In the French sense, however, "*presence*" means not simply being present in the form of troops and bases, but also in the sense that a great actor is said to have "presence" on the stage. Even during the years following the independence of its colonies, France's cultural persona, and political and economic desires suffused the atmosphere and often manipulated the central drama of each new nation's independence.

Continued French *presence* of this pervasive and enduring kind also relied on France's historically constructed and defended reputation as a great power, which in turn depended on the consistency and strength of its military

and economic reputation. Colonies could not simply be acquired or conquered; they had to be ruled and maintained as long as their benefits outweighed the costs of their preservation. Since France's view of its own worth depended heavily on its prestige as a nation both at home and abroad, the contribution made by its colonies to this *amour-propre* should not be underestimated. Likewise, the perceived danger of a lessening in French prestige due to the growing unpopularity of colonialism, both as ideology and as practice, was a factor in France's decision to decolonize. France decolonized gradually, however, while doing its best to maintain access to the most valuable aspects of its former colonies: strategic territory for military purposes, markets for French trade, and preferential access to the considerable natural resources and raw materials that Africa had provided for so long.

France's exploitation of the colonies acquired during the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries enhanced its prestige as an expanding empire able to project its force, political influence and culture far from home. At its greatest extent, in competition with the other colonizing nations of Europe (especially Great Britain), France had amassed territories in every ocean, North America, Africa, and Asia. The sun may not have set on the British Empire, but it shone with some consistency upon the French as well. French was spoken somewhere on every continent, and was still regarded worldwide as a necessary tool of culture and diplomacy. The largest continuous block of territory outside of France over which France had this level of power and influence was sub-Saharan Africa.

Maintaining that level of global power required territory that was not only large and well distributed, but also of strategic value. The sub-Saharan colonies provided France with long stretches of Atlantic coastline with access to deep-water ports and rivers leading into the interior. The contiguity of the sub-Saharan regions controlled by France insured strategic access into the interior via the North African colonies, all the way to contested areas such as the border region between French Chad and British Sudan. The creation of military bases and outposts was facilitated by France's determined push into the interior from the coasts of French Congo and Gabon during the 19th century, along with an increased French trade presence and access to African markets for French goods. French cotton, fruit and rubber plantations, mineral mining, and timber concerns were able to bring their goods out from the interior. Access to strategically necessary resources such as offshore petroleum and uranium from the northern parts of Niger and Chad were developed during the first half of the 20th century and increased in importance thereafter.

In addition to providing territory, raw materials, and markets, there was one further natural resource required by France which was taken in massive quantities from its sub-Saharan colonies: human labor. De Brazza's optimistic economic opening, his "twin hands" of implied force backing attractive trade opportunities, gave way quickly to the cruelties of French colonial resource extraction techniques: forced labor, head taxes, beatings and executions. Colonial authority in the territories was essentially arbitrary, and maintained by the *indigénat* code. Crucial to the *indigénat* was the capacity for summary

punishment, including execution, for any act or word deemed disrespectful of French authority.²⁷ So, Africa's main contributions to France's own military security and prestige included not only material resources but also manpower. African subjects not only served France as forced labor for building and farming, but also as soldiers, military porters and servants, both as forced conscripts and as volunteers. A brief explanation of France's justification for this injustice follows.

La Mission Civilisatrice

After the shaming French defeat by Germany in 1870 and the loss of Alsace-Lorraine, the French government's reputation suffered, and the public's support needed inspiration and a rationale for new territorial expansion while feeling hemmed in at home in Europe.²⁸ A contemporary French *philosophe*, Charles B. Renouvier, offered the view that France had been defeated because it had lost its ideals of freedom and had not pursued science and the path of reason. A neo-Kantian systematic idealist, Renouvier believed that a free civilization must have its base in both rationality and morality. As a new version of an older worldview familiar to the French, this idea was embraced by French politicians, lifted almost completely out of its philosophical context, and adopted as the defining rationale for France's expansion of its power overseas and subsequent curtailment of the freedom of others. It was popularized as the France's peculiar, elitist civilizing mission: *la "mission civilisatrice."* Renouvier was by no means the only intellectual contributor to the idea as it developed.

What resulted was more of a rationalization of what France wanted to do anyway than a rationalist expression of the French spirit.

In July 1885, the French politician Jules Ferry, a strong supporter of developing France as a colonial empire in order to expand its economy and fulfill its special role in history, announced to the Chamber of Deputies that superior races had a duty to civilize the inferior races and that France, as a great power, had such an obligation to fulfill in Africa. It was Ferry who succeeded in drawing this duty to civilize together the idealistic strands of Cartesian rationalism, conflating it with his own devotion to creating a truly French theory and practice of education. Under Ferry's direction, and provided with the *mission civilisatrice* as an ideological framework on which to restructure the lands, lives and cultures of millions of Africans, Ferry oversaw the organization of the initial explorations of the Congo basin that ultimately resulted in *Afrique Équatoriale Française*. As John Chipman puts it,

“That France had a special mission to initiate the colonial peoples into the responsibilities of modern political life became an easier rallying cry once it was obvious that there was a practical need to manage new territories efficiently. This increased responsibility in the world – this mission – had to be presented as adding to French grandeur if it was to be acceptable to those who, invoking the main liberal tenets of republicanism or a priority for action in Europe, opposed colonial expansion. The elaboration of a colonial doctrine which in some of its aspects tested republican theses of liberty, freedom and equality, helped to consolidate domestic political opinion and establish colonialism as a national policy which could not be challenged except by the disloyal.”²⁹

Not carefully developed as a political ideology and sketchily drawn enough to bear whatever was required of it in the way of emotional appeal and practical justification, *la mission civilisatrice* became an all-encompassing

excuse for conquering, ruling, and patronizing less economically developed, less powerful, non-European lands in the name of enlightened French moral, educational and scientific standards. It was an excuse that persisted well past the colonial period on the tongues of a number of French officials, and which made nonsense of both of the older and more distinguished French moral constructs of Cartesian rationality and its revolutionary ideology of human freedom and rights.

Francophone Africa provided ample evidence that French culture could be exported as profitably as French products, even if Africans were not generally fooled into thinking that they were regarded with respect or as having the full rights and privileges of French citizens. There was even a cultural argument in favor of retaining Africa within France's sphere of influence even after the use of the term *mission civilisatrice* fell into disfavor. French political independence was often conjoined rhetorically with France's own cultural distinctiveness, with each aspect justifying and supporting the other. Chipman³⁰ says,

"While evidence of an ability to control others or to impose conditions on their behaviour would always be necessary to prove that power had been wielded, the fact of French civilization was often put forward, during the nineteenth century, as itself evidence of the existence of power. If French civilization was influential, so was the French state."

In the 19th century, when cultural influences were becoming rapidly globalized, the French already believed that a culture that was not exported would stagnate. The *mission civilisatrice*, and the continued promotion of French culture after independence, were not simply the export of the products of French culture, but of the organizational structures (in the military, law, religion, education, business

and politics) that would transform colonial subjects into first, consumers, and then re-producers of this culture.³¹

Africa's Military Manpower Contributions to the Preservation of France

France's most widespread and prominent form of transformation grew out of its need for a greater military presence in Africa without increasing the number of Frenchmen needed to serve there. French military capability in Africa in the form it took just prior to the African colonies' independence grew organizationally out of the military history of France in Africa during the previous century. The overwhelming military superiority which France possesses to this day in comparison with its former African colonies and even with the larger regional powers in Africa, such as Nigeria, South Africa and Libya, is as much a function of the consistently-maintained historical relationship of dependency between France and francophone Africa as it is a function of France's impressive technological superiority. Physical military presence was the earliest expression of French military power, which formed the historical basis of the intelligence and political presence, the ongoing diplomatic inducements ("carrots and sticks"), and the later arms and military aid transfers of the post-colonial period. As its own history has always been an important part of France's justification of its continued presence in Africa, and the basis of many of its publicly expressed goals, it is necessary to offer here a brief history of the Franco-African armed forces.

The Armée Coloniale

The colonial army of the colonial period, as a unit, was separate from the army of France's metropole.³² There were multiple French armies in Africa, with no single Commander-in-Chief or permanent "Africa command" officer corps.³³ Crawford Young³⁴ characterizes France's "science of hegemony" as the opposite of British (Lugardian) indirect rule, calling it "prefectoral, hierarchical, centralizing and Cartesian." Gaullism had a similar "rationalist" perspective on command and control. The French military system was empowered completely from the metropole; every military policy was focused outward from the political control center, and was subject to the center's political currents.

To serve the prevailing centralizing tendency, three distinct military groupings formed the French armed forces in Africa: the *Armée Métropolitaine*, the *Armée d'Afrique*, and the *Armée Coloniale*. The *Armée Métropolitaine* consisted mostly of French conscripts, France's "nation in arms," who could only be ordered to serve off of French soil if they so chose, or if the *Assemblée Nationale* approved. The other two armies of France were originally created in order to cover assignments that the citizen-draftees of the *Métropolitaine* could not. As Clayton explains, "In no other way could the paradox of France's wish as a great power to assert a global presence be squared with the French electorate's wish that conscript soldiers remain linked to their native soil".³⁵ The *Armée d'Afrique*, initially an army for maintaining the conquest of northwest Africa, included North Africans, was created in the 1830s to replace white French metropolitan forces serving in North Africa. It should not be confused

with *L'Armée Coloniale*, since sub-Saharan Africans were not included in this force.³⁶

It is the third army, the *Armée Coloniale* that forms the historical basis for French military power in sub-Saharan Africa. Before 1900 and also after 1957 (with independence on the horizon), the *Armée Coloniale* was known as the *Troupes de Marine*.³⁷ La *Coloniale*'s history begins with the colonization process itself. Regular infantry and artillery garrisons were installed in the French African and Caribbean colonies during the 17th and 18th centuries, and became a permanent part of the Navy's command structure as the *Régiments d'Infanterie de Marine* and *Régiments d'Artillerie de Marine*.

Local African recruits were used increasingly as these regiments grew in size during the 19th century, becoming the forerunners of the now-famous African troops who served France during two World Wars and the final part of the colonial period as the *Tirailleurs Sénégalais*.³⁸

The history of the *Tirailleurs* demonstrates the early and complete French military penetration of the regions that became *Afrique Occidentale Française* and *Afrique Équatoriale Française*. The first phase (1857-1905) began with the establishment of the *Tirailleurs* garrisons in Senegal. From 1905 to 1919, French sub-Saharan possessions were more secure, and the *Tirailleurs* served farther from home. An estimated quarter of a million sub-Saharans fought for France in World War I.³⁹ African troops numbered disproportionately among the dead,⁴⁰ mainly since racist French military and political authorities believed that Africans were the best front-line troops for all-out assaults because they had

different nervous systems, experienced less pain and fear, and were naturally more inclined to violence.⁴¹

Not all of the *Tirailleurs* were from Senegal, in spite of the name. They came from many sub-Saharan colonies. Often, although not always, forcibly conscripted, they continued to be equipped below the levels of French troops, and were not even given machine guns in the European theatre in 1914.⁴²

It had become politically costly to use French soldiers in regions where they succumbed rapidly to diseases in dramatic numbers. France was expanding its influence in Africa at a pace too rapid for French manpower sources to supply. Once established and systematized, Africa's manpower contribution to France's military power and prestige was as significant, if not more so, as Africa's natural resource contributions to the French economy. By the 1920s, there were 48,000 *Tirailleurs Sénégalais* augmenting France's European and North African units all over the world.⁴³ They served not only in African military operations and pacification campaigns, but as far away as Europe, the Middle East, and Indochina.

During World War II, Africans made up almost 9% of the French army in France, whereas they had constituted roughly 3% of French forces during all of World War I. At least 100,000 sub-Saharan Africans were mobilized at the outbreak of the second World War; by the Armistice of June 1940, between 24,000 and 48,000 of these were declared missing, and at least 15,000 of these were prisoners of war. After June 1940, most French forces were removed from combat. From June 1940 until France's liberation in 1944, sub-Saharans and

North Africans made up a major part of de Gaulle's Free French armies, constituting approximately 20% of Jean de Lattre's forces as late as September 1944. The Free French recruited roughly 100,000 sub-Saharanans by various means between 1943 and 1945 to fight at the front. Meanwhile, inside of what Vichy still held of French West Africa, the Vichy government increased the size of *its* standing army of Africans to 100,000 men in order to hold on to what it could of the West African colonies.⁴⁴

France did its best to control the numbers of Africans who attained leadership roles during the period following World War I. A few more African officers emerged during the inter-World War period, but most of these were non-commissioned and remained in the lower ranks. Most troops continued to be commanded by Frenchmen.⁴⁵ The only route to a commission was to achieve the nearly impossible feat of qualifying for entry at one of France's own military schools. This occurred, but only rarely, producing a scattering of North Africans, and a few sub-Saharanans, at the rank of second lieutenant and above. The special military school for North Africans and Sub-Saharanans, the *École Spéciale des Sous-Officiers* established at Fréjus, closed temporarily in 1939, but re-opened after World War II. Although only 5% of its 1931 graduates were from sub-Saharan Africa, many of these graduates achieved considerable political and military importance during the transition to independence. Fréjus graduates started at the rank of sergeant major, with promotion to second lieutenant only after lengthy service. Some subaltern officers were graduates of the *Écoles des Enfants de Troupe*, which offered a limited primary-level education, tied to a five-

year military service contract, to the children of veterans. Only a tiny number of the *École* graduates were ever promoted beyond the rank of sergeant.⁴⁶

Because of their general lack of French language skills, the training given to most African soldiers continued to be very simple, with little or no vocational or trade content; most *Tirailleurs* remained infantrymen.⁴⁷

The post-war phase of *L'Armée Coloniale* ended just prior to independence when the *Armée Coloniale* became once again the *Troupes de Marine*. In spite of the name change and a lukewarm commitment to professionalizing the African armies with better training and officer cadre development, the change in command structures was an gradual one, only in part because of the paucity of African officers. African bourgeois "*évolués*" tended to be under-represented in the officer corps, because it was more prudent to staff the officer corps with French citizens or with less well-informed, educated and independent Africans who could be more easily controlled. The glacial speed of professionalization of African armies preserved (or at least greatly slowed the loss of) one of the main advantages that France maintained in its African sphere of influence: the continuing presence of French officers in command of their African "marines."

At independence, the armies of the new African nations were no longer French in name, but remained French in concept, used mostly French arms and were commanded by French or (increasingly) French-trained officers.

Tirailleurs were generally posted back to their countries of origin. French pension benefits for retired or demobilized *Tirailleurs* had improved after 1947,

probably due to the associations of veterans that were organized after the Second World War. Those discharged often tended to cluster in towns where some were rewarded with local administrative positions from which they could also benefit and where their numbers might encourage prompter payment of pensions. However, at independence, the pensions became bargaining chips for the negotiation of each country's military cooperation agreement with France. Pensions for the *ancien combattants* could be frozen at 1959 levels, given cost-of-living adjustments, or (in the case of uncooperative former colonies like Guinea), halted completely. Those former members of the French armies who were not yet retired were expected to be supported by their own country's military administration and form the nucleus of their nation's new army.⁴⁸

Citizenship was not a benefit option either; French citizenship had never been an option for anyone without a French parent, and fighting on behalf of France could not make one a French citizen. France did, however, continue to support the new African national armies with foreign aid, continued training both at home and in France, and by paying the salaries of the French military *coopérants* who remained with the African armies in an advisory capacity. The continued placement of French personnel and liaison with French military was critical to the maintenance of good intelligence networks in France's former colonies, the "ecological watchfulness" of the *chasse gardée*, greatly enhancing the solidity of France's sphere of influence.

The colonial French perceived the exploitation of Africans as subjects and as soldiers as morally acceptable because such a partnership "added to the

dignity" and advancement of indigenous peoples. The apparent support to the overlord metropole demonstrated by the service of African soldiers while colonial subjects was also thought to lend legitimacy to France's authority over the region as a whole. In theory, the democratic patriotism of the French citizens themselves was supposed to be demonstrated by France's practice of universal conscription, which was intended to insure an egalitarian "nation in arms." Colonial-era politicians hoped that a rhetorical stretch of the "nation in arms" concept to cover African colonies-in-arms might convince the French public, and other nations competing with France for Africa, that France belonged there as a redemptive and constructive presence. African military service to France was therefore an integral part of the *mission civilisatrice*.

Whatever the rhetorical justifications, however, French colonial rule was comfortable with being hated so long as it was feared. Marshal Lyautey, who formulated and executed much of the French colonial policy in North Africa, believed that "*Il faut manifester la force pour en éviter l'emploi*" -- force should be demonstrated in order to avoid having to use it.⁴⁹ Lyautey himself demonstrated what Clayton calls the colonial self-confidence that led at times to "gaps of self-delusion" between political ideals and real behavior.⁵⁰

As Anthony Clayton notes, French empire building bore particularly striking philosophical and practical similarities to classic Roman imperialism both as a centralized authority and in its capacity for assimilating indigenous colonials into the lower military ranks. French "direct rule" also mandated a large number of French civil servants in proportion to the population in order to administer the

territories. The possessions of France, as befitted those of a centralized imperial power on the Roman model should, "within the limits of their resources and quality of their manpower, provide soldiers for regiments of indigenous men under officers from the metropole, as part of the concept of these territories paying for themselves"⁵¹ Colonial subjects used as soldiers were cheaper in the short run, and were believed to survive and fight better under those adverse conditions where the loss of too many French citizens was politically unacceptable. By no means, however, did this translate into a relationship of equality in arms among the French. When victory became a possibility, the order was given by de Gaulle to "whiten" the Free French army and allow young Frenchmen to participate in the final assaults. Because his troops were supplied essentially by American charity, De Gaulle was limited by the Allied budget to supplying a maximum of 250,000 troops in the Free French armies. De Gaulle was also concerned that young Frenchmen were too much attracted to the Communist partisans; he hoped to separate them from the far left by getting them into military service at a critical moment. He believed that the humiliation of Vichy could be remedied if the next generation of young Frenchmen were to liberate France, and renew France's commitment to its destiny. By the time of the planned invasion in fall 1944, there were over 20,000 experienced African combat veterans fighting with Jean de Lattre in France, all of whom had expected to participate in the final victorious assault on German forces. On de Gaulle's command, these troops were relieved of their uniforms, their supplies, their opportunity to share in their army's triumph, and much of their honor, and

sent to the south of France with the liberated African POWs during the brutal winter of 1944.⁵²

France was trying to be, at once, a modern European democracy, and the imperial governor of a vast colonial domain. The strains of maintaining this dual identity are manifest in the political rhetoric of the post-independence decade; the duality persists to this day.

The political history given here of *Afrique Centrale Francaise* as a part of France's *mission civilisatrice* illustrates the earliest techniques of French military penetration in the region, a presence that persists to this day. The post-war period can be seen as a direct extension of this penetration, and ended with the return of France's own liberator, General Charles de Gaulle. The sub-Saharan colonies' contribution to French military power and security from the second World War through the late 1950s, and during their first decade as independent nations, parallels General de Gaulle's long and significant service to France. De Gaulle's ideals for France, and the practical uses of Africa in the service of French prestige, were a significant influence on African political development. The assumptions upon which France's African security policy has been based since de Gaulle's Brazzaville Conference of 1944 are still discernible in France's African affairs in the 1990s.

The Brazzaville Conference was organized by de Gaulle's *Comité Français de Libération Nationale*, established in 1943 by the Free French in Algiers to promote French unity in exile. De Gaulle's appeal to the francophone Africans to cut off Vichy gave renewed importance to the French colonies, and

suggested that salvation could come from francophone unity in the empire while France itself was divided in two.⁵³ The colonies became the base of operations for the Free French government in exile.⁵⁴ During World War II, Francophone Africans remained convinced (or coerced) for a number of military, economic, and political reasons of the continued necessity of contact with one of the French governments. While most of them began the war loyal to Pétain and Vichy, many of the Central African sub-Saharan governors and military leaders soon switched their allegiance to de Gaulle. Chad⁵⁵ joined de Gaulle in June 1940, followed by Cameroon, Congo (Brazzaville) and Oubangui-Chari (later CAR). The Governor of Gabon chose Vichy but committed suicide in November 1940 after the Free French troops arrived. The West African leaders joined the Free French much later, Senegal waiting until Allied forces had landed in North Africa in November 1942. Côte d'Ivoire supported Vichy until midway through the war. However, by the time Tunisia was recovered in 1943, most of French Africa was aligned with the Free French.⁵⁶

Although Gaullist histories now record the 1944 Conference of allied French colonial governors in Brazzaville as the first step toward those colonies' eventual decolonization, its purpose was not to promote self-government. Africa, to de Gaulle, was a vital extension of territory that supported France's claim to imperial greatness. The purpose of the Brazzaville conference was to maintain Africa's dependency in such a way as to renew the grandeur and power of France, and not to begin the process whereby Africa could regain power over itself. In fact, the Africans who participated at Brazzaville were laying the

groundwork for re-shaping their own relationship with their colonial overlord.

The Indochina war began soon after the Brazzaville Conference, and provided an object lesson to the colonial subjects concerning the risks to France of other, less peaceful paths to independence.⁵⁷

African and French leaders formed some of their most enduring working relationships during this period. France's continuing political penetration of the new African nations in 1960 was actually one of the more pervasive historical vestiges of France's political penetration of African leadership and parties during the final colonial period, and no less significant than its economic penetration. During the period just before independence, what Foltz calls "patron parties" with more traditional power bases such as local chiefs, wealthy traders, religious leaders, or members of the colonial administration, were preferred by French administrators, and received privileged access to French resources. "Mass parties," those based on common political ideologies with a universalistic (principle-based) rather than exclusive (patronage-based) membership, were considered more potentially divisive and often a security risk, and were discouraged by France. Nonetheless, mass parties had a significant influence on the pre-independence nationalist movements, partly because they still needed a territorial power base in order to have any influence on Paris. The patron parties, in turn, found often that they needed to de-emphasize their local particularistic ties in order to achieve the larger support required to hold territorial or even inter-territorial offices.⁵⁸ As the distinctions between the two party types became blurred, France became adept at manipulating the local, regional, and

territorial power bases and interests of African leaders in order to exploit political divisions like those between future Presidents Senghor of Senegal and Houphouët-Boigny of Côte d'Ivoire.

The supposed cultural "*assimilation*" of Africans into France⁵⁹ as part of *the mission civilisatrice* started out as an intentional colonial security policy against the total loss of its imperial possessions. "*Assimilation*," however (was and remains) limited by how much real assimilation of Africans France itself could tolerate and still remain in control of (or feel superior to) its dependent peoples. During the post-war era, if what was assimilated made French power insecure (e.g. the ideals of French communists, or even the political power aspirations of educated African *evolués*), assimilation was limited or discouraged altogether. African *evolués*, in turn, learned that, the more "French" their behavior appeared, the more individual benefits came their way, that is, unless they asked for too much at once, or on behalf of too many of their fellow Africans. African colonial politicians, like West Africa's Senghor and Houphouët-Boigny, who learned how to manipulate such a system of double standards, did well for themselves over the long run, and managed to accomplish a great deal for their new nations as well. Central Africa's earliest leaders were also practiced in this form of what we might now call ethnic "code-switching", although none lasted in power as long as Senghor and Houphouët.

An especially selective limit was placed on the cultural absorption process in the realm of political leadership. French democracy in full measure remained an ideal to be delayed in the colonies so that the French could maintain control

for as long as possible over the political process. Under French rule, a tiny number of Africans were allowed to participate in politics by adding their minority voice to the politics of the metropole in the French National Assembly, as Léopold Senghor and Félix Houphouët-Boigny did, both becoming heads of state. After independence, authoritarian forms of government (like Houphouët's) were both tolerated and supported by the French in most of the countries of their former empire. This gradualist delay was woven into the *mission civilisatrice*: The early colonial policy of *assimilation*, defined as the indoctrination of non-French peoples into French culture and the political body of France itself⁶⁰ gave way quickly to *association*, on the basis of fraternity but not equality⁶¹, and a relationship of continued patronage and dependency. Francophone Africans were apparently French enough to fight for France in Indochina, consume French wine, write French literature, and contribute to French political campaigns⁶², but not yet considered quite French enough to govern themselves as democrats, even after independence, in part because the authoritarian leaders of Africa were such useful and reliable partners in France's global policy. In return, if France wished to remain a global power, it needed the *cooperation* of those same leaders.

Francophone Africa Becomes Independent

The heightened political consciousness and sense of entitlement of returning African veterans was a catalyst to a number of emerging political movements in West Africa. Both French and African politicians competed for the loyalties of recently demobilized veterans.⁶³ After World War II, France could

no longer rely completely on the old colonial relationships of patronage and fear to maintain francophone Africa as a source of manpower and wealth. Africans at all social levels had lost limbs, lives, wealth, family, and self-respect in the course of liberating France from German occupation. Many no longer regarded these losses as an imperial tribute but rather, as a repayable debt. If France wanted to keep its army in Africa, and Africans as a part of the French security sphere, something had to be given back in return.

The return of Africa's soldiers from the European theatre caused changes in their understanding of their value to France. No attempt was really made to repay France's moral debt to its African soldiers until the 2005 law which recognized their contribution to France's liberation, a law which unfortunately not only focused mainly on the contributions of North (non-Sub-Saharan) Africans, but which also perpetuated the view of colonialism as a benevolent force in spite of thousands of African deaths while serving and preserving their colonial master, not only in World Wars I and II, but in Indochine as well.

In 1945, the French colonial minister argued, "During the war that has just ended it was in the Empire that French liberty survived, it is by the Empire that France constantly persevered in the struggle, it is from the Empire that the French forces of liberation were launched."⁶⁴ Part of France's post-World War II claim, in spite of Vichy, to belong once again among the great powers of Europe was based on de Gaulle's insistence that a power which had maintained its empire was a great power whether or not it had been conquered by another. To continue to make this claim, it was necessary for France to continue as an

empire in spite of its African colonies' increasing assertiveness. De Gaulle maintained to the colonies themselves that it was their status as colonies (and, post-independence, as allies) of France in particular that made them especially fortunate, because France was grand, powerful, and -- importantly -- independent of the increasingly bipolar power groupings of the post-War era. France presented itself as able to retain its culture and its independence within the international system of states, and tried to demonstrate its supposed sensitivity to other states desiring the same level of enlightened culture and political independence, if only as French appendages.⁶⁵

This argument, accepted and promoted in various forms throughout the colonial and post-colonial administrations, demonstrates what is perhaps France's greatest strength where its former colonies are concerned: the ability to adapt the necessary ideological justifications for the French presence in Africa to the historical circumstances at hand. The goal that France set for the African states aligned with France, therefore, was to mirror France's own resolute non-alignment, and to support the choices made on their behalf by France. Before independence, France's continuing control over its colonies and its general discouragement of their national independence movements, was justified on the basis of containing Soviet expansionism (as expressed in Soviet support of those movements) and providing a defense of the West's flank and rear in Africa and the Mediterranean.⁶⁶

Even the French socialist left agreed with, and participated in, promoting this political strategy formulation. French socialists were able not only to

discourage Senegal from participating at the first Bamako conference by having the Minister for Overseas France pressure his fellow Socialists Lamine Guèye and Léopold Senghor not to attend, but also some other African political groups as well. In addition, members of the French Socialist Party were appointed to the Governorship of Côte d'Ivoire and also to the Governor-Generalship of the West African Federation in order to strengthen more moderate ties to future Côte d'Ivoire President Félix Houphouët-Boigny, and discourage the affiliation which Houphouët's RDA had made with the French Communist Party. By mid-1950, Houphouët had been convinced to cut off the French Communist Party. This was done by the future leader of the French Socialist Party and President of France, François Mitterand, who was, at that time, Minister of Overseas France. This incident not only cemented a connection which remained valuable to both the future presidents of France and Côte d'Ivoire in later years, but also helped France negotiate politically with anti-communists in the United States government.⁶⁷

Radicalization of France's African subjects was, however, taking place, whether or not strictly on the European models which had developed out of the works of Marx, Gramsci. African readings of Marxian texts supported movements all over Africa during the period preceding the independence of the French colonies, in particular the works of two political writers of African heritage from the French Caribbean colony of Martinique, the poet Aimé Césaire, and the psychiatrist Frantz Fanon. Both emphasized the exploitative influence of colonialism as a form of capitalism, grounding their arguments in Marx's theories

of alienation and the alienated consciousness of labor. Essentially, colonial subjects could be described in Marxian terms as those whose labor brought wealth to the imperialist controllers of their land and resources. They not only did not benefit from their work or own their own land, but could not recognize themselves in the products of their labor. To Césaire, the colonizer appropriated not only land and resources, but the historical memory and culture of the colonized: the African's pre-colonial past became defined as pre-historical, pre-civilization, and African linguistic and cultural products became objects of primitivism and folklore. Césaire was educated in Paris, where he founded a literature review in 1935, The Black Student (*L'Étudiant Noir*) along with the poet who would later be the first President of independent Senegal, Léopold Senghor. This review was to become the first expression of what Césaire called "*Négritude*," a literary and political movement intended to restore an authentic consciousness to African and Afro-Caribbean colonial subjects of the identity that had been alienated from them historically, artistically, and psychologically. Later literary reviews, *Tropiques* in the 1940s and *Presence Africaine* in the 1950s published Césaire, Senghor, and many other francophone African and Afro-Caribbean authors who were critical of French colonialism and colonialist racism.⁶⁸

Césaire's student, Frantz Fanon, had a profound influence on African political thinkers and writers of the 1950s and 1960s, and also on European and American radicals of the 1960s. Fanon rejected the *Négritude* movement of his

teacher, supporting violent revolution as a means of restoring the self-respect of the colonized subject, and a return to the emphasis on immediate change in the unequal relations of the colonialist political economy. Fanon served in the Free French forces, volunteering to fight against the Vichy government. After practicing psychiatry in Algeria, he joined the anti-French colonial liberation movement (FLN) there in 1954, contributing to the radicalization of a population that fought hard enough to require the return of Charles de Gaulle, and the ultimate loss of that colony to France. He had done his medical studies in Lyons and Paris after World War II, and spent the Algerian war as a doctor as well as a political philosopher, traveling through the guerrilla camps in the French Sahara and training medical and psychiatric personnel. He had written his first internationally successful book, Black Skin, White Masks (*Peau Noire, Masques Blancs*) in 1952. His writings made an explicit return to Marx's concept of alienation and "false consciousness," emphasizing the distorting and dehumanizing effects of colonialism on the African and Afro-Caribbean. Interestingly for the present study, Fanon's description of false consciousness affects not only primarily the colonized person who accepts the subordinate picture of himself, but also the colonizer, who has an inability to understand that his position of superiority relies on the subordinate's belief that the conditions of inequality are innate.⁶⁹

Fanon's last work, The Wretched of the Earth (*Les Damnés de la Terre*, 1961), was based on Fanon's experiences with the FLN in Algeria, and explicitly

questions the hegemonic cultural, economic and political relationship of the colonizer over the individual consciousness of the colonized person and the consciousness of a new or re-emerging nation. Fanon also insisted that the vanguard party must grow from the radicalization and readiness of the people's revolution, and not the other way around (as in Leninism or Maoism), a position that meant that African socialism needed to be organically African, and not simply an imported model of governance from the USSR or China. This final book was one of the founding texts of black liberation organizations in the 1960s, including those that organized in the new nations of francophone Africa. In particular, it was a tool that allowed the radicalized citizen of a new African nation to criticize the persistence of colonial social structures and exploitative relationships in the form of neo-colonial attitudes, continuing unequal political, military and economic relations with the former imperial power, and the continued presence of French linguistic and cultural dominance. Fanon, speaking always as a clinical psychiatrist as well as a political theorist, put it this way:

“Colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying their brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people and distorts, disfigures and destroys it.”⁷⁰

For France, the major challenge of widely-read political influences like Césaire and Fanon, both during the postwar colonial period and the post-colonial decades, was the growing perception among the inhabitants of the *chasse gardée* that their continued “false consciousness” was a framework for

neocolonialism perpetuated well past independence as a way to keep African francophones thinking like subjects rather than citizens long past the end of their "colonial" status. By independence, African elites in all of the colonies were familiar with these writers and many newer African authors as well. France would need to provide a competing intellectual framework, and additional positive and negative incentives for African leaders to follow French directives, if it was to maintain the power its cultural and political presence.

Throughout the 1950s, France was able to control local elections in the colonies well enough to discourage the more radical nationalists from achieving any real power base.⁷¹ France managed to prevent a pan-Africanist strategy for independence from taking precedence over the eventual, more manageable plan which left France in its leadership role over a group of relatively small, weak new states whose only unifying force was the need for French support. In fact, there could have been a solid bloc of African swing votes in the French National Assembly if the Africans had been able to organize without risk to their own positions. There was said to be an "unwritten rule" during the colonial period parliaments, however, that overseas deputies should "behave like good Frenchmen" by not interfering in the affairs of the metropole, and should always vote with the metropolitan party to which they were affiliated. African party members did so even when they privately disagreed with their party's position, as many did regarding Algeria. Senior African leaders like Senghor and Houphouët knew that, although they had an occasional voice in the Council of Ministers attached to the Assembly, Africa policy was made primarily and finally

in the French Overseas Ministry. Senghor concentrated on maintaining his influence at this Ministry, by consulting with them on education matters.⁷² Since these two most influential West African leaders had both achieved power (in spite of their disagreements) as participating members of the French political system, and they were not the only African leaders whose power bases included influential members of the French parliament and successive cabinets, French "penetration" of political leaders may be said to have been achieved partly by allowing Africans to penetrate, in the limited fashion allowed by *assimilation*, the French domestic political scene.

Houphouët's strategy of independence for individual colonies as political units won out over Senghor's desire for a more regional power structure. The pre-independence *Loi Cadre*, which divided French West Africa into many small, relatively weak proto-states ("balkanizing" them in Senghor's phrase⁷³), perpetuated their dependency on France and made such political manipulation (via the threat of withdrawal of political influence in Paris, and of economic assistance) much more effective. This 1956 "enabling law" was the most significant "reform" during the period between World War II and independence. It affected the entire decolonization period, including the first years of independence in both Central and West Africa. Houphouët at this time served in a convenient location for policy influence: in the French Cabinet as Minister of Health.⁷⁴ The *Loi Cadre* decentralized the colonial administration in all of the territories somewhat, and also granted governing councils to organize public services and universal suffrage in the territories. The French Union was still

regarded as a single entity for certain purposes, however: sovereign power remained with France on matters of defense, foreign policy, and currency regulation.⁷⁵ Each individual colony was given a council, and developed its own leadership as a single unit. Having thus divided the larger territories into small potentially independent units, France further weakened the inter-territorial political groups and virtually insured continuing dependency on the part of the weak states that were to result from this initial division. The debates in the French parliament and territorial assemblies began to center on federation and independence rather than on territorial autonomy.⁷⁶

It is perhaps the most significant indicator of French power at this point that decolonization continued to be a matter of managed collaboration rather than revolution. Federation of some sort was still the model defended by most participants, even Guinea's Sekou Touré. For Houphouët, whose political fate was tied to the *Loi Cadre* and his Ivorian power base, federation could only be tolerated if there were to be full equality for African states within a France-centered federal structure. As the leader of one of the two wealthiest colonies (the other was Gabon), it was clearly in Houphouët's interest to promote Côte d'Ivoire as an autonomous unit. A federal government based in Dakar would be a drain on the comparatively rich Gabonese and Ivorian economies, which would be asked effectively to subsidize the rest of their regions.⁷⁷ Touré and others continued to argue for greater pan-African unity in order to strengthen the African position vis-à-vis France, but France was able to use its considerable political leverage on the African parties in order to prevent this from happening.⁷⁸

France's preference in Central Africa during the period since 1945 was clearly to slow down the decolonization process there as much as possible without causing leaders to be powerful and well-connected enough to make terms in their favor (as above in Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire in West Africa), to foment violent revolution (as in Indochina or Algeria), or to reject France altogether once it was an independent nation (as did Guinea). Having learned the lessons taught by Algeria simultaneously with the process of decolonizing West and Central Africa, France was perhaps fortunate only to have lost one sub-Saharan colony completely, and then only until the death of Guinea's revolutionary Marxist President Sekou Touré in 1984. Many of the difficulties of this process were caused by the contradictions inherent in France's self-image: France was a colonizer and civilizer, by force if necessary, of those who were deemed not quite ready to govern themselves as the French did. France was a democracy ruling an empire, run by an autonomous president who discouraged parliamentary interference, but who believed nonetheless that it was France's duty was to bring its particular political, social, and economic virtues (including democratic participation, if only as a part of France) to as much of the world as possible.

Not surprisingly, those who were ruled by this paradoxical hegemon learned as much as they could about the opportunities and ideologies which France presented to them, and applied their knowledge to setting themselves free while getting what they could out of their *patron* in the process. As Michel Martin states, "The fundamental objective contradictions that colonization bears

in the germs of its own essence and that are ultimately detrimental to its existence had already given birth to the ideology of nationalism. The participation of diverse members of the colonial empire in a combat aimed at the defense of democracy, racial and religious equality, civil liberties, and self-determination, further nourished the indigenous peoples' conviction, at least that of their leaders, of the righteousness of their desire to be freed from alien domination."⁷⁹ France could not grant independence without leaving a few chains, but some of these were as firmly fastened to the jailer as they were to the prisoners.

Militant Sub-Saharan nationalism in Africa centered largely in Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire, and there was very little nationalist political activity in Chad, French Congo, CAR, or Gabon compared with what was possible for two leaders in West Africa who were closer to de Gaulle than any others. Félix Houphouët-Boigny's *Parti Démocratique du Côte d'Ivoire* (PDCI) formed in 1946 the political base for Houphouët's subsequent election to the first French Constituent Assembly, and his participation in the Fourth Republic's constitutional debates. Léopold Senghor established his own party, the *Bloc Démocratique Sénégalaise* (BDS) in 1948. Both of these parties had regional connections to parties and political elites in the other West African colonies. Both Houphouët and Senghor, from their different power bases, worked from Paris within the French system for colonial reform. Both were deputies in France's parliament and believed in working from within the metropolitan political structure, even if they disagreed ultimately on the final form that independence should take.⁸⁰

There were few options for the new francophone states to put pressure on France or try to influence French policy toward them. What small amount of African influence existed tended to be exercised on a personal level at the highest levels of government. Léopold Senghor, who became the first President of Senegal, considered that many of his political projects before independence had failed because French policy was determined to divide African energies and prevent Africans from achieving strength through unified political efforts. In spite of his service, and that of other Africans in the French Assembly, France refused a true political integration with her former colonies, and held steadfastly to the French political doctrine of administrative centralization. Senghor believed that his single most powerful influence on French policy had come through his lifelong friendships with Georges Pompidou and other French leaders, whom he had been able to sensitize to African cultural and political developments.⁸¹ Pompidou, de Gaulle's closest advisor for a long period, and his chosen successor as president, had held Senghor in high regard since they attended lycée together in Paris as young men. This has been less true of the Central African post-independence leaders, who had less historically or emotionally resonant connections from the World War II period with French leaders.⁸²

The options available to the leaders of francophone Africa are rooted firmly in the history of the pursuit of independence from France. The post-colonial relationship was one of continuing dependency, with relatively few opportunities for the African states to put pressure on their French patron for any favors outside of the defense cooperation agreements that were signed at

independence. The agreements themselves were clearly subject to French discretion, and the relationship continued to leave France the first among putative equals in *la Francophonie*. Those African leaders with the strongest ability to pressure France remained those whose loyalty had remained firm over many years, and especially those who had cemented their relatively powerful positions in this patronage structure during the years just prior to independence. They knew French politics well, often as insiders, and understood how to play the game of what might be termed “cooperative nationalism,” but what many Africans saw as nationalism co-opted.

The French presidency itself has, within a democratic structure incorporating popular participation, maintained a significant measure of independence and autonomous authority compared with the presidencies of other democratic states. This independence is particularly striking with regard to French policy first toward the African colonies and then toward the new African francophone nations. France's Africa policy has remained until the mid-1990s centralized in the Elysée in a ministry with immediate and often intimate ties to the French presidency. Personal relationships between Charles de Gaulle, François Mitterand, other members of the French military and political elite, and francophone African leaders like Houphouët-Boigny, Senghor of Senegal, and Mba and Bongo of Gabon, began during the period between the World Wars, were cemented during the Free French period and continued to be cultivated after independence, because they were a useful feature of the Franco-African relationship which gave some leverage to all parties.

Jean-François Bayart describes an interesting aspect of this phenomenon: the relationships, which were cemented into place by Africans who attended non-military schools in France. Houphouët-Boigny sent 150 such scholars from Côte d'Ivoire to France in 1946, one of whom was Thérèse Brou, his future wife. She studied in Villeneuve-sur-Lot, the mayor of which was later appointed French Ambassador to Côte d'Ivoire, remaining in that post for fifteen years. In addition, a number of French citizens have been appointed to positions in the Ivorian government, including Raphaël Saller, who was a colonial senator in Guinea and became Houphouët's Minister of the Economy, Finance and Planning at independence. Senegal, Niger, Chad, the Central African Republic and Gabon have all employed French citizens in government posts.⁸³

Beginning in 1945, the French had seven-year *lycées* (high schools) in every colony, as well as four-year *collèges*. Examinations were administered by the University of Bordeaux, and the diplomas were valid in France as well as in Africa. Standards were much higher in these secondary schools than in the primary schools, however, and admission was extremely restrictive and competitive. By 1946, the French government was also granting scholarships to Africans for higher education in France. By the end of the Fourth Republic, there were at least 400 such scholarship-holders in French schools, along with a number of other Africans who were there without scholarships.⁸⁴ The small group of often influential Africans educated in this manner frequently maintained their French school friendships and business connections, and used them to increase their own political or economic influence at home. There were

reciprocal benefits to France from streamlined political connections with this cadre of sympathetic elites in the new African nations. As will be seen from the Central Africa cases, African leaders often had practical reasons for keeping close ties with France in spite of an emerging consciousness of themselves as free citizens of their own nations.

There was some reciprocal influence involved in France's continuing control over the strategic mineral and other natural resources of West African nations. For example, France discovered uranium in Niger in 1958 and maintained most of the market for it for decades, even purchasing it at well above the market price during price depressions as an indirect subsidy to the *Nigerien* economy. Niger was the fifth largest uranium producer, and contained up to 10% of the world's known reserves.⁸⁵ Interestingly, given what happened later in neighboring Chad when Libya attempted to annex the uranium-rich northern Aouzou Strip area as part of its own territory, one of the other buyers was Libya, although in much lower amounts. Libya has been a consistent military and economic competitor of France in both Chad and its southern neighbor, the Central African Republic (former Oubangui-Chari). One of the greatest advantages of having France as an early uranium client was France's willingness to pay a good price, and to protect a country that could sell it uranium for the *force de frappe*, a position that Chad learned to manipulate.

Charles de Gaulle returned initially to France's political arena in order to solve the problem of insurrections in colonial Algérie and Indochine, and preserve their relationship with France. Both proved intractable and France

eventually lost Indochine completely. After a period of bloody insurgent and guerilla warfare, France devolved Algeria into an allied client state, albeit with a number of problems that have been well treated elsewhere. Algeria taught France an expensive lesson, causing de Gaulle to set about finding a method of decolonization for sub-Saharan Africa which would prevent bloody warfare, make France *appear* both prudent and properly anticolonial, and yet preserve the tightly interwoven military, political, economic and cultural relationships which France still valued with her former colonies, a *chasse gardée* in fact if not in putative sovereignty.

De Gaulle began to recognize by 1955 that the complete preservation of the colonies that he so desired was beginning to work against another of his goals: renewing and maintaining the prestige of France. De Gaulle opposed liberalization in the colonies between 1945 and 1955, but Algeria changed his mind when it became clear that France's prestige would be far more greatly enhanced by managing a careful transition to self-determination among its colonies than it would by losing them altogether.⁸⁶ The certainty of their eventual loss due to nationalism, compared with the prestige to be gained (among them and in the rest of the Third World) by letting them go, dictated the plans which were set in motion by the *Loi Cadre*. Revolutionary Pan-Africanism like that advocated by Ghana's first President Kwame Nkrumah, was discouraged by the French as impractical (since it would make countries more independent of France), and the new states were weak enough to be easily led. The new nations would be independent in name and dependent in fact, sovereign and yet

filled with Frenchmen, and the *chasse gardée* would remain available as an instrument of French policy and an extension of France's wealth, security, and *grandeur*. Riots in Algiers in May 1958 and the ensuing crisis produced two important results: first, a clear message to France concerning the continued risks and costs in delaying decolonization, and second, the return of Charles de Gaulle to public life to establish France's Fifth Republic.

French constitutional reforms in 1958 presented another opportunity to African politicians, now far better connected and better organized than they had been at Brazzaville in 1944, to push for independence. "Cooperation," in contrast to what Algeria was doing, made an attractive alternative to war. "*L'Homme de Brazzaville*" was formally voted into power in France, on June 1, 1958, and given the independent executive powers as president that he had always asserted were necessary to French destiny and glory. Recommended constitutional reforms were to include a federal system incorporating France and its territories, according to a committee of French ministers, one of whom was Félix Houphouët-Boigny of Côte d'Ivoire. De Gaulle's plan for a federated French state was then presented to an African consultative committee including Gabriel Lisette of the RDA (Houphouët's representative), Senghor and Lamine Guèye of Senegal representing the *Parti de Regroupement Africain*, and Philibert Tsiranana, the future president of Madagascar.⁸⁷ Significantly for this study, *Afrique Equatoriale Française* was not represented. Senghor argued at that time that any colony's disagreement with de Gaulle's proposed form of federation should not necessarily constitute an automatic decision for secession.

Tsirananana proposed successfully that the word "federation" should be dropped and changed to "French Community," meaning a "free association of states." France would still lead this "community", and the result could not yet be called full independence. The purpose remained evolution toward independence by all member states except France (which was apparently presumed to have already evolved successfully enough to be fully free).

A referendum on the constitutional draft for the French Community was set for September 28, 1958. De Gaulle began a promotional tour of Africa in order to strengthen old ties, establish new ones, and impress forcefully on every African capital's political elites and their supporters that a lack of support for the referendum would probably entail a total loss of French military, technical, economic and even diplomatic support. All African leaders except for Touré preferred French support to an impoverished destiny (however free), at least for the time being.⁸⁸ The total French withdrawal from Guinea in 1958 created a local object lesson to the other states, and demonstrated what valuable benefits they had purchased with their freedom by choosing de Gaulle's formula for security within the protective *chasse gardée*. For some time after Touré's vote of "non," Guinea was left bereft of military and economic support, arms, teachers and technical advisors, a state disorganized, solitary, poor and powerless. All French troops were withdrawn by November of 1958, and the French also repatriated Guineans serving in the French army.⁸⁹ Later Soviet bloc support picked up some of its expenses, but Guinea has only recently become once again a regional military power.

The new constitution stated that the matters formerly controlled by France (defense policy, finance, foreign policy, law, higher education, strategic raw materials, transport and telecommunications), would now be controlled by the French Community. This "change" meant effectively, however, that France still held these powers, although they were now administered through the Community's institutions: a president, senate and court under French control. When Algeria rejected a similarly ambiguous relationship with France, and when members of the "French Community" in Mali, Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso) and Dahomey (now Benin) began plans for the Mali Federation (which failed but resulted in Mali's decision to seek independence) de Gaulle began in December 1959 the negotiations with Mali, and then with Madagascar and the rest of French Africa that led to full political sovereignty for all of the sub-Saharan colonies as independent states.⁹⁰

As of 1960, the French Community was no longer an official constitutional entity; however, the collaborative links with France were still a necessity for most of the new states. Each of the states that de-colonized manageably and cooperatively in 1960 retained significant benefits in return for continued contractual agreements and promises to follow France's leadership and direction in numerous ways.

The three main challenges to France in achieving its goals during the second half of the 20th century were to remain much as they were in the immediate post-World War II phase: first, preserving and extending French power and influence against the anglophone world, especially the other Western

members of the Atlantic Alliance, particularly the United States; second, staving off attempts at influence in the developing world on the part of the Soviet Union and its allies, and third, managing, not nationalism exactly, but its sequelae: the growing independence of the francophone African states from French influence, and their increasing willingness to play off the French against other nations who could strengthen them against internal and external security threats.

De Gaulle had observed how dependency on Britain had weakened France between the wars, and was not pleased that the Allied victory in the Second World War resulted in a similar French military dependence on the United States. Having to clothe and feed the Free French armies by begging the Allies for funds had been humiliating enough. His return to France came after it became clear that the Fourth Republic would be unable to avoid war at any time in any part of its territories. The Indochina war began just after World War II, and lasted for nine years, after which *Algérie Française* began to deteriorate. Peace was necessary, and a respite from financial and military drain of the colonial wars in order for de Gaulle and the Fifth Republic to achieve the Fourth Republic's desired goals of (1) renewed French greatness, (2) a recovered French military presence in Europe itself, and (3) independence from the Atlantic Alliance.⁹¹ Since French forces in France had not reached a point where they represented a strong contribution to the defense of Europe, Gordon suggests that "rather than saying de Gaulle tore down the French pillar from the NATO temple, it might be more accurate to say he refused to erect one that had never been there in the first place." On March 7, 1966, de Gaulle told US President

Johnson that he would terminate all French participation in NATO command structures. France did not withdraw from NATO, precisely, but it now had no formal obligations to them other than consultation.⁹² This ambiguous position made it clear that France wanted more maneuvering room in world affairs, with less need for consulting allies. It would have military strongholds elsewhere that the other NATO nations would not, giving it staging areas for operations that might or might not be NATO-related. Sub-Saharan Africa was part of that plan.

France needed more than a politically careful decolonization process; de Gaulle had to answer the question of how France could hang on to African territory, given the strength of the local radical independence movements. These movements were particularly strong in its Central African colonies. De Gaulle had to offer some form of continuing military assistance to those leaders who were most likely to allow French presence and influence.

The French military had two broader missions in the late 1950s: participation in the Western European security alliance which was dominated by the United States, and keeping the peace and its presence in the *chasse gardée*. The latter actions took immediate precedence during the decolonization period just prior to 1960. In 1956, most of the NATO-related French mission forces had to be sent to fight in Algeria.⁹³ The Allies resisted using the Atlantic Treaty framework to commit Allied forces outside the area encompassed by the treaty, in particular in the overseas territories of the Alliance, and French leaders concluded that France's own independence within that Alliance needed to be underscored. North Africa was considered vital to the defense of NATO

interests in the Mediterranean, the US was allowed by France to place five air bases in Morocco, and Algeria became the focus of concerted Allied attention. The West, including France, maintained a watchful military policy in North Africa, aware that the USSR was attempting to establish bases there as well. After the loss of Algeria as a colony, France managed to renegotiate its military relationship with Algeria, signing a military assistance agreement when they evacuated their former port facility at Mers-el-Kebir; however, France was no longer Algeria's sole potential patron. Morocco and Tunisia also maintained close relationships with other Western powers after independence, and France found itself in increasing competition with the other great powers in North Africa. Its position in North Africa fading already by the early 1960s, France concentrated on maintaining power in the place where little or no Western competition was evident: sub-Saharan Africa.⁹⁴

Les Anglo-Saxons, in the form of Great Britain, were upping the decolonialist ante by setting up independence in their colonies, often in cooperation with nationalist independence movements. France would lose some prestige and a claim to being a “modern” nation if it did not do the same. The nuclear *force de frappe* required African uranium (from Chad & Niger, and there was some in Gabon). France had obtained its nuclear capability concurrently with the official independence of its African colonies but over a decade later than the first US bomb test in 1948. Another blow to French prestige had been occasioned by its other traditional enemy, Germany, refugees from which had added significantly to the scientific and rocket-building capacity of the United

States after the war. France needed a grand gesture that looked grander than it was, and decolonizing provided that opportunity.

France's interests prevailed, although numerous ways were found to make them prevail which coincided with the interests of African leaders or ambitious elites. France's main advantage was that, throughout the Fourth Republic and the beginning of the Fifth, there had been remarkable clarity and consistency of vision concerning what France wanted from its African possessions. De Gaulle's return to power in France brought back a leader who was able to imagine, promote, and explain France to itself and to the rest of the world as a re-emerging great power with a universal cultural message, an independent policy voice, a global (or at least bi-continental) alliance structure, and the military power to support its aspirations.

Whether or not all of these things were actually true of France during the entire period covered here, this vision was the motive force behind French military and foreign policy throughout the decades after World War II, and the emerging African countries caught in its wake could do little until quite late in the century except take advantage of what France offered for their cooperation, learning the rules of the game well enough to begin to manipulate them to their own advantage. De Gaulle proved to be a modern and articulate proponent of this particular visionary model of France, a vision that owes as much to Napoleon as it does to de Gaulle.⁹⁵ Perhaps Charles Renouvier would have been pleased with this development for the glory of France, but not with the

increasingly powerful presidency that resulted at the expense of representative government.

The Referendum of 1958, which established the French Fifth Republic with a new constitution and a much stronger and more centralized executive branch, also brought France the Gaullist philosophy of government that has persisted almost until the present day. De Gaulle was president for the next eleven years. As Sten Rynning puts it, “his synthesis of French political traditions and policy priorities has proved so durable that the question of ‘respecting the Gaullist heritage’ continues to shape French political debates more than three decades after his political resignation.”⁹⁶ As one can understand from Rynning’s work on the modern French presidency and its military origins, Charles de Gaulle’s relationship with the French army was both as a general who had fought by their side in a glorious past and expected their cooperation, and as a president who had been “asked” (like the Roman Cincinnatus, but not intentionally as dictator) to return in an executive capacity to save France from its difficulties in Algeria. He owed his return in May 1958 to the belief on the part of French military leaders that he shared their “idea of France,” which included the retention of French Algeria as a colony. When it turned out that his intention had become devolvement of the colony, rather than retention and integration, his working relationships with many of the leaders of the Algerian campaign became

“...a dangerous balancing act. On the one hand, de Gaulle sought to assert central authority by tightening the central decision-making process in restrained national councils, presided over by the president and including his principal ministers, which dealt with important Algerian

affairs. Moreover, and in a more challenging way, de Gaulle sought to remove the most recalcitrant officers from Algeria.”⁹⁷

Ironically, this dual duty as commander-in-chief and first citizen would mirror the relationship of a number of later francophone African presidents to their own armies, since their origins were in the military elites of their countries, and they had frequently competitive rather than cooperative relationships with their own military leaders, who sometimes represented competing constituencies and power bases. Presidents Habré and Déby in Chad, and Bokassa and Kolingba in the CAR, had all been the leaders of insurgent movements who took power claiming to liberate their countries from despots much as the Free French had helped to rid France of Vichy. All modeled their presidencies on a strong and centralized executive branch ruling as much by military reputation as by any claim to legitimacy. De Gaulle was “called” back by referendum and not by *coup d’état*, but his past as the liberator of France and his present as the restructurer of the new French presidency were what provided the framework in which these African presidents conceptualized their claims to power. De Gaulle’s immediate changes in military and political doctrine when dealing with Algeria, particularly the self-determination policy, and his insistence on appointing general staff with explicit reference to their personal loyalty to himself, was not popular with the French military during the 1958-1961 period, but nonetheless, de Gaulle managed to establish his leadership over the military, in spite of assassination attempts and the putsch of 1961.⁹⁸ Once in power, the presidents of CAR and Chad also needed to control the rivalries and manipulate of political

sympathies of their closest (and most potentially dangerous) supporting constituency, the armed forces, mirroring de Gaulle's initial conflicts with the French military at the time he took power.

After the sub-Saharan colonies became independent nations in 1960, the French military's physical presence in francophone Africa, along with its intelligence and diplomatic presence, and its ongoing military training, transfers, and sales, was more consistent, more numerous, and more reliable than that of any other great power. The overall military balance between France and the other European powers during the post-independence period demonstrated clear French preponderance, but only in those countries that had been a part of its colonial empire. From the beginning, de Gaulle maintained this preponderance in French Central and West Africa in spite of France's largely subordinate role in the NATO alliance, and despite efforts by the Soviet Union to encroach on the *chasse gardée*.

The Franco-African defense cooperation agreements, signed at independence, were essential to its ability to keep the sub-Saharan military balance favorable toward France. During the bipolar Cold War period post-World War II, France viewed itself as a third "pole", and often as an "equidistant" intermediary between East and West,⁹⁹ preserving and enhancing its prestige as an entity independent of, and yet diplomatically linked to both. Relationships with particular African leaders were judged first, according to their loyalty to France and only secondarily according to whether the leader displayed pro-US or pro-USSR tendencies.

At independence, the African colonial contingents of the French military became the militaries of their own new nations, but continued to receive large amounts of military aid, training, and troop contingents in the form of "cooperative" assistance from France. "*Cooperation*" of this kind provided France with the most useful and significant continuing opportunities to maintain her influence as the preponderant great power in its former colonies, and to continue to preserve and shape the environment of the *chasse gardée*.

An efficient, productive and secure *chasse gardée* could not simply be enclosed and left to its own devices. Constant and systematic internal maintenance was required on the part of the French in order to shape the peacetime environment in its former colonial preserve. No other European colonial power was able to retain as much influence in a former colonial empire. France's patronage relationship with its African client states was not always harmonious. However, it is notable that now, almost five decades after independence, it is still the major guarantor of peace and security in many of its former sub-Saharan colonies, and often a port of first resort for the others in the event of a crisis. Economic and military dependency on France during the post-independence decade remained stable, and guaranteed France a continuing source of carrots and sticks with which to keep order. The French troop and *coopérant* presence remained relatively constant over the course of the first decade, and African elites continued to learn and use French as the primary language of government and business affairs. Maintaining the elites' preference for French insured that French intelligence, health, education, economic and

technical advisors remained just as "interoperable" with Africans working in these areas as their military counterparts.

The Cooperation Agreements

France's military options during the first decade after independence were closely related to the ways in which the African nations' cooperation agreements structured the French presence in each country. These agreements gave France a number of options if its help was needed (assisting or preventing a coup, fighting insurgency) to defuse or prevent African threats to French or African security, or if an African client became embarrassing or opposed French objectives to an untenable degree. France used all of the resources enshrined in the cooperation agreements for insuring that her preferences were served in the *chasse gardée*. The following options were explicit or implied in the agreements, and could be used separately, sequentially, or combined as part of a coordinated plan. These options, broadly, included both "carrots" (inducements to behave, only some of which were military) and "sticks" (punitive measures). The "carrots" included:

- *Non-military economic, infrastructural and educational assistance, using civilian *coopérants*.

- *Maintenance of the Franc Zone, and a stable African currency pegged to the French franc.

- *Financial aid and investment.

- *Diplomatic contacts and mutual friendships between French and African officials, including personal contacts between presidents

- *Franco-African solidarity and mutual political support at the annual Francophone Summit meetings and the United Nations.

*Arms transfers.

**Gendarmerie* and officer-cadet training, in Africa and in France.

*Military logistical and technical assistance, using French intelligence networks and military *coopérants*.

*Military intervention with base troops and/or *Intervention* forces to protect an African president from internal security risks.

*Military intervention with base troops and/or *Intervention* forces to protect an African country from external security risks.

Since the cooperation agreements left intervention decisions in the hands of the French presidency and the French were not obliged in all cases to intervene or to continue aid in the event of an uncooperative client, the punitive "sticks" available to France were as follows:

*Withdrawal, or the threat to withdraw, any and all of the "carrots" listed above.

*Covert operations, making use of the French Intelligence networks, including paramilitary, mercenary, and other unofficial French operatives.

*Military intervention, using the Africa-based French troops.

*Military intervention, flying in the France-based *Force d'Intervention*.

Paramount to maintaining power in France's colonial empire was the capacity to maintain the ability to use force in a form that could be justified with some semblance of legitimacy to both France's fellow independent states, and to its former colonial subjects. The advantages of allowing France to do this became evident to the colonies just before independence when Guinea refused to join in accepting the military cooperation agreements that de Gaulle offered them in

order to assist their transfer to independent statehood. France was able to use Guinea to demonstrate that a total French withdrawal would mean a substantial reduction in security, order, and access to resources for states that chose independence over French guidance and cooperation. Guinea was not immediately left on its own, as the USSR took advantage of the opportunity to offer alternative military patronage. However, it found its economic situation far more insecure than it had been under French rule. To this day, Guinea maintains a more independent and autonomous military structure, although relations with France have become much friendlier since the end of the Cold War, when Russia's support for what had been a useful proxy ally in regional conflicts became unreliable.

Cooperation agreements offering "*maintien de l'ordre*," "*assistance militaire technique*," and "*soutien logistique*" (keeping order, technical military assistance and logistical support), were signed at independence with most francophone African countries, including: Congo-Brazzaville (1960), Gabon (1960), Central African Republic (1960), and Chad (1960),¹⁰⁰ France continued to follow the pattern established during the colonial period of mounting its efforts in sub-Saharan Africa with as few French troops as possible: "the profile would always be African troops surrounded by French cadres and officers."¹⁰¹ National security bargains were made by the leaders of African states with a number of external and internal actors, but mainly with the French via the post-independence cooperation agreements. France's African military bases, added to its economic clout, were used as carrots or as sticks as the need arose.

"*Assistance Militaire Techniques*" (AMT) allowed the French authorities to respond to African defense requests in three major ways: training of military personnel (locally and in France), financial support, and logistical support (providing arms, tools and vehicles, and aid in their maintenance). Two types of defense conventions were available, including conventions covering external defense, and conventions that covered internal "*interieure*" defense, which is what is meant above by "*maintien de l'ordre*." Under these defense agreements, African partners were responsible in general terms for their own external and internal defense, but might ask for aid from France.¹⁰²

The demand that France provide personal protection to African leaders from internal opposition has not always placed France in an advantageous political position *vis-à-vis* its fellow great powers, but France has continued to value its African partnerships with authoritarian African leaders above its historic reputation as a defender of democratic governance. What Africa added to French power proved to be too important to give up easily or quickly. France's military "hand" (in de Brazza's phrase) has been reinforced by the reproduction of French military and police organizational structures within African countries, which not only use French methods but also retain French personnel in command positions. France's intelligence and power has only been as strong as its ongoing ability to remain an active part of the military and diplomatic structures of its African partners. French *coopérants* and technical advisors, French arms, weapons platforms, bases, marines, intelligence officers and every other concrete manifestation of France's political and strategic concerns are still

a part of francophone African life now, although not nearly as prevalent as they were at independence.

The two key aspects of the military cooperation agreements, which could appear in different amounts, with different conditions in each separate country's agreement, were “***maintien l'ordre***” (keeping order) and “***assistance militaire technique***” or ***AMT*** (military and technical aid, which could include training, arms transfers, etc.). These are described in more detail as follows.

Maintien l'Ordre

France maintained a constant troop, intelligence, and military assistance presence in Africa after independence, although troop levels were lowered during the decade just following independence, and fluctuated according to need on the occasions of training exercises and intervention operations as covered by the cooperation agreements. France compensated for a lessened troop “*présence*,” however, by increasing the capacity for intervention reaction forces, which could provide augmented *présence* when necessary. Arms transfers were at a fairly constant level during the 1960s, although largely constrained to infantry weapons and light artillery. The military cooperation agreements, even as altered occasionally by the demands of France's African clients, provided France with a legitimized framework for leverage and maintaining the constancy and pervasiveness of its influence in the *chasse gardée*.

Before independence, French-paid garrisons composed of former *Tirailleurs* continued to be stationed in Cameroon, Gabon, Côte d'Ivoire, and Senegal, with smaller units stationed in Mauritania, Niger, Chad and Oubangui-

Chari (CAR). The last four of these French-paid African garrisons were withdrawn during the 1960s.¹⁰³

Throughout the 1960s, France divided its non-European strategic commitments and military commands into three zones: the Pacific, the Indian Ocean (headquartered in Madagascar with a significant military base at Djibouti), and the Central and West African countries. This last zone was subdivided into three Zones d'Outre-Mer, headquartered at their historic locations in Dakar in Senegal, Abidjan in Côte d'Ivoire, and Brazzaville in the former French Congo. Five categories of African military facilities existed at the time of independence, which included over one hundred French garrisons:

- *Principal bases, which stationed elements of all three branches of France's armed forces [at various times Djibouti, Diego-Suarez (Madagascar), Dakar (Senegal), and N'Djamena (Chad), Port Bouet (Côte d'Ivoire), Libreville (Gabon) and Bangui (Central African Republic)],

- *Intermediate bases, which allowed the convenient shifting of French troops and armaments around the continent,

- *Replacement bases, which could be built up in the event of losing a principal base,

- **Ad hoc* security garrisons, as needed,

- *Locations where staging rights had been established by the cooperation agreements.

Indeed, French sub-Saharan Africa was as militarized in the 1960s as it had been throughout the colonial period, although this heavy French military presence began to abate somewhat after decolonization, assisted by the technical improvement and Africanization of African army commands. One

lingering effect of the colonial period that persists to the present day was the heavy military involvement in policing duties. *Tirailleurs* had often been used as reinforcements for the African and French police forces, and this led to a general neglect of trainings which taught tasks and an ethnic specific to police duties.¹⁰⁴ By the mid-1980s, there were only six French bases in sub-Saharan Africa, although these maintained a significant military capacity for active intervention. Half of these were in Central Africa: in Gabon, CAR, and Chad.

There would be five conditions under which France would intervene using military force: to guarantee the safety of French citizens overseas, to protect the territorial integrity of overseas territories, to defend energy and strategic materials supplies and commercial transport routes, to fulfill France's obligations under its military cooperation agreements with allied nations, and to participate in international peacekeeping missions. These goals were clarified under the Mitterand government, but did not differ from the intentions of previous French governments since the independence of the African colonies in 1960. France's ability to intervene with its forces of *intervention* and *presence* remained good in most of the purely domestic cases, but the results were not always as predictable as before, and more political damage control was necessary than during the 1960s when de Gaulle's close relationship with African leaders could be depended upon to maintain *status quo*.

Arguably, France may not have originally envisioned its involvement in politically independent African countries to give it the nickname, "*gendarme* of Africa." Given the continuing reluctance of the great powers to intervene with a

speedy deployment during African crises, France may need to play that role a little longer. However, while it succeeded to a remarkable degree for a long time in shaping the peacetime environment in its former colonies according to its preferences, France's policing duties in the latter half of the twentieth century environment showed significant limitations, and little of their intended imperial glory.

Assistance Militaire Technique (AMT)

Military assistance agreements included financial support, logistical (arms and equipment, and maintenance) support, and the training of military personnel both locally and in France.¹⁰⁵ A typical "AMT" mission¹⁰⁶ was composed of military and diplomatic personnel from France and the cooperating African nation, and frequently included French coopérants whose purpose was intelligence, even if their ostensible function was administrative, diplomatic, or advisory in a technical, or even economic capacity.

Military cooperation agreements are not necessarily directly linked to the defense agreements. The decision to intervene in the event of internal threats to African presidents was reserved to the French President in most of the defense agreements. French response was not automatic, therefore, but greatly assisted by the opportunities for regular consultation offered by the less formal but still empowered organizational presence like those above.¹⁰⁷

However, informal friendships maintained between African and French presidents, and their high-level representatives, dated from the colonial period, and were maintained with remarkable closeness during the 1960s and

thereafter. For "preferential allies," Gabon, the Central African Republic and Chad (as well as Cote d'Ivoire, Cameroon, and Senegal), the *AMT* agreements were an additional guarantee and indication of security and stability. For the other countries, the lesser though still substantial levels of support guaranteed France a continuing presence.¹⁰⁸

French aid also took the form of substantial arms transfers. France's technological capacity remained quite superior to that of the francophone Africa during the early period, although sales and transfers of its jets and other advanced equipment to sub-Saharan Africa increased considerably later on, as the market expanded and African presidents were understandably no longer satisfied with low-end technology. Under the cooperation agreements in the 1960s, however, the French maintained francophone Africa's armies at a low level of technical sophistication commensurate with France's own needs for interoperative forces in the region. French training missions and military aid stressed interoperability by insuring that African client states were able to work with the French troops based in Africa. "Effective" implies not merely possession of technology but the training and institutional capacity to maintain and employ it. As the arms aid information tables in the Appendix show, most of what France provided to its clients was infantry weapons, rocket launchers, and light artillery, and the training that went with these items. The weapons were good ones, and not cheaper versions dumped as foreign aid, because France still regarded its African alliances as an integral part of its own security. However, African clients during the 1960s generally did not receive as aid any of

the more sophisticated weapons being developed by the French electronics and aerospace industries. This was not only because African soldiers were less well regarded as clients than other countries, and could also not afford to pay for the newer technology. France's own forces in Europe during the 1960s were less modern, compared to the other members of the Atlantic Alliance, and de Gaulle gave first priority to improving the technical capabilities of the army, navy and air forces composed of Frenchmen who were to fight in Europe.

French security doctrine has been supported by France's position as francophone Africa's primary arms merchant through most of the decades since independence. Arms transfers and sales, and the repair, maintenance and training in the use of these arms, remains a source of political leverage even though some nations now purchase arms from elsewhere to supplement France's contribution.¹⁰⁹

Article 2 of Gabon's defense agreement stated that the "Gabonese Republic, in consideration of the help granted it by the French Republic, and in order to assure the standardization of armaments, engages itself to call exclusively on the French Republic for the maintenance and renewal of its materials." This provision was occasionally ignored by all defense agreement signatories (e.g. Gabon's purchase of tanks from Brazil) but the French have largely retained their status through these agreements as francophone Africa's primary armorer.¹¹⁰

The Issue of Sovereignty and Intervention

Sovereignty and the supposed inviolability of national borders were, and still are, a key concept for the present African Union (formerly the Organization of African Unity), and the United Nations. However, the lop-sided obligations of France as a great power to the new small nations, and their continuing dependency, greatly affected the sovereignty of the less powerful partners in these French-African cooperation agreements. Were these agreements as interpreted by France in any way breaches of African sovereignty, or were they simply mutual protection treaties between allies? Would France and each African nation have had to be more equal in resources for the latter to be the case? Can one, in fact, say of a “neocolonially” dependent state that it is more or less sovereign in terms of its international status than a simply dependent state (based on economic status)?

Naeem Inayatullah states that, even though weak states are formally recognized as sovereign states and equal in constitutive rights with the great powers, including nonintervention in domestic affairs, their inability to protect their people from poverty, or from abuse by their own governments calls their right to sovereignty into question. The nonintervention rule also results in a protected condition where many weak states are allowed to fail to deliver a condition in which their people have actual sovereignty in a real state, which can participate in international organizations and create and maintain social order and civil rights. From the relationship of great power *patron* to subordinate client state which was effectively perpetuated in these cooperation agreements, it

appears that France effectively agreed at the outset that such states were not in fact “sovereign” in the sense that they were only “quasi-states,” and not functional governing entities.¹¹¹

David Strang suggests that the cultural relations between a dominant Western state like France, and its subordinate non-Western colonies resulted in a “broad, collective delegitimation of non-Western sovereignty” which facilitated colonial imperialism.¹¹² France retained this quasi-parental and patronizing relationship with the newly independent states, so perhaps the state of perpetuated dependency mediated by the cooperation agreements can be examined similarly. Looking at the slowly evolving relationship between France and its former colonies from the 1950s onward, it might be argued that, much as a colonial person could evolve socially, assimilate the dominant culture of France, change his status and acquire more social and political privileges as an “*évolué*,” so could a post-colonial state. A condition of disorder or an unmanageable political relationship in a former colony, such as in Chad or the CAR during the 1960s onward, could still be met with military intervention by France based on the cooperation agreements between the dominant and subordinate governments, and in apparent contravention of the formal sovereignty of the independent, yet still permeable African state. In practice, France was still the party which controlled the relationship, and which would make the ultimate decision to intervene. Greater privileges and legitimating respect would be earned by more assimilative and cooperative behavior on the part of the client state.

In practical terms, military dependence affects sovereignty, since sovereignty can be defined in terms of how much or little control a state has over its external and internal affairs, and France provided both support and constraint on francophone African states' militaries. The dominant state was in control of the situation in its socially constructed and militarily enforced role as "*patron*." However, the subordinate states also have to acquiesce to this arrangement for it to work. The new, post-colonial states may have regarded the other challenges they (internal insurgency, external aggression from another state) as greater threats to their sovereignty than that of continued domination by France.

Throughout this work, it will be necessary to distinguish between African states and their individual leaders, just as it has been necessary to distinguish France's presidents from France herself. Where the interests and objectives of states have been mentioned, it is with the understanding that it is the leadership of these states that is meant. Since democracy has not been the type of government common to these African states during the period studied, one cannot say that all African citizens held objectives in common with their state, or with the French. It is certainly possible, however, to detect instances where African government policy and goals (territorial integrity, the personal security of the president and high officials, access to loans and development aid, the ability to conduct business and distribute patronage in such a way as to guarantee a stable leadership by rewarding loyalty with opportunities for enrichment), were furthered by the French government's policies and goals (access to strategic military locations and strategic minerals, the continued political loyalty of African

leaders, access to markets and opportunities to sell French products and spread French culture). If the goals and preferences were not identical, they were at least complementary, and the basis in large part for profitable political, economic, and military relationships.¹¹³

It is important to note that state sovereignty may be, as the Biersteker and Weber suggest, “socially” constructed,¹¹⁴ but it is also dependent on a cost-benefit analysis on the parts of both the dominant and the subordinate state in each of the cases studied here. In each case, what France offered that weakened each state’s sovereignty may have strengthened both its military and its economic position.

Stanley Hoffmann identifies three long-term non-military trends that nonetheless had frequent effects on the sovereignty, and susceptibility to intervention, of post-World War II states: economic interdependence, ideological polarization, and the delegitimation of colonialism.¹¹⁵ France's need to remain a part of the economic and cultural climate in each of its former colonies often militated against its use of force and supported a choice for economic support in the form of further aid or capacity-building, as did the increasing need for restraint if France was not to be seen any longer as an imperialist power. France was also extremely flexible during this period with those countries, which chose (at least nominally) either of the two poles in the Cold War. Its own Socialist and Communist parties were active enough in maintaining their ties with similar parties in Africa countries that this may have preserved French influence from disappearing altogether in most of the new nations that veered to

the far left. As Decalo notes, even "full-fledged Marxist states" like Burkina Faso and the People's Republics of Benin and Congo-Brazzaville remained not only dependent on French aid, but also solicitous of it. Burkina Faso was, if anything, more in need of French aid during its revolutionary phase than before its revolution. Congolese rhetoric about expanding state control over industry was actually combined with an increase in expatriate capital investments.¹¹⁶

This is in keeping with the Gaullist emphasis privileging military and economic security of a nation over its ability to function as a free actor. What, then, did de Gaulle's 1960 "recognition" of the subordinate sub-Saharan African states consist of? Did France really mean it when it "gave" them back the independence that the peoples of the region had possessed before their arrival, and was it really France's to give? If sovereignty is indeed constructed, was it both France and its client states that constructed it, since most of the African states acquired more formal borders in the process that had not existed before French conquest?

As Chipman states, "French military co-operation with francophone African countries has created a dependency which is in the service of French political interests but not always to the long-term benefit of African countries."¹¹⁷ France was never as liberal concerning the political rights of its African subjects during the colonial period as it was with its own citizens, establishing a pattern of political repression that proved to be convenient for African presidents at independence. During the colonial period, correspondence between Africa and other countries was intercepted and censored (as was still true in Bokassa's

Central African Empire in 1978 when this author was there as a Peace Corps volunteer), and African newspapers were subjected to continuing surveillance and interference, particularly if they had leftist sympathies. Such newspapers were legal in France, where leftist parties held considerable power within the organizational structures of French democracy, but were seized as "revolutionary propaganda" in Africa because they might be (and often were) anti-French.¹¹⁸ Repression of journalists and censorship of the mail persists to this day in most francophone African countries, and it may well be in the best interests of both French and African leaders that this is so, even if French citizens would not allow either of these tactics at home on the scale that they are practiced in Africa, and African human rights groups have protested against them. For most of the first three decades in most of its former colonies, the French were successful in developing the domestic political, economic and military capacities of the *chasse gardée* only insofar as such development was consistent with French values and preferences. Any domestic military, political or economic development occurred in a controlled fashion that allowed France itself to stay well ahead of its clients in these areas.

The resulting *chasse gardée* was constructed as follows. Almost all of the francophone African states that became independent in 1960 signed military cooperation agreements, with some doing so only after they received United Nations recognition. In each case, however, it was clear that France was to be a donor and protector of independence only in return for continued cooperation. As a contractor in these agreements, France remained in control of many of the

internal developmental processes of the new states, not only their military development, but economic, legal and cultural development as well. A unified economic zone with a common African franc currency value pegged to the French franc, the continuing use of the French (Napoleonic) legal code in spite of its numerous conflicts with persisting traditional legal practices, and African educational systems mirroring those of France and using the French language as the standard for all civilized communication, all served to support and enhance continued French military power in francophone Africa.

Although pressure was certainly exerted by de Gaulle on African leaders at independence to accept these cooperation agreements, which had contractual force, France continued to claim that the contracting parties freely chose the agreements at independence. The obligations were mutual, and France's own contributions were seen as substantial, so most of the world was willing to accept that their African partners desired these forms of cooperation, which were therefore legitimate. In return for developmental aid, and the promise to maintain the internal and external military and economic security of the new states, France was guaranteed the continuing strategic, economic, linguistic, and cultural hegemony that had been its goal since the Scramble. It had lost Algeria and Guinea, but maintained a sizable, powerful, and internationally acceptable form of *grandeur* that no longer appeared to require apologies for lingering imperialism, while retaining many of the practical advantages that had been inherent in colonial expansion.

The cooperation agreements resembled both treaties and contracts in form. They included provisions for defense and the use of strategic minerals, foreign policy agreements, technical assistance arrangements including personnel, training and equipment, and financial and legal cooperation. Some of the agreements were bilateral (as with the Central African Republic) and some were regional (Côte d'Ivoire, Dahomey and Niger had a multilateral agreement with France). The Central African agreements were all bilateral to start. As the African nations began to deal as sovereign states with states other than France, some of the agreements of the 1960s were revised or even canceled. The renegotiated agreements of the 1970s continued to give France significant power and influence, however, particularly the military accords.

French presence in the form of French officers and base rights, technical military assistance and control, and France's promise to defend African governments from both external danger and internal disorder were the centerpieces of the military agreements. In return, France received prior notice and approval rights for any decisions involving military development, political changes, and the transfer or sale of strategic materials.¹¹⁹ Just as trade within the CFA (African Franc) Zone remains mutually preferential, so do military decisions, and even UN voting bloc arrangements. The African leaders who negotiated these agreements did so in the knowledge that the visible results they would achieve would secure their own power bases at home. In time, the very mutuality of these agreements, the continuing need of France for African bases, markets and influence, and the close relations perpetuated by these contracts,

made African leaders into an influential lobbying group in Paris as well. Their voices in French foreign policy formation continue to be a salient presence.¹²⁰

In addition to the agreements with individual states, which were mostly bilateral, the French sponsored a multilateral military agreement, the *Union Africaine et malgache de Défense* (UAMD), which was arranged to include Madagascar and most of the sub-Saharan states (except for Guinea, of course, as well as Mali and Upper Volta). France agreed to come to the defense of any member of the UAMD that was threatened, and set up a headquarters, which maintained consultative contact with UAMD members.¹²¹

In sum, seventeen modern sub-Saharan African countries developed the special military, economic, juridical and cultural relationships with France that include them in what is generally meant by "francophone" or French-speaking Africa. Three of these, Rwanda, Burundi and the former Zaïre (originally and once again the Democratic Republic of Congo or DRC), use the French language as their *lingua franca* because they were Belgian colonies. Rwanda and Burundi became independent in 1962, and the DRC in 1960. France's former West and Central African colonies had also become fourteen independent countries by that time, thirteen of them *en masse* in 1960. The fourteenth, Sekou Touré's Guinea, broke away in 1958 from President Charles de Gaulle's offer of a French Community partnership and preceded the others to independence by two years.

Most of the fourteen French sub-Saharan colonies had been French possessions throughout the twentieth century. French Congo was lost to

Germany in 1911 and retrieved in 1914. Togo and southern Cameroon were in German hands until they became French mandate territories at the end of World War I. At independence, the former French West Africa of the early twentieth century (*Afrique Occidentale Française* or AOF) became the nine West African countries of Senegal, Guinea, Mauritania, Mali (formerly "French Soudan"), Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso), Dahomey (now Benin), Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, and Niger. The former French Equatorial Africa (*Afrique Équatoriale Française*, or AEF) became the five Central African countries of Chad (the northern part of which had been a part of AOF), Cameroon (incorporating the formerly British and anglophone north), the Central African Republic (formerly "Oubangui-Chari" and briefly, the "Central African Empire"), the Republic of Congo (formerly, and more familiarly, "Middle Congo," "French Congo" or "Congo-Brazzaville" to distinguish it from the DRC, which is also known as "Congo-Kinshasa"), and Gabon. The stories of French military, intelligence, economic, and cultural interventions and influences in the sub-Saharan region are legion, and the literature is extensive, so the four cases will give the most important of the illustrative tales and general trends.

The levels of France's presence in the region were preserved, determined, and occasionally altered by the defense cooperation agreements (giving the leaders of African states the ability to ask France for security assistance) and military cooperation agreements (which provided African states with technical advisers, military equipment transfers, and the continued opportunity to train African officers in France). France retained in this way, not

only base rights and strategic materials control, but the right ***not*** to send more French forces to Africa, nor use the ones based there, if this were deemed inadvisable for any reason. Thirteen sub-Saharan states signed defense cooperation agreements in 1960 and 1961: the Central African Republic, Chad, Congo-Brazzaville, Gabon, Cameroon, Senegal, Madagascar, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Dahomey, Niger, Mauritania, and Togo.¹²²

In spite of France's undoubted military superiority within its *chasse gardée* before independence, a number of serious conflicts took place that affected francophone Africa, although only one conflict was actually within her boundaries before the 1960s. This occurred in Cameroon, one of two countries, which were given to France as mandate territories after Germany lost World War II and its colonies. Although Cameroon was a crossroads of German, British and French influence, and France was initially given only the southern part, due to careful and consistent French attention, it is now one of the most loyal of France's African allies. Sivard records that the 1955-1960 insurrections during Cameroon's independence process resulted in a total of 32,000 civilian and military casualties caused by fighting between Cameroonian, French and British troops. Cameroon has required no major armed interventions on the part of the French, however, since 1960 when the French garrison was used to suppress the Bamileke uprising.¹²³ Cameroon was not an original colony, but a protectorate, and having an Anglophone north was subject to US/UK influence in competition with the francophone south.

Training and arms assistance were coordinated by the establishment of a military aid mission or office in each of the countries that had signed cooperation agreements with France. The French military cooperation mission offices were directed from Paris by the Ministry of Cooperation, which was established in 1961. The defense agreements were directed by the Ministry of Defense, which only in 1998 acquired the military assistance programs under its administration. The Council of African and Malagasy Affairs was established in 1961 to ensure the direct, and often hands-on, participation of France's highest officials (the President, the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister and the Minister of Cooperation) in African regional policy. This council has since ceased to exist; however, high officials continue to have immediate and direct influence over Africa policy in a manner unique to France. The Elysée Palace maintained an advisor with a continuing responsibility for African affairs that often met weekly with high-level officials.¹²⁴

The defense accords signed between France and several key francophone nations, including Senegal and Gabon, instituted the following military administrative structures. At the individual state level, defense matters were referred to a "mixed Committee" assisted by the Bureau of Defense. The Committee contained the French ambassador assigned to the country, the French commander of that particular overseas zone, and the African head of state. The Defense Bureau contained a French superior officer, the African country's superior military officer, and one or more *fonctionnaires* (administrators) from the French Embassy. At the regional level, if multiparty

defense agreements were to be considered, there was another defense council, including once again the relevant African heads of state, the Prime Minister of France (or his representative), and a general of the French Army delegated for this purpose in each African state.¹²⁵

External vigilance was required to preserve the *chasse gardée*.

Preserving French power and influence in Africa against any attempt at cultural, economic, or military encroachment by the English-speaking world (whether this was a great power like the US, or a regional hegemon like Nigeria), or by the Soviet Union, was as important as preventing the newly independent nations from becoming too independent. The types of internal maintenance suggested above, however, lessened the need for external protection by giving the US, the USSR, and other great powers less of an incentive to encroach when there were more attractive targets available (e.g. Ethiopia).

African support for French military security initiatives was key to the perpetuation of the French sphere of influence, and African militaries were only developed, armed and trained to the basic level needed in any given year for them to remain interoperable, compliant, and generally satisfied clients of France. Although France itself had democracy, an industrial growth economy, and excellent educational, health, and technical expertise, and therefore the potential for assisting the African nations in developing in these directions, the desired postcolonial relationship between France and francophone Africa was intended to be one of vigilant and thorough maintenance of the *status quo*, and only controlled evolution, rather than nurturance of rapid growth. Indeed, one

can see in this first decade the determined continuation of the earlier philosophy of promoting, in a limited and controllable fashion, a few educated and privileged African *evolués* who would owe their promotion to their compliance with French preferences.

Increasing the stress on France's military and economic resources in the central African region during the post-independence period was France's success in adding the three formerly Belgian colonies to the *chasse*: Zaïre (formerly Belgian Congo), Rwanda, and Burundi, all three of which experienced major political instability and occasional armed conflict during their first three decades following independence, descending into various levels of protracted civil war during the 1990s. France entered into military cooperation agreements with these three countries too, stretching its military presence, its financial and foreign policy resources, and its ability to cope with the demands of the cooperation agreements made with its own original colonies.

In spite of a common language and an attempt to draw them further into *la Francophonie*, France was unable to deter internal conflict during the 1960s in the former Belgian colonies that bordered francophone central Africa. Inter-ethnic conflict in Rwanda between 1956 and 1965 resulted in totals of 3,000 military deaths, and 102,000 civilian deaths. The Shaba insurrection in Zaïre was responsible for approximately 100,000 total deaths. France's indirect participation in Nigeria's Civil War (1967-1970), during which several francophone nations transferred French aid to Biafra, did not prevent the loss there of 2,000,000 military and civilian lives. France's participation in these

conflicts was limited by the cooperation agreements within the African Community. France's priority in these external engagements was to protect the lives of French citizens and French economic and strategic interests in these countries, and its participation does not seem to have mitigated the number of African lives lost.¹²⁶ During the 1960s, France's priority was placed squarely within its own former colonies, which was essentially what had been promised to them by Charles de Gaulle.

The Franc Zone

The Franc Zone is the final new structure at independence that needs to be described in this chapter, and perhaps the most influential in terms of France's own security and that of its former colonies. At African independence in 1960, France not only preserved its preponderant military power in the former sub-Saharan colonies, but its economic power and political power as well. This economic and political influence also contained an element of cultural exportation, which facilitated the African assimilation (at least on the part of elites) of some useful and powerful French preferences in banking, finance, business, resource extraction, education, and governance. Economic and political leverage was combined with military power in such a way as to reinforce continuing dependence on France. France's economic leverage in francophone Africa during the final fifteen years of the colonial period had been overwhelming, and what Foltz calls "the usual signs of colonial economic dependence," was visible as late as 1956, a condition which improved very little during the 1960s. Foreign trade remained the export of raw materials for

manufactured items, and domestic capital accumulation was minimal. Imports dominated exports, with France making up the cash deficit.¹²⁷

After sub-Saharan independence in 1960, however, France had three nonmilitary tools that were critical to its success in continuing its influence in the central African region:

- *Financial support leverage (control of the Franc Zone and financial aid to African governments),

- *French government and private investment in African industries (particularly the oil industry), which supported both the economies of various states and their leadership elites, linking political support to economic leverage,

- *French political penetration of African governments, parastatal industries and companies via various public and private channels.

Economic Leverage

The new francophone African economies were all the more completely dependent on France because of the Franc Zone, an arrangement for mutual financial security put in place after World War II that bound the African and French economies almost inextricably to one another. The Zone was a monetary transaction association under French fiscal control that included most of France's former colonies after World War II. The African nations that remained in association with France stayed in the zone after independence and continued to use its currency as their national currency. African leaders accepted this arrangement in order to insure the benefits that their financial stability as members of the Zone brought to their national economies. The Zone would not necessarily make them rich, but it was a certain hedge against total

impoverishment. Many of the francophone African economies were heavily dependent on cash crop production, and membership in the Zone lessened the severity of agricultural crises, while also providing a secure environment for foreign investors and (largely French) multinational corporations.

From its founding in the 1930s until the present, the African Franc Zone has been divided into two zones, which were originally *Afrique Équatoriale Française* and *Afrique Orientale Française*. France originally established currencies in each region that were tied in value to the French franc. By the end of World War II, these currencies had been consolidated as the *Colonies Françaises d'Afrique* franc, or CFA. It was issued by the French central bank charged with the financial affairs of “*outré-mer*,” a term that has been used for France’s overseas territories since the Crusades. As of 1948, 0.5 CFA franc was worth 1.0 French franc (FF), a rate of exchange which persisted until the France’s currency reform in the 1960s, at which point 50CFA, equal to 100 old FF became worth 1.0 new FF. As of 1994, in order to rectify what had become a very inflated rate compared to European currency, the rate was slashed from CFA 50 to the French franc to CFA 100 to the French franc, but was still guaranteed by the French Treasury. Ultimately, the Franc Zone has been stable, but at the mercy of whatever happens to France in its own economic relationships worldwide, and particularly within Europe.

At independence in 1960, responsibility for the Franc Zone, which included issuing currency, shifted to two regional financial institutions, both controlled completely by France until the 1970s when member countries took

more responsibility for their management. The Central African countries of the former *AEF*, including those discussed here, became members of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (French acronym *CEMAC*), while the West African countries of the former *AOF* became members of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (*UEMOA*). The Central African CFA was issued by the *Banque des États de l'Afrique Centrale (BEAC)*, which calls its CFA the “*Franc de la Coopération Financière Africaine*.” The West African franc is issued by the *Banque Centrale des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (BCEAO)*, and is called “*Franc de la Communauté Financière de l'Afrique*.” While both francs are referred to as CFA, they are not legal tender out of their regions, except that they both have the identical rate traded against the French franc.

France has had heavy representation on the boards of these two banks over the decades since independence, has been the major trade partner for most of that period also, and provided substantial technical assistance in the form of coopérants and bank officers. The convertibility of both CFA currencies to the French franc is guaranteed by statutes, which include the observance by the *BEAC* and *BCEAO* of credit limits for member governments, and the maintenance of a main account with the French Treasury containing at least 65% of its foreign assets. The rules were set up so that fluctuations in the Franc Zone would not damage the French Treasury. However, fluctuations in France's own economic situation could have negative effects within the Franc Zone. In addition, in spite of the relative stability of the Zone, the relative wealth disparity between the more stable economies of West and the frequently conflict-

damaged economies of Central Africa that have characterized the two parts of the Zone for decades show no signs of going away.¹²⁸

During the first two decades after independence, more of the francophone states achieved limited but steady growth rates, comparatively low inflation rates, and more open economies than the non-francophone states. They have also remained heavily dependent on the French economy and banking system, and continued French investment. The occasional threat posed by France (and the occasional real need) to devalue the CFAF has offered France a significant bargaining chip in its relationships with these countries, although any decision to devalue the CFAF is fraught with consequences for France as well.¹²⁹

The African franc zone, established well before the political independence of these countries with its roots in individual currency arrangements made for the value of the French franc in Africa during the 1940s, was possibly the most consistent and penetrative legacy of transitional colonialism. It continued to provide the structure and financial security that allowed French companies, and companies from other nations, to invest in francophone Africa. The zone offers a common convertible currency, less possibility of the hyperinflation common to developing countries, opportunities for bilateral aid, and a predictable investment environment. It also perpetuates African dependence on France, but does so in a way that offers a real incentive to remain dependent, given the poverty and unreliable economies of many of the Zone's less fortunate neighbors.¹³⁰

French support and penetration of the African banking systems and commercial investments was crucial to maintaining this relatively secure

investment climate, as the CFAF continued to be pegged to the French franc. Countries like Côte d'Ivoire, which had started independence as relatively healthy financially (at least compared to their neighbors), were enabled to remain so. Countries that were comparatively resource-poor, or dependent on a small number of exports, were given a boost above destitution by having a subsidized currency. Countries with natural resources useful to France (like the uranium in the Central African Republic and Niger) found that access to banking assistance in the Franc Zone allowed them to subsidize an unreliable agricultural base and even out the boom and bust cycles of the uranium market. The oil countries (Congo-Brazzaville, Benin, and Gabon) were able to cushion themselves somewhat against the pricing fluctuations and resultant shocks of the oil market. Membership in the Franc Zone did not preclude a need for assistance from the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund, however, but it simplified some of the negotiations. The "*Communauté Financière Africaine (CFA)*" had replaced the "*Colonies Françaises d'Afrique (CFA)*", in a very neat acronymic transposition.

As a monetary union including all whose currencies have a fixed rate of exchange pegged to the French franc (and hold reserves in FF), the Franc Zone is now part of the European Union's currency zone and CFA linked to the Euro as of January 2002. At the moment, the Franc Zone includes France and all but two of its former sub-Saharan colonies: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, the Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and Togo. Guinea, Mauritius, Mauritania and former North

African colonies of Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia were members for a brief time, and the Comoros joined in 1976. Equatorial Guinea, a former Spanish colony that is surrounded on all sides by francophone Africa and has a political structure similar to its neighbors, became a member in 1985.

The Franc Zone has four currencies, used in various parts of the zone according to historical precedent or modern negotiations: the Euro (France and overseas departments like Martinique), the CFA franc in the former French Equatorial and West African countries, still grouped into the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC), where CFA refers to the *Coopération Financière en Afrique Central*; and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), where CFA still refers to the *Communauté Financière Africaine*. The Comoros franc is used in the Comoros only, and the CFP franc is used in the overseas territories of New Caledonia and French Polynesia. African currency is issued by the central banks of the CEMAC and the UEMOA. All are backed by the French Treasury and are freely convertible with currencies in the EU and outside the Franc Zone, thus facilitating international transactions and giving confidence to both African and outside investors, something which is not the case for many African states with less financial stability

The Franc Zone is also a channel for French humanitarian and development aid to sub-Saharan Africa, and has recently been used to develop international commercial legislation within the Zone and a common regulatory structure for insurance. During recent years, the numerous civil wars and

political instability in some of the African countries in the Zone have raised questions about UEMOA and CEMAC's financial viability.

France also offered economic and development aid of various types to the former colonies, some of which improved the lives of elites, and some of which actually benefited those further down. African leaders were given access to investment opportunities in Europe that allowed them the proper lifestyles to maintain presidential prestige, augmented by easy private access to foreign aid money. These resources were also useful for patronage of loyal elites, and established the domestic power bases of a number of francophone African presidents. The patronage of elites has, however, led to instability in countries like Chad and CAR where ethnicity may have control over government resources leaving other ethnic groups to sense their disadvantage and organize rebellion.

Even though the aid levels fluctuated over time due to the vicissitudes of changing regimes in France and in Africa, the consistency over time of these three interwoven types of support is remarkable, even in states like Congo-Brazzaville which had avowedly socialist regimes ostensibly open to political and economic support from the Soviet bloc nations.

France's economic leverage and superior technological resources provided various political tools. France also provided some of the more attractive visual trappings of power to its African clients, not only to make them happy with French patronage, but also to demonstrate the benefits of French friendship to those African nations whose loyalties might be slipping, or to those

who had not experienced French rule but might benefit from French patronage. Uniforms for the gendarmerie, joint Franco-African troop exercises with much ceremony, presidential jets, and other visual perquisites of official power often arrived accompanied by some of the less visible manifestations of French power, such as the Foccart intelligence network, and the continued French administrative presence that came with *Assistance Militaire Technique*. (In return, each of the capitals generally had an "Avenue Charles de Gaulle," and streets named for other French presidents.)

International summit meetings among Heads of State in *la Francophonie* are now an institutionalized routine that include not only the French-speaking countries of Africa, but non-French speakers as well. This is the African continental dimension of the French diplomatic presence. The three main challenges for France in achieving its goals during the second half of the 20th century would remain preserving and extending French power and influence against anglophone (and particularly US) encroachments; preventing economic and military inroads in the French sphere by other great powers; keeping its former colonies in some degree of continuing dependency on France in order to maintain its position as the dominant partner in the ongoing military and economic cooperation agreements. That *La Francophonie* continues to meet on a regular basis much like the "French Community" envisioned by de Gaulle, although not quite as implemented in his post-WWII colonial reconstruction of France's relationship with its colonies, is remarkable.

France's administration of the West and Central African regions of its sphere of influence must be understood in the context of the French leadership's perception of France as a major global player as this century drew to a close. French leaders used the sub-Saharan African colonies in order to regain and solidify the political, economic and military strength that made France once again a great power after its demoralizing defeat at the hands of Germany, its need to regroup with the help of the Atlantic Alliance, and its loss of major colonies in Indochina and North Africa. In spite of leadership changes (from de Gaulle through the post-Gaullists to the Socialists), France's postwar Africa policy was coherent, consistent, carefully managed and largely bipartisan. France retained much of its African preserve as a source of strategic resources, investment opportunities, economic and military cooperation, political influence and as an illustration of the export strength of French culture.

France would remain the political tutor, the financial backer, the sponsor of UN membership, the armorer, and the military guarantor for these cooperative francophone African nations, and often for their individual leaders as well. The *chasse gardée* was still maintained by force, but that force was now embodied in the threat of French withdrawal of privileges rather than the old threat of punishment under the *indigénat*. French military force was still based in Africa, but it was now combined with the new African armed forces in such a fashion as to blur the distinction between the legitimate monopoly on military and police action held by the new governments, and the use of French arms and armed personnel at the request of African governments. African armies now served

African governments, but were often still commanded or organized by French military and technical *coopérants*. French army bases, arms and personnel remained by contractual agreement in Africa as much to control internal disorder in African states (and so were at least nominally in service to the leaders if not the people of those states) as they did to display the continuing French influence and global reach of France as a great power. Given the shared, "cooperative" nature of this security structure, and even though France was by far the more powerful partner, there was room for the new African states to learn why it was that France continued to desire their cooperation and apparently, their friendship. They were able to varying degrees, to manipulate France's needs to use Africa as an extension of France's historic power base, and to maintain France, in both appearance and fact, as a great power with an inter-continental reach.

In the long run, however, the French neo-colonial militarization of its African clients may in fact have increased not only their dependency, but also their fragility as states and as a sub-region. Francophone African military culture also offered the advantage of shared outlooks and contact opportunities among military leaderships. Claude Welch's example of such possible "contagion" relates the shared strategic culture of francophone African leaders to their *coup* propensity, and also to their international environment:

"Three weeks after the assassination of President Olympio, Colonel David Thompson, commanding officer of Liberia's National Guard, was arrested on suspicion of plotting a *coup d'état*. 'If only 250 Togolese soldiers could overthrow their government, a Liberian Army of 5,000 could seize power easily,' Colonel Thompson is alleged to have argued. Successful seizure

of control in one state may touch off a series of coups. The Zanzibar uprising may have helped trigger the East African mutinies; similarly, the intervention of Soglo in December, 1965, may have helped touch off coups in the Central African Republic, Upper Volta, Nigeria, and Ghana. Contagion must be considered on two levels: the personal links among African officers in different countries, and the increasing extent of interstate ties. Shared experiences in the French army provided the leaders of intervention in the Central African Republic, Dahomey, Togo, and Upper Volta (respectively Bokassa, Soglo, Eyadema, and Lamizana) with potentially significant individual ties. All four served in Indochina. It is quite likely that the success of one in winning political control prompted the others to consider intervention -- though no conclusive evidence can be adduced."

Such shared history as a form of "contagion" cannot always be demonstrated this clearly as a cause for military intervention either within states or among states, and remains a fuzzy concept when applied to social learning and development processes. However, since independence, African leaders have steadily improved their ability to communicate and cooperate with one another in alliances and regional accords. Africa has become a genuine geopolitical subsystem once again, as inter-state relations in Africa become increasingly reciprocal and often present opportunities for joint military interventionism. It is in this sub-systemic context that we need to take a closer look at the composition and structure of post-colonial French *presence* (and *intervention*) in sub-Saharan Africa.¹³¹

France was successful for most of the 1960s in manipulating the foreign policies of its francophone African allies. Most significantly, they tended in large part to mirror France's own independence and non-alignment during the Cold War, except for their concerted alignment with France itself. They might dally with the US and USSR, expel or invite the Chinese, and collect what aid

they could from other great powers, but ultimately, France's goal was their complete loyalty to France, and their willingness to follow its lead and cooperate with whatever global or regional goals which France might have.

An increasing number of regional and international regimes and institutions offered either opportunities or threats to French interests in the African region. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations were a little more influential during the 1980s and 1990s, although not much more. The OAU and the regional francophone summit conferences remained the most salient arenas in which the African countries raised concerns about their relationships with France. The OAU was largely ineffective in countering France's influence, however, and also somewhat ineffective when it agreed to intervene in support of French objectives. The international institution with the most clout, where African security (and not only francophone) was concerned, was not a political organization but an economic one almost entirely controlled by the West: the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The UN's international human rights conventions and norms continued to be more honored in the breach, although human rights questions were raised far more frequently than in the 1960s in African politics, both nationally and internationally. While inter-governmental (IGO) and non-governmental (NGO) organizations continued to provide forums for discussions of more democratic governance in francophone Africa, French policy continued to place France's interests paramount; the democratic development of the *chasse gardée* remained only a secondary concern.

International arms control agreements, as in most places, are not yet a salient factor in regulating the African continent's regional security climate, although the recent landmine and small arms conventions may have much more of an effect on African security when these have been ratified and even, perhaps, taken seriously by nations at war.¹³²

Finally, one international institution that strongly influences security conditions in the region is the International Monetary Fund. Nearly three-quarters of African debt is owed to bilateral or multilateral creditors rather than to individual banks.¹³³ IMF structural adjustment programs have gained the reputation, fair or not, of contributing to economic hardships and consequent social unrest in some of the sub-Saharan states, which have accepted these programs. If so, then this is an institution that must be considered a constraint on France's attempts to be an internal security guarantor for its cooperating allies. The role of the IMF structural adjustment program in the oil strikes in Gabon is treated in Chapter 5. The United States, furthermore, often backs the international funding institutions' decisions as to how and where aid conditionality is to be applied in cases of lagging political or economic reforms. France is also beginning to condition aid to its African allies on their adherence to reforms deemed necessary by the IMF and the World Bank. At the 1990 Franco-African summit of heads of state in La Baule, France stated that it would pay increased attention to political and economic reforms and make its aid decisions accordingly, although exactly how the military cooperation agreements may constrain these promises is not clear.¹³⁴

CHAPTER 4:
THE COMPOSITION OF THE FRENCH MILITARY,
POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL PRESENCE IN
EQUATORIAL AFRICA SINCE 1960

France's Overall Options

To accomplish its goals and maintain its influence in Francophone Africa, France needed the following: military presence, in the form of airstrips, troops and staging areas, intelligence-gathering capabilities and diplomatic presence (often combined, as in many countries), and military aid transfers, training and sales. A reliable and supportive economic presence in the form of the Franc Zone, and a broadly understood, deeply rooted cultural presence in the form of French schools, religion, language, literature and artistic preferences was also required in order to maintain the financial stability, and also the economic dependency of African allies, and to encourage a shared cultural frame of reference to create a comfort zone of easy and fluidity contacts among leaders and investors.

France's three nonmilitary tools for preserving its power, political/diplomatic influence, financial leverage, and cultural penetration of African social structures (first, and foremost, by promoting the priority of the French language as a necessity for advancement), were critical aspects of the success of this policy. They cannot be separated from France's military

preponderance as factors supporting French *présence*, as military power alone would not have allowed France to persist nearly as long in its chosen role as a benign, protective *patron*. It is well to recall here Fanon's insistence that the first site of revolutionary activity against neocolonial imperialism must be within the already-colonized minds of Africa's bourgeois elites and educated classes, and those subordinated to them, where the most basic and insidious acceptance of French "*présence*" had been implanted by through education and the perpetuation of unequal social and economic relationships. (Hence, the title of one of francophone Africa's most successful and radical literary journals was *Présence Africaine*.)¹³⁵

The overall military balance between France and other external powers in the central African region had to be held in France's favor, along with its technological superiority over its regional African *protégées*. Presence had to be maintained constantly in order to be considered trustworthy by the African governments. Speed of response and flexibility of options, including both inducements "carrots" and punitive measures "sticks" continued to constitute important tools of diplomacy and security. Briefly, again, the "carrots" included: non-military economic, infrastructural and educational assistance; maintenance of the Franc Zone for a stable currency; financial aid and infrastructural investment; smooth diplomatic contacts among French and African officials and presidents; solidarity and mutual political support in the international arena; troop training, arms transfers; police and officer training; military logistical, technical, and intelligence assistance; and the promise of military intervention to protect an

African president or the country itself. The punitive "sticks" included withdrawal, or threatening to withdraw any of the "carrots," covert operations which might destabilize an uncooperative African leader or a party, and military interventions by either the Africa-based troops or externally-based intervention forces which would restore a regime or strategic situation to one optimal for French interests.

In its turn, France's constant and obvious military presence supported all of the other facets of French power by protecting the coopérants, favored leaders, and French financial institutions and infrastructure. To a certain extent, however, military capacity building in Africa, and the deployment of continuing base troops, and non-draftee specialist contingents, needed the support of the French population as well. The relative freedom of action in Africa enjoyed by the Elysée had domestic political constraints. For France's political leaders, a careful balance had to be maintained between fulfilling French promises to African presidents, and fulfilling their own obligations to the citizens of France, who occasionally found French support of African tyranny to be against their own democratic ideal of what France represented as a nation. France's ability to conduct humanitarian and peacekeeping operations, and to offer disaster assistance and economic aid, also depended on the personal power of the French presidents and the increasingly strained good will of the French people.

France also needed to deal with the increasing number of international institutions and nongovernmental organizations that constrained or criticized France's behavior in its former colonies, fending off the attentions of other great powers active in the francophone African regions, and dealing with the African

states' increasing options for putting pressure on France to get what they wanted in return for their continued cooperation.

Pascal Chaigneau identifies two "axes" in the French strategy with regard to its former colonies: *la Présence* and *l'Intervention*, each of which represents a certain configuration and availability of forces.¹³⁶

The French *Forces de Présence*

Présence has two facets: technical and economic, and local military bases and apparatus. The military bases provided France with: first, a "dissuasive" presence by their very existence; second, an immediate local intervention capacity; and third, a formal symbolic indication of France's global presence.¹³⁷

To understand why and how France maintained its power in francophone Africa during the post-World War II period requires a historically informed examination of how the three distinct facets of French military power have penetrated the region. These are: France's physical presence (troops, military command structures, French officers and well-maintained bases), France's intelligence and diplomatic presence (formal and informal military advisory connections and networks, and France's ongoing donations of training opportunities for African troops and officers both on site and in France, along with military aid and transfers of the appropriate technology and weaponry. These three military manifestations of French power are connected to French diplomatic initiatives and with another significant form of penetration: French financial support for African military development. For example, the preferential

treatment that French companies generally received in African markets and investment opportunities is mirrored by the continuing preference shown by the most faithful francophone African allies for purchasing most of their arms and police equipment from French companies. This continues to be so now, even though many francophone nations also purchase arms from elsewhere, including the former Soviet bloc countries, the U.S. and China.

France's own physical presence in Africa was much larger, of course, than any of the African forces during the period just before independence. The overall size of the French forces demonstrated large increases and decreases over time after the second World War, falling from 1,200,000 men in 1945 (a figure which includes all North African and sub-Saharan colonial troops as a part of the French army), to 470,000 in 1947, rising to 1,153,000 in 1957, and dropping to 675,439 in 1964 after decolonization, when France's sub-Saharan troops became the armed forces of their own nations.¹³⁸

According to Chipman, French base troop levels in Africa numbered approximately 58,000 in 1962, had been lowered to 21,300 by 1964, and dropped to about 6,400 between 1965 and 1970.¹³⁹ IISS gives total French troop strength in Africa of 12,500 in 1970, which includes paramilitary gendarmes and troops in North Africa and Madagascar¹⁴⁰.

The pre-independence conflicts had required a large infantry investment with little concern for technical superiority. Even in Indochina and Algeria, the army had been the primary force, and the navy and air force had purely logistical roles and were used primarily for surveillance and transportation. Propeller-

powered aircraft, a pre-World War II invention that could land on short airstrips and perform low-speed surveillance, were the most technologically advanced aircraft required for the Algerian operations and air traffic in sub-Saharan countries with little in the way of airport infrastructure. The more complex equipment of armored and motorized units sent to Africa frequently had to be taken apart before being packed, and often ended up unused.

The need to modernize those French forces destined for service in Africa was not really perceived until well into the 1960s. Michel Martin makes the case that this lack of technological inventiveness, and the continuing French dependence on colonial manpower to solve strategic problems, had left an enduring negative legacy on the armies of France that may have been usefully ruptured by the independence of the colonies in 1960. The Fourth Republic's military establishment remained dominated by its land forces, causing inter-service tension with the naval and air service branches, which felt technologically deprived. Between 1950 and 1960, the average percentage of the military budget allocated to the French air force was seldom more than 23%, a figure incommensurate with the advancing technology in this area during that decade, and lower than the air force allocation between 1936 and 1939. By contrast, the US and UK, during the 1950s, allocated at least a third of their military budgets to air force expenditure.¹⁴¹

French technological expansion occurred only after 1960, when francophone Africa took command of its own armies, and de Gaulle realized that the European commitment (and French prestige in the Atlantic Alliance) required

a serious French commitment to modern military research and development. A key concern was to preserve and enhance France's ability to defend itself in Europe, independently of NATO. The rapid return to economic strength of France's ancient rival, Germany, was the competing focus in French strategic policy, as was the felt need to act as the "balancer" between the US and the USSR. The goal of maintaining the former empire as a sphere of influence was therefore a competing interest with these France's aims in Europe and as a great power. As of 1996, France had become one of the principal arms manufacturing and exporting countries in the world, and although there was regulatory control in the executive branch of government, there was almost no parliamentary control by the French *Assemblée Nationale*. Nearly 80% of the industry was partially state-owned, and export decisions were made by the French Prime Minister, advised by an inter-ministry committee, and implemented by the Defense Ministry. Indeed, when French arms were used by Iraq against French troops in the first Gulf War, the *Assemblée* attempted to force the government to disclose its arms sales policies and contracts, but was not entirely successful.¹⁴²

Later in the 1960s, once it was established that defending the *chasse gardée* would occasionally require airborne weapons, ground vehicles, communications systems and artillery more sophisticated than those used in the Algerian war, more sophisticated weapons began to appear in the sub-Saharan countries. However, since France's own Africa-based troops would be available to fly planes and operate the more complex weapons systems, the superior

technology remained in French hands during the 1960s even when it was used in Africa. The institutional capacity for maintaining the more sophisticated airplanes and electronic communication systems also remained under the control of French *coopérants*, and missions that used these were generally under French command.

France's technological superiority over all African states was quite significant, although the most obvious evidence of that superiority was based, not in Africa, but in Europe. The missile platforms were in Europe or at sea, tanks were sent infrequently because they were not always the best way to fight on African terrain, and the larger field artillery only arrived when needed. Air bases were the most visible manifestation of France's modern technology in Africa. The development of the nuclear *force de frappe* consumed much of the French arms budget during the 1960s, which made cheap African troops all the more attractive as a way to augment French power in regions where they would not be likely to use nuclear weapons in any case.

French military presence in comparison with francophone African forces

The most serious technological gap between France and Africa was, and perhaps still is, at the most basic level. African educational capacity remains far below that of France, although training in technical skills has improved greatly since the 1960s. Although too much technical capability on the part of African clients would have made them more independent, too little was also a potential security threat. During the post-war period, it became necessary to gradually increase the competence of African armies first, in order to serve France better,

and then, in order to narrow the gap between the African and French armies during the transition to independence. French technical superiority remains overwhelming, but Africans became better trained, and better able to work with the more specialized equipment which were first discovered to be necessary in the 1950s, even in the infantry, for Africans fighting France's anti-colonial wars.

The modernization of African armed forces has also been slowed by a lack of what Arlinghaus calls "military microcompetence," that is, the lack of an adequate educational and industrial base, especially with literacy rates of under 50% in many places, from which to create a versatile, technically trainable, or even competent pool of military personnel. While this condition is slowly being remedied, it remains a problem in many parts of Africa in the 1990s as it did in the 1960s.¹⁴³ Although France managed to transplant African versions of French systems of primary, secondary and university education, access to anything above the primary levels remains limited by financial resources and by the extremely competitive nature of the *lycée* system and the still relatively small number of African universities and technical training institutes.

As military equipment became more varied and more complex, it became more difficult to find recruits who could be trained to use it, drive it, fix it, fly it, or use it to communicate in the manner required. Distributed weapons systems caused particular problems in technical training. As Arlinghaus says, recipients of arms aid sometimes failed to understand that they were not receiving just a weapon, but an interrelated complex of subsystemic components. A plane was not simply a single weapon that could be flown through the air, but rather an

airframe, engine, electronic fire control and navigation components, and the necessary ground support facilities and equipment. Specialists (pilots, mechanics, air traffic controllers) were required to deal with distributed systems. Those countries that received arms transfers from multiple sources exacerbated the problem by multiplying the types of systems for which they would need training, also creating interoperability problems. Filling the gaps with French personnel was the only solution in many cases, even though it was a solution that was resented by African militaries, particularly those who had been fortunate enough to receive their training in France, the USSR or the United States.¹⁴⁴

France made a convincing argument to its colonies at independence that their militaries would continue to need outside assistance. Since France continued to provide protection, and many Africans had served in the French armed forces rather than at home, indigenous African armies were quite small. The small size of the African armies in 1967 is shown in the table below, which represents only minuscule gains on their part since independence in 1960. In contrast to two countries experiencing major conflicts during the 1960s (Nigeria and Zaïre are included on the table for comparative purposes), the former French colonies' armies remained tiny, and not much increase in size was evident during the following decades.

Table 1: African Defense Forces in 1967 (mostly only francophones)¹⁴⁵:

Country	Army size	African officers	Expatriate officers	Air Force size	Navy size
<u>CENTRAL AFRICA:</u>					
Cameroon	3,800	120	16	150	110
CAR	1,000	45	15	40	35
Chad	1,500	20	25	50	---
Congo(Brazza)	1,900	60	2	75	---
Gabon	450	18	7	50	25
<u>WEST AFRICA:</u>					
Dahomey (Benin)	1,750	30	9	18	---
Guinea	5,000	150	---	60	---
Côte d'Ivoire	3,500	120	90	130	110
Mali	3,000	150	---	20	---
Mauritania	1,400	30	12	21	20
Niger	2,000	30	2	30	---
Senegal	5,000	185	35	170	150
Togo	700	17	---	10	---
Upper Volta	1,700	58	8	15	---
<u>FORMER BELGIAN COLONIES:</u>					
Burundi	2,000	60	30	---	---
Rwanda	1,500	60	10	---	---
DR Congo (Zaire)	35,000	1,500	70	2,000	---
<u>NIGERIA</u>	12,000*	600	---	1,000	1,500

(Former British colony) *Before the Nigerian Civil War, the wartime army estimates are 50,000 for Nigeria (possibly even 80,000 in some estimates according to Lee), and 14,000 for Biafra. Nigeria is included here for comparative purposes as francophone influence on this war is discussed elsewhere.

In 1983, the following sizes were recorded for the francophone central African armed forces. many though not all of which still numbered under 10,000, as shown in the 1994 table below. Numbers for a few of the regional powers are included for comparison (Angola, Nigeria and Libya). These figures do not include paramilitary forces, reserves, or gendarmerie¹⁴⁶:

Table 2: Sizes of Selected African Armed Forces in 1983:

Central African Republic, Chad, Gabon	Under 5,000
Cameroon, Congo-Brazzaville, Rwanda, Burundi	5,000-10,000
Zaire	10,000-25,000
Angola	25,000-50,000
Libya	50,000-100,000
Nigeria	Over 100,000

Charles P. Snyder gives the following brief impressions of some of the francophone African ground forces in 1984¹⁴⁷: Zaire's army was 22,000 in 1984, enormous by francophone standards, but not nearly as well-equipped (and nowhere near as disciplined) as other neighbors with comparable forces (e.g., Angola). Gabon's forces were small, but well trained to provide enough internal security in a crisis until French help arrived. The Congo-Brazzaville army in 1984 was 8,000, and well equipped with artillery and armored vehicles, but suffered from politicized ethnic divisions in its ranks. Chad's armies in 1984 were riven by war and factionalism. The Central African Republic's army of 5,000 was unable to control its porous borders; smuggling was a significant problem. In comparison with its neighbors, Congo-Brazzaville, Chad and CAR, Cameroon had a more modernized army, and was said to be well disciplined and capable of both internal defense and external engagement. Rwanda and Burundi were in the process of modernizing with French help. On balance, however, these armies' capabilities were dwarfed by those of France's armies, and also by the capabilities of several neighbors: Angola, Libya and Nigeria.

A comparison in 1994 illustrates the relative magnitude of armed forces and defense spending in the region¹⁴⁸:

Table 3:	1994 Armed Forces (in thousands)	1994 Military Expenditure (in millions of US\$)
Cent. African Rep.	3	23
Chad	25	31
Congo-Brazzaville	10	45
Gabon	3	85
Cameroon	15	139
Rwanda	5	125
Burundi	11	33
Zaire	49	91
Angola	82	498
Libya	70	927
Nigeria	77	195
FRANCE	410	34,442
USA	1,650	230,896
FORMER USSR	2,587	32,740

For those states whose military spending is available for comparison from 1960, it is evident that their military budgets have increased at least a little since independence. The factors that are difficult to reconcile or determine from these figures are (a) the degree of militarization of each of these economies (many have military governments), and (b) the levels of aid received from France and the other great powers which have subsidized the military budgets both directly within the budgets and indirectly in the form of training exercises and other forms of cooperation. Thus, the percentages of military spending in each country's budget are not always directly comparable. Richer states, like Gabon and Cameroon, appear to have higher military expenditures, although again, these figures do not show the subsidizing effects of foreign aid on any country's total expenditures. Rwanda, not a wealthy country, was at war in 1994 with the

insurgent Rwandan Patriotic Front, and receiving considerable military aid and training from the French government; its expenditures here reflect the ongoing state of civil war. Highly militarized states, like Congo-Brazzaville, Zaïre and Burundi, have higher totals of troops and military spending relative to their populations.¹⁴⁹

France has been accused by its post-independence African client states of maintaining an effective technical superiority that actually increases the gap between the West and African technical inferiority. This cannot be proven for certain, but it is clear that France has been slow and often deliberately elitist in promoting Africans and improving their military capacity beyond what was essential for France's own purposes. Methods of improving African forces existed, but were implemented only gradually. The African version of the competitive French school system in no way guaranteed universal literacy, but at least provided the most talented with some technical training and the cultural background deemed necessary to a citizen of *La Francophonie*. The military officer corps was also improved and augmented through an educational process referred to since the colonial period as "*Promotion Africaine*." Africans could become officers in the following ways: four years at Saint-Cyr or another of the French officer-cadet candidate schools, two years at one of the *Écoles Spéciales Militaires Interarmées* located in France (for senior NCOs desiring a commission), promotion from the ranks for meritorious service, or two years of special training at Fréjus, which had become by 1959, the *École de Formation des Officiers Ressortissants des Territoires d'Outre-Mer* (EFORTOM, or the Officers' Training

School for Those from the Overseas Territories). The French officer-candidate schools and the NCO programs were nearly inaccessible because Africans were at an educational disadvantage in the entrance exam. Meritorious service, the oldest and least-well documented route to promotion through the ranks available to African officer candidates, produced two (very different) African military presidents: Sangoulé Lamizana of Upper Volta and Jean-Bédél Bokassa of the Central African Republic, both of whom came to power by *coups d'état*.¹⁵⁰ The EFORTOM program, which trained 174 African officers between 1958 and 1965, was the most successful of the programs created to train African officers, but its students tended to remain at much lower educational levels than French officers, and very few graduated from Fréjus with the equivalent of the first part of the *baccalauréat* (roughly a twelfth grade education). Most of these officers came from West Africa, rather than Central Africa, with the larger numbers from Senegal, Upper Volta, Dahomey and Mali.¹⁵¹ (*Afrique Equatoriale* is “Cinderella” again: even in a project which benefited France by improving interoperability and contact between French and African forces, Central Africa was comparatively less developed.) The curriculum continued to be focused on the defense of the French metropole, and featured courses mostly on French defense issues and French civilization. In spite of this educational disadvantage and the small number of officers produced at Fréjus, EFORTOM did increase the number of African officers, if not the quality, and also presented the French military with a convenient group of African military men in the territories who shared much of their ideological outlook and were accustomed to

operating within a French-dominated system of military operations. EFORTOM therefore eased the transition of the African armed forces to nominal African control at independence, and also provided opportunities for a number of African officers to become powerful actors within the new post-colonial system.¹⁵²

In spite of these improvements, the higher levels of military technology remained in French hands in francophone Africa during the 1960s, even on those occasions when more sophisticated non-infantry weapons were used in African countries. Although some level of technical education was provided to Africans in order to facilitate their ability to work with their French patrons, the technological gap perpetuated a relationship of dependency which in large part maintained France's position as the major great power influence on its African clients.

France's technical potential throughout the 1970s until the present has been clearly superior to that of every other power in the Central African region in hardware and capacity for rapid response, except for the United States and the Soviet Union. However, even the US and USSR could not match France's political and economic penetration capability, which resulted in a greater strategic flexibility and better cooperation with the much smaller, and technically inferior, forces of the francophone African armies. The armed forces of francophone Central African states continued to depend on France for training, arms purchases, infrastructural support and cooperative liaison. Both the US and the USSR maintained ties to African governments. The US did so wherever it appeared that US aid would balance forces supplied and aided by the USSR

(e.g. by helping Zaïre to support UNITA's insurgency in Angola), and the USSR was a major factor in countries that were ideologically sympathetic to socialism, or lacking in French support, as in Guinea. During the two decades following the death of de Gaulle, however, in those countries that maintained cooperation agreements with France, the US and the USSR were prevented from establishing more than a foothold, and that largely *via* arms sales. De Gaulle's desire to return post-Vichy France to its former "grandeur" has been well served by the French arms industry. Under the Gaullists and Giscard, and later under the Socialists, France built an extensive arms industry with independent research and development, capable of producing a complete line of modern weapons, with sea, land and air plat-forms, small arms, a variety of heavy artillery, and electronic communications systems.¹⁵³

In addition, France continued to educate the officer corps of Africa on French soil. Chaigneau¹⁵⁴ notes that African officers and troops trained in France numbered under 1000 per year until the mid-1970s, but that number had doubled by 1982. For the twelve post-independence years between 1961 and 1973, the number of African junior and senior officers given French training from each of the Central and West African countries is shown in Table 4 on the next page.

Table 4: African Officers Trained in France**Central Africa:**

Cameroon	1,222
Congo (Brazzaville)	920
Gabon	742
Chad	574
C.A.R.	550

Former Belgian Colonies:

Zaire	202 (between 1970-1973 only)
Burundi	21 (between 1970-1973 only)
Rwanda	15

West Africa:

Senegal	1,904
Côte d'Ivoire	1,296
Upper Volta	846
Dahomey	636
Mauritania	618
Niger	516
Togo	429
Mali	88 (between 1970-1973 only)

Chaigneau notes further, however, that the number of African junior and senior officers trained in France has risen steadily since 1970. Clayton places the number of African officers trained in France at 1,734 in 1979 and 2,226 in 1983, remaining roughly at this level for at least a decade.¹⁵⁵

By the 1990s, in spite of their relative weaknesses, sub-Saharan African armies began to acquire force projection capabilities that were better equipped and much more versatile than their colonial incarnations. African armies were no longer solely composed of infantry. Many had acquired some limited air strike and paratrooper capacity. African air forces, however, were not always capable of making the most of their more advanced aircraft. The topmost

leaders tended to be well-educated and good flyers; however the aviation ability in the ranks immediately below the top tended to vary widely in quality. Also, in most African armies, the air force took its orders from the ground army command, which often lacks a full understanding of air potential. Air force capacity was largely used only for support of ground troops.

Libya's air force presented a vast contrast in preponderance to the other African air contingents in the 1980s, although it was less extensive than that of France. Where Libya had 479 fighters, 30 COIN aircraft, 7 bombers, assorted other aircraft and 8,500 air force personnel, the nearest sub-Saharan francophone African competitor to Libya in 1984 was Guinea, with 6 fighters and an air force of 800 men. Gabon had 7 fighters, but only 500 air personnel, and Chad had no fighters, only helicopters and trainers, and an air force of 200 men. In contrast, Nigeria -- ECOWAS's military hegemon and the most substantial power in West Africa, had an air force of 9,000 men, 30 fighters, and a number of other helicopters, trainers, reconnaissance planes and transports.¹⁵⁶

Francophone African nations with rivers and coastlines had tiny naval capacities as well, largely in the form of a couple of small patrol boats. However, as of 1986, Cameroon, Congo-Brazzaville, Gabon, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire and Zaïre all had slightly larger navies with more numerous, larger, and better-armed patrol craft. None are in the same naval league, however, with the two African competitors most frequently mentioned here. Libya's navy by 1986 had at least 8 (Soviet and Yugoslav) submarines, a frigate, 4 minesweepers, and numerous

well-armed (with missiles) corvettes and patrol boats. Nigeria's navy at this time had no submarines but was similarly well-endowed with surface warships.¹⁵⁷

Use of Africa-Based Troops (the *Forces de Presence*)

Positioning stocks and supplies at the bases has simplified intervention in Africa by making use of the bases' ongoing connections with local suppliers. The Africa-based troops are not part of the *Force d'Action Rapide*, but are needed and used for interventions as logistical and manpower support.¹⁵⁸ They can be used to intervene by themselves, of course, wherever only a small number of Frenchmen in uniform are needed to make a force projection statement, to add protection or provide training to a president's own security forces, or to remind local clients of the potential power of their French *patron*.

As of 1977, the *Forces de Presence* were a consistent presence. The 10th *Battalion d'Infanterie de Marine* or Marine Infantry Battalion (BIMa) was stationed in Senegal, the 4th BIMa in Côte d'Ivoire, and the 6th BIMa in Gabon. The Djibouti contingent was far more extensive, including the 13th Foreign Legion Armored Division, the 5th Interarmed Overseas Regiment, the 6th Marines Artillery Regiment, the 6th Command and Support Battalion, and army aviation.¹⁵⁹

Mitterand re-named them the *Forces d'Assistance*, in order to make their "presence" more palatable.¹⁶⁰ As of 1989, the 23rd BIMa was stationed in Senegal, the 43rd BIMa in Côte d'Ivoire, and the 6th BIMa was still in Gabon, and the Djibouti base continued to provide further marine infantry that could be called upon for support. There were also some *FAR* troops rotated semi-permanently through the bases in the Central African Republic. All could interact with the *FAR* in spite of the cooperation agreements with Senegal, CAR, Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon, which stipulated that the territories of these countries could not be used for direct interventions in other countries, but only as staging posts. This staging capacity, however, has been vital. For instance, the Libreville (Gabon), Bangui and Bouar (both in CAR) bases were used to stage the 1983 Chad intervention. The 1986 Togo intervention (in West Africa) used French troops based in Central Africa.

The French *Forces d'Intervention*

The creation of the *Force d'Intervention Interarmées* in 1962 was intended to preserve the immediacy of military response that France had maintained by continued militarization of the colonies throughout the 1940s and 1950s. Communication between the intervention forces in the south of France and the overseas forces based in Africa was to be closely coordinated enough to serve as a deterrent to both external aggression and internal disorder which would threaten French interests. Between 1956 and 1964, the creation of these external forces of intervention served to cement the transition of local command of African forces to the new African nations and also, to "disengage," or at least place in an external location, many of the French forces previously located in Africa. France promised to continue to maintain peace and equilibrium in Africa, but also needed to pay attention during this period to its European troop commitments, and to its intervention capacity on its own continent.¹⁶¹

Under the earlier Gaullist governments, there were to be five conditions under which France would intervene, using military force: to guarantee the safety of French citizens overseas, to protect the territorial integrity of overseas territories, to defend energy and strategic materials supplies and commercial transport routes, to fulfill France's obligations under its military cooperation

agreements with allied nations, and to participate in international peacekeeping missions. These goals were clarified and restated under the Mitterand government, but did not differ from the intentions of previous French governments, and closely resembled the reasons which France had kept such a tight rein on its colonies during the post-World War II period.

Before 1962, there had been a number of local interventions in African countries by French soldiers based there. The creators of the *Force d'Intervention* argued that re-posting the French troops outside of Africa, with the capacity to intervene in Africa in a crisis, meant that unstable conditions could still be dealt with effectively with appropriate force without the necessity of basing large numbers of Frenchmen in the region. The deterrent capability was to be met with better organization, modern communications, and a reputation for reliable action rather than by an egregious French presence of overwhelming numbers of troops.

French forces were active in the 1960s in a number of countries in francophone Africa in spite of the waning troop presence. The French sent at least 300 officers and NCOs to assist government forces in Cameroon that were fighting the Soviet-assisted *Union des Populations du Cameroon*. Mauritania was the site of interventions between 1956 and 1963 to restore order in the Western Sahara and keep the peace until a cooperation agreement had been signed. More limited interventions occurred in Gabon, Congo, Chad and Niger in the early 1960s to end internal conflicts.

Part of the troop withdrawal at independence was supposed to be mitigated by de Gaulle's creation in 1962 of the *Force d'Intervention Interarmées*, which was to be based in France and capable of speedy intervention in the event of an increased need for troops in Africa. France's fellow Western nations, and French domestic opinion, agreed that a large number of Frenchman based overseas was undesirable for a number of reasons. After independence, the remaining Frenchmen who had served in *La Coloniale* (now the *Troupes de Marine*), plus those units of the *Légion Étrangère* who had survived the Algerian campaign were re-organized as the nucleus of this *Force d'Intervention*. The original 1963 intervention force was composed of a single brigade of marines; additions after 1964 brought it up to division strength (two airborne brigades, 1 motorized brigade) as the 11th *Division d'Intervention*.¹⁶² Most of the smaller-scale interventions of the 1960s were accomplished, however, using France's Africa-based troops.

The new system after 1962 made three levels of military power available to France¹⁶³:

- *The immediate defense of African territory by the national armies of African countries that had benefited from increased French training and technical support.
- *The Africa-based French Overseas Forces (*Forces d'Outre-Mer*), stationed according to the defense and cooperation agreements with African countries, largely on those bases established in 1960 and 1961. These were deemed "*Forces de Presence*."
- *The *Force d'Intervention Interarmées* stationed in the south of France, which was to provide the *Forces d'Outre-Mer* with land, sea and air reinforcements as needed.

France maintained its ability to intervene, and used all of the "carrot" and "stick" options at its disposal to maintain and insure cooperative alliances with the francophone African states, replacing or improving leaderships as necessary, and fending off challenges to its most reliable long-term friends. After independence, the ability to intervene militarily was enhanced (at least in theory), and made more politically acceptable in France, by the creation of the *Force d'Intervention*, and the continuing insurance provided by the Africa-based presence of the *Forces d'Outre-Mer*. There were a number of occasions where France exercised its ability to intervene militarily, and also some occasions where French intervention took more subtle forms. Occasionally, France would exercise its option to refrain from intervening, usually in the event of a *coup d'état* where France supported the outcome or believed that the situation could be manipulated to its advantage. Toward the end of the decade, however, it became clear that France was more effective at deterring internal security threats in African states, and manipulating coup outcomes, than it was at controlling conflicts that were either intractably lengthy or involved countries outside the francophone sphere.

Chipman¹⁶⁴ lists the following French military interventions in the early 1960s, which do not include more "discrete" actions (e.g., pre-emptive aid increases and garrison reinforcements) that are less documentable, but as often effective, as the obvious shows of force:

Cameroon in 1959-60 (Action against insurgents of the *Union des Populations du Cameroon*)

Mauritania in 1961 (Suppression of revolts)

Senegal in 1959-60 (Support to President Senghor during collapse of the Mali Federation)

Congo-Brazzaville in 1960-62 (Suppression of riots)

Gabon in 1960 and 1962 (Suppression of opposition riots)

Gabon in 1964 (Prevention of a military coup against President Mba)

Chad in 1960-63 (Suppression of minor uprisings)

In addition, French troops repressed a military revolt in Niger in 1963, and unrest in the Central African Republic (CAR) in 1967. The 1964 intervention in Gabon used the local French garrison supplemented by reinforcements from the base in Senegal and French parachutists based in Brazzaville.¹⁶⁵ The 1960 intervention in Cameroon used the local French garrison to put down a Bamileke uprising.¹⁶⁶ The Senegal intervention was primarily caused by the disintegration of the Mali Federation, which involved both peasant uprisings and independent actions by the gendarmerie. French participation was limited to protection of President Senghor, and diplomatic activity aimed at minimizing damage to the military cooperation agreements with the now-separate states of Mali and Senegal.¹⁶⁷

France regarded military *coups d'état* as crises that, although potentially dangerous, could offer useful opportunities for securing French power and influence. French military presence was not necessarily a coup deterrent; there were many successful military *coups d'état* in the francophone African states during the first ten years of independence, including¹⁶⁸:

Central African Republic (1966)

Congo-Brazzaville (1963, and again in August and September 1968)

Congo-Léopoldville (1960, and again in 1965 as Zaïre)

Burundi (twice in 1966)

Upper Volta (1966)

Mali (1968)

Togo (1963 and again in 1967)

Dahomey/Benin (1963, twice in 1965, 1967, and again in 1969. However, Welch concedes that this count for Dahomey includes shows of force that showed no evidence of a plan to overthrow civilian government.)

Upper Volta, Mali, Togo, and Dahomey are given here for comparison, all in West Africa, and all of their pre-*coup* leaders had fewer trouble-free relationships with France than did France's most reliable supporters in the region, Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal. Since many of the coup leaders showed promise of being able to work with France, they were not interfered with significantly, except where local unrest in the wake of a coup was a danger to French interests or to strongly francophile leaders like President Senghor or Gabon's President Mba. This is in line with some of the more established theory on *coups d'état* and African military governments, including the now-classic statement by Aristide Zolberg¹⁶⁹ that such coups do not represent a political rupture, or a derailment of progress, so much as "an institutionalized pattern of African politics" that does not necessarily change the basic character of a society or its political structure. Since the structural character was largely unchanged by these coups, and France had played a long-term role in establishing that structure, military coups

represented changes of personnel. These changes did not necessarily require the total reconstruction of France's entire relationship with each country, which had been largely of a military nature from the beginning.

Coups d'état, and the post-independence phenomenon of a number of military governments in the former colonies, did not generally constrain French power in the region during this period, but seemed, rather, to offer France the option of working closely with government leaders who had been steeped in French military culture, and held wartime ties with France. Military governments offered, in addition, less need for France to deal with or penetrate internal political parties in the new nations, and a consequently greater opportunity to concentrate on using military aid as a form of diplomacy. If one assumes, as Zolberg did, that military governments have the ability to moderate the potential decision-making capabilities (and resulting conflicts) of political parties by taking over as a non-political guarantor of internal stability¹⁷⁰, then it is not difficult to see why de Gaulle and later French presidents found them as agreeable to work with, if not more so, than those states where political factionalism was less restrained. Factional disputes within African militaries remained a problem, however (as 1963 Niger shows), particularly during the decades covered by the next case, as a generation of military leaders emerged who had not shared the World War II experience with de Gaulle.¹⁷¹

In spite of the implicit protection of some African presidents embodied in the defense agreements, France's military presence inside and outside of the region was not in itself a deterrent to *coups d'état*. While France had no military

interventions between 1964 and 1968, this four-year period included *coups d'état* in Dahomey, the Central African Republic, Upper Volta, Algeria, Burundi, and Congo-Léopoldville (later Zaire). Although France did not intervene directly in these cases, French policy makers were concerned about the effects that these disruptions of their carefully cultivated relationships with heads of state would have on the French reputation and French interests. President de Gaulle warned shortly after the coups in CAR and Upper Volta that the new military heads of state in these two countries would need to rule with fairness and apparent legitimacy or risk the loss of what French aid their countries were due from the cooperation agreements. Both military and economic deterrence were threatened, and cooperation funding was held back for a short time until it was established that France would be able to work with the new governments.¹⁷²

The fairness and legitimacy of either Colonel Bokassa or Lieutenant Colonel Lamizana as rulers turned out ultimately to be less important to the French than their loyalty to France, and their willingness to cooperate with de Gaulle. Bokassa ousted President Dacko on January 1, 1966, and established his anti-communist credentials, at least temporarily, by ordering all communists and Chinese nationals to leave the Central African Republic (the Chinese were invited back later, bringing economic assistance), and dismissing a number of military officers for collaborating with a "Peoples Army" of the CAR.¹⁷³ It has been noted that Dacko may have brought the coup on himself, in part, by encouraging the CAR gendarmerie to act as his personal presidential guard in order to balance the growing power of Bokassa within the army.¹⁷⁴ Bokassa

proved to be an obliging partner for France in the beginning, however. In 1967, France airlifted troops to Bangui upon Bokassa's request for protection, when he asserted that his austerity program, including restraints on corruption and civil service salaries, was causing internal hostility.¹⁷⁵

French presence in Central Africa remained quite constant during the 1970s and 1980s in terms of the distinct facets of military power which continued to characterize France's penetration of the central African region: physical presence, intelligence and diplomatic presence, and arms aid via transfers and sales.

By de Gaulle's resignation in 1969, his goal of renewing the sovereignty and confidence of France had been largely met, but he left his successor with a number of economic and diplomatic problems. President Pompidou, while publicly faithful both to de Gaulle, and to Gaullism, made a number of changes in the composition of the French forces and military capacity.¹⁷⁶ Pompidou continued de Gaulle's policy of lessening French troop commitments in francophone Africa, as part of a policy aimed at maintaining the consistency of the French commitment, while attempting to make it less obvious. He concentrated like his predecessor on reminding the rest of the world that there was still a link between the French commitment in Africa, and France's image as a global power, and found the *Force d'Intervention* useful more as a general deterrent to the Soviet threat in Europe, even though it could still be used as needed in other theatres of operation. France's interventions in Africa were

presented to the other Western powers as one of its contributions to containment of the USSR's global ambitions.

France's later "*Force d'Intervention*" was composed of the airborne and motorized brigades of the 11th *Division d'Intervention*. It could be mobilized and deployed by air within days. It became a parachute division in 1971. Indeed, the elite 2^e *Etranger de Parachutistes* trained for, and maintained, a reputation for effective commando intervention on short notice, and (in Zaire in 1978) on very little sleep.¹⁷⁷ Most of the smaller-scale interventions of the 1960s were accomplished, however, using France's Africa-based troops, which could be transferred within 24 hours from the country in which they were based to wherever they were required.

While de Gaulle and Pompidou's terms in office had diminished the land army in Europe in favor of the *force de frappe*, Valéry Giscard d'Éstaing, elected in 1974, increased military spending by 16%, along with the defense-related portions of the French economy. The conventional forces in Europe were strengthened, tactical nuclear weapons received new types of training programs, and the need for overseas intervention, in Africa in particular, increased in importance. The ambitious reforms and expectations of Giscard's military program were not all met, however, because of economic constraints. The result, though, was not incompatible with the Gaullist principle of a more prominent military role for France in Europe¹⁷⁸, and the resulting increase in flexibility of response was useful in several African interventions.

Giscard's "centrist" presidency represented a rupture in the Gaullist policy of decreasing France's African military presence. Displaying French power became once again an important way to show just how well France could preserve Western influence in Africa, and how much more able it was to do so than any of the other Western powers. In 1977, French military aid to Africa went from 414 million FF to 644 million FF, and began a steady climb, although it was still a small portion of the overall French defense budget. An increased number of Africans began to be trained in French military schools and Giscard increased the weapons capacity and troop strength of the existing *Force d'Intervention*.¹⁷⁹

France's loss of faith in pure deterrence doctrine post-de Gaulle in the 1970s also placed renewed emphasis on improving the capacity of French forces to respond to nonnuclear crises. Giscard d'Éstaing's policy of flexibility included the reorganization of French forces. Of greatest importance to Africa, the distinctions between de Gaulle's three France-based forces -- the *Forces d'Intervention*, the home defense *Forces du Territoire*, and the mechanized First Army or *Forces de Manoeuvre* -- were eliminated. Their division and specialization was preventing the army from adapting to rapid change, and limiting its capabilities. The *Forces du Territoire* were reintegrated into the *Forces de Manoeuvre*, and all units were given the same level of equipment to fight in a conventional war: nonnuclear artillery, *HOT* and *Milan* antitank weapons, and *Roland* antiaircraft weapons.¹⁸⁰

France remained the most influential great power in francophone central Africa during the 1970s and 1980s, although her power was tempered by

regional and local politics and the growing influence of the United States as a competing source of aid and investment. Although France outgunned by far even the strongest regional actor (Libya), her military power in Africa was by no means based entirely on hardware and software. The overwhelming military superiority which France possessed in comparison with all African states continued to be as much a function of the consistently-maintained historical relationship between France and francophone Africa as it is a function of France's impressive technological superiority.

The same facets of military power continued to characterize France's penetration of the central African region during the Giscard and Mitterand years: French military commands and bases, French political, intelligence and diplomatic connections, and France's military training (in French) and arms transfers. These continued to be supported by economic cooperation, financial support and business opportunities, accompanied by cultural and educational initiatives. France's most faithful francophone African allies still preferred to purchase most of their arms and police equipment from French companies, even though many also began to purchase some of their arms from the Soviet bloc countries, the U.S. and China. Their "comfort zone" remained largely French, however, because only part of the familiar accompanying *présence* of France was military.

One of France's strongest assets in Africa remained the use it made of the infrastructural, educational and administrative support provided to its former colonies over the years since de Gaulle's Brazzaville Conference. This support,

almost always in the French language and according to French bureaucratic and academic norms, included the education of African military and administrative elites that replaced most, if not all, of the French bureaucrats in the colonies with "assimilated" African trainees. Road construction, transportation, banking facilities, and communications networks also required francophone trainees, not least because all of these infrastructural resources also formed important assets for fulfilling France's military aid agreements to the former colonies. France's preponderant power in the central African region was still deeply rooted in the colonial years, during which time France had cemented a relationship of dependency on the part of its African partners.

Mitterand's Changes: the Rapid Reaction Force

In spite of his continuing anti-colonialist rhetoric, the government of President François Mitterand (1981- 1995) improved France's military capacity for intervention in Africa and offered an even higher level of security aid to African governments than did Giscard. Mitterand demonstrated a remarkable ability to present himself as, first, the modern version of France's distinguished socialist past, harkening back to Léon Blum and Jaurès, while simultaneously developing the presidentialist centralism and opportunities to personalize presidential power that were bequeathed to his office by de Gaulle. While this dual orientation, both to socialism and to Gaullist presidentialism, gave the Mitterand presidency an air of ambiguous integrity at times, it also offered maximum flexibility where francophone African affairs were concerned. Mitterand was adept at exploiting the historical ties of the past and

simultaneously making good use of the structure of the French state and the political opportunities and constraints it presented to him.

France's technological edge gave it the capacity for rapid intervention, which was improved under President Mitterand. The new 7,000-man *Force d'Action Rapide*, created in 1983, was intended to demonstrate France's commitment to European defense while maintaining France's continued autonomy and independence of action. In theory, the five-division (parachute, alpine, marine, airmobile, and light armored) *FAR* was to be flexibly deployable (although focused on central Europe), immediately mobilizable, and technically well endowed, with enough *Milan* anti-tank missiles, armored vehicles and helicopters, for modern front-line ground warfare.¹⁸¹

Mitterand's main innovations came from the 1984-1988 Military Program Law. These innovations were deepened and perpetuated during a four-year plan from 1988-1992. The *Force d'Action Rapide (FAR)* which came out of the Military Program Law was intended to provide the capacity for intervention in Europe required by France's allies, along with the flexibility to intervene in the Middle East or Africa as required. Which of these needs was given priority in the *FAR*'s organization was unclear to the Allies, as this force's purpose was very similar to de Gaulle's and Giscard's *Forces d'Intervention*. The French insisted that the *FAR* was capable of intervention in both theatres (Europe and the Third World) and would provide, as Charles Hernu said¹⁸², "independence and solidarity." France would continue to defend its friends while remaining, as little as possible, dependent on its allies for policy direction. French loyalty without

subservience was as important a symbolic message in the Mitterand years as it was for de Gaulle and his followers.

In actuality, this restructuring was of greater importance to the overseas theatres than to Europe, although some of the units, like the anti-tank division, were clearly designed for Soviet containment operations in central Europe, and would need NATO air and logistical support in order to make a viable contribution there. Mitterand was considerably more responsive than his predecessors to the practical need on the part of NATO to consider France's defense as vital to Europe's overall security. However, since France was still seeing action with relative frequency overseas, but not in Europe, it was fairly clear where the bulk of the *FAR*'s operations would be. During the Mitterand presidency, there was little change in the substance of the African cooperation agreements, and those commitments remained important factors in the *Elysée*'s overall security deliberations.¹⁸³

Mitterand's new *Force d'Action Rapide* was roughly twice the size of Giscard's *Force d'Intervention*, and included five divisions totaling 47,000 troops and logistical personnel:

*The 9th Marine Infantry (2 motorized regiments, 2 light-armed regiments with an anti-tank squadron, 1 artillery regiment, 1 engineer regiment, 1 command and support regiment).

*The 11th Parachute (6 infantry regiments, 1 light armed regiment, 1 artillery regiment, 1 engineer regiment, 1 command and support regiment, and 1 support battalion).

*The 6th Light Armored (2 light-armed regiments, 2 infantry regiments with armored personnel carriers, 1 artillery regiment, 1 engineer regiment, 1 command and support regiment).

*The 27th Alpine (6 mountain infantry regiments with *Milan* anti-tank weapons, 1 light-armed regiment with anti-tank squadron, 1 artillery regiment, 1 engineer regiment, 1 command and support regiment).

*The 4th Aeromobile (3 combat helicopter (*Gazelle*, *Puma*, *HOT*) regiments, 1 infantry regiment with *Milan* anti-tank weapons, 1 command and support regiment, 1 super-Puma support regiment).

The 9th and 11th Divisions were mostly *Troupes de Marine* and used to action overseas. The 6th Light Armored had some *Legionnaires*. The other two divisions were new additions to France's intervention forces. The *FAR* divisions were given a single commander but not necessarily intended to fight as a unit or even participate in joint exercises. As the *FAR* was improved, however, the divisions began to operate together more frequently, and to participate as well in joint exercises with the *Marines* and the *Legionnaires*, regular forces that continued to have the potentiality of overseas action both by tradition and by continued training. However, the *FAR* itself remained largely a command structure and forces that were available in France for crisis intervention rather than long-term action. This was because, in wartime, there was need of considerable logistics support that was not built in to the *FAR*.¹⁸⁴

The five *FAR* divisions were highly mobile. The Aeromobile and 27th Alpine were primarily for European operations involving helicopter use, mountain experience and anti-tank warfare. As was characteristic of France's operations in Africa, the other divisions were more lightly equipped. The possible European missions remained dependent on NATO support, and were consequently defined in terms of France's current relationships with the Atlantic Allies. The overseas

missions for the *FAR* were far clearer; there were five conditions under which France would intervene:

- *To guarantee the safety of French citizens overseas.
- *To protect the territorial integrity of overseas territories.
- *To defend energy and strategic materials supplies and commercial transport routes.
- *To fulfill France's obligations under its military cooperation agreements with allied nations.
- *To participate in international peacekeeping missions.

Since nearly all of the *FAR* was composed of non-conscripts who were able to serve overseas, this increased the force's flexibility considerably. Conscripts still could not, under French law, be sent overseas without their own permission and that of the French parliament. Filling the *FAR* with professional soldiers shortened the decision-making process considerably in a crisis by bypassing the need for a political debate of the various aspects of any given crisis. Intervention in Africa, *de facto*, was a decision granted to the French president by virtue of this feature of the internal structure of the *FAR*, enhanced considerably by the immediacy of the relationship between the Ministry of Cooperation and the French Presidency. It was the Cooperation Ministry that managed the military cooperation agreements, and not the Defense Ministry, and so the decision-making process for military interventions often began there as well. It will be interesting to see whether the 1998 decision to move the administration of cooperative *Assistance Militaire Technique* to the Ministry of Defense will have any effect on the near-autonomy exercised by French presidents in military

intervention decisions.¹⁸⁵ Although a more flexible arrangement (and certainly a more Gaullist one) this took the decisions for military intervention almost totally out of range for any consideration by the legislature, which became less and less popular with French legislators and citizens.

The reality of the FAR's capacity for intervention was less impressive in later years. In 1991, France's limited participation in the multilateral force sent to Iraq during the first Gulf War was delayed for three weeks by transport and logistical problems. France's globally oriented rhetoric during this period, as Gordon demonstrates, could not always be matched by its force projection capabilities for larger operations. In addition, much of the *Force d'Action Rapide* still had to be made up of conscripts, non-professionals who could not be sent overseas by French law unless they agreed to this type of service. This meant that France made smaller troop contributions to multilateral forces during those years. The French military was redesigned yet again in the mid-1990s under Chirac in order to increase the numbers of trained professionals for overseas service, and also to increase the number of conscripts who would agree to overseas service.¹⁸⁶

France's intervention capacity in Africa also remained constrained by mobility and transport problems, personnel constraints (particularly the still-necessarily high ratio of professional personnel in these forces), and technical contingencies having to do with preparing French forces for dealing with guerilla-style warfare and Africa's exigent climate conditions. Its previous near monopoly

of the air also began to be seriously eroded by improved African access to anti-aircraft weapons during the 1980s.¹⁸⁷

Specialist Troops

Since all of the 11th Division troops in the *FAR* had parachute training, they could clear an airfield of opponents and ready it for the landing of ground troops. Every regiment of the 11th Parachute also contains an intelligence-gathering unit of specialists (a traditional and useful feature of French paracommando units that dates from Foccart's time in the Free French "paras") that is trained to operate in hostile territory, concentrated in the *Détachements d'Assistance Opérationnelle (DAO)*. There were only 200-400 of these specialists in peacetime, too small a number for all-out war, but nonetheless key to securing an area in the midst of a domestic uprising or insurgency. The most specialized of the *DAO* units is at the direct disposal of the French president (the 1st *Régiment Parachutistes d'Infanterie de Marine*). This particular unit is used for rescues or special intelligence operations and is not a part of the *FAR*. It has been used a number of times in Africa, e.g., supported by *Jaguar* aircraft and followed by ground troops in Shaba. It has been argued that this type of small-scale specialist intervention capacity is better suited to the dispersed and decentralized nature of African guerrilla armies and therefore more useful to France in Africa than large numbers of nonspecialist ground troops.¹⁸⁸

France's Intelligence Presence in Independent Africa and the Réseau Foccart

A key element in maintaining French military power has been its intelligence capacity. The French intelligence presence is perhaps the least

quantifiable aspect of French presence, although certainly as consistently maintained as the other facets. Most of the Central African military services were commanded by French officers until independence. Even now there are French citizens in African uniforms among the officer corps of the central African militaries. The ambiguity of the allegiances of these officers is a strong factor in preserving the personal relationships between African heads of state and the French president and military that has characterized France's penetrative diplomacy in its former colonies, a form of diplomacy that continues to be called "*cooperation*."

The neediness of the inhabitants of the *chasse gardée*, and France's preponderant military and financial power, provided the best possible insurance for France's economic interests. The French economic presence required a French military presence of some type, overt or not, and the French military presence could be enhanced using economic leverage. French financial support, and the strategic placement of *coopérant* employees, in parastatal industries and businesses run by African elites insured an interlocking network of aid, debt, investment, and intelligence. Jacques Foccart's network of carefully-placed intelligence *coopérants* were located where they could have considerable access to information on both government industries, enhancing France's early warning of potential problems in either the diplomatic or economic sphere, and France's strategic position. The structure put in place by each cooperation agreements facilitated as much as possible ways in which pressure could be put on African countries and industries to put France's interest first. Military pressure was

available to back up economic incentives. In those countries without military bases or internal defense agreements, the arms and training assistance offered as cooperative *Assistance Militaire Technique* provided similar opportunities and early warning capability.

Most of the defense agreements provided opportunities for Africans to serve in the French army, and for Frenchmen to wear African uniforms and serve as military support in African armies. In a fascinating extension of the always ambiguously defined sense of Franco-African solidarity developed during the two World Wars, African and French interests continue to be blurred by the frequent occurrence of Africans continuing to serve France and Frenchmen continuing to command African troops.¹⁸⁹

The more covert French intelligence presence in francophone Central African countries is harder to determine, in part (as Anthony Clayton emphasizes) because successful covert operations remain so, and also because some of these operations, when made public, are explained away by the authorities as cases where the local French operatives have overstepped their authority. Clayton suggests that, in 1960-1962 during Congo-Léopoldville's unrest, French personnel tried to attach part of northern Congo-Léopoldville (later Zaïre) to their own sphere of influence, and make it part of Congo-Brazzaville.¹⁹⁰ Algerian parachute veterans and other French forces served under Tshombe in Katanga "on local contract but with covert Paris approval." Covert French intelligence support played a role in the aftermath of its more overt military *Operation Barracuda*, which replaced Emperor Bokassa with David Dacko in the

Central African Republic (CAR), allowing the French to acquiesce in the subsequent overthrow of Dacko by General André Kolingba in his 1981 *coup d'état*. France maintained a constant and consistent influence in the CAR, delivering some limited military support to Kolingba.¹⁹¹

The largest of France's intelligence services by 1986 was the 2,000-member, seven-department SDECE (*Service de Documentation Extérieure et de Contre Espionage*), which has an entire department devoted to intelligence and military intervention in Africa. The SDECE and the *Service d'Action Civique* have paid particular attention, during the Cold War period and after, to the activities of the other major powers in Africa, including the US and the USSR, so that France could shore up its interests where necessary in the face of other superpower activities in its *chasse gardée*.¹⁹²

Other examples of French intelligence involvement center on the activities of Jacques Foccart, de Gaulle's African affairs advisor, and an influential figure in Franco-African affairs throughout the period since independence. In addition to the regular intelligence service, the SDECE, there is the *Service d'Action Civique*, also called the "Foccart Machine" or "*Reseau Foccart*" (Foccart network) after its long-time director. This agency uses diplomats, business, and aid personnel in order to extend the reach of the intelligence and security services, and kept the Elysée well informed of the initiatives of other great powers (primarily the US and USSR) in the domestic politics and military operations of nations within France's sphere of influence. (During Nigeria's civil war, Foccart was probably the prime mover in the decision to supply Biafra with arms via Gabon and Côte d'Ivoire.)¹⁹³

In the year 1980, France's total armed forces numbered 509,300, of which a little over half were conscripts. In 1987, this number was 546,900, again, over half conscripts, and there were 391,000 in the reserves.¹⁹⁴ By 1994, France's armed forces numbered 409,600, although IISS puts the potential mobilization including reserves at 1,353,700.¹⁹⁵ By African standards, these numbers are overwhelming. While clearly not in the league of the United States or even the former Soviet state by the end this period, France's army and military spending in 1994 dwarfed that of the sub-Saharan African nations, all of whom together managed to field an armed forces total of 943,000 on a combined military expenditure of \$3,891 million. Some of this expenditure total reflects the considerable aid given to sub-Saharan nations by the West and the Soviet bloc, much of which subsidized the Africans' ability to purchase weapons and field troops. France's aid, as well as the participation in and out of African uniforms by French military *coopérants* provided a significant enhancement of francophone African military power.¹⁹⁶

The Coopérants;

As discussed above, France's physical presence, intelligence presence, diplomatic presence, and military trainers and arms sales were maintained consistently during the first three post-independence decades in their former colonies through the military cooperation agreements, despite many African changes in government. This reflects the built-in flexibility with which France has been able to interpret the substance of the agreements, which were signed at independence with most of the former colonies. France is still the more powerful

partner in any given agreement. Decisions concerning military or political support for particular African leaders continued to be weighed against the loyalty of those leaders to France, the most important criterion of in any particular country. These decisions have been facilitated by France's consistently watchful and locally experienced intelligence capacity. The military cooperation agreements are considered at greater length in later sections, but it should be noted here that armed troops were not the only sort of park rangers or, more properly, "*coopérants*," to be found in the *chasse gardée*. Johnson describes *coopérants* as the primary agents of the technical cooperation agreements:

"The *coopérant* provides a continuing governmental presence for the French in a way unique to Black Africa. To be sure, Israel, South Korea, Japan, Poland, the United States (AID and Peace Corps) and other countries have provided technical assistance through specialized missions or projects, but the *cooperation* accords signed between France and most of its ex-colonies have provided a continuity interpreted by some critics as the very heart of neo-colonialism. Critics admit that many of these agents offer valuable services, especially in the technical sphere, which developing countries could never pay for on their own; on the other hand, the criticism is leveled that the *coopérants* breed a continued dependence upon things French, whether in supplies, parts, or techniques. Breaking this condition of independence would, according to the argument, go a long way in helping establish real independence."¹⁹⁷

The number of official French military technical advisors in Africa was close to three thousand in the years just following independence, plunging steadily throughout the 1960s to a low of 1,272 in 1969. It had risen again to 1,591 in 1971 but continued to fall throughout the 1970s to its lowest point of 1,010 in 1977. However, in the following year a steady rise in military *coopérants* was once again evident¹⁹⁸, reflecting changes in military and political strategy during the Mitterand years. These figures cover only the official military

advisors, and not the base troops, or even the large number of teachers, economic advisors, or other French personnel that were stationed in Africa for various purposes. The broader definition of "*coopérant*" is that given by Johnson, and covers a number of missions and which may be military, diplomatic, intelligence-related, or completely non-military in nature. Most of the *coopérants* discussed here are military advisors, but there were also many teachers, economic experts, and administrators who went by that title too.¹⁹⁸⁹ Coopérants in the intelligence networks could be both military and civilian to some degree.²⁰⁰

Military Coopérants

The linchpin of the cooperation agreements lay in the relationship that France maintained with its former colonial army. In 1950, French sub-Saharan Africa had only 66 African officers, 90% of whom were lieutenants or sub-lieutenants. This figure and rank distribution remained substantially the same at independence a decade later.²⁰¹ During the post-World War II period, some attempts were made by the French to slowly Africanize the officer corps of the colonial armies but, as Claude Welch suggests²⁰² there was a limited budget for professionalizing African armies, and France preferred to continue the practice of providing its own officers directly to the colonial armies. This practice continued after independence, in spite of the increasing availability of comparably trained African officers. France after 1960 continued to bear many of the equipment and training costs of its former colonies' armed forces and, in spite of several educational and training programs intended to educate an elite African officer

corps, continued to assign a number of its own officers to command positions in francophone African armies. This practice, although partly a function of France's own institutional constraints and low expectations of African ability, also had the serendipitous effect of placing French citizens strategically *within* African military structures, and cemented into place military intelligence networks and African habits of institutional dependency on military aid and training that have been vital to continuing French influence in the region.

French policy since independence has been to improve, modernize and "Africanize" the francophone African armies, building upon the small improvements made during the last part of the colonial period, when African troops were still members of the armies of France. The French government saw France's military interests and its African clients' interests as co-extensive (whether or not this was actually the case), and maintained a corps of French officers and NCOs within African armies as a convenient way to streamline interoperability of technical support, and also as a way to emphasize the continuation of these shared interests and French influence.²⁰³

Table 5: Numbers of French Military Advisers in Central Africa in the 1980s:

	<u>1980²⁰⁴:</u>	<u>1988²⁰⁵:</u>
Gabon	132	111
Central Afr. Republic	32	76
Chad	81	41
Congo- Brazzaville	8	13
Cameroon	75	69
Burundi	17	28
Rwanda	8	20
Zaïre	128	105
Other Francophone Africa:	510	448
<u>TOTAL:</u>	<u>991</u>	<u>911</u>

Chaigneau notes that the number of French military advisers in Africa fell constantly from 1960 to 1977, but tended to rise after that date. As the table above demonstrates, the numbers of military *coopérants* remained at a fairly high level throughout the 1980s.

The numbers of advisors fluctuated between 900 and 1000 throughout the 1980s, reflecting other policy changes on the part of France and these countries. They also reflect that the variety of trainings, maneuvers, and other features of the various agreements might vary the numbers of advisors needed in a given year. Chad's decreased number of "advisors" between 1980 and 1988 may actually reflect fluctuations in troop presence: France's temporary withdrawals in 1980 and 1984 were each followed by renewed operations by troops, many of whom would not be classified as *coopérants*.

These figures for military advisors do not include the numerous other categories of advisors sent by France (teachers, economic representatives), nor do they include French base troops in the total, and so represent only a portion of the French presence. Arlinghaus gives a *coopérants* total of twenty-two thousand in all of Africa for 1982, stating that although French troops and technical advisors in Africa were outnumbered in general by the Soviets and Cubans, they were better organized and distributed throughout the region, and had more potential for effective intervention.²⁰⁶

Economic Coopérants

After independence, the ongoing development neediness and endemic debt of the African nations, combined with France's participation in African parastatal companies, agricultural concerns, manufacturing, banking, mining, petroleum extraction, telecommunications, transportation, and other economic concerns, ensured an interlocking network of obligation and investment that was as necessary to French political interests as it was to the functioning of francophone African economies and governments. Diplomatic (political) and economic *coopérants* were also, frequently enough, operatives in the intelligence network, and placed in situations where they had a considerable policy-making voice in African governments. This insured that the intelligence presence was never solely a military one, although it certainly enhanced France's strategic and tactical positions. Within the cooperation agreements, economic demands could be met in return for military concessions. In those countries without military bases or full-scale defense agreements, the cooperative *Assistance Militaire Technique* agreements left room to insure opportunities for intelligence, strategic placement of various kinds of military and nonmilitary *coopérants*, an early warning system for potential conflicts or leadership changes, and numerous ways for France to use development aid, the economic interests of African leaders, arms transfers and other incentives as political leverage.

Disaster Assistance: Since these former colonies have been offered the economic support of the Franc Zone, and have also been provided with some disaster cushioning in the form of infrastructural and administrative support under

the terms of the cooperation agreements, large-scale humanitarian crisis aid in the *chasse gardée* has largely been unnecessary. The countries have remained poor, and several are subject to frequent agricultural crisis due to drought, but none of them has had an ongoing crisis of the strength and severity of, e.g., Ethiopia's repeated humanitarian disasters of the past decades. As Zartman indicates, intervention in the case of a major collapse "must restore security, provide massive technical assistance and budgetary aid, and maintain a low profile." These measures are mutually contradictory, further inhibiting the desire to intervene, and increasing the incentive for the French to maintain preventive policies wherever possible in the *chasse gardée*. Indeed, Zartman emphasizes that economic intervention in the 1980s returned to a level that was more characteristic of the pre-independence years, a level that the French had hoped would be unnecessary. This economic intervention, along with debt-rescheduling and other economic measures largely forestalled the need for major humanitarian projects involving the French military, projects which would have been logistically and politically more risky if they had required long-term military contributions.²⁰⁷

Other types of *coopérants*

Administrative *coopérants* were also provided where professional expertise was required in banking and industry, as well as in governmental advisory positions. Teachers and educational administrators were also provided to the universities, technical schools and *lycées* (high schools). Many teaching *coopérants* were provided and paid by France to teach the French language,

literature and history, in order to insure the continuation of French as the primary language of commerce, government administration, and cultural exchange.

Augmenting what the French government continued to provide to its former colonies, a continuing religious presence was offered by the Roman Catholic Church, which sent priests, nuns, and teachers to the mission schools.

Persistent Gaullism under successive French presidencies

The Gaullist underpinnings of French presence persisted quite naturally with the change in government from de Gaulle to his chosen Gaullist successor Georges Pompidou. More surprisingly, the Gaullist philosophy of supporting friendly African dictators who were willing to act as extensions of French influence, and continued unilateral military intervention in francophone Africa, persisted even throughout the more idiosyncratic administration of Giscard d'Éstaing, and the putatively more "socialist" presidency of François Mitterand with his period of "*cohabitation*" with the Gaullists, until the return of more overt Gaullism under Jacques Chirac in the 1990s.

France's freedom of action in Africa remained linked integrally to the political freedom of action of the French presidents who have directed its Africa policy since 1960. The French *Assemblée Nationale* had relatively little to do with the direction and execution of this policy, and the political strength of de Gaulle and his ideological legacy were such that successive French presidents had remarkable freedom of choice as to which African leaders they supported and how they chose to support them. The domestic political constraints on the French presidency, even in as vocal a parliamentary democracy as that of

France, were relatively small compared to those on, e.g., the US's president or the UK's prime minister. The military constraints were more salient, but these have already been discussed; probably the biggest single domestic political constraint on the military was the requirement that French conscripts not be sent off of French soil without the approval of the *Assemblée*, a political constraint that made the intervention forces largely a professional army.

Since de Gaulle was the leader who had prevented France from losing its remaining colonies as violently as it had lost Algeria and Indochina, his Africa policy was translated to later presidencies largely unaltered during the time of his successor, Georges Pompidou.

Georges Pompidou was close to de Gaulle, and may properly be called the first Gaullist president, but was nonetheless required to make a number of adaptations to the military expressions of Gaullism due to the increasing bipolarity of the global situation. The most surprisingly persistent Gaullism where Africa was concerned came from the next president, Valéry Giscard d'Éstaing, an avowed parliamentary democrat and political liberal who promised France a less independent and more consultative and conciliatory presidency. It was during Giscard's "post-Gaullist" presidency that the contradictions inherent in Gaullist military policies became evident. After three years of reform, including a national security outlook that professed to be nonnuclear, more flexible, and more committed to Europe, Giscard returned to more orthodox Gaullist security patterns during his final four years in office. The arrival of tactical nuclear weapons in 1972 was a part of this new conception of French flexibility.²⁰⁸

Whoever occupied the French presidency from de Gaulle onwards, African intervention decisions were made almost entirely according to each president's personal commitment to the continent. France's speed of response and flexibility remained high so long as the decision-making capacity for African intervention remained closely tied to the French president and the Elysée's Office for African and Malagasy Affairs. Throughout the Gaullist period, this office was headed by Jacques Foccart, in "direct competition with the Ministry of Cooperation" as well as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Foccart's place at the center of an intelligence network with operatives in all of the African capitals made this office the first point of contact for anything of importance to France's Africa policy. The Ministry of Cooperation, which managed the *Assistance Militaire Technique* (AMT) agreements, has also intentionally been kept separate from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defense, and this has streamlined the decision-making process considerably. Also, since sub-Saharan presidents effectively had their own Paris Ministry, African presidents were able to maintain a direct line to the Elysée and a more direct voice, consequently, in France's Africa policy.²⁰⁹ The French Assembly has generally dealt with most intervention decisions after the fact.

Valéry Giscard d'Éstaing intended his presidency to be an answer to the cognitive constraints of Gaullism, a new ideological position, but found himself falling back into Gaullist patterns and policies in Africa when it became clear that those patterns constituted a working arrangement that worked as well for African leaders as they did for the French. Since the system was set up through the

cooperation agreements to require constant presence and vigilance, lapses in maintaining the *chasse gardée* in the careful centralized, watchful Gaullist manner would cause costly maintenance problems, as Giscard discovered in the Central African Republic, which became an Empire during his presidency with the inadvertent help of French foreign aid. Finally, François Mitterand, in spite of his party differences from both the Gaullists and Giscard, found himself promoting Gaullist policies not so much out of inertia, but because his own political past contained ties with African leaders that were much like de Gaulle's own, and these ties constituted a convenience and an advantage in dealing with African governments that proved impossible to give up completely.

Jacques Foccart was fired by Giscard for being too Gaullist, but whose network and methodology survived nonetheless. Foccart became something of an *eminence grise* for the subsequent network of personal emissaries to Africa established by President Mitterand. He was rehired by Prime Minister Chirac as *his* own personal Africa advisor during the "cohabitation" period between 1986 and 1988. The Mitterand emissaries included the president's own son, Jean-Christophe Mitterand, a former *Agence France Press* journalist who had worked in Africa²¹⁰, and whose derisive nickname among Africans was "*Papa m'a dit*."²¹¹

Mitterand, whose military and political career was marked by the ability to adapt his actions and rhetoric to a variety of circumstances, was able to adapt as well to the challenge of the Atlantic Alliance. His leftist "third worldism" was maintained as needed in the context of his dealings with the United States (e.g. his opposition to SDI) and he was not accused as frequently as his predecessor

Giscard of "*Atlanticisme*." He was all the more able to deflect domestic criticism, and work with Washington when he needed to.²¹² The advent of his presidency was initially hailed by African governments and ordinary Africans, who appeared to believe, first, that Mitterand was a pro-African politician with deep ties to African leaders dating from World War II and the last part of the colonial period, and second, that a socialist presidency would be sympathetic to a greater degree of freedom for African political and economic growth. The former certainly proved to be true. Mitterand's ties to the most loyal African leaders were maintained and nurtured with de Gaulle-like care, if not overtly Gaullist ideological language. In spite of rhetoric designed to make Africa, the French public, and the rest of the world believe that France's neocolonialist support of dictatorships had come to an end, the Mitterand years were not so different from previous presidencies. Indeed, the Mitterand government both cultivated and supported repressive authoritarian governments in the Central African Republic, Rwanda, Burundi, Zaïre, Congo-Brazzaville, Cameroon, Gabon and Chad.

Mitterand's decisions in Africa mirrored a trend visible in his administration of France's overall security policy, which had become almost definitively Gaullist fairly early in his presidency. The Socialist government adapted its defense policy to the Gaullist model, which it had previously criticized as unrealistic. By 1981, Mitterand had also adapted the Gaullist model to the changing security situation, increasing France's defense contribution to Europe considerably without giving up any of its autonomy. Part of the reason for this lingering and pervasive Gaullism was that, by the 1970s, the basic premises on which de

Gaulle had based French military policy were firmly anchored in public opinion and within the military itself, which had no desire to abandon nuclear power status, or to return to basing foreign (NATO) troops on French soil. The Socialists, whose rhetoric was previously in favor of becoming non-nuclear and more Europe-oriented, became *de facto* Gaullists once in power. Like his predecessors, Mitterand also discovered that the independent, personalized policy-making of the Gaullist presidential style was useful to him as well, making domestic parliamentary constraints and public opinion into occasional political nuisance but never a straitjacket.²¹³

Finally, all of these French presidents benefited from taking as their model the single biggest constraint that Gaullism had placed on the rest of the French political system: the centralized, independent, autonomous strength of the French presidency. Non-Gaullist presidents acted like autonomous, independent Gaullists because de Gaulle had left them with a tactical advantage built into the structure of the French political system.

France's freedom of action during the first post-colonial decade was larger than at any subsequent time, even given its domestic political constraints. True to Gaullist principles, France's Africa policy was directed almost entirely during de Gaulle's decade by the executive branch of the government, and was influenced very little by any ministry other than the Ministry of Cooperation. Domestic parliamentary debate and the French public's opinion of various interventions counted for relatively little. In general, De Gaulle did not need parliamentary approval to conduct the interventions of the 1960s. There

remained the one significant military limitation, however, in that both public opinion and French law restrained the president from sending French conscripts onto non-French soil except under the most extraordinary circumstances, and then only with the explicit blessing of the legislature. This placed significant logistical and manpower constraints on France's ability to conduct large-scale military interventions. It also required the military to actively encourage volunteer enlistment, and also to maintain, train and improve the all-volunteer Foreign Legion at a highly functional level as professional intervention specialists

French domestic political constraints on Africa policy after 1960 also included competition for parts of the military budget from government arms research and development (building up France's naval, air, ground and nuclear capabilities in Europe), and the continuing attempts on the part of the French president and parliament to place restraints on one another's ability to make policy. Once France made the decision to become a nuclear power, nuclear expenditures received priority. (France needed to do much of this work from the ground up, reinventing the wheel -- or rather the bomb, because of the US's nonproliferation concerns.)

The various Military Program Laws after 1960 represented successive plans for modernizing all levels of French forces from the nuclear weapons to the infantry. However, early concentration on the *force de frappe* constrained some of the budget which might have been offered to the other parts of the armed services.²¹⁴ These decisions affected the military cooperation assistance offered to African governments as well, and made their promises to assist France in

whatever way possible to secure their own region and support France's international policies all the more important. Also, because modernization of the ground forces to be deployed in the former colonies was delayed by the nuclear budget commitments, the missions that these forces carried out were still performed during the 1960s much as they had been in the 1950s, and were not integrated with the Europe-focused nuclear deterrence policy.²¹⁵

France needed to re-shape its strategic policies in the years after the 1960s in order to take into account the increasing number of regional and international regimes and institutions that might offer either opportunities or threats to French interests in the African region. The Organization of African Unity, founded in 1963, and the United Nations were relatively ineffective during the period of this case study, although they became more important during the period of the second case study. International human rights organizations began to be active during the period, including Amnesty International, founded in 1961 to promote the goals of the International Declaration of Human Rights, but had only just begun during this period to have an influence on the way human rights questions were framed in African politics. While inter-governmental (IGO) and non-governmental (NGO) organizations provided new forums in which to raise issues related to governance in the new nations, these were not yet powerful enough to have a substantial influence on French policy in the region. The OAU's participation in Chad in the 1970s was limited, and was influenced substantially by the interests of the wealthier and more powerful countries in the region (particularly Nigeria and Libya).

The increasing number of regular summit conferences by francophone heads of state during the 1960s and 1970s also became important regional institutions and opportunities for France to cement its relationships with African presidents, which continue until this day. They were established by Pompidou's first invitation to African heads of state, and welcomed by African governments, which found the summits a useful venue for putting pressure on France as well as for presenting their positions. Social links among these heads of state include shared military experiences, relationships formed in those universities and schools which were open to Africans (like the École William Ponty near Dakar which educated a large number of the Africans in the colonial civil service who achieved political power before and during independence²¹⁶), and French freemasonry, which has many members among African elites and heads of state, including President Omar Bongo of Gabon.²¹⁷

Change over time in the cooperation agreements

The formal defense agreements with independent African governments, supplemented by informal defense “understandings” supported by the intelligence networks, continued to function during the period after the death of de Gaulle with many if not all of the countries of France's former colonial empire. These agreements offered weapons as deemed appropriate for African needs and French interests, infrastructural creation and maintenance, training, and the promise of protection against external attack. Some of these agreements still included the implied promise to defend the head of state and his government against internal oppositional attacks as well, as will be demonstrated in the cases

of the Central African Republic and Gabon. French military readiness and response capability varied according to the terms of each of the defense and military cooperation agreements.

France's military options during the 1970s and 1980s continued to be closely related to the ways in which the Central African nations' cooperation agreements structured the French presence in each country. These agreements gave France a number of options if its help was needed (assisting or preventing a coup, fighting insurgency) to defuse or prevent African threats to French or African security, or if an African client became embarrassing or opposed French objectives to an untenable degree. The carrots and sticks changed very little over the decades from the 1960s through those offered in the 1980s. The cooperation agreements continued to leave intervention decisions in the hands of the French president and his group of Africa hands in the *Elysée*, many of whom, like Foccart, received their initial African experience during the colonial phase just after World War II. The French options during the 1970s, even until the present day, can still be characterized as Chaigneau does, in terms of "intervention" (whether by the *Forces d'Intervention* or the later *FAR*) or "presence" (as in the Africa-based *Forces de Presence*).

The two types of military agreements, defense agreements (allowing for direct military intervention in African countries at the discretion of the French president) and military cooperation agreements (providing for training, technical assistance and equipment transfers) continued to insure France's continuity in the region, although these were occasionally re-negotiated and updated to reflect

new political priorities. Central African Republic and Gabon, both of which had large French bases on their soil, had maintained their defense agreements without much alteration since signing their accords in the early 1960s. In 1989, the most extensive types of presidential regime defense agreements were still in force between France and Cameroon (signed in 1974), Central African Republic (in 1960), and Gabon (in 1960). Military cooperation agreements were signed by a much larger number of former colonies, as well as by several that were not formerly French. These included Cameroon (1974), Central African Republic (1960), Chad (1976), Congo-Brazzaville (1974), and Gabon (1960), and the former Belgian colonies: Burundi (1969), Rwanda (1975), and Zaire (1974). Libya even signed a military cooperation agreement with France in 1978²¹⁸, although that arrangement has fluctuated wildly depending on Libya's own military interventions in Chad, and Chad's own defense agreements with France.

By the mid-1970s, only a few of the cooperation agreements were on the same comprehensive scale as those signed in the 1960s. Of the twelve agreements in existence in 1960 and 1961, only the Central African Republic, Gabon, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo and Cameroon kept their agreements largely as they had been drawn up at independence.²¹⁹ Cameroon did not sign a new agreement to host French forces, but its relations with France remained in accordance with the former agreement. From the mid-1970s on, French base forces remained officially only in Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, and the Central African Republic, with additional support from the continuing base in Djibouti.²²⁰ Chad received a significant military commitment from France throughout a period

of nearly continuous internal strife and external insecurity, although this commitment varied according to the ability of each successive French president to offer aid to various Chadian leaders.

The defense accords signed after independence between France and Gabon are a representative example which showing the early military administrative structures of these agreements. At the individual state level, defense matters were referred to a "mixed Committee" assisted by the Bureau of Defense. The Committee contained the French ambassador assigned to the country, the French commander of that particular overseas zone, and the African head of state. The Defense Bureau contained a French superior officer, the African country's superior military officer, and one or more *fonctionnaires* (bureaucrats) from the French Embassy. At the regional level, if multiparty defense agreements were to be considered, there was yet another defense council, including once again the relevant African heads of state, the Prime Minister of France (or his representative), and a general of the French Army delegated for this purpose in each African state. Both military and civilian *fonctionnaire coopérants* were involved.

According to Pascal Chaigneau, France had a twofold objective in maintaining its presence in African armies: to preserve the free maneuverability and ready networks indispensable to the conduct of military operations, and to guarantee the internal security of each participating state.²²¹

In the early 1970s, a number of states requested the renegotiation of their military cooperation agreements, the removal of some of the more restrictive

clauses, and a greater "Africanization" of their economic institutions as well. Although France responded to this readily, by renegotiating many of the defense cooperation agreements and by moving the two regional banks of the Central and West African sections of the Franc Zone to Yaoundé (Cameroon) and Dakar (Senegal), France remained in effective charge of a number of African economic institutions, however. Since it also remained the preponderant power in the military and economic cooperation agreements, its flexibility of response was essentially preserved even if the language of the contracts appeared to offer it less room to maneuver. Since that time, however, it has become evident that the increasingly independent policies of African presidents make it more difficult for the France to influence bilateral relationships as it once did.²²²

During the 1970s, France renegotiated military cooperation agreements that provided training assistance and joint exercises, as well as military equipment, to Cameroon, Central African Republic, and Gabon. French officers were provided in many instances to command African troops in a continuation of what had occurred in all of the French African colonies since the colonial-era creation of the *Tirailleurs Sénégalais*. (The same was even true in the once Belgian, and still francophone, former colonies of Zaire, Rwanda and Burundi.²²³) As of 1984, only Cameroon, Central African Republic, and Gabon in Central Africa (and Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire in West Africa) continued to have the most comprehensive defense accords. These five also continued to have *Assistance Militaire Technique* agreements, as did Congo-Brazzaville, Zaïre, Rwanda, and Burundi.²²⁴

Although many of the military cooperation agreements of the early 1960s were later revised or terminated because of internal domestic factors, or even credit problems with some of the poorer states, France has managed to maintain a number of agreements with provisions specifically tailored to each nation. What France agreed to in each case is sometimes not an indication as to how useful each of its options proved to be in responding to a particular case. Having detailed the nature of the technological superiority of which France is capable, one must also consider whether, and in what ways, technological superiority was a necessary asset to France in Africa, where often a French troop presence backed by a few airplanes was all that was needed in order to make an impression.

Chad was a case where much more was needed, however, as will be demonstrated in the next section. It required several larger-scale interventions which had less to do with the terms of its agreement than with the knowledge of what would happen if any of the cooperation agreements, even the informal ones which were made between France and the various Chadian insurgents and factional leaders, were seen to have failed.²²⁵ The trust of even France's smaller allies in the regions had to be maintained.

French garrison troops in 1986 at the largest French bases numbered 450 Marines in Côte d'Ivoire, 1,200 in Senegal, and 650 in Gabon. Gabon also rotated in occasional metropolitan cavalry and engineers. Spahi or Marine regiments usually served in the Central African Republic.²²⁶ Details on the varied uses of the garrison troops, or "*Forces de Presence*," is given in the

previous chapter concerning France's speed of response and intervention capability. Chaigneau notes that the number of military *coopérants* in Africa fell constantly from 1960 to 1977, but rose after 1977.

French political penetration continued during the last part of the twentieth century to be both deep, and personalized. Military governments with economic constraints continued to offer opportunities to France, streamlining the delivery of military aid and positioning French military *coopérants* within African political hierarchies. The intelligence capacity and personal services rendered to African governments by various members of Foccart's networks remained useful tools of government to both French and African leaders. The case of Gabon will demonstrate this capacity. Gabon has had a nominally civilian government for a long time, but the French intelligence presence in Gabon, although it is "informal," continues to partake of the character, methods and personnel of the military relationships developed during the Free French period in Africa, and a number of the economic and political advisors are connected with it.

Cabinet shuffles in francophone Africa often occurred as a result of French intervention, or with French consultation. France did not hesitate to intervene to influence the choice (or firing) of particular African government ministers when someone either suited French interests or got in their way. Charges of corruption were not always necessary in such cases, but provided a convenient and often-present excuse. Although some level of governmental corruption was occasionally helpful in maintaining French influence, too much diversion of

French aid (or its diversion into unintended hands), was sometimes a reason to intervene.²²⁷

Humanitarian operations and peacekeeping interventions were well within France's capacity for the most part during the decades following African independence, and France's ongoing military, diplomatic and intelligence presence facilitated the speed and effectiveness of delivery. Short-term military interventions were preferred, however, as was a consistent level of military and economic aid that forestalled the need for any intervention forces at all. Longer-term interventions were generally avoided as politically and financially costly (except in Chad), largely because the recent colonial pacification operations in Indochina and Algeria were remembered as expensive, exhausting, and ultimately ineffective.

France had the capacity to offer humanitarian aid to the francophone African countries, but preferred to maintain the internal security and economies of these countries at such a level that large-scale humanitarian disaster aid (e.g., in the not-infrequent event of a drought in the Sahel) was not frequently necessary. French economic and infrastructural aid was defined as humanitarian, but usually occurred in the context of the cooperation agreements, rather than as a reaction to unforeseen events. France was well aware of the politically destabilizing effects of economic hardship, and considered Sahelian droughts and commodity price fluctuations to be enough of a continuing security risk to institute careful financial controls in the Franc Zone and a constant level of various types of assistance.²²⁸ Although France could and would certainly

provide humanitarian aid in emergencies, it preferred preventive, rather than reactive measures. The types of aid that current Western governments often refer to as "capacity-building" were evident in the areas of agriculture, health, education, business, banking, road construction, and sanitation, and most of it fell within the ongoing contractual arrangements of the cooperation agreements.

The same was somewhat true of France's capacity for military peacekeeping during the 1960s and 1970s, continuing the Lyautey doctrine of "*faut manifester la force pour en éviter l'emploi*." Preventing the need for too-frequent policing of warring parties was built into the very notion of French presence. During the 1960s, France conducted a number of successful small-scale operations that it defined as peacekeeping, including interventions that largely involved riot suppression and the containment of internal disturbances. The operations called "peacekeeping" by the French were more accurately pacification operations that preserved French power in the region by maintaining leaders in power who acted in the French interest most of the time. Any humanitarian aid delivered in the context of such operations was secondary to the overall military peacekeeping objectives. However, large-scale peacekeeping operations requiring thousands of intervention troops over the long term continued to be unpopular in Paris.

The hope which accompanied de Gaulle's creation of the *Force d'Intervention* was that an obvious display of France's willingness to intervene, combined with the continued cultivation of privileged and fruitful relationships between the French *patron* and African client states would forestall as much as

possible the need for actual military intervention. As the case of Chad will amply demonstrate, however, several of the client states in Central Africa required military actions during the following decades, and these actions demonstrated a number of the limitations inherent in France's intervention capacity when it came to larger-scale conflicts that had ramifications beyond the francophone nations themselves. In Chad, starting late in the 1960s, the internally warring parties had enough external support to transform France's peace-keeping operation into a long-term campaign with sporadic increases and decreases in troops and equipment over a period of years. France tried to minimize her presence in Chad, using only as many troops and as much equipment as was politically tolerable at home at any given time. Although France maintained some control over Chad, and slowed the progress of the various warring parties, it was unable to stop the Chadian rebellion completely. Chad engaged in almost two decades of civil war and experienced interventions not only by France, but also by Libya and other African nations. In comparison, another large-scale conflict during the 1960s, the Nigerian Civil War, demonstrated that France's formerly imperial influence was not enough to prevent the largest anglophone nation in the West African region from becoming a regional power in its own right.

France's ability to shape the peacetime environment according to its preferences in its former central African colonies after the death of De Gaulle lessened over time. Its objectives for the *chasse gardée* did not change greatly until the 1990s, when the relationship required more accommodation to African preferences, and more attention to outside competition from the United States,

China, and the newly hegemonic states of South Africa and Nigeria, which were beginning to play a much greater role in regional affairs on the continent.

The limits to French power lie largely in the African leaders' growing knowledge that France still has need of them for a number of reasons. The depth of their understanding of French culture allows them to manipulate the relationship with their former colonial overlord and make the most of what little reciprocal power is available to them. Their greatest advantage remains that France continues to need its African *chasse gardée*. France's need for strategic resources like petroleum and uranium are only part of the picture, and perhaps not even the most salient part. While the loss of *Algérie Française* meant that one could no longer say, in the words of General Raoul Salan²²⁹ that, "the Mediterranean runs through France as the Seine runs through Paris," it remains true that France continues to view its former sub-Saharan possessions as a vital extension of its own power and prestige. By integrating its interests closely with those of its African "partners" in a relationship of fraternity (if not complete liberty and equality), France has continued to preserve itself as an African regional power.

France's own form of government was only mirrored at the very topmost level in African governments, since strong military presidents could model themselves on Charles de Gaulle and find the synchronous development politically useful. Local democratic development, or even democracy itself, was not really necessary for pursuing France's goals in Africa, and neither were nationalized resource extraction capacities or industrial growth and development,

as these would actually have increased these nations' independence from France politically and economically. France was successful in preventing excessively rapid growth in democratization, resource nationalization, and industry. However, some controlled development of pro-capitalist economic policies, preferential import and export relationships, and francophile cultural preferences was important to preserving the region as an opportunity zone for French profit and prestige enhancement, and so the maintenance of the Franc Zone and continuing infrastructural assistance was a necessary feature of French policy.

The Gaullist military legacy is thought to have associated the glory of France as a great power with military force projection, which may have become less useful in recent years. The French themselves occasionally question its legitimacy and wonder if "*grandeur*" cannot be obtained in economic and political terms rather than by military threat. It should be remembered that de Gaulle himself wished France to recover economic and political glory as well as independent military security. He de-emphasized the military budget, except for the portion devoted to the *force de frappe*, and the French nuclear force was paid for by troop cutbacks in Africa and elsewhere.²³⁰ Other means of support were called for, if France was to remain powerful in Africa. The next chapter details the economic and political means by which France maintained its power in the former *Afrique Équatoriale Française*, at least through the 1990s.

De Gaulle's withdrawal of major parts of France's armies from many of its overseas commitments during the 1960s, particularly in North Africa, may well

have lessened its ability to intervene in major wars in parts of Africa that bordered on its former colonies. However, this withdrawal needs to be seen in the context of de Gaulle's policy choice to concentrate on preserving the economic and political alliances with sub-Saharan nations, while guaranteeing the safety of particular leaders and of the overall territorial integrity of the many small nations that France had conquered and divided into states. The smaller interventions to prop up loyal leaders were the most successful during the 1960s, in that they offered large political advantages in return for relatively small troop commitments. Major participation in regional wars was avoided during the first 10 years of the Fifth Republic by fulfilling the terms of the cooperation agreements, demonstrating the reliability of the Franc Zone's economic support, maintaining the base troop presence as a threat against disorder and a reassurance to African presidents, and solidifying France's political relationships with the new African governments.

The next chapter will offer a more in-depth look at the four countries formerly known as Afrique Equatoriale Française: the Republic of Gabon, the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville), the Central African Republic (CAR), and the Republic of Chad. For each of these, I will examine how well France's goals were accomplished, at what costs, what domestic constraints stood in the way in both France and the region, and which other great powers or neighboring countries contested France's persisting influence in the *chasse gardée*.

CHAPTER 5:
FRANCE'S SUCCESSES & FAILURES IN *AFRIQUE*
ÉQUATORIALE (CASE STUDIES)

CASE I. GABON

A. Introduction:

The Republic of Gabon's territorial features and natural resources that are of the most strategic interest to France are its ocean ports, timber, minerals and offshore oil. Gabon is a source of petroleum, natural gas, diamonds, uranium, gold, manganese, iron and other minerals. Industries include petroleum extraction and refining; manganese and gold mining and refining, chemicals, ship repair, and the manufacture of cement, lumber, plywood, textiles, food and beverages. Agricultural products include cocoa, coffee, sugar, palm oil, rubber, beef and fish.²³¹ Gabon has a small population relative to its size and, with France's help, has experienced more political stability than most African countries. These conditions, plus the exploitation of its considerable natural resources (particularly the oil in Corisco Bay), have made it one of Africa's richer nations *per capita*, and by far the most economically stable of the four countries considered here.

Gabon has had only two presidents since its independence on August 13, 1960. It has been controlled by the Gabonese Democratic Party (PDG) for most of its post-colonial history, led since 1967 by President Alhadji Omar Bongo Ondimba, who succeeded its first President, Léon Mba. Nominally a republic,

and based originally on France's own Fifth Republic, Gabon's government has historically been a centralized, autocratic presidential bureaucracy where power is distributed largely through patronage. When no parliamentary assembly is in session, the president has the power to veto legislation that has been passed. He can dissolve the national assembly, call a new election, or govern by presidential decree. The police and the Defense Ministry's gendarmerie are responsible for public security. Although all ethnic groups have access to positions in government, the President Bongo's Bateke ethnic group and allied southern groups are heavily favored in positions of power, particularly in the military and the Republican Guard, which protects the president. Gabonese citizens have only limited ability to criticize or change their government. The PDG tends to win sizeable majorities (usually at least 66%) of the vote in elections that are only modestly "free and fair," and in which international observers note many polling irregularities. The legal system is based on French civil law and Gabonese customary law. The constitution and legal code prohibit arbitrary arrest and detention without warrants, and also torture and the use of excessive force. However, torture and repeated severe beatings are routinely used on detainees, usually in order to obtain confessions. Arbitrary arrests without warrants are common, as is lengthy detention without charge or trial. Mandated fair trial procedures are only irregularly observed. The judiciary and police are corrupt and inefficient. Judicial decisions are influenced heavily by the government's wishes. Members of the security forces appear to have almost complete impunity if accused of involvement in criminal activity or mistreatment of

detainees. Privacy, freedom of speech and freedom of the press are restricted. The only daily newspaper is government-affiliated. Independent newspapers appear only irregularly and offer critical views of the government; however, they are hampered by frequent license suspensions, severe penalties for libel, and financial difficulties. The media is usually allowed to criticize members of the government, but never anything regarding President Bongo or his family.²³²

B. How well were France's goals accomplished in Gabon?

Fifteen cooperation agreements were signed with France at independence, covering a number of different military and economic areas. Specific terms of the military cooperation agreement with Gabon were as follows: presidential protection, defense against internal conflict and external attack. French troops were based in Libreville. While Gabon preferred that the French troops not be used in other African countries, probably because it did not wish to appear to be helping France breach the sovereignty of its neighbors, the French troops based in Gabon were used elsewhere as often as France required. Positioning stocks and supplies at the bases has simplified intervention in Gabon by making use of the bases' ongoing connections with local suppliers. The Africa-based French troops in Gabon have been used for interventions in Gabon and other neighboring francophone states as logistical and manpower support.²³³ They were *forces de présence*, on-site and capable of intervening as ordered by the *Elysée*, without help from troops based in Europe, wherever a French force projection statement was required. This could be to add protection or provide training to a president's own security forces, or to remind local clients of the

potential power of their French *patron*. As David Gardinier says of the solidity of Bongo's tenure, "Revolt would have been futile because the France of Presidents Charles de Gaulle, Georges Pompidou, and Valéry Giscard d'Éstaing (1958-1981) was prepared to intervene militarily to support Bongo under the terms of the defense cooperation agreement."²³⁴

Permanent bases, troops, intervention forces, arms sales and military training in Gabon have included the following. As of 1977, the *Forces de Présence* in Gabon consisted of the 6th *Battalion d'Infanterie de Marine* (or *BIMa*). These overseas-based missions had the following official goals: "safeguarding the security and integrity of overseas departments and territories, participating in assisting (technically or militarily) friendly nations, and guaranteeing French influence and the safety of French citizens overseas." The 6th BIMa in Gabon was an independent command based in the capital, Libreville.²³⁵

France was required to intervene in order to protect first President Mba three years after independence due to his increasingly repressive leadership, which sparked a rebellion. Remarkably, that has been the only coup attempt producing a need for the French to protect a Gabonese president. However, protecting Mba was unpopular in France. Michel Martin says that it was this 1964 intervention in Gabon that sparked the *Assemblée Nationale's* insistence that French draftees could not be sent abroad without its authorization.²³⁶

By 1989, the 6th BIMa was still in Gabon, calling on the Djibouti base for more marine infantry for occasional support. They could interact with the French

intervention forces, the *FAR*, in spite of the cooperation agreement with Gabon, which stipulated that Gabonese territory could not be used for direct interventions in other countries, but only as a staging post. This staging capacity of the permanent bases, however, has been vital. For example, the Libreville (Gabon), Bangui and Bouar (both in CAR) bases were used to stage the 1983 Chad intervention.

Host governments like Gabon generally disapproved of the external use of the battalions stationed in Gabon, CAR, Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire, often citing the OAU Charter's African sovereignty (i.e. non-intervention) principle, but they have not refused France the use of French troops when France has formally asked their permission. Since these French forces are primarily intended as a local deterrent against domestic unrest, this official reluctance is understandable. President Bongo of Gabon has found French troops to be of immediate use to him domestically on several occasions, and is particularly *exigent* about their return to Gabon after any use elsewhere.²³⁷ These *Forces de Presence* insure a continuing capacity to deter internal conflict, as well as acting as an early warning system, providing immediate intelligence on events with a larger potential for conflict. The host countries' armies rarely go on maneuvers without including French troops. As an example, Chipman cites the 1987 joint Gabonese-French exercise that combined the 6th BIMA with Gabon's security forces in order to design and practice a defense of the uranium and manganese mines near Franceville.²³⁸

Another of France's less obvious objectives in placing base troops in Gabon was to have them available for pacification operations in other francophone states. Mitterand's 1986 Togo intervention was an example where the French base troops in former colonies were used outside of their host's territory, in spite of the clause in Gabon's cooperation agreement which stipulated that France was not to do this. 200 French parachutists were sent from the bases in CAR and Gabon just before the Lomé Franco-African summit meeting (excellent political timing), in order to quell what President Eyadema described as a Ghana-inspired opposition uprising (providing a useful anglophone foil). The Togo intervention demonstrated exactly what Mitterand had promised, and what other French presidents would have hoped for in their interventions: French reliability and loyalty to its African partners, a successful demonstration of the potential speed and power of French force projection, and the ability to carry off a successful intervention with a small number of French troops in a brief time frame. There was some surprise internationally that Togo was still among the countries which could command an immediate French response but this, perhaps, made the demonstration all the stronger as to what France would do even if an otherwise-loyal country did not go so far as to maintain French bases on its soil. There was also the requisite inter-African collaboration: President Mobutu sent a Zaïrian Army detachment to Togo with the French troops and aircraft to protect his fellow francophone President Eyadema.²³⁹

In addition to the occasional maneuvers which combine the armies of host countries and the French troops based in them, the French organized, once a year, maneuvers which included the host country armies (particularly those from the countries with permanent bases: Senegal, Gabon, Côte d'Ivoire and Central African Republic), the base troops of the *Forces de Presence*, and the intervention *FAR*. The first-ever of these exercises took place in Senegal in 1967, and included counter-insurgency and anti-guerrilla training. Bilateral exercises also take place occasionally in those countries where France had defense agreements, but no bases. These exercises continue to provide a concrete demonstration of political solidarity between these countries and France, and also a place where each partner's force projection potential is displayed. Representatives from other francophone African countries often observed these exercises in the past.²⁴⁰

France's bilateral training exercises with the francophone African countries are less frequently attended by officials from others than they used to be. Many of France's ex-colonies, especially those without French bases, have a competing interest in not revealing whatever closeness remains in their ongoing relationship with France.²⁴¹ While the varieties of "carrot" and "stick" remained identical to those of the first ten years post-independence, France's ability to exercise them, particularly over the course of longer-term military interventions, was becoming more and more subject to accusations of neo-colonialism, not only from its fellow great powers, but from its African clients. This did not mean that

France did not continue to intervene, only that more subtlety was required in order to preserve the appearance of benevolent overlordship.

Arms transfers and sales were also made which supported France's presence and Gabon's ability to interact with France's military. France sent infantry weapons and mortars to Gabon during the 1960s. France's arms transfers to the *chasse gardée* during the 1960s concentrated noticeably on infantry weapons and the lighter artillery, but France also sent weapons to many more of the francophone countries than its nearest competitors, remaining their primary source of supply during the period. The scale of the transfers was modest in scope, but France maintained a near-monopoly on transfers to her former colonies. After 1978, French arms transfers increased in both quantities and level of sophistication.²⁴² *Mirage* counter-insurgency aircraft (COIN) were sent by France during the 1970s and 1980s to Gabon, along with armored cars and armored personnel carriers. In 1980²⁴³, France provided 52.7% of Gabon's armaments.

Gabon was in many ways one of the very few French colonial "dogs that didn't bark" because all-out civil war and coups d'état were avoided altogether and conflicts manipulated utterly to French advantage. The means of doing this included all four of the dimensions studied in this work: military, political, economic and cultural options were all in use, the Foccart intelligence network integrating the four. Alone among the four countries studied here, Gabon has had no large-scale civil war since independence.

Local constraints on French military action included the need to upgrade

African technical capability with successive upgrades in weapons since African technical education levels varied greatly from those of the French.

Sometimes, *présence* was enough. Samuel Decalo suggests that France's pattern of military interventions is such that:

"probably all that really prevents the overthrow of many 'stable' civilian regimes (e.g. Senegal, Ivory Coast, Gabon) may be nothing more than the physical presence of French troops in these countries and/or the known commitment of France to the preservation in office of the existing civilian hierarchies."²⁴⁴

France's ability to influence the outcomes of the smaller regional conflicts in francophone Africa during the immediate post-independence decade was quite strong. Gabon required some armed intervention in 1960, 1962, and 1964.²⁴⁵ The fighting was quickly suppressed, and France remained the paramount external influence there.

The most public intervention in accordance with Gabon's defense agreement was the aforementioned defense of President Mba in 1964, when French forces put down an uprising by opposition leaders. The defense agreement with Gabon had contained an implicit provision for the personal protection of the Gabonese president. This intervention came as a surprise to those not involved in French Africa policy because France had exercised its option not to intervene following the assassination of President Olympio of Togo in 1963.²⁴⁶ France had also not sent troops to Congo-Brazzaville that same year in response to an internal conflict there. The defense of Mba had the effect of speeding the deployment of the new intervention forces to be based in France, accompanied by political rhetoric concerning the advisability of external

deterrence threats and increases in economic aid that might forestall the need for military action.²⁴⁷

In addition, although Gabon's defense agreement stipulated that the president was required to ask for French assistance in order to receive it, it is possible that Mba made no such request. With the help of de Gaulle's Africa advisor, Jacques Foccart, and his French intelligence network in Gabon, a meeting of the Foccart network was activated, Mba was surrounded by French advisors and troops during all of the ensuing unrest, and remained President of Gabon until his death from cancer later in the year, at which point the Foccart operatives managed to replace him with a hand-picked successor, Omar Bongo.²⁴⁸

The overall speed of France's response was generally determined by the nature of each military cooperation agreement with a given country, and the resulting consistency and strength of the French presence in that country. In Gabon, that presence was clearly sufficient to maintain good intelligence and a careful guiding hand to restrain local conflict and influence local politics in directions advantageous to France.

France's political goals in Gabon have been, mainly, keeping the military base in place and the oil flowing to France, and keeping the alliance with the Gabonese government strong. Manipulating the presidential succession has achieved consistent and friendly civilian control throughout the decades following independence. Although never a complete democracy, also in contrast to the

other three countries studied here, Gabon has not had at any point what could be called a military government.

In spite of the French presence, there were quite a few successful military *coups d'état* in a number of the francophone states during the 1970s and 1980s, including all three of the other cases in this study: Chad (1975), Congo-Brazzaville (1977 and 1979), and the Central African Empire/Republic (1979 and 1981). For purposes of comparison, and in apparent congruence with Decalo's conclusion above, Gabon has maintained civilian control from independence through present day, with the heavy presence of French troops guaranteeing the continuing tenure of its civilian leaders Léon Mba and Omar Bongo.²⁴⁹

Gabon makes a particularly interesting case study in constancy of French presence because it is one of the few former French colonies on the continent that not only maintained the more politically penetrative form of cooperation agreement (for internal as well as external security), but has also kept its agreement largely as it had been drawn up at independence. Jean-François Bayart tells one of the famous Foccart stories concerning the rise to power of Omar Bongo in Gabon, demonstrating the very ordinariness of "foreign interference" via some of the intelligence and/or advisory relationships maintained with France, and the often astute use made of these relationships by Africans who could manipulate them:

"Inasmuch as it is quite open, the interference does not involve any conspiracy. A former French ambassador in Libreville, for example, quite calmly told the story of how in 1966 the vice-president of the Gabonese government, who was 'almost illiterate', asked him 'whether or not he could sign some documents' in the absence of the head of state who was ill, how he himself 'regularly took instructions from Jacques Foccart who

was following the situation very closely' and how, in the end, he obtained from the dying Léon Mba a draft constitutional reform in favour of Bongo."²⁵⁰

The French could not afford to lose Gabon (in particular, its large military base and effective control over its considerable oil resources) after the death of the loyal francophile President Mba, and groomed his successor, Omar Bongo, while Mba was dying of cancer in a French hospital. Omar Bongo, like most francophone heads of state, had a French military background. He was from a younger generation of African leaders, and had joined the French Army Air Corps in 1958, becoming a second lieutenant, and stationed at Brazzaville (Congo), Bangui (CAR), and finally at N'Djamena in Chad. He left the Army with the rank of lieutenant, and firm credentials as a Gaullist. He worked in Gabon first in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and then in Mba's Cabinet. After the attempted coup, Bongo began to receive funds from France via Foccart, and picked up one cabinet portfolio after another during Mba's illness until he became Vice President of Gabon, and effectively, Mba's successor. Mba was pressed to agree to all of this on his deathbed, according to the personal memoirs of then-French Ambassador Delauney. Bongo has been, as of this writing, President of Gabon for 42 years.²⁵¹

Jacques Foccart's network ("*le réseau Foccart*"), in those formulations that have dubbed Gabon "Foccartland," was said to be composed of Foccart himself, President Omar Bongo, Bongo's influential assistant Georges Rawiri, the longtime French Ambassador Maurice Robert, the former Ambassador and French Elf-Gabon oil company chief Maurice Delauney, French mercenaries

trained by Pierre Debizet, a security specialist, and a shadowy group of spies and ex-soldiers, some of whom served in the French Resistance. Foccart himself joined the Resistance in 1940, working with the *Bureau Central de Renseignement et d'Action* (BCRA), the French Nazi-removal network based in London, and his wartime paracommando unit became the basis of the French CIA equivalent, the SDECE. He drew contacts, operatives, and possible assassins from his wartime contacts, and formed the *Service d'Action Civique* as a special branch of the SDECE to perform the more covert, and often illegal or politically dicey, operations necessary in the course of Foccart's lifelong service to numerous French presidents. Foccart's private import-export company, SAFIEX, was a cover for information gathering for the French intelligence services. In addition to Mba and Bongo in Gabon, Foccart befriended Houphouët-Boigny of Côte d'Ivoire early in the Ivorian president's political career and maintained this friendship until both died in the mid-1990s, and was introduced to President Mba by President Houphouët. Like many of the later francophone African presidents, Mba and Houphouët could call Foccart at any time on the telephone without an intermediary, and he could do so with them. Foccart was appointed de Gaulle's technical advisor on African Affairs in 1958, and was also his liaison between the Elysée and the SDECE.²⁵² The foreign affairs ministry should have been the main architect of France's Africa policy but that responsibility fell early to Foccart, who also organized all visits to Paris by African heads of state, and all visits to Africa by the French president. Colonel Bob Denard, the French mercenary who was later responsible for a coup in the

Comoros in 1975, was a member of the Foccart network in Gabon for many years, and helped President Bongo to set up the paramilitary forces which are assigned to guard the buildings and installations of the French Elf-Gabon oil company. The activities of Jacques Foccart in Gabon are frequently offered as the most egregious illustrations of France's "neo-colonialism." Indeed, Douglas Yates suggests that, "unlike other French colonies that had to struggle for their freedom (e.g., Indochine, Algérie), it was the good fortune of Gabon to have been made free without having to become so." However, in spite of the undoubted influence in Gabon of Foccart's network, and free or not as one cares to define freedom, Bongo was and is no puppet, and arguably gained as much power over his country from the French as they gained from him.²⁵³

However, there are some obstacles to France's complete political control of the Bongo government, and also to its ability to work with the Gabonese people over the long term. Ethnic favoritism is a continuing problem in the government, accompanied by political repression of opposition leaders. Another feature of the patronage system in place is that, like many powerful rulers, Bongo has named no clear successor, possibly for fear of setting up an alternate focus of power. Rumors continue that he may name one of his own sons. Opposition parties are repressed, and their leaders occasionally detained or threatened if they cannot be co-opted, which offers no clear route to the transfer of power. Local NGOs and labor unions are active, but constrained by political repression, which constrains their ability to work with France.

France has kept its relations with opposition leaders friendly, which has worked well for it in the past, but the potential is there for a military power struggle once the aging Bongo is gone. It is assumed that he will die in office.

Political corruption complicates matters by giving President Bongo a means of influencing his leadership by acting as their *patron* that is not readily available to France as Bongo's *patron*. This is particularly so now that Foccart is gone, and his network of World War II cronies has died also.

President Bongo himself, however, remains very useful to France in his Position as a local mediator of African disputes, mainly because of his longevity and the respect which other leaders have for his power, and also because of the country's stability relative to its neighbors (Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, etc.) He is perhaps the most politically loyal, and now certainly the most long-term ally of France in central Africa.

In those states that remained utterly loyal to France in all respects during the 1960s through the 1980s, such as Gabon, France's access to materials and markets remained completely secure. While the institutions of the Franc Zone insured a secure basis for French and other Western investments in the region, membership in this Zone was predicated on each country's entire relationship with France, and its willingness to follow French directives in return for the privileges of Franc Zone membership. Trade and defense (de Brazza's two "hands") relied on one another's strength to some degree in each country to maintain the continuing relationship. While financial corruption did persist in the patronage structure of all of these governments, France and its allied African

presidents controlled elite access to patronage well enough to make corruption a readily manipulated, predictable, and occasionally profitable, if distasteful, part of the system.

Gabon has had a high *per capita* income compared to its neighbors, but continues to have major income inequalities. The majority of the population not part of industry or government circles of influence has remained poor. Gabon's offshore oil was discovered and began to be exploited in the 1970s, and now produces about half of its GDP. Prices for oil, timber, and mineral exports are subject to external market fluctuations, so Gabon shares the problem faced by most African countries that base their economies almost entirely on natural resources: fluctuating prices and a failure to develop sufficient industrial manufacturing to cushion dependency on commodity exports.

When France devalued the CFA franc in January 1994 by 50% (in response to the increasing strain placed on the French franc and the banking system's support of the CFA), it caused considerable inflation and an economic crisis in most of the African states of the *Communauté Financière Africaine*. However, the IMF offered credit and an enhanced financing arrangement to balance this out for three years contingent on good financial management. France gave Gabon additional financial support as well. In spite of few improvements in its financial practices, Gabon continues to receive aid from France and the international lending organizations.

Gabon has been well integrated in the Franc Zone since independence, and has benefited greatly from both the currency rate support provided by the

French franc to the Central African franc, and from the preferential development of its offshore oil by France's oil companies. It has also received a great deal of economic aid and technical assistance from France in the way of "carrots."

However, as mentioned, at the 1990 Franco-African summit of heads of state in La Baule, France stated its intention to make aid decisions with increased attention to political and economic reforms and make its aid decisions conditionally, although the military cooperation agreements may well have taken precedence over such conditions, particularly in trouble spots like Chad. Gabon does not appear to have changed its regime greatly in response to the 1990 La Baule announcement, and neither have Congo-Brazzaville, CAR or Chad. However, dictatorial regimes such as Bongo's are increasingly unpopular in France, and conditionality of aid upon political reform has been raised more frequently during the past two decades than it was during the first three. Bongo's *status quo*, however, has greatly benefited France, so these changes may not ensue until his passing.

The Franc Zone brought superior financial stability to Gabon and guaranteed to some degree that this particular oil state was not as poor as its neighbors. Major French financial interests lie in the reliability of the oil industry, which France has helped to develop. Until recently, with some US oil company penetration of the Gabonese market in the 1990s, there has been very little competition from any other major. The American competition, however, may well offer the Gabonese government a way to further influence France's aid in their favor.

Strategic natural resources in the quantity owned by Gabon are a significant source of leverage, particularly when combined with their vulnerability to politically generated disruption. Another interesting facet of the power of France's long-term allies to pressure France is offered by examining the case of Gabon in more detail. The Gabonese president is not the only member of his government or citizen of his country with a firm grasp of what it might take to put pressure on France. Popular political organizations have far less of an influence on the Gabonese government than French economic concerns do, and using those economic concerns as pressure points is a tactic used by various strands in Gabonese politics.

An interesting series of events occurred in Gabon in the early 1990s that featured a failed attempt (ultimately) by labor organizations and employees in Gabon to influence the government by putting pressure on the French oil interests. An IMF austerity plan was agreed to by President Bongo in order to alleviate the effects of falling oil prices. Bongo's political opponents from the MORENA party, based in Paris and hitherto cooptable by Bongo, profited from civil unrest caused by the economic hardships of the IMF structural adjustment plan. After a failed assassination attempt and coup in 1989, followed by another attempt later in the same year, Bongo entered into negotiations with MORENA's leaders, toward a process of political liberalization. After Bongo announced to the country that would tolerate no further disorder, teachers, students and hospital workers went on strike in January 1990, demanding pay raises. They were followed by other workers in a general strike, accompanied by

riots and the burning of public buildings. Gabonese policemen joined the strikers. The only major group not to join the general strike was the offshore oil workers. The offshore oil enclaves remained in operation, while those onshore came to a full halt.

In response to this internally generated pressure, Bongo announced that he would hold a conference of democratic reform, possibly including multiparty elections, which had not occurred in Gabon since Mba's rise to power. Further strikes occurred by the banking and insurance company employees, university teachers, doctors at a Libreville teaching hospital and at the country's only flour mill (which threatened a bread shortage in the capital). In March 1990, there was further serious unrest at the onshore oil facilities. Workers at Gabon's only refinery threatened a plant shutdown unless they received a wage increase from Elf-Gabon (their wages had been frozen under the IMF plan). The goals of these tactics included destabilizing Bongo's government, inducing some form of democratization process, and using France's frustration with the oil slowdowns and the danger to French expatriates to shift French support from Bongo to the opposition.

Bongo met a number of the workers' demands (oil workers in Gabon are government employees), but was faced with riots again in May 1990 when an opposition leader, who was to have run in the April elections, was assassinated in his hotel room with what the protesters assumed was French complicity. The French became much more publicly involved at this point. The French consulate in Port-Gentil was burned down and 500 Legionnaires arrived shortly thereafter,

stationed throughout Libreville and Port-Gentil. Elf-Gabon evacuated all but 50 of its 600 French staff, 10 executives were taken hostage, and military cargo jets stood ready to evacuate the 1,800 French expatriates working in Gabon. For the first time in Gabon's history, the French oil company was forced to halt production. Gabon was losing \$50 million a day in revenues, and France even more, as 65% of Elf-Gabon was controlled by the French state by either direct ownership or through state-owned companies. Elf-Gabon was responsible for almost a quarter of Elf's 1989 oil production worldwide.

At this point, Bongo went on French television demanding the return of Elf's employees to Gabon, saying that his country would drop its services if production did not begin again soon. He called the French airlift "completely unjustified," and insisted that security could be maintained. In addition to Bongo's threat to drop Elf, the presence of French soldiers was a factor in Elf's subsequent decision to return its employees. French tanks took down the opposition barricades and fought with protesters, and crushed all anti-government resistance in Port-Gentil. French troops withdrew and left security in the hands of the Gabonese troops and the Presidential Guard, which was reported to have fired indiscriminately on protesters. 500 French troops were kept in place to protect the oil facilities in Port-Gentil. "Multiparty" elections, characterized by intimidation and voting fraud were rescheduled for September of 1990, and won by the president's party. The first multiparty presidential election was not until 1993, and considered flawed but not exactly fraudulent by international observers.²⁵⁴

The history of Gabon's natural resource extraction politics offers another example of how France's economic power and political leverage are intertwined.²⁵⁵ French business interests in Gabon were as powerful during the immediate post-war colonial period than they are today, but involved a different natural resource: timber. The forestry lobby emerged historically under colonialism as a particularly salient political force in Gabon, lobbying for concessions and even funding political parties. The French businessman, Roland Bru, led the foresters from the late 1940s onward, starting with price negotiations between the *Syndicat Forestier du Gabon* and the colonial *Office de Bois* in Paris. Bru became a "kingmaker" in Gabon because of the power and success of the forestry lobby, supporting sympathetic political party candidates even during the colonial period. The support of Bru, and other business interests in Gabon, helped Léon Mba to found the *Bloc Démocratique Gabonais* in 1954 and later become President of Gabon in 1964, whereupon Mba dissolved the Gabonese assembly and called for elections in what had just become a single-party state. When Omar Bongo came to power in 1964, Bru and the foresters began to receive serious political competition from French oil interests in the political realm, partly because Bru apparently no longer had the power to control the more radical elements of his party.²⁵⁶ Although the timber interests in Gabon still have some leverage on the government, French business interests continue to be a more powerful force in Gabonese politics, as the above story of the oil industry strikes indicates.

4. Cultural Goals

The development of an African industrial base was slow, perpetuating dependence on French imports for arms, manufactured products, luxury goods, and even food and clothing. This dependency was strengthened considerably by the cultural assimilation of French consumer and cultural preferences. In general, France's cultural goals were achieved in Gabon through the same means as elsewhere in the region: by educating elites in French instead of their mother tongues, devaluing local culture, undercutting local production with preferential treatment of French goods marketed to Africans in return for some market favoritism for African goods in France, and by having, under the colonial system, discouraged African religious practices as primitive.

Even Gabon's own history of secret religious brotherhoods and mystical Christian sects has been exploited in order to give its leadership more direct links with France. Bayart gives the compelling example of how Léon Mba tried to unite Gabon's elites under one particular sect, the Bwiti cult, during the 1950s, only to have this more indigenous tendency essentially hijacked by international Freemasonry:

"In reality, however, the boom of esotericism turned out to be a mechanism of selection and exclusion which has reinforced the dominant circles. Freemasonry exercised this function in Blaise Diagne's Senegal, for the Creoles in Sierra Leone, and the Whig oligarchy in Liberia, and in Ghana and the Ivory Coast. Today, it is in Gabon that Freemasonry plays its biggest role, together with the *njobi* rite: Bongo himself is master of one of the lodges, and membership of the fraternity is obligatory *de facto* for every member of the country's political elite."²⁵⁷

Perhaps the most fundamental cultural changes occurred in the context of greater industrialization and the establishment of a French educational system. Industrialization increased the urbanization of the population and also increased its size. Some of the latter increase was due to immigrants from less well-off countries who were attracted by higher employment rates in Gabon and a marginally higher standard of living. Gardinier cites the following statistics. In 1960, 15% of the population lived in cities or large towns, meaning that 85% of Gabonese people were still rural and mostly agricultural. By 1990, almost 75% of the population had become urban and lived from salaries and wages, marking the creation of a vastly larger industrial working class. In addition, schooling in French at all levels had produced a culture of literacy, in particular French literacy, which also gave the speakers of Gabon's dozens of languages a common tongue in which to communicate with one another and with the French.²⁵⁸ Ironically, with the help of radio, television and internet transmission, this was also producing a culture more like that of France, where it was much harder to censor information or control the dissemination of alternative political ideas or cultural products which challenged cultural or religious traditions.

C. What other powers competed with France for attention in Gabon?

Other great powers were active in francophone Africa, providing arms, training and financial assistance, but they were not really inclined in most cases to intervene militarily or to try to replace France as the most influential political and economic power in any part of the *chasse gardée* during the 1960s. The exception during this early period was perhaps Zaïre, which was not yet truly

within France's sphere of influence. Throughout the first ten years of independence, the continuing dependency of these countries on France was striking. Although other great powers would certainly have been capable of intervening in the region by force of arms had there been a compelling reason of state to do so (as the US believed in Zaïre), their intervention would have lacked the historical advantages accruing to the French from over a hundred years of military, political, economic, and cultural patronage and dependency. Consequently, the other great powers paid relatively little attention to those countries that, in their eyes, were still under France's influence or outright protection.

The United States exercised most of its influence in Gabon through the international financial institutions like the IMF and the World Bank, where it has remained the predominant power. Private economic investment from the United States was a significant factor in developing the mineral and oil industries in Gabon. US military aid to Africa during the immediate postcolonial period went to potential political opponents, as well as to politically friendly governments, mainly in order to counter Soviet influence. US military aid to Gabon was not nearly as significant as aid given to other countries, although the US did contribute some armored vehicles to Gabon during the 1980s. As this table shows, the US sent the following amounts of military aid during the 1956-1967 period to a few francophone African governments, but mostly those in West Africa, except for Zaïre.²⁵⁹

Dahomey (later Benin)	\$ 0.1 million
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Côte d'Ivoire	\$ 0.1 million
Mali	\$ 2.8 million
Niger	\$ 0.1 million
Senegal	\$ 2.6 million
Upper Volta (later Burkina Faso)	\$ 0.1 million
Cameroon:	\$ 0.2 million
Congo-Kinshasa (later Zaïre)	\$16.1 million

The US military aid figures to these mostly West African countries, all former French colonies except for Zaïre, is extremely small compared to both aid from France to these countries during the period, and to aid given outside of sub-Saharan Africa by both the US and the USSR.²⁶⁰ During their first three decades of independence, US military aid to the Central African countries Gabon, Congo, CAR and Chad was even smaller.

However, there was the continuing US interest during the Cold War period in preventing socialism from taking hold in African governments. Clayton tells of the following examples of attempted US CIA intervention, taken from the work of René Lemarchand: the CIA had an interest in overthrowing Mba in Gabon in 1964 and Tsiranana in Madagascar in 1971. The French fended both of these attempts off, because Presidents Mba and Tsiranana had been France's long-time allies since the colonial period and had been groomed to be their countries' first presidents.²⁶¹

The British were not really a factor in the *chasse gardée* after World War II, and had no discernable influence in Gabon. While Britain has maintained

diplomatic and arms trade links with her former African colonies, notably through the Commonwealth, its agreements with these nations have not been nearly as all-encompassing a political factor in their post-independence development as have the links maintained by France with the francophone nations. The French military cooperation agreements are clearly a factor in the maintenance of these ties.²⁶²

West Germany has given training aid to Gabon, but most European countries have offered such aid largely to non-francophone states because of France's priority in the francophone countries.²⁶³ Other major powers are still not a significant influence on Gabon, with the exception a growing interest by American oil companies in Gabon's offshore resources. There has been little or no USSR or Cuban influence in Gabon, which, since Bongo took power, has shown very little evidence of sympathy to socialism, with the exception of France's own variety of socialism. There has been a small Chinese influence in Gabon, largely in the form of technical aid. During the 1980s, China sent Gabon some automatic weapons. Brazil sent 16 armored cars and two maritime reconnaissance aircraft to Gabon, an indication that, since the French were still giving weapons aid to the Gabonese government in the form of lighter weapons, Gabon was obtaining heavier armaments from elsewhere. (See the two tables on arms transfers in the Appendices.)

A constraint on the French intervention capacity was demonstrated by Gabon's major role as a refueling base during the Zaïre intervention of 1977-1978. The intervention was intended to support President Mobutu against Lunda

insurgency in Shaba province. The use of Gabon for this intervention in a neighboring country is of interest also because France's airlift capacity from Libreville was seriously questioned by the French parliament during the operation. This operation initially featured logistics assistance from France, combined with military air transport of Moroccan troops to Shaba in 1977. This was followed by a more extensive commitment in 1978 when French citizens were killed in Kolwezi. 1978's *Operation Léopard* dropped Foreign Legion parachutists from French and Zaïrean aircraft to seize Kolwezi. The Libreville Legionnaires were withdrawn later and replaced by an all-African force with continued logistical support from France.²⁶⁴

D. What international regimes or institutions worked for or against France's goals?

The regular summit conferences of "*La Francophonie*," attended by francophone heads of state are still a significant regional institution, so popular that they now include a few non-francophone heads of state. As one of the longest-serving heads of state, President Bongo has been a major influence during these meetings, sometimes on behalf of the French and sometimes as a mediator in disputes. They remain a forum for discussions and disputes, but ultimately a means by which francophone African governments impress France with their still-viable ability to unify as a bloc when deemed necessary. Although France instituted these summit meetings, French leaders do not receive a show of unquestioning loyalty there any more; indeed, loyal pro-French rhetoric no longer plays well with many African citizens in the home audiences. However, France is able to use the summit meetings to announce new initiatives and

cement old ties. In addition, many of the heads of state and their entourages know one another well, and have dealt with one another independently of their relationship with France for some time now. As Bayart describes Franco-African political culture:

“Franco-African links are reproduced by the social relations formed in universities, the military, brotherhoods and also in matrimonial exchanges, the importance of which must not be disregarded. This reproduction also occurs in political life: from the daily flow of information, visits, telephone conversations, and requests that make sub-Saharan diplomacy in the *Elysée*, the *Quai d'Orsay* and the *Rue Monsieur* resemble a clientelist system. It is symbolically strengthened by the Franco-African summits, started by Georges Pompidou.”²⁶⁵

One of the matrimonial exchanges referred to here was the marriage of the daughter of Congo-Brazzaville's socialist President Sassou-Nguesso to President Bongo of Gabon.

It would be, however, a mistake to regard the histories of the francophone African states as in any way uniform other than a certain level of shared experience with the force and cultural hegemony imposed by French colonialism, as the disputes at the francophone summits demonstrate amply. Their nationalist histories differ distinguishably, and must be seen against a salient background of African cultural influences that are particular to each country's combination of peoples, natural resources, geography, and history. This is why the history of Chad differs so broadly from that of Gabon, and why the existence of the francophone summit meetings in no way insures France of a continuing political, ideological, cultural or military alignment by its African partners.²⁶⁶

“*La Francophonie*” as a worldwide organization that was founded to promote France’s mutual goals with the other francophone states at annual

meetings. In contrast, institutions which have competed with France or made the achievement of its goals more difficult have included the United Nations (particularly its relations on the Security Council with the other SC nations), Anglo-Saxon dominance of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, the increasingly global reach of non-French oil companies, the growth and influence of international human rights organizations and international law and legal constraints, and the African Union (formerly the Organization of African Unity). The issue of military intervention, currently the biggest current issue facing the African Union, was particularly emphasized at the 1977 OAU summit in Libreville, Gabon,²⁶⁷ most ironically, in view of that host country's relatively frequent role as a staging area for French interventions.²⁶⁸

E. What domestic constraints in France presented obstacles to the French government's goals in Gabon?

As mentioned earlier, the expense of maintaining base troops in Gabon was controversial in France, as was the intervention using the Libreville marines that appeared to help *les Anglo-Saxons* solidify their influence in Zaïre. The intervention on behalf of President Mba resulted in limitations placed on types and protocols for French troop involvement.

During the 1980s, technological limits were found on the overseas actions that could be mounted with the available air transport at the Gabon base. Troop transport capacity with the *Transall* aircraft remained problematic even in 1984 when the 25 second-generation air-refuellable *Transalls* were added to the 48 older ones originally put into service in 1967. The *Transalls* of whatever age still required the use of staging bases for interventions in Africa, and particularly (for

the various central African interventions), the permanent base in Gabon. France bought US Hercules cargo planes in 1987, but they were not as big as the larger American C-141 Starlifters, and they relied primarily on national civil aviation to provide mission transport on short notice. An agreement was made between the French government, *Air France*, and *UTA* stipulated a twelve-hour notice for providing additional air transport to the French armed forces. France has continued to augment its military air transport in the 1990s, and set long-term goals for a fully military transport system by the year 2000. However, air transport was a considerable problem throughout all of the interventions in central Africa covered here. In addition to transport, air and ground equipment used in the 1980s included *Puma*, *Gazelle* and *Alouette* helicopters, AMX 30 tanks, lighter armored vehicles (e.g., AMLPanhard, ERC 90 Sagaie and AMX 10s), mobile anti-tank vehicles and the *Jaguar* bombers.²⁶⁹

Sea transport was slower but less fraught with logistical problems and the need for support from civilian transport agents. Mitterand's Military Program Laws of 1984-88 also augmented France's sea transport with three new landing ships (10,000 tons displacement) into the 1990s, primarily for material not deliverable by air (e.g. tanks). Most of France's defense agreements were with landlocked states, so the naval enhancements to its security presence were important primarily for maintaining its relationship with four of its most important and loyal allies in Africa which were accessible by sea, of which Gabon was one.²⁷⁰ Maintaining a flexible response capability on the Atlantic coastal side of Africa continues to be desirable for France.

This may become even more important because of France's oil needs from these port states, and because the Atlantic coastal francophone states have experienced a number of internal security difficulties since the beginning of the 1990s. The tension surrounding Gabon's elections, the likely disarray of Gabon following the eventual loss of long-term president Omar Bongo, Houphouët-Boigny's death in Côte d'Ivoire, and the tensions surrounding his successors' inheritance of a presidency geared to the personalism and patronage networks of Houphouët's regime, as well as electoral and social unrest in Cameroon, mean that France cannot assume that its influence will continue seamlessly in its African Atlantic port allies during the present decade.

In addition, the ability to intervene from the sea may well be of value if France needs to protect its offshore oil interests in Gabon and Congo-Brazzaville, as well as the Cameroonian coastal end of the pipeline from the Doba oil fields of southern Chad, but this capacity will be limited by how much the show of force will be a political advantage in an era where France's "neo-colonialist" interventions are more frequently criticized. If democratization occurs with more frequency, and becomes less cosmetic (less a show of procedure without democratic substance), African presidents may well decide that French intervention would be a liability. France will probably, therefore, continue its hitherto-useful policy of using the smaller, subtler, interventions that employ quiet enhancements of troop capacity, arms sales and transfers, and economic aid, to preserve its influence among African governments. Warships and other ocean-

going troop transports will continue to be available, enhancing France's flexibility of response, but held in reserve.

Other constraints on the achievement of France's goals in Gabon included the unpopularity, among French citizens, of support for repressive, undemocratic regimes, criticism in the French media, scandals involving the revelations of the covert activities of the Foccart network during the 1990s, the economic strain on the French franc of supporting the African Franc Zone, and the energy dependency of France itself on Gabon to keep the oil flowing at all costs, even costs to French prestige.

Conclusions about Gabon

Of the four country cases considered here, Gabon can be considered on most dimensions to be the greatest success for France in terms of preserving French patronage and *présence*. It has remained loyal to French interests, economically far more stable than its neighbors, culturally adaptive to French religion, and manner of education, and a ready consumer of French products and preferences. It is not politically democratic, but has remained a civilian, rather than a military dictatorship.

Sufficient and well-maintained air power meant that troops based in Gabon in Central Africa could be used as a deterrent presence in West Africa, or even nearby, in spite of the actual language in the military cooperation agreement. Most of the armed revolts suppressed in West Africa by the French during the 1960s were dispatched quickly and efficiently, using the base troops in Gabon, CAR, Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire, which enhanced the reputation of these

troops as a dissuasive presence and a deterrent threat against further conflict. Base troops in Central Africa were also used to suppress revolts in West Africa and *vice versa*. The countries like Gabon in which French troops were based publicly preferred that "their" garrisons not be used elsewhere, but their leaders recognized that France could and would do so if the need arose and that this was part of the price they paid for protection. France, as the preponderant partner, was allowed considerable flexibility in interpreting what it would be allowed to do in each circumstance.²⁷¹ The 1964 intervention in Gabon used the local French garrison supplemented by reinforcements from the base in Senegal and French parachutists based in Brazzaville.^{272, 273}

Presidents like Omar Bongo, whose loyalty was certain and who owed France their positions, could be counted on in large part to support France's preferences most of the time. Bongo, however, had an additional advantage. Gabon is not only a loyal part of the *chasse gardée* housing a large contingent of base troops, it is a key strategic location with a large oil industry under joint French-Gabonese control (Elf-Gabon), profitable timber interests, port facilities and a relatively sophisticated infrastructure in which France has invested significant resources. Those francophone countries with fewer resources important to France than Gabon were in less of a position to push France for economic concessions, investment projects, and swift protective action.

Of the countries discussed here, Gabon is the most successful in terms of France's interests being fulfilled. Gabon and France have a number of objectives in common, since Gabonese ability to exploit its natural resources

remains important for France's access to those resources, particularly strategically-important substances like petroleum and uranium. As a relatively well-off Atlantic coastal country, Gabon is one of the few African countries with a domestic capacity to manufacture naval vessels, used largely to protect the coastline and the oil installations. The oil industry developed largely by France's Elf continues to serve France's petroleum needs, in spite of recent encroachments by American oil companies, and the increasing power of those in Gabon who control this industry.

Interdependency can cut two ways, however. The lessons of MORENA's activism described above are twofold. First, every political tendency in Gabon is aware that France's protection and French interests remain salient sources of political power leverage and that they are, as such, worth competing for by any means. If the Gabonese opposition had managed to get France to put real pressure on Bongo to hold fair multiparty elections, those elections might well have taken place. However, the second lesson reiterates a point made in a number of places in both of these cases: a loyal African president, however undemocratic, was still given precedence by France over a problematic opposition, however democratically inclined. France may have hedged its bets on Gabon by giving MORENA members sanctuary in Paris, but the French did ultimately intervene to make certain that Bongo would stay on as president. His threat to drop Elf only strengthened his position.

Unity between France and its African partners involves more, then than just preservation of markets, the extension of culture, the establishment of a

strategic presence, and a promise to vote France's way in the United Nations. The strategic mineral and petroleum stocks are important enough to both Gabon and France to allow their owners (both French and Gabonese, and both private and state owners) some degree of leverage. Whether Bongo's successors will have the same kind of power is debatable, because of the way Bongo has made use of his historical relationships with successive French presidents. Gabon was an extension of France itself, at first, and then of the French sphere of influence. France also needs Gabon now because of the pressure which Elf and the other French oil companies are able to put on the French government in their own domestic arena.

Some recent changes are evident, however, in the Gabon case. French power can now be manipulated through its economic interests both by African presidents and also by their own African employees. Also, having finally authorized ostensibly "democratic" elections, President Bongo's power must now depend as much on his political ability to manipulate the election process, as on his ability to call for help from France. Bongo lost a major friend at the Elysée when Mitterand removed Jacques Foccart from office, although Chirac brought Foccart back briefly before he died, and had a respect for the presidential friendships and other personal ties that were built and cultivated by the Foccart network. Chirac, however, was the last of a generation of French presidents whose ties to the older generation of African leaders predated independence, and it remains to be seen how the latest French President, Nicolas Sarkozy, will handle the special relationship with Omar Bongo.

Gabon is still able to put pressure on France to get what it wants from its *patron*, but the relationship is nowhere near as clear as it was in the days of de Gaulle, or even Chirac. What African influence existed in the past was exercised through long-term personal relationships at the highest levels of government. The most influential African presidents were those whose special relationship had existed over the course of decades of loyalty, like President Bongo of Gabon. However, the cooperation agreements have provided a continuing arena for re-negotiations with France. African partners in these cooperation agreements occasionally ask for significant economic and military help from other states, too much of which would threaten the special relationship which France may still need to maintain. France's continuing desire to be both the dominant partner, and the primary external partner, in any cooperation agreement could be used in the past as a limited form of influence over France in order to leverage an occasional concession, and may still be useful in the future, depending on whether the cooperation agreements are maintained. Arguably, given its continuing strategic importance to France as a source of energy and a staging ground for military interventions, Gabon's agreements with France are among the most likely to remain *status quo*.

CASE II. REPUBLIC OF CONGO (BRAZZAVILLE)

A. Introduction:

As the protective center of Charles de Gaulle's Free French activism during the second World War, Congo has a historic importance for France as well as well as a strategic one, and the relationship has been a strong one in spite of a long-term flirtation with Marxism, the Cold-War-period USSR, and the People's Republic of China.

The Republic of Congo's territorial features and natural resources of strategic interest to France include ocean ports, offshore oil production, natural gas, timber, and a number of minerals (potash, lead, zinc, uranium, copper, phosphates, gold and magnesium). Its agricultural products include cassava (manioc or tapioca), sugar, rice, corn, peanuts, vegetables, coffee, and cocoa. Major industries are in petroleum extraction, and the manufacture of cement, lumber, brewing, sugar, palm oil, soap, flour, and cigarettes.²⁷⁴

Upon independence in 1960, the former French colonial region of Moyen-Congo (Middle Congo) became the Republic of Congo, and then the People's Republic of the Congo. Beginning, like other former French colonies, as a democracy based on the format of France's Fifth Republic, its first president was Fulbert Youlou, whose ethnic base was the Lari. In contrast to Gabon, where President Bongo is a member of a minority ethnic group, the Batéké and governs somewhat outside and above the major ethnic divisions in his country, politics in Congo has been almost entirely divided along ethnic lines, often violently so. John Clark describes the Youlou government as neocolonial, and also "mildly

corrupt, directionless in domestic policy, and deferential to France.”²⁷⁵ When he tried to make Congo into a one-party state (that of his own party), he was overthrown in 1964 by Alphonse Massamba-Débat, who was also offering a one-party state but an ostensibly Marxist one. In 1968, Massamba’s technocratic socialist government was forced to relinquish power to a more ideologically Marxist-Leninist government, led by a military officer (paratroop), Marien Ngouabi who formed the *Parti Congolais du Travail* (Congolesse Labor Party). The PCT was to lead Congo for the next twenty-three years. The oil boom of the mid-1970s and the rise in oil prices benefited the Congolesse economy dramatically, but raised expectations that were impossible to sustain over the long term due to bureaucratic mismanagement, corruption, and the volatility of the energy market. Ngouabi was assassinated in 1977, and succeeded as president by General Joachim Yhombi-Opango, a less ideological military leader who gave more power to the army and less to the PCT. In 1979, Colonel Denis Sassou-Nguesso, a harder-line Marxist and a member of the Mbochi ethnic group, which dominated the Congolesse military, forced him out. Ethnic politics remained as much a force as ideological socialism. None of these regimes had good human rights records, due mostly to the habit of eliminating political opponents from rival ethnic groups by detention or extrajudicial execution.

What is perhaps most remarkable about Congo during the first three decades of its independence is that it remained as close to France as it did. France remained its largest trading partner during the first three decades, when Congo was busy cultivating its relationships with the major Marxist-Leninist and

Maoist states, the USSR, China, Cuba, and North Korea. According to John Clark, these relationships included military training agreements, educational and cultural exchanges, trade accords, and economic and military assistance programs. Similar relationships with France continued during the same period, and France's Elf-Aquitaine oil firm continued to be the main exporter and exploiter of Congo's petroleum production, which represented more than 90% of its export earnings in the 1980s.²⁷⁶

The successive Marxist governments did live up to some of their promise to distribute the oil wealth more equitably, but reliance on one natural commodity to support an entire economy left Congo in crisis when oil prices went down, and at the mercy of enormous debts. Windfall profits were spent, and not used to pay off the debt load. In 1986, Congo agreed to structural adjustments in return for debt relief from the International Monetary Fund. Its continuing membership in the *Communauté Financière Africaine* was an economic advantage as well, dramatically underlining the benefits of a close relationship with its former colonial overlord, in spite of the irony of this continuing dependency. This last was particularly important, since the structural adjustments the IMF demanded were not put into practice, with the exception of some privatization of the numerous state-run (parastatal) natural resource industries.

When Marxist francophone Benin announced plans to become a multiparty democracy in 1990, and the La Baule summit of *la Francophonie* the same year announced France's intention to make aid conditional on political reform, Congo's economic and political crises solidified Congo's political

opposition and the PCT was forced to agree to initiate the legalization of multiple political parties. A national conference chose a transitional “prime minister,” André Milongo, reducing President Sassou’s political role as president, and changing the name of the country back to “Republique du Congo” from “Republique Populaire due Congo.” President Sassou strove for cosmetic, rather than real reform, and appeared to delay and control the process as long as possible. Presidential elections and a new constitution were scheduled for 1992. Two more major political factions emerged, aligned mainly according to region and ethnic group, led by Bernard Kolélas, Pascal Lissouba, who both ran as candidates for the presidency, along with Prime Minister Milongo, and former President Sassou-Nguesso. France stood back from the fray during this period, but continued to emphasize multiparty democracy as its desired outcome. Lissouba won a plurality, attempted to bring the army under civilian control, and succeeded in alienating nearly every faction by not giving enough cabinet posts to opposing parties, and then dissolving the legislature when his own candidate for Speaker of the Assembly was defeated. Lissouba even managed to put France at arms length at a time when he would logically have courted French assistance in the democratization process. In 1993, France’s oil company Elf Aquitaine refused a new loan to Congo because the country was in arrears with the IMF. Lissouba argued that Elf had loaned millions to former President Sassou-Nguesso (not surprising, since both French President Mitterand’s son, Jean-Christophe and the president of Elf were Sassou supporters and advisors). Lissouba took Elf’s decision as indicative of France’s political support in general,

and he asked the French ambassador to leave. A rocky rapprochement was eventually negotiated; France's priority was still to prevent the United States from having any room to encroach on the Congolese oil industry and maintain Elf's priority.

The legislative elections of 1993 were the beginning of Congo's civil war, which started as various factions erected barricades in the capital. Brazzaville's districts were divided along ethnic lines, with paramilitary militias representing the various parties in conflict. Clark cites *Jeune Afrique's* quote of 1,500 combatants in each ethnic party's militia, which included "army deserters, village conscripts, unemployed urban youth and, in the case of Kolélas's forces, Zairian mercenaries."²⁷⁷ Over 2000 Congolese died during the period 1993-1994, with grave human rights violations against civilians committed by combatants from all sides. Brief periods of peace were followed by continued negotiations and outbreaks of violence until former President Sassou-Nguesso and his army prevailed in 1997, but peace was not really achieved until the various rebel factions signed an accord in 2003. France waited out the crisis, provided political asylum in exile to leaders of the various factions, waited, and watched. Since the Soviet Union had by this time dissolved, and France was willing to remain flexible, it was able to resume a somewhat similar relationship with President Sassou to the one it had had before the multiparty conferences in 1990.

President Denis Sassou-Nguesso remains in power at this time, having been elected constitutionally by an astounding (and suspicious) 89.4% of the "popular vote" for a term of 7 years. He is eligible to stand for a second term if he

wins the next election, which is scheduled for 2009. The legislature elections gave a similarly large percentage of seats in the Senate and Assembly to Sassou's *PCT*. His relations with France remain as warm as those of former President Massemba-Débat, who once famously declared the Congolese and French peoples to be "Siamese twins."²⁷⁸

As in Gabon, the judicial system in Congo has remained culturally French and Congolese, based on French civil law system and Congolese customary law. Unlike Gabon, however, Congo was highly urbanized earlier. Presently, over half of the population lives in the major cities of the capital, Brazzaville, and Pointe-Noire, the oil industry center on the coast, with concentrations along the railway line that links the two. Another of Congo's distinguishing features is, by African standards, a remarkable literacy rate of nearly 84% of the adult population (including women, who are often left out of educational opportunities in Central Africa). This has been ascribed to the one area where socialist doctrine and worker activism took hold early on. The educational system, originally started by the French along French lines for training the Congolese *fonctionnaires*, was broadened well beyond its somewhat exclusive beginnings in order to promote a universally socialist ideological training. The ironic combination of these two rather distinct educational purposes increased both the literacy of the general population and also the number of elite students who were learned in political discourse, possibly making the population more challenging to govern.

B. How well were France's goals accomplished in Congo (Brazzaville)?

As a part of the prestige-conscious and politically independent policy formulated by Charles de Gaulle just prior to the African colonies' independence in 1960, and perpetuated by later French presidents, France continued to shape the central African security environment to a remarkable degree in order to deter much of the unwanted conflict during the 1970s and 1980s. Chad and Congo-Brazzaville were the major exceptions, both experiencing severe civil wars during the 1970s and 1980s.

Specific terms of the cooperation agreement with the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville) were, at the beginning, quite extensive, much like those of Gabon, and included defense against external aggression and also internal attacks on the president. Congo signed a bilateral defense agreement with France in 1961, and France intervened during the next two years to suppress the riots, but did not have to send in an intervention force in 1963 because President Youlou preferred to resign. In July 1972, Congo requested changes in its defense agreements. Unlike Gabon, which has maintained its defense cooperation agreements with France much as they were from the start, Congo demanded military independence from France. France could continue to offer training and military aid, and military cooperants would continue to be accepted, but there would be no permanently based troops. Intervention would be on an ad hoc basis, as invited by the Congolese president. An interesting example of this occurred as late as 1987 during the period of political "cohabitation" between the Socialist and Gaullist parties in France. Both Mitterand and Chirac, as leaders of the respective parties, had a team of special advisors on African affairs. (Foccart

was re-enlisted on Chirac's team.) Chirac, without consulting Mitterand, sent transport aircraft to Congo in support of Sassou-Nguesso to help quell urban conflict. Mitterand rebuked Chirac to remind him that he was President, and that it was still the French President's prerogative to intervene in African affairs.²⁷⁹ Certainly, however, maintaining a good working relationship with Sassou's now less-ideological socialist government was enhanced by Mitterand's own brand of socialism.

In 1980,²⁸⁰ France provided 24.7% of Congo-Brazzaville's armaments, a significantly lower percentage than that of Gabon, largely due to the competing influence of the USSR and other socialist countries. In addition, Congo-Brazzaville was one of the few francophone nations during this period with the capacity to manufacture small arms and ammunition. France sent infantry weapons at independence, and more guns during the 1960s, to Congo-Brazzaville. France did not tend to contribute heavier weapons even during the 1970s and 1980s. Those would be supplied by the USSR, China, and Cuba.

A mutual defense relationship remained between Congo and France in spite of changes over time in the scope of the cooperation agreements, particularly for interventions within Africa itself. For example, between 1978 and 1980, Congo-Brazzaville supplied Congolese peacekeeping troops whose presence in Chad would supposedly allow for a French military withdrawal. When the transitional Government of National Union of Chad (GUNT) was formed in 1979, a multinational OAU force was supposed to be sent to preserve the peace agreements, composed of troops from Congo-Brazzaville, Benin and Guinea.

Only the Congo sent a unit, which only stayed for a week, remaining in their barracks.

France's ability to influence the outcomes of the smaller regional conflicts in Congo-Brazzaville during the immediate post-independence decade was quite strong, as shown by the early intervention on behalf of President Youlou during the period from 1960-1962. Interethnic rivalry and violence was a severe ongoing problem, however, and not entirely controllable either by France or by the military governments of the later People's Republic of Congo. Indeed, the tendency toward violent conflict along ethnic lines was probably the most important local constraint on French military action, and on French influence in general, since the civil war in particular disrupted diplomatic relations for significant periods, although the oil continued to flow in France's direction.

Other local constraints on French military assistance and influence, even when the French were invited in, included discontinuities in leadership, and their relative friendliness or unfriendliness with France (*e.g.* Lissouba), and political militias which were undisciplined, and loyal only to their leaders on an ethnic basis, and not even entirely controllable by their leaders, who maintained deniability in the face of egregious acts of violence against civilians and political opponents. There was also the need to upgrade Congolese technical capacity with successive upgrades in weaponry, due to varied educational and training levels, plus differences in inter-operability due to the influx of differing weapons and weapons systems transferred or sold by the USSR, China or North Korea. Finally, because of the long-running war in the neighboring Zaire/Democratic

Republic of Congo during the 1990s and beyond, border spillover of refugees, and fleeing opposition members (from both directions into both Congos) have complicated the diplomatic and military picture considerably in later years.

There was an unsuccessful *coup d'état* early on, and two successful *military coups d'état* in Congo-Brazzaville (1977 and 1979).²⁸¹ As elsewhere in francophone Africa, coup leaders who were willing to work with France were generally not prevented from taking power, provided that local unrest was kept under control and no French interests or personnel were threatened. The civil war in the 1990s was an excellent example of France making do with the results of disruption, but nonetheless preserving a useful relationship. Patronage systems and political corruption have complicated matters by insuring that each successive president's ethnic group must dominate the security forces and government positions or suffer the fate of President Lissouba. Political repression has also been exacerbated by the "political militia" tradition of every political rival hiring his own thugs and becoming, in effect, a warlord with a portfolio.

In spite of these various difficulties and a political context far less stable than that of Gabon, France's failure to completely prevent military conflict in Congo was mitigated by some signal political successes, not the least of which was a continuing relationship between the militaries of the two countries as trainers and military aid recipients. Although France was not able to prevent successive coups d'état, it successfully maintained a close diplomatic relationship over time and successive French and Congolese presidencies in spite of armed conflicts, assassinations, and somewhat less-than-democratic

elections. France's political failure to manipulate the presidential succession was combined with good intelligence and political networking to salvage its working relationships with Presidents Youlou, Massemba-Débat, Lissouba, and Sassou-Nguesso. It appears, however, that salvaging the relationship was more important than France's stated goal at La Baule in 1990 of encouraging multiparty democracy, given the present condition of cosmetic democracy and the continued tenure in office of Denis Sassou-Nguesso.

The regular summit conferences by francophone heads of state are still attended by the Congolese head of state and regarded as significant diplomatic venue, even though Congo's ties to France itself are less egregious and the Anglophone world more important now that the USSR is not a factor and American oil companies have filled the gap. As an elder statesman with a lengthy term of service who has weathered a civil war and come out the winner, Sassou-Nguesso remains a strong personal force in African politics and, like his father-in-law, President Bongo of Gabon, acts as a mediator in francophone African disputes (such as the present conflict between Chad and Sudan). As mentioned, these summit meetings remain a forum for disputes, but continue to be a means by which francophone African governments can act as a bloc when they want concessions from France, and Presidents Bongo and Sassou tend to act in concert.

France also continues to maintain relationships between its own parties and both the opposition and presidential parties in Congo, and there are meetings and exchanges at all government levels, e.g. parliamentarians,

members of the judicial system, which continues to be based on that of France, and members of non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

France's primary economic goal is to support the economies of its francophone African allies in order to preserve their position as markets and trading partners of France, particularly in the energy industries. As in its neighbor, Gabon, the petroleum industry replaced the timber industry as the main support of the country's economy. Petroleum and Elf-Congo's occasionally rocky relationship with France's Elf-Aquitaine have been the foremost concerns. Since much of what Elf-Congo brought in has had to go toward paying off Congo's substantial debt, the Congolese economy has not seen major benefits from its oil since the oil shock period of the 1970s. The remainder of the economy is a mixture of subsistence agriculture, an industrial sector based largely on oil products and support services. In the 1980s, rising oil earnings sparked a number of large development projects, financed by loans based on future oil revenues. Revenue shortfalls have curtailed Congo's ability to pay its debt, prompting agreements in the 1990s with the IMF and the World Bank. Since the end of the civil war, President Sassou-Nguesso has declared interest in further privatizing the economy, and a renewed relationship with the IMF. In March 2006, the IMF and World Bank approved Congo as a Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC).

Economic corruption, and ethnic patronage systems were unfortunate factors in awarding the management of parastatal industries in Congo's state-dominated economy. Although most of the oil industry has been handled by a

socialist Congolese government in parastatal companies, this did not prevent private French investment or governmental support. France's own combination of mixing capitalist development with socialized government services, and the coexistence in France of economically conservative Gaullist party and Socialist (and for a while a Communist) Parties, may well have provided Congo with another model of governance in addition to the Gaullist model of a strong presidency previously discussed here.

Where strategic resources were concerned in Congo-Brazzaville, French access, influence and profit from the oil industry there continued even while the latter was flirting with socialism and actively courting the Soviet Union. Not even in Congo were all of the French companies nationalized, although the threat to do so was often used by the Congolese government as leverage to get a concession or transaction from France. Even when the French companies engaged in resource extraction were nationalized by a new leader, many French employees were asked or required to remain in them to provide leadership, technical expertise, and business connections. Socialist governments in francophone Africa did not tend to reorganize agricultural collectives or local markets in as systemic a fashion as happened, for instance, in Tanzania. Even when such reorganization occurred, various aspects of its socialist collectivism tended to be mitigated by what was usually an authoritarian or military government structure at the top. Franc Zone membership, with its capitalist rules and regulations, generally prevented socialist economic practices from rooting themselves too firmly even if socialist experiments were attempted.

Furthermore, since the Socialist and Communist parties in France were active throughout these decades, and a variety of forms of Marxist philosophy were, and still are, a familiar part of the French political fabric during the entire 20th century in ways quite unlike either the rigidly anti-Communist United States or the equally rigidly Stalinist Soviet Union, the occasional and usually opportunistic Marxist tendencies or pronouncements from francophone African leaders were tolerated by France so long as they did not result in diminished French influence.

France's cultural goals were not entirely met, in that the school system was changed early on to accommodate socialist ideals on the creation of new citizens with more equal opportunities, and many aspects of French culture were discouraged. Nonetheless, French culture remains pervasive in Congo. Not for nothing is President Sassou called a "silk-suit & champagne socialist." French fashion, food and beverages are favored, along with every French cultural product that can be sold to a francophone. Brazzaville is, however, the site of a famous annual African film festival, and its government's encouragement of education at all levels has not only encouraged the consumption of French literature, film and intellectual products, but the creation and dissemination of Congo's own writers and artists.

C. What other powers competed with France for attention in Republic of Congo (Brazzaville)?

The United States became more of a factor in Congo with the entry of the IMF as a significant party in Congo's economic dilemmas. Sub-Saharan Africa was not, during the 1960s, a scene of intense US vs. USSR military aid

competition, except for in Ethiopia and Somalia. Most francophone recipients relied on one of the two, but not both, and then only to supplement the aid that they received from France. Those former French colonies receiving US aid generally got no Soviet aid, except for Mali and Guinea, which received aid from both.²⁸² Congo-Brazzaville received Soviet aid, but remained under significant enough French economic influence to make the Soviets peripheral players there by the 1990s when the IMF had become of much greater importance to its well-being as a nation.

Before the 1990s, however, during the Cold War period when the US and USSR were fighting smaller-scale “proxy wars” through their affiliated local forces in Angola, Mozambique, and Zaire, the USSR was much more of a factor in Congolese affairs. The fall of the Youlou government in Congo-Brazzaville in 1963 and the subsequent rise to power of leaders whose ideological and political orientation was sympathetic to (although not subservient to, or even completely controllable by) the USSR weakened the military cooperation link for some years, although Congo's socialist governments remained amenable to various continuing contacts with Paris. The government of Denis Sassou-Nguesso has remained quite open to French investment on the Congolese oil industry and other economic support from France.²⁸³

During the years immediately following independence, France was cautious about what types of arms it transferred or sold to its newly sovereign African clients. Infantry weapons and other small arms were the norm. The USSR was more competitive in this area, but only to certain countries where it

felt it could gain a political and military foothold. During the 1970s and 1980s, there were transfers by the USSR of MIG17, MIG19, and MIG21 combat aircraft to a few francophone countries that professed socialist tendencies, including Congo-Brazzaville. (Guinea, Mali, and Madagascar were the others.) The USSR also sent artillery rocket launchers and armored personnel carriers.

France, for the most part, was willing to teach Africans how to operate the arms and equipment it sent, and how to fix it, even if what was being sent was not of the greatest complexity, mostly infantry weapons and mortars. In contrast, in spite of the large amounts of Soviet military "training" and the generally greater sophistication of the arms sent, the USSR remained reluctant to transfer much of the technical knowledge that would have helped African recipients maintain their equipment by themselves. The USSR's preference was to send Soviet repairmen (and often Soviet pilots to fly the MIGs themselves), and to use spare parts and repairs as a means to control the actions of their aid recipients. This kind of diplomatic manipulation alienated a number of the USSR's African clients, notably Guinea.²⁸⁴

As demonstrated by large numbers of Soviet and Cuban "technicians" (who were often troops), arms transfers and the opportunities offered to Africans for military training in the USSR, China and East Germany mentioned earlier, other powers did offer economic and military aid in a number of ways, but less than they might have had France not been in the picture. They also provided teachers, agricultural specialists, and other infrastructural support, but again, not on the scale of France. France's own tolerance of socialism remained much

greater than that of the Atlantic allies. This tolerance proved to be a political advantage in holding on to states that might otherwise have gone completely into the Soviet sphere of influence. The clearest illustration of this phenomenon is the former People's Republic of Congo.

Samuel Decalo says of Marxist (often more Maoist) Congo-Brazzaville that it provided a fascinating early contrast in rhetoric and pragmatic alliances: "Nowhere in Africa is international capitalism more roundly and consistently vilified at home, and at the same time so assiduously courted abroad."²⁸⁵ Congo declared itself Marxist in 1963 under the moderate socialist Massemba-Débat, who toppled Fulbert Youlou's government largely because the small Congolese army, mostly commanded by French officers, refused to help Youlou. (Youlou resigned on de Gaulle's command, reportedly telephoning him to say, "*J'ai signé, mon général.*") The Congolese army helped preside over the transition. In spite of early assistance from Cuba, China, and the USSR, most of Congo-Brazzaville's leadership throughout the 1960s and 1970s "proceeded with the same deferential attitude to France and foreign-capital markets as Youlou's ministers." Congolese leaders did play off the various Soviet-bloc and Chinese aid sources against one another, but nearly always in accord with France's wishes.²⁸⁶

Cuba, China, and the USSR continued to provide significant military aid (weapons and advisors) to various factions within the Congolese military and also to sympathetic political and ideological cliques among Congolese politicians (some of whom had their own paramilitary militias), but, although these clashed

occasionally, and the Massemba-Débat government's continued maintenance of French ties was strongly criticized in Brazzaville, France never lost its foothold in Congo. Indeed, when the far less-moderate Marien Ngouabi took over from Massemba-Débat in 1969, and declared Congo a People's Republic, nationalizing several French enterprises, the economy remained effectively under French control in spite of the rhetoric. Ngouabi continued to juggle the factions with their various leftist aid donors, but his attempts to control the state made Congo effectively more militarized than Marxist. Many powerful figures in his government remained pro-French, including Col. Jacques-Joachim Yhombi-Opango, who succeeded Africa's (arguably) most pre-eminent Marxist martyr as president when Ngouabi was assassinated in 1977. Yhombi's successor, Denis Sassou-Nguesso, billed himself as a hard-line Marxist, but made good use of Yhombi's pro-Western initiatives and French aid.

Congo-Brazzaville was one of the francophone nations most assiduously and continuously courted by the Soviet Union during the post-independence years. However, as of 1988, Sassou-Nguesso's Republic of Congo held a gala celebration of the hundredth anniversary of French colonization with a ceremony that ranked the USSR only 16th in the protocol arrangements after France, the US, and a number of African nations.²⁸⁷

Between 1974 and 1978, 22 sub-Saharan states and African liberation movements received USSR and other communist country arms and equipment. Of these, the only central African francophone recipients were Congo-Brazzaville and Chad.²⁸⁸

In neither of these countries was the USSR a major strategic factor or a director of regional policy by the end of the 1980s. The USSR was active and capable of intervening; however, its influence in francophone Africa remained marginal. Soviet military aid in francophone Africa, as in the rest of Africa, was tied closely to the USSR's foreign policy goals of supporting independence movements and linking ideology and policy with the nationalism of emerging states. Communist doctrine largely took a back seat to pragmatic concerns, such as gaining a foothold for Soviet interests. The francophone states, with the exception of those with leftward-leaning regimes, were more difficult to penetrate during this period because of the comprehensiveness of the military cooperation agreements that most of the francophone colonies had signed with France. Even where leftist governments like that of Congo-Brazzaville, provided openings for the USSR, French influence predominated, and France's tolerance toward socialism allowed it to maneuver pragmatically and often successfully among its socialist former colonies.²⁸⁹

A number of francophone African military personnel were also trained in the USSR and Eastern Europe. Between 1955 and 1979, these included 505 Congolese in the USSR and 85 Congolese in East Germany.²⁹⁰ The Chinese during the same period trained 415 Congolese.²⁹¹ This represents a significant number of Communist trainees for the Congolese army, so it is particularly interesting that France was able to remain the primary military guarantor in this case, and the Eastern bloc and Chinese influence remained a peripheral irritant in this part of the *chasse gardée*. Congo-Brazzaville was the only francophone

host of Soviet advisors in central Africa, and was even willing to host Cuban troops needing a staging area for their operations in Angola.²⁹²

On balance, French presence did not manage to completely discourage Soviet military and diplomatic initiatives in Congo-Brazzaville. It did, however keep France a potent presence there in spite of the Congolese government's socialist leanings and public pronouncements, even while the USSR was sending a relatively large amount of military aid to President Sassou-Nguesso.

The USSR was not, in contrast, much of an economic or cultural presence in Congo. It concentrated on giving the Congolese government what others would not give, in the hope that this policy could turn a hitherto Western ally into a Soviet satellite. Its own economic focus was largely on developing itself as a great power, and creating markets for products other than arms was not a priority. There was probably a residual cultural influence on those Congolese who studied with Russian teachers, or who had been given the opportunity to travel to the USSR for their university studies or military training, but many experienced racial discrimination while in the USSR, and were not overtly Russified when they came back home.

Other non-African states involved in Congo-Brazzaville included Cuba. During the 1970s and 1980s, Cuba sent the following arms to Congo-Brazzaville: 35 medium tanks, 37 armored vehicles, 68 armored personnel carriers, artillery weapons, artillery rocket launchers, light anti-aircraft guns. Some of these were of Soviet manufacture, but came via Cuba.

China became a factor in Africa in the 1970s, however, largely contributing development projects and military education, either in China or by visiting Chinese training teams. The priority was on economic development projects as a demonstration of China's good faith as an international development partner. There were arms sales as well. During the 1970s and 1980s, China sent 15 medium tanks and 14 light tanks to Congo-Brazzaville, which also received some military training²⁹³ China's influence in Congo is now, if anything, much greater now that the USSR is out of the picture, and its interest in showing itself to be an economic force in Africa and a source of everything from railways to modern weapons to training in modern farming is becoming pervasive. Congo was one of its more receptive early clients.

Commercial interests occasionally dovetailed with military necessity. Some smaller powers sold arms to the Central African region. Israel offered specialized security training, having discovered that regional conflicts provided openings for commerce. Several "private" agencies from smaller powers, employing former government military personnel, have provided security training to African governments, most notably the South African firm Executive Outcomes. Israel's Levdan, a private firm with ties to the Israeli government, was engaged by Congo-Brazzaville to train President Lissouba's private militia as well as his official guard. Congo-Brazzaville also experienced a problem that Ross calls "multiple source acquisition," This refers to the collecting of various arms technologies from different sources that may not mesh well, leading to logistical

problems. In Congo, it worked against France's strategic goal of military standardization.²⁹⁴

D. What international regimes or institutions worked for or against France's goals?

“La Francophonie” worldwide was still a factor in Congo’s relationship with other nations, particularly as a place to share interests and work both with and against France. Anglo-Saxon dominance of the World Bank and IMF have been a concern for France in its quest for first place among its former colonies’ major power friends, as has the global reach of non-French oil companies. New developments in international and national laws targeting heads of state as human rights violators or war criminals was for a while a major concern when it came to the various participants in Congo's civil war. International human rights organizations for many years excoriated Congo's human rights record and made it difficult for France to defend its support of Sassou-Nguesso in particular as a long-term client. Even in the People's Republic of Congo under the avowedly socialist Marien Ngouabi, the French maintained contacts with government factions and remained in charge of various economic concerns.

E. What domestic constraints in France presented obstacles to the French government's goals in Republic of Congo (Brazzaville)?

The main domestic constraints in France against aid to Congo are the general and increasing unpopularity of long-term, expensive military and economic aid to a government that has wavered in its support of French goals, and created embarrassment because of its economic and political corruption,

lukewarm support for democracy, and horrifying human rights violations which include incidents during the civil war of ethnic cleansing, torture and extrajudicial executions of political opponents, and multiple grave violations on the part of the ethnic militias committed against civilians, including rape, mutilation, home demolition, and murder. No French conscripts can be used in interventions in Congo, and there are no base troops, so the professional intervention forces would have to be used if France intervened at any point. France's ability to intervene to protect the oil industry from the sea may well be of value if France needs to protect its offshore oil interests in Congo-Brazzaville but, as in Gabon, this capacity will be limited by how much the show of force will be a political advantage in an era where France's "neo-colonialist" interventions are more frequently criticized. Political and/or military interventions might appear to require secrecy because of active and critical French media. The devaluation of the CFA franc helped to ease the strain placed on the French financial system of supporting the franc zone; however, in difficult economic times this might be required again and would probably trigger a reconsideration of this method of French economic support. Finally, the continuing need to keep Congo's oil flowing to France at any and all costs may well prove to be the defining restriction. In spite of its support of nuclear power stations to alleviate its essential energy-dependency, France needs the petroleum and natural gas resources of Congo and Gabon, which have been its longest term, most reliable sources of energy on the Atlantic coast of Africa.

F. Conclusions about Congo (Brazzaville)

If Congo (Brazzaville) can be considered over the long term as a difficult case where France was challenged early on by the move to socialism and a consequent military and political arena of competition with the Soviet Union, Cuba and China, then it can be considered a limited success. France outlasted the USSR and has so far fended off some competing influences from “*les Anglo-Saxons*” in the form of American oil companies.

Peter Schraeder notes that, in spite of a rise in US-French competition in francophone Africa evident during the 1990s forward, France has managed to fend off some inroads in Congo. France views US penetration of the *chasse gardée*’s French economic zone as intrusive and aggressive, and a serious policy matter at the highest levels of the French government. He cites the competition among the government of the Congo-Brazzaville, France’s Elf-Aquitaine, and the US-based Occidental Petroleum Corporation (Oxy), as an example of the stakes involved. Needing almost \$200 million to pay government salaries prior to legislative elections (for which he needed the loyalty of government workers), President Pascal Lissouba turned to Elf-Aquitaine, which controlled 80% of Congo’s oil production capacity. When Elf refused to approve a \$300 million loan, Lissouba negotiated a secret agreement with Oxy, which Lissouba’s government reneged on 8 months later because of pressure from France. This may be one of many reasons that France backed former President Sassou during the civil war, assisting his return to power.²⁹⁵

It is a success in military terms, since France and Congo remain military allies, and Congo is willing to contribute troops to other African conflicts (like

Chad) that are of interest to France. Politically and culturally, however, Congo (Brazzaville) is the most independent of the countries discussed here. There remain no guarantees over the long term that Congo will even need France as an economic ally, although France's reliability in that regard will speak well for it in times to come, and probably tip the balance in its favor as a trade partner. However, Congo's continuing dependency where the IMF and World Bank are concerned may draw its economic focus away from France in the long term.

"Other francophone African governments have maintained themselves in power by using France's aid in a number of ways, some becoming adept in manipulating their most faithful donor's need to continue the relationship. Zartman emphasizes that one result of France's extended presence is an increasing susceptibility to African pressure: "The more the Western presence spreads in Africa, the more its effects are diluted by the need to talk and listen to a larger number of African voices, often raised in concert to increase the volume. As the decolonization process became multilateral in Namibia through the inclusion of the Front-Line States and Nigeria and in the Franco-African summits through the inclusion of non-French-speaking states, greater French and Western activity in Africa brought greater African influence on the Western states. In the 1979 Franco-African summit a discussion of military cooperation could have taken place, as the French wanted, had it not been for the presence and opposition of a group of leftist states (Benin, Burundi, Congo, Mali)." ²⁹⁶

France and Congo still have interests in common, including the protection and development of oil installations and reserves on the coast, and upkeep at Pointe-Noire. This is Congo's main pressure point, but also France's. With more American development of Congo's oil in the future, and China available to help with economic development and infrastructural projects wherever openings present themselves, France's pull on Congo's strings will weaken. The French

linguistic *liaison*, and the Congolese president's silk suits and champagne may be all that remain for leverage.

CASE III. THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

A. Introduction:

The Central African Republic, in contrast to the first two countries examined here, is one of the poorest countries in Africa both per capita, and in terms of natural resources. Its literacy rate is over 30% lower than that of Congo, it has no oil (although as part of the Congo basin it is in fact possible that oil exists beneath the surface). Even its most potentially precious resource, uranium, is under-exploited (and presently located in a war zone). It offers little of apparent strategic value to France until one examines its history as a provider of conscripts and volunteers who fought for France in Europe and North Africa in both World Wars, and also on behalf of French interests in other colonies (e.g. *Indochine*, where President Bokassa was promoted to the rank of captain in the French army). The centrality of its location as one of the long-term locations of French base troops until the 1990s offered access, refueling, and a staging area for operations both internally, and to France's other allies in central African region.

The CAR borders 4 other francophone countries: Congo-Brazzaville, Cameroon, Chad, and the Democratic republic of Congo, and also Sudan to the northeast. It occupies almost the exact center of Africa. For most of its independent history, its economy has been based on the international diamond trade, and what could be grown its soil. Formerly one of the earth's last large wildlife refuges, desertification, deforestation of the rain forest, and poaching have recently deprived it of a possible source of tourist income.²⁹⁷

In 1960, the former French colony of Oubangui-Chari became the independent Central African Republic under the presidency of David Dacko. Dacko purported to be a Maoist, and courted China briefly, but was removed on the last day of 1965 in a New Year's Eve *coup d'état* by his military chief of staff, and cousin, Colonel Jean-Bédél Bokassa. Bokassa promoted himself to Marshal, ruled for 10 years and, on December 4, 1976, declared himself Emperor Bokassa 1^{er} of the Central African Empire. The coronation, subvented by French economic aid, featured a gilded eagle throne and a crown and robes modeled on those of Napoleon Bonaparte. His 14-year rule was characterized by extreme human rights violations, extrajudicial executions and long-term detentions of political opponents under appalling conditions. Foreign aid given to the CAR (now CAE) went to Bokassa and his political allies, with very little spent on the largely impoverished *Centrafricains*. France appeared to tolerate this reliable, if arguably daffy and dangerous ally, because of the importance of the country as the site of two of its permanent army bases and air strips in the capital, Bangui, and in Bouar, to the northwest.

Bokassa finally became a noticeable embarrassment to France when President Valéry Giscard d'Éstaing was embroiled in a scandal involving diamonds given to him personally by Bokassa as part of his country's continuing friendship with France. Having been witnessed beating striking lycée students to death in Ngaragba Prison, his international reputation was now beyond redemption. The Emperor was taken out in a French-assisted *coup d'état* on Sept. 20, 1979.

Bokassa's cousin, former president David Dacko, was returned to power with the help of French paratroopers, and was henceforth known popularly as "*le Président parachuté*."²⁹⁸ Dacko changed the country's name back to the Central African Republic. Two years later, another army coup on Sept. 1, 1981, deposed him again.

The new president was General André Kolingba. In 1991, President Kolingba was pressured by both France and his Central African political opponents to announce a plan for parliamentary, multiparty democracy. Former Prime Minister (and former Bokassa official) Ange-Félix Patassé was elected president in August 1993, defeating General Kolingba and promising years of back salary unpaid by the previous government to the military and government servants. Patassé was unable to keep this promise, the military rebelled, and French intervention troops were sent in 1996 to keep order. The United Nations contributed an African peacekeeping force in 1998. The 1999 elections returned Patassé for another term, defeating Kolingba yet again. After another attempted takeover in 2001, a successful military coup followed in 2003. The Patassé government was removed by General François Bozizé. Bozizé ran for the office of president in 2005 and won what some termed a mostly free and fair election in spite of polling irregularities including intimidation of voters and some observable instances of vote fraud. The International Criminal Court is presently looking into possible war crimes committed by the current president during the earlier coup attempts against Patassé.

Banditry and warlord activity in the northern part of the country make it impossible currently to exploit any of the natural resources found there, including CAR's uranium, which is of strategic interest to France. War across CAR's borders in DRC to the south, and Chad and Sudanese Darfur to the northeast have generated refugees across CAR's borders, balanced only by the Centrafricains fleeing northward into Chad and Sudan to get away from the warlords and bandits.

B. How well were France's goals accomplished in the CAR?

The specific terms of France's cooperation agreements with CAR were similar at its start to those of its neighbors Gabon, Congo-Brazzaville, and Chad, with all of whom it also shared the Central African economic zone. Dacko and subsequent presidents were promised defense against external aggression by other nations, and defense of the president himself in the event of internal attack, this last overlooked finally in the case of Bokassa, perhaps because he was an emperor and no longer a president. Attempting to find consistency of interpretation of the defense cooperation agreements by France may be futile, unless one examines all of the related interventions as part of a master plan by France to do whatever will further French interests. As with the other francophone countries of central Africa, the effect of these linked military, political and economic/financial agreements was effectively to tie African policies directly to decisions made in Paris. Presidents Dacko and De Gaulle signed CAR's agreements in 1961, at a point when over 100 French garrisons still remained in

sub-Saharan Africa. As of 1989, there were six, one of which was in CAR.²⁹⁹ As

Chipman puts it:

“This physical retreat from Africa, which began soon after decolonization, was made possible because of changes which were taking place in the African military structures themselves as a result of French technical assistance, and because of improvements made in the French ability to act overseas. All French colonies except Guinea signed military assistance agreements that were aimed at building national armies and providing logistic support. Instruction to local armies was openly declared to be in the French interest since it was ‘one of the most efficient ways of guaranteeing the maintenance of influence in the new armies’ (*citing Protocol Relating to Mutual Assistance on Defense in the official journal of ECOWAS, June 1981*). Training of the developing African armies was done by technical advisers, and armaments were provided by the French government which, in order to organize military cooperation properly, established a *Bureau d’Aide Militaire* or a *Mission d’Aide Militaire* in each country having cooperation agreements with France. The French initially preserved the right to enlist new African volunteers directly and retain those not called on by their national armies, thus giving further substance to the sometimes vague political claim that African defence considerations were indistinguishable from French ones.”³⁰⁰

As of 1970, only the CAR, Gabon, and Cameroon in central Africa, and Cote d’Ivoire, Senegal, and Togo in West Africa had kept their original military cooperation agreements largely unchanged, other than with minor amendments. (Cameroon’s move at this point was interesting; it did not re-sign its agreement, but also did not formally drop the original agreement.) As of the mid-1970s, French forces based in sub-Saharan Africa existed only in CAR, Gabon, Cote d’Ivoire and Senegal (as well as at the more permanent base in Djibouti). Even Chad had asked to have the base troops removed, although the long-term interventions there may have made it seem like a permanent troop presence. So, CAR’s importance to France, in spite of its lack of resources, sea access, and oil, lay arguably in its willingness over the long term to host the based troops,

something only Gabon was also willing to do among the countries examined here.

As of 1977, There were also some intervention (*FAR*) troops rotated semi-permanently through the bases in the Central African Republic. The base troops could interact with the *FAR* in spite of the cooperation agreements with the CAR which stipulated that the territory of this country could not be used for direct interventions in other countries, but only as a staging post. This staging capacity, however, was vital when CAR's Bangui and Bouar bases were used to stage the 1983 Chad intervention. As mentioned in the Gabon case, they were also used to intervene in Togo in 1986.

As in Gabon, the French organized yearly maneuvers which included the host country armies, the base troops of the *Forces de Presence*, and the *FAR* in addition to the occasional maneuvers which combined the CAR's armies and the French troops based in the country.³⁰¹

France sent infantry weapons and mortars to the CAR during the 1960s, and thereafter; again, the concentration was on light weapons. In 1980³⁰², France provided a preponderant 98.1% of the Central African Republic's armaments.

France's ability to influence the outcomes of the various political and military conflicts in the CAR during the immediate post-independence decade was remarkable in spite of the need to intervene militarily but briefly during Bokassa's rise to power, and the fact that it had not chosen him to succeed Dacko.

During the late seventies (at the height of Bokassa's empire), President Giscard d'Éstaing was as politically active in Central Africa as he was militarily active, although his Africa policy, like most other parts of his military policy, became understandably more restrained toward the end of his tenure in office. It was Giscardian interventionism, however, that earned France a title it holds to this day, "the *gendarme* of Africa." To stretch this concept a bit, however, France has acted as both the *gendarmerie* on the beat, managing the chronic day-to-day problems ("*Présence*") and preventing most of them from becoming national *histoires*, and the riot police, who are deployed in the event of an acute crisis ("*Intervention*"). However, interventions, to be popular in France, needed to be timely, limited, and short-term. This could reasonably be said of the 1978-79 Zaïre intervention, but was far less so in the case of the Central African Republic and particularly untrue of Chad, as shown in the next case.³⁰³

France's most decisive ability to intervene in the CAR was through the *Force d'Intervention*, combined with the continuing implied threat of the presence at Bouar and Bangui of the *Forces d'Outre-Mer*. Chipman describes the following French military intervention in the Central African Republic as the most significant since decolonization, which does not include the more "discrete" actions (e.g., pre-emptive aid increases and garrison reinforcements) that are less documentable but as frequently effective as obvious shows of force³⁰⁴. 1979's *Operation Barracuda* in the Central African Empire used French Marine parachute troops to seize the capital, Bangui, and depose Jean-Bédél Bokassa. He was no longer an asset to French influence in the region, having crowned

himself using French aid intended for economic development, modeled himself on Napoleon (instead of his original *patron*, de Gaulle of the Fifth Republic), and subsequently given enormous political embarrassment in the French press to his present *patron*, Giscard d'Éstaing.³⁰⁵ David Dacko, who had been removed in Bokassa's *coup d'état* in 1966, was restored successfully, if temporarily, to the presidency. Giscard's refusal of continued protection for Bokassa was understandable, given the inconvenient revelations that the Emperor had given him personal gifts of diamonds with the implication of loyalty given in return. Bokassa's various deficiencies, made public internationally with extensive pictorial coverage of the coronation in various glossy news magazines (which were subsequently banned and confiscated at the border) de-legitimized the Emperor as a candidate for further French aid. He could no longer be considered a reliable political partner, and Dacko was still available to operate under the original terms of France's cooperation agreement with the CAR, terms that had admittedly done Dacko no good whatsoever against Bokassa when he was overthrown in 1965.

Other intervention operations were performed as needed under later presidents. In 1981, one of Mitterand's foreign policy priorities was to adapt France's Africa policy to changing global conditions and to changes in France's relationship with the Atlantic allies. There would not just be military changes, but political, economic, and cultural adaptations as well. Mitterand promised, as well, that the historical links between France and Africa would no longer be used to support the private interests of particular African leaders, but rather, the interests

of African citizens. One of the keys to improving the lives and governments of African people was to be the renegotiation of the cooperation agreements on a case-by-case basis. In addition, France would also try to reinforce the ability of the Organization of African Unity to solve African security problems so that there would be less need of outside (French) military assistance. These promises were applauded, and then largely ignored by African leaders who generally had no desire to re-negotiate their defense and military cooperation agreements in ways that would in fact lessen their ability to call for French help if their own security were threatened. Almost immediately after announcing that France would no longer support the private interests of African leaders against those of their citizens, Mitterand found himself providing internal security aid to the Cameroonian president under the old terms and dealing with Dacko's successor, General Kolingba, following his military coup in CAR.³⁰⁶ It soon became clear that Mitterand's Africa policy was going to resemble more closely his pragmatic political mediation as a Minister of Overseas France in the 1950s than his socialist anti-tyranny presidential campaign rhetoric.³⁰⁷

Mitterand did establish a definite pattern of intervention, however, in that in future it would take place only where requested explicitly by an African leader, and only then in cooperation with African forces. France would also try to avoid intervention in internal disputes, although what was considered to be purely internal remains unclear. Mitterand supported Senegalese intervention in the Gambia in July 1982, an external intervention by most accounts. As already mentioned, he actually refrained from any overt military intervention when

General André Kolingba overthrew CAR's David Dacko in September 1981 although, as Clayton indicates³⁰⁸, some logistical or intelligence support may well have been offered.³⁰⁹

The French public largely supported deposing Bokassa, but was concerned by France's continued expanded troop presence after the fact, as Dacko's government was swiftly overthrown, and France continued its relationship with the CAR by working relatively harmoniously with General Kolingba. The Bokassa intervention was certainly timely, but not limited sufficiently in terms of how long the externally based troops had to be deployed in the CAR before returning to France. Even after the intervention forces eventually returned home, France's base troops in the CAR continued to provide a reassuring source of power for the new President Kolingba.

Although intervention was accepted by CAR with little or no complaint or obstruction, and with a predictable level of interoperability on the part of French and Central African forces, there were some local constraints on French military action. These included the usual need to upgrade African technical capability with successive upgrades in weapons since African technical education levels varied greatly from those of the French. Other constraints appeared during the most recent Bozizé era, with the General's demand that France remove the permanent bases, which had persisted longer than the bases of in any other francophone country with the exceptions of Gabon, Senegal, and Cote d'Ivoire.

Another more frequent local irritant came in the form of competing local African powers which began to offer their assistance to the CAR as military allies:

Libya and most recently, Chad. Chad became a neighborly military government ally when it was recruited by General Bozizé to defend his government against internal armed opposition forces. Since Chad was experiencing yet another period of internal civil war, however, very few of the Chadian troops remained in CAR, where they were accused of a number of serious human rights violations, including a number of incidents of rape of detainees in Ngaragba Prison.

Libya, however, has been interested over the long term in the central position of CAR's location as a potential military site for interventions elsewhere in Africa, and in its potential as a state with many fellow Muslim leaders that might be interested in joining Libyan President Muammar Qaddafi's Pan-Africanist Islamism as an ally (a quality true of Chad as well).

However, wherever external countries developed a presence in a particular francophone ally (usually by supplying military aid and arms), France usually had enough economic or military leverage to balance them, and often enough to nudge them out eventually or marginalize their influence. The most egregious example of this comes, unsurprisingly, from President Bokassa, who at one point named an avenue in the Central African Republic's capital for Muammar Qaddafi, and espoused Islam in return for Libyan aid and diplomatic support. Within a year of this honor to Qaddafi, however, the now-"Emperor" Bokassa had decided that Napoleon was a better role model and Giscard a more profitable patron, and he reaffirmed his French Catholicism.

A final challenge for France has been caused during the past two decades by a truly historic amount of spillover from the civil wars in the Democratic

Republic of Congo/Zaire, and in Chad, which have generated hundreds of thousands of refugees requiring the CAR's assistance. CAR has been hospitable to these refugees, but utterly unable to assist them, requiring the help of a number of neighboring countries, as well as the United Nations HCR, the OAU, and, of course, France, further stretching the tolerance of French citizens for supporting military governments in perennial war zones. France's military assistance has been stretched by these events as well, since it has also been active militarily over the long term in both Chad and the DRC.

France's political goals in the CAR and CAE were largely met, however, and it was able to retain this country as an ally and a military staging area for well on four decades. While not completely able to manipulate the government succession, it was able to manipulate successive Central African presidents and military leaders to accept its political requirements and continue the special relationship. The CAR continues to have a reputation as France's own particular military playground in the center of the *chasse gardée* (if not exactly comparable to the reputation enjoyed by Gabon as France's private garden spot and preferred expatriate colony).

In spite of the French presence, there were successful military *coups d'état* in the Central African Empire/Republic (1979 and 1981), and an abortive *coups d'état* in 1982.³¹⁰ As in Congo-Brazzaville, coup leaders who were willing to work with France were not prevented from taking power, provided that local unrest was kept under control and no French interests or personnel were threatened.

Ironically, it has been CAR's first democratically elected president that has gotten along least well with France over his candidacy and time in office. Ange-Félix Patassé, as a survivor of the Bokassa era, was unsympathetic to military governments in general, particularly the military government of General Kolingba that had worked so well with France. France was in favor of a managed transition to democracy, but this particular president was not France's first choice, mainly due to a fair amount of campaign rhetoric critical of France's continued influence on CAR's economic policies and continued friendships with members of CAR's military. Unfortunately for France, Patassé's ouster has produced chaos under the military government of Bozizé, who was encouraged to take his own path to democracy. With Bozizé's latest election, France may have a better chance of continued influence than it would have under Patassé.

As in Gabon and Congo-Brazzaville, France faces additional obstacles to its policies from CAR's habitual ethnic rivalries and resulting political favoritism, since each successive president's ethnicity has dominated the security forces, the judiciary and governmental positions. Due most likely to the lack or insufficient payroll during economic difficulties and times of conflict, systems of political patronage were ingrained whether the regime has been a democratic republic or a military government. Everyone with the power to compel some type of additional income from their position, from the airport luggage inspectors to the highest levels of government, would request some form of payoff. This is not uncommon in other African countries, not to mention other continents and in the United States; however, the extreme poverty and instability of this country, added

to a succession of truly execrable public servants as presidents who were seen to be in the pocket of the big *patron*, France, often made at least some minor level of corruption a necessity in order to make a living and support one's family out in the village.

A personal observation from this author, who is a former US Peace Corps volunteer during the latter part of the Bokassa period (1978), provides the following illustration of the pervasiveness of this necessity. At the lowest level of governmental graft, it required a fifth of Johnnie Walker Red or a comparable "*cadeau*" (gift) to obtain access to the United States Embassy swimming pool in the middle of the night when only the single guard was on duty. The guard would then open the gate, turn off the pool lights and retire to his bamboo cabana for the remainder of the night. Interestingly, this period was also one of the longer stretches at the embassy without a US Ambassador in residence, possibly reflecting an utter lack of great power interest in the CAE, with the egregious exception of France.

Although the repression of anti-government opposition parties and local NGOs during Bokassa's empire and Kolingba's military government has had a negative effect on France's reputation, there have also been a number of French organizations, mostly private or religious, which have worked on behalf of the poor and marginalized populations in the CAR, thereby helping France's reputation in some areas. Religious schools, missions and hospitals are frequently the only place to receive medical care away from the capital, and coopérant teachers from France and elsewhere have a reputation for care of

their students in spite of France's generally negative reputation among ordinary *Centrafricains*.

France's economic goals have been difficult to meet in a country with this level of poverty. Subsistence agriculture and forestry (logging) support many in the CAR, with some economic contribution from diamond digging. (Most diamonds are riverine and found closer to the surface than the more southern African diamond mines.) Ordinary diggers are paid very little, with a sizeable markup value going to the middlemen in diamond transactions, who are often Europeans. More than 70% of the population presently lives outside of urban areas, without counting those currently inhabiting refugee camps that are not internally displaced persons. There is not much in the way of an urban economy either, but CAR does have some small manufacturing industries, and beer and soft drink bottling companies. Agriculture is responsible for over half of the GDP (exportable crops include cotton, coffee, and tobacco), with the remainder (40%) from diamonds and timber. Since CAR is completely landlocked and the roads outside of the capital are very bad, many imports must arrive by air, which puts them well out of the range of ordinary *Centrafricains*. Encouraging anyone other than the country's elites to develop tastes for French cultural products is therefore a much greater challenge than it is in Gabon and Congo-Brazzaville, which have far more highly developed transportation systems. Continued factional fighting, military roadblocks, and haphazard economic policies almost completely dependent on foreign aid have made difficult conditions nearly impossible, with the result that the CAR's distribution of income is extraordinarily

unequal. Grants from France, other countries, and international humanitarian aid groups cannot meet the total need.

Although the CAR is a member of the *Communauté Financière Africaine*, the Franc Zone does not seem to have provided it with a level of economic support even while keeping the currency steady. However, the withdrawal of the support that France was able to give via the Franc Zone, or the threat of its withdrawal, was more than enough to keep the CAR in France's sphere of influence. Another factor has been the proportionally smaller number of Central Africans receiving an education above the level of what we would consider middle school, which has discouraged outside investors from considering it to be a country with a technically qualified and hire-able workforce.

Zartman gives a number of Central African examples of types of French economic support that forestalled the need for military intervention. In the Central African Republic, low per capita income and low economic growth have frequently threatened political stability, and France has made frequent and effective economic interventions there by supporting the needs of the various regimes in return for their loyalty. As is characteristic of many francophone nations receiving such support, the CAR also has a large group of French expatriates, occupies a strategic position with respect to other francophone nations, has products important to the French economy, has a French school system which maintains French as the language of government and trade (not so incidentally maintaining a sense of shared history and mutual political loyalty between the CAR and France), and, until their recent removal, a large contingent

of French base troops. Economic support could be used (as has been suggested earlier) as either a carrot or a stick. Aid was withdrawn from President Bokassa in 1979, after continuing scandals over his use of French aid for his coronation as Emperor, his gift of diamonds to President Giscard, and the beating deaths of Central African students, but a sum roughly equal to a third of the state budget (over \$40 million) was provided to the new Dacko government which replaced Bokassa a year later. The CAR's continuing willingness to maintain a close relationship with France on all fronts, military, economic and political, combined with its enormous neediness, have also insured that France has remained the pre-eminent partner in every type of agreement made with this country since independence. France has actually tried to enlist the assistance of other nations toward the economic support of the more desperate nations in the *chasse gardée* like the CAR, but even with the most recent enthusiasm by the Chinese in infrastructural development projects like roads, modern farms and rail lines, France is perforce the dominant partner, however many other powers join in the effort, and however great those happen to be.³¹¹

Since the CAR has been such an unpopular place for outside investment (or interference, France has been quite successful, within the limitations of this country's poverty, in maintaining a French character in many organizations, particularly the school system and the government bureaucracy. Due to the need for ordinary citizens and young family members to work so that the entire family can live, however, schooling above the elementary level is available only for the very bright, who can pass the exams to get a scholarship for middle

school and lycée (high school) or whose family has enough money to continue their schooling. Girls are rarer at the upper levels of the educational system because of early marriages and pregnancies, and the conservatism of many of their parents regarding women's education. The country's one university is very small, and in need of much repair and financial support. French remains the language of schooling, but science and math courses are not always taught consistently, and some not at all since the Russian coopérants are no longer apparent as a competitive cultural presence in the professorial ranks. One of the things which sustains French cultural consumption overseas is the ability to pay for it, and CAR is clearly disabled in this area, hampering France's ability to offer full privileges in the cultural joys of *la Francophonie* or market any but the most rudimentary products there.

The remaining cultural area that has stayed very French in character is that of religion, which augmented by the strength of co-religionists in other countries. Although there are now members of many Protestant groups in this part of Africa, particularly from evangelical groups, the strongest competing influence in CAR is Islam, the presence of which predates that of French Catholicism and other European forms of Christianity by hundreds of years, and which also provides an economic component through the continuation of trading groups of nomadic herdsmen who practice Islam and travel across CAR's northern and western country boundaries to Chad, Sudan, and Nigeria. The CAR is roughly 35% indigenous beliefs, 25% Protestant, 25% Roman Catholic, and 15% Muslim. However, as in Gabon, indigenous animistic and ancestral beliefs

are also practiced, and in many areas have blended in syncretism with Christianity and some types of Islam. Although Islam is a minority religion in CAR, it has penetrated CAR quite deeply, and has also facilitated the government's pattern of on-and-off political and military relationships with Libya and Chad, where the greater majority of citizens practice various forms of Islam.

C. What other powers competed with France for attention in the Central African Republic?

The influence of the United States in the Central African Republic has been minor with the exception of various types of humanitarian and development aid in concert with international organizations working there. The other major anglophone power, Great Britain, sent a few armored cars to the Central African Republic during the 1960s, but this was exceptional. Most of Britain's arms transfers, and those of the US (with the notable exceptions of Zaire and Angola) were to anglophone Africa.

Arms sales have been the primary form of non-French military influence, but both the US and the USSR also contributed development aid to Central Africa. There were Peace Corps volunteers in both CAR and Zaire at various times during the 1970s and 1980s, mostly serving as English teachers, fish-farming instructors, health workers, and latrine builders. While the author of this study was a US Peace Corps "*coopérant*" stationed in the Central African Empire in 1978-79, she taught English language classes at a lycée which included three other Americans, three Russian science and mathematics teachers, and two Frenchmen (teaching French language and literature) on its faculty. The other faculty members were Africans, and the school was structured and administered

according to the French system of secondary education, even so far as the calculation of examination grades. This combination of contributing nations was mirrored in secondary schools all over the country. We were also made aware by Peace Corps fish farming instructors in the same town that there was a Chinese agricultural cooperative just up the road. A Belgian diamond merchant and a Portuguese restaurant rounded out the local foreign presence in this town, which was a regional prefecture. While this anecdotal evidence is hardly "intervention" in the traditional sense, it gives an interesting picture of some of the windows of opportunity granted by both France and Emperor Bokassa to outside influence of any variety during this period.

In addition to teachers and military advisors, and offering some training, the USSR supplied some weapons to the CAR during the 1970s and 1980s, including light mortars, anti-tank rocket launchers, and armored vehicles.

China participated in some of the African independence movements with some enthusiasm in the 1960s, largely in the former Portuguese colonies (often in competition with the USSR). In francophone Africa, China assisted southern Cameroonian insurgents in 1960. Recognition of the People's Republic of China was a factor in David Dacko's loss of the presidency of the CAR in Bokassa's 1965 *coup d'état*.³¹² China lost its momentum in Africa later in the 1960s due to the need to concentrate on its own domestic political problems, but has clearly not lost interest in the continent as a whole.

China has also sent a number of other technical (often agricultural) advisors, but these were not as significant a presence in the francophone

countries, and their numbers often fluctuated according to whether a particular leader decided (usually because of renewed alliances with the West) to ask them to leave, as Bokassa did in the Central African Republic in 1966. The future will clearly be different. With the disintegration of the USSR, and France's rhetoric about encouraging democracy, China has sensed a vacuum in the provision of various services and products to some countries in Africa that are still comfortable with autocracy, particularly those with a need to repair their infrastructure and encourage investment. It has made an effort during the past ten years to solidify alliances by providing employment projects of various kinds. There remains a noticeable tendency, however, to train Africans only to a certain level of supervisory expertise and no higher, placing leadership of these projects in Chinese hands.

Libyan influence has been almost as intrusive in the CAR as it has been in Chad, although on a far less consistent basis and with far less show of military force. France has managed to hold off Libyan expansionism in the CAR during the past four decades but Libya has continued to offer development aid and political alliances.

Israel has found a number of allies in Africa, although any alliance with Israel has generally been broken whenever an African nation needs assistance from North African or other Arab countries. In addition to its well-publicized large-scale aid to imperial Ethiopia, Uganda and Tanzania, Israeli military and security training has been particularly important in Zaïre.³¹³ Where France's realm is concerned, Israel was an important buyer for the Central African

Empire's diamonds, and Emperor Bokassa maintained ties with Israel in spite of his publicly-expressed sympathy with the Arab League and what Kalck describes as his "ephemeral conversion to Islam," to court Qaddafi. President Dacko of the CAR used Israeli aid to set up rural agricultural projects, industrial shops, and the National Young Pioneers.³¹⁴ Israel supplied automatic weapons to the CAR during the 1970s.

D. What international regimes or institutions worked for or against France's goals?

La Francophonie is perhaps the most salient international institution to discuss in the context of the CAR. Clearly, Emperor Bokassa saw himself as a part of worldwide "Francophonie" in his admiration of Napoleon Bonaparte and his desire to rule an empire as the French had done. Even if it was not the image which France or any other member of *La Francophonie* would have chosen to project, the eagle throne, the beautiful empress, the crown and royal accoutrements of the former army captain in French Indochina indicate one case at least, where French culture had reached a kind of manic apotheosis through a set of its most recognizable symbols. The organization itself was able to encompass a mad monarch or two and survive, however, because linguistic affinity and the continuation of French as a world language may be the soundest concept on which France can base any kind of universal umbrella organization which claims to hold all persons and elements francophone. Since francophone literature, film, art, music and other areas of endeavor now include writers and artists from France's many colonies, *la Francophonie* now has a tangible presence outside the metropole which earns it respect and admiration.

Arguably, Emperor Bokassa could have been the product of no other combination of cultures. He was educated at French mission schools, joined the colonial army in 1939, and fought for France in both World War II and colonial Indochina, where he was awarded medals for courage. He received his lieutenant's commission in 1949, and took the lead in the training and formation of what was to be the CAR's first independent army. His story is that of someone without whom France could not have perpetuated its extended post-colonial African "*Présence*."

Relationships with other international organizations have been more problematic for the CAR. With France on the United Nations Security Council any requests for peacekeeping troops for the country's period outbreaks of violence had to go through France first, which still intended to do its own peacekeeping in its own back yard even as it was withdrawing the base troops in 1999, as the following events demonstrate. In 1996, the CAR experienced three mutinies in the Armed Forces largely due to a prolonged period without salaries. The 19th Summit Meeting of Heads of State and Government of France and Africa, December 1996, asked the Presidents of Gabon, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali to visit Bangui and mediate a truce between the forces loyal to President Patassé and the rebels. On January 25, 1997, the parties signed the Bangui Agreements, which included the necessary elements for a comprehensive settlement. An international committee with one representative from each of the four mediating countries was to monitor implementation of the Agreements. The mediating committee decided to establish an inter-African force (MISAB) with a

mandate to restore security and monitor the Bangui Agreements, and disarm the rebel militias. MISAB was deployed on February 8, 1997 in Bangui, with 800 troops from Burkina Faso, Chad, Gabon and Mali, and later from Senegal and Togo, under the military command of Gabon and with the logistical and financial support of France. The UN Security Council welcomed the agreement in Resolution 1125 (August 1997) and authorized MISAB to ensure its freedom of movement. In the meantime, UN Resolutions 1136 (November 1997) and 1159 (March 1998) established the UN Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA) to support MISAB, mainly because MISAB could not accomplish its mission without the French base troops, which were set to be completely withdrawn by April 1998. MINURCA contributed significantly to restoring security and economic stability to the CAR, and enabled relatively peaceful legislative elections in late 1998 and presidential elections in 1999. MINURCA was phased out in 2000. Arguably, however, MINURCA would not have been able to operate without MISAB in place and getting political and logistical support from France, even though MINURCA might not have been necessary if France had not been removing the bases.³¹⁵

Another international institution potentially affecting French influence in the CAR may well be one of those which will alleviate some of the poverty, provide educational benefits and actually help France in its stated goal of improving governance in its former colonies: the World Bank. There are currently 5 ongoing World Bank projects costing a total of about \$87 million ongoing in CAR in the areas of health and social services; law, justice, and public administration,

information and communications; energy and mining development; and community and local development.³¹⁶ Any one of these may help France's goals for the country, but the involvement of the World Bank and the IMF will also cut into the relative autonomy that France has experienced in its management of its interests in the CAR.

Since General Bozizé is currently being investigated with regard to the violent conduct of his military supporters during the ouster of former President Patassé, the latest developments in international and national laws targeting heads of state as human rights violators or war criminals, and the role of international human rights organizations in lobbying to create this body of international law needs to be on the list of international institutions which may affect France's ability to deal with the CAR's current and future heads of state. It may be better for France to back off and encourage these developments, since it allows the international community rather than France to put pressure on CAR's leadership for change.

It is useful to note, however, that France actually sheltered Bokassa after replacing him with Dacko. The former emperor fled CAR and lived in exile (on his estate) in France, and then in Côte d'Ivoire. He returned to the CAR in 1987, where he was charged with torturing and murdering some of his political enemies, and sentenced to death. Showing more mercy than he had given those opponents, the CAR commuted his sentence to life in prison. He was given a compassionate release in 1993, and died in 1996 in his home village.

Finally, perhaps the most influential international institution in CAR's history as an independent nation has been the Organization of African Unity, now known as the African Union (AU). Since the leadership of the OAU and AU is a position rotated among the African heads of state, and the chair fell to President Bokassa one year, the traditional building project was initiated in order to provide a proper host venue for the annual meetings. In past years, each successive chair used the annual meetings in their country for a building project that would also result in something useful for the host country. In the case of the CAR, the buildings housing the OAU meeting became part of Université Jean-Bédél Bokassa, now called the University of Bangui. It is the only institution of its kind in the CAR. Also, in addition to their military *AMT* cooperation agreements with France, Francophone African states have signed agreements among themselves for transnational training of their militaries, which supports interoperability when contributing troops to AU interventions.³¹⁷

While not in itself an explicit empirical measure of the force projection strength of African armies, numerous incidents of intervention by African nations in other African nations demonstrate that the central African theatre cannot be defined solely in terms of French preponderance and superpower rivalry. Hughes and May conclude that, of 43 independent states in sub-Saharan Africa, a surprising total of 31 have, for various foreign policy reasons, either provided or received deployments of military forces from other sub-Saharan African states. This total represents regular armed forces contributions alone, in support of three types of objectives: regime-supportive and regime-opposing foreign policy, and

state-supporting objectives (when a state is in danger of collapse). Regime-supportive interventions by African nations closely resemble those of France in support of French client regimes; most of these were by Guinea, Tanzania, Zaïre, Senegal and Nigeria. Zaïre intervened in the Central African Empire in 1979 out of President Mobutu's personal friendship for President Bokassa in order to reinforce Bokassa's attacks on protesting school children and older students.

E. What domestic constraints in France presented obstacles to the French government's goals in the Central African Republic?

The usual domestic constraints in France, already discussed elsewhere, apply to French military and economic interventions in the CAR as well. These included: the expense of multiple military interventions and the continuing base troops, the unpopularity of long-term military interventions in a country which gave back very little to present-day France other than a strategic military location and a part of French history which some might have wished to forget. There were the usual limitations on types of troop involvement. In terms of actual speed of response, those actions which were able to use French troops based already in Central Africa could act with all necessary speed, while larger-scale operations (as in Chad) requiring long-term intervention troops were more difficult to sustain and achieve success, e.g. pacify a rebellion like one of the many in Chad, over the long term.

The CAR's successive undemocratic governments and unstable ethnic politics have been particularly unpopular in France. Criticism of French involvement with Bokassa, Dacko, Kolingba, Patassé and Bozizé has been particularly savage in the French press. The French press is lively and critical,

but plays a role largely in rallying public outcry against (or defending) a decision that has already been made with respect to Africa. Certainly, in the case of a particularly outrageous ruler, the French press has been able to have a considerable influence on public opinion, as in the publication of the story of Emperor Bokassa's gifts of diamonds to President Giscard, and the scathing coverage of the Emperor's coronation and human rights record. The subsequent criticism of Giscard may well have led to his orders for *Operation Barracuda*. Since that time, France has increasingly felt a political need, both internationally and domestically, to present its interventions as multilateral (internationally-sanctioned and organized), and not unilateral (*i.e.* neocolonial).

F. Conclusions on CAR:

France's continuing relationship with the Central African Republic was a success for France in terms of the survival of some vestiges of the colonial influence and its ability to maintain some influence over the CAR's governments and military. It has not been able to raise CAR above dire poverty in economic terms, nor has it instilled the kind of discipline in its military that would allow it to remain subordinate to a civilian government. At most times in the CAR's history as an independent nation, it and France appeared to be at cross purposes, but a commonality lies in their mutual desire to see the country survive, albeit in a state of continuing dependency on France and other entities in the outside world. The CAR had perhaps fewer means of putting pressure on France than any of the other three countries studied here in terms of economic or strategic resources.

However, in allowing the French to maintain the permanent bases for as long as it did, it created for itself the only string it had to pull in order to put pressure on its *patron* to continue the patronage.

The cooperation agreements provided a continuing arena for re-negotiations with France. African partners in these cooperation agreements occasionally asked for significant economic and military help from other states, too much of which would threatened the special relationship which France was trying to maintain. Emperor Bokassa's flirtations with Libya and China are interesting examples of this; notably, he and his successors have always come back to France. France's continuing desire to be both the dominant partner, and the primary external partner, in any cooperation agreement could be used as a limited form of influence over France in order to leverage an occasional concession. Whether this will continue in the future is highly doubtful, since the CAR is now spreading its aid requests further afield and the base troops are gone.

CAR is almost the polar opposite of Gabon in terms of resources, and in terms of the stability of its government and consequent need for France to intervene or re-build its relationship with new presidents. While Gabon has had no civil war since independence and only one uprising (and that very early on), CAR has had many. Not only has France needed to intervene using the base troops within the country, it has had to send in the externally based paratrooper forces as well. Like Congo-Brazzaville, however, CAR has had numerous periods of civil conflict accompanied by urban violence that have provided

challenges to French management and logistical skills. The political skills of France's presidents have been tested numerous times as new leaders emerged and had to be either tamed or otherwise co-opted for the *chasse gardée*, with varying results. There is no question, however, that, of the four countries studied here, and even among the 14 sub-Saharan former French colonies, the CAR has the greatest claim to have been the most exclusive piece of surrogate terrain that French had. There were no oil wells to share with outside companies, no coastline or other resources useful to other parties for logistical purposes, not much uranium (and it was more easily obtained elsewhere) and nothing else but diamonds, which were also easily available from other countries. What it had to offer France was mainly its geographical position in the center of France's other interests, a place to put bases which could reach any other country and project France's force efficiently wherever it needed to go.

CASE IV. CHAD

A. Introduction:

Chad's terrain is largely desert, except for mountainous areas to the north. Like the Central African Republic, it is landlocked, but occupies a strategically central location. As a colonial territory, it bordered British Sudan and was the site of some contestation. The location offers access to France's other allied states in the central and North African regions. Chad was also of great historic importance to France as a provider of soldiers to fight for France in World Wars I & II, and also to fight for France's interests in its colonial empire. Chad's governor during the Second World War remained loyal to the Free French when the Vichy regime tried to co-opt him, for which de Gaulle placed a special importance on Chad, similar to that of Congo-Brazzaville, which had sheltered the Free French and de Gaulle himself. Chad was the first French colony to support the Free French overtly, and Fort Lamy (now the capital, N'Djamena) served as an allied air base and staging area for campaigns in the Middle East and North Africa.

The southern part of Chad contains the only arable land (hence its French nickname, "*Tchad Utile*"), and is also the region where oil was discovered and then extracted and produced and delivered during the 1990s via a pipeline built with international financing through which the oil flows from Doba in southern Chad to the Atlantic coastal port of Kribi in Cameroon. Oil and cotton are the major agricultural export products in the south of Chad. The northern region

Aouzou Strip is a source of strategically important uranium, and a long-running territorial dispute with Chad's northern neighbor, Libya.

Chad's naturally occurring resources include: petroleum, uranium, natron, kaolin, fish (from Lake Chad), gold, limestone, sand and gravel, and salt. 2.8% of the total land areas are arable. Lake Chad is the largest body of water existing in the African Sahel climate band, and forms part of the border with yet another large African military power, Nigeria.

Language is an area that places Chad in a distinct contrast to the three previous cases. It is the only one of the four countries that has two official languages, instead of relying only on French for education and official communication. Chad's other official language is Arabic, reflecting languages spoken by those currently governing the country. In addition, and much like CAR, Gabon and Congo, there are over a hundred different languages and dialects reflecting Chad's multiple, competing ethnic groups. Much of Chad is even more impoverished than the CAR, and only about 26% of the population is literate in either French or Arabic.³¹⁸

On 11 August 1960, Chad achieved full independence, with François (later Ngarta) Tombalbaye as head of state. He became president officially two years later when Chad drafted its new constitution. After 1965's northern rebellion by the *Front de Libération Nationale* (FROLINAT) against southern Chadian domination of the government, President Tombalbaye requested the aid of French troops under the terms of Chad's defense cooperation agreements with France. French troops were withdrawn in 1972 with military technical advisors

staying on. In 1973, Libya, then the main supplier of covert aid for FROLINAT, occupied and annexed the Aouzou Strip in northern Chad.

President Tombalbaye was assassinated in 1975 in an army coup d'état, and replaced by General Félix Malloum, a southern Chadian like Tombalbaye, who was also opposed by the mostly Muslim Arab-speaking rebels from the north. In 1976, a FROLINAT faction led by Hissène Habré broke with the organization and formed the *Forces Armées du Nord* (FAN). Goukouni Oueddai became leader of FROLINAT, supported by Libya, but French intervention troops halted a FROLINAT push to the south in 1978. Malloum negotiated with FAN, and named Habré his prime minister in 1978, a situation that only lasted until 1979 when grievances between the northern and southern groups in the government intensified and shattered the accord between Malloum and FAN. FAN seized control of the capital, Malloum resigned as president in March of 1979 and fled into exile. In April 1979, having settled some of their differences, Habré became defense minister and Oueddai interior minister in a coalition government for the 11 armed groups making up FROLINAT and FAN. By November of that year, they had named an interim Government of National Unity in which Oueddai was president and Habré continued to serve as minister of defense.

Fighting between FAN and FROLINAT's government troops broke out in 1980, and Habré was dismissed from the cabinet. France withdrew its forces from Chad in May of that year, and FAN occupied Faya-Largeau and part of the capital in June. Libya intervened to support Oueddai in the fall of that year. Up to

10,000 Libyan troops were occupying N'Djamena by December. Habré's forces fled to eastern Chad and the Sudan.

Libya's intended political and military union with Chad was not popular with other African leaders, or with France. President Ouéddeï himself felt that Libya's influence had overstepped African founding principles of territorial sovereignty and independence. Ouéddeï asked the Libyan troops to leave in November of 1981, to be replaced by the Organization of African Unity's peacekeeping force. The 3600 OAU troops were unable to halt FAN's advance from eastern Chad, and Habré's forces occupied the capital in June 1982. Ouéddeï fled to exile in Algeria. Hissène Habré announced his presidency of Chad on October 19, 1982.

By 1983, Habré was also in control of the south, but was again fighting Ouéddeï's forces in the northern base of his rival government. Ouéddeï captured Faya-Largeau with Libya's help in August 1983, at which point the United States sent military supplies to Habré, and France sent roughly 2,500 troops in addition to supplies. Zaire contributed an additional 2700 troops. Chad was a nation in partition in 1984, divided by a chain of French military installations across the country's midcenter. While Habré solidified his position in southern Chad, France pushed its defensive line northward by degrees. Since northern Chad was entirely under the protection of Libya's forces, it was expected that Libya's eventual intent was to annex the Aouzou Strip.

France and Libya agreed late in 1984 to withdraw their forces. France complied, but Libya did not. French intervention troops were sent back in 1985 to

push Oueddai's forces and Libya out of Chadian territory, giving the disputed Aouzou Strip back to Chad, but Libya recaptured the area in August. However, after a damaging raid in September by Habré's forces on a Libyan air base, Libya finally agreed to a cease-fire. During renewed fighting in 1987, Chad captured over half a billion dollars worth of Libyan military equipment, much of it usable. Habré was greatly helped by the United States' transfer of Stinger missiles used in bringing down Libya's dominant and well-supplied air force.

During his time as president, Habré managed to achieve one of the worst human rights records on record as he took control by threatening, jailing, torturing, and often killing a large number of his political and military enemies. His suppression of northerners, or anyone with northern family ties, was a well-publicized international example of political brutality. Northerners were not the only targets; journalists, religious leaders, and peaceful political activists of all ethnicities became targets. In November of 1990, after a campaign lasting only 3 weeks by a rebel force led by one of Habré's former army commanders, Idriss Déby, Habré and many of his followers fled into exile. Déby was supported by Libya and Sudan, which provided him with cross-border territory from which to launch his campaign. However, the United States, France and Nigeria backed him politically, and a 1200-troop French force helped Déby to mop up the remaining Habré partisans by 1993.

So, although Chad became an independent republic in 1960, it has experienced over four decades of civil war and political conflict. Peace was eventually made with Libya, and the issue of the resource-rich Aouzou Strip

apparently resolved in 1990, the year in which the current President, Idriss Déby, took power by military *coup d'état*. The Déby government drafted a democratic constitution, held a pair of somewhat dubious presidential elections in 1996 and 2001, and has since dealt with a succession of armed revolts in both the north of the country (1998) and from the east in 2005, attacking Chad from bases in eastern Sudan, which was also, not coincidentally, the location from which the current president overthrew former President Hissène Habré in 1990. The current president's ethnic group, the Zaghawa, is northern in origin, but one of the smaller Muslim ethnic groups. It holds a monopoly on positions of political and military power in the current Chadian government, however. In June 2005, President Idriss Déby held a referendum to remove constitutional term limits on the presidency, and won his third term by another suspiciously overwhelming margin election in 2006. N'Djamena, the Chadian capital, was attacked by a coalition of armed rebels in February of 2008, and is currently under a declared state of emergency where those in the political opposition who have not been detained indefinitely or extrajudicially executed have fled into enforced exile in neighboring countries or in France. Déby's regime has come to resemble the previous rule of President Habré, for all of Déby's early campaign rhetoric about reform and tolerance.

After four and a half decades of French presence in independent Chad, and a history of French loyalty to this country because of the early contributions made by this loyal member of the *chasse gardée* as a border region against the encroachments of the British in Sudan during the colonial period, for its troop

contributions during the first World War and its loyalty to de Gaulle and the Free French against the Vichy regime presence in North and West Africa, France has very little to show for its loyalty to the independent nation of Chad except for several decades-worth of exasperatingly small victories to protect a succession of despots who have drained French military and economic resources and added very little to France's glory. Since the country has been chronically unstable, the types of investment in infrastructure and economic ventures that would have made Chad a reliable trade partner were short-lived or impossible, in contrast to France's long-term and lucrative arrangements with Gabon, the Central African Republic and Cameroon for oil, diamonds and timber.

B. How well were France's goals accomplished in Chad?

Specific terms of the initial military cooperation agreements with Chad under Tombalbaye resembled closely those of Gabon and CAR, providing for the defense of the country in the event of an external aggression (such as that of Libya) and also for the defense of the president in the event of an internal insurgency (like those of Oueddai, Habré and Déby under the various circumstances that brought them to power). France sent infantry weapons and mortars to Chad during the 1960s, adding anti-tank guided weapons during the 1970s and 1980s. In 1980³¹⁹, France provided 98.4% of the Chadian government's armaments.

Chad's own total armed forces and military budget have been larger than those of the other countries studied here, reflecting the frequent state of either

civil war or external aggression in that country, and the continuing presence of military governments with ongoing concerns about internal security.

The use of French intervention forces in 1983 was supplemented by base troops, such as the 6th BIMA regiment based in Gabon and the French based troops in CAR, which were used for the 1983 Chad intervention in spite of France's cooperation agreements with both Gabon and CAR, which stated that their territory could not be used for direct interventions elsewhere.

Libya, France's primary external opponent in the earlier Chad conflicts (and a frequent diplomatic and military factor in central African regional politics to this day) had a total of 70,000 in its armed forces in 1994, with a military budget of \$927 million. Libya's military expenditures in its region have been enormous, buoyed by its oil resources; its arms purchases between 1973 and 1983 were estimated at \$17,260 million. Although it has the physical capacity to be the preponderant power in the region, Libya's military itself is increasingly less involved in political decisions, and Qaddafi's own variety of ideologically-based diplomacy has made Libya's use of its power somewhat erratic in effect. Nonetheless, it was a power to be reckoned with during the first 4 decades of Chad's independence, and particularly during the period from 1973 to 1987 when it was operating as an invasion force in Chad.³²⁰ Libya's willingness to harbor terrorist training groups on its soil for many years, including the forces of Charles Taylor in Liberia and other insurgent groups, is also a reason that the United States has invested in counter-terrorist training for Chadians during the past

decade, making it more involved militarily in Chad than it has ever been in Gabon, CAR or Congo at any point.

Infrastructural improvements were required on a much greater scale in Chad for France's interventions, mainly because of the relative sophistication of Libya's opposing forces. These improvements included the installation of a *Centaure* radar system and the deployment of Hawk missile installations in N'Djamena, which allowed the French and Chadians in 1987 to bring down a Libyan *Tupolev 22* that was bombing the capital. Chad was indeed the first place where France was willing to bring its most modern equipment into the operation and supply Africans with it as well. This choice vastly improved its interoperability with the Chadian forces, just as the general upgrading of African armaments that has taken place since 1987 has meant similar improvements in the ability of French and francophone African armies to operate together.³²¹ *Milan* anti-tank missiles, for instance, were supplied to the Chadians in 1987, and also to the Rwandan government for use against the insurgent Rwandan Patriotic Front.³²² As the opponents of France's African allies have acquired more modern military capacities, France has tried to match these developments with capacity-building aid to its allies. This aid, in turn, upgrades France's own capacity to intervene.

There is enormous irony, however, in France's need to upgrade forces in Chad to balance Libya. As late as 1981, France was still supplying Libya with aircraft and arms in return for concessions having to do with the Chadian conflict, as well as with the preservation of French oil interests in Libya. Mitterand ceased

the transfers, but only after a number of bargains had been struck. His predecessors in office had been no less conciliatory with Libya, in spite of continued irritation from that source. Giscard had imposed an arms embargo on Libya because of Qaddafi's interventions in Chad, but this was lifted in order to allow previously ordered French arms to be delivered (*Mirage* F-1 fighters, helicopters, and patrol boats). By 1982, the USSR was Libya's main supplier in any case, and France had lost even this ineffective form of leverage on Chad's northern aggressor.³²³

Military capacity building became a real concern when a francophone African country faced a superior opposing force that had been improved by outside support such as that given by Libya to Goukouni Oueddai and FROLINAT. Both the long-term "peacekeeping" actions and the short-term interventions envisioned for France's original *FAR* were constrained by the local conditions and infrastructure of the states in which it intervened. This was the primary reason for the concentration of *Assistance Militaire Technique* on infrastructure and capacity-building aid. With airstrips large enough to receive civilian transport, troop transport was considerably simplified. During the 1983 Chad "peacekeeping" operation, French engineers rebuilt the N'Djamena and Faya-Largeau airstrips to handle the larger transports that were used to ferry French troops into Chad *via* Dakar in Senegal and other African bases.

In spite of these improvements in local resources, France has not been able to prevent conflict in Chad from the opening days of its of Independence. Chad required armed intervention on the part of France from the start, during the

period 1960-1963.³²⁴ The fighting was suppressed, but the initial conflict died down only temporarily, leaving political and ethnic grievances which resurfaced later in the 1960s as a full-scale civil war lasting a couple of decades, and which France was only partially able to control.

Chad is another country that, like Gabon, particularly demonstrates the results of a constant French presence in both the military presence and intelligence dimensions. France has frequently subsidized the African security services by providing its own expert personnel as advisors and as operatives. Clayton cites a very early example of the French captain of Chad's security service in the early 1960s, who was paid by France to serve Chad's first President Tombalbaye until 1968, at which time the captain "retired" from the French military, and was re-employed and paid by Tombalbaye himself. This captain was responsible for the arrest of 100 Chadian opposition members after the failure of the 1963 *coup d'état*.³²⁵

Other early French intelligence activities in Chad produced even more startling, results. In the early 1970s, Jacques Foccart himself was accused by President Tombalbaye of conspiring with the Chadian opposition to overthrow the regime. This may have been true given that Tombalbaye had become increasingly irrational and difficult for France to deal with. Tombalbaye accused Foccart of being the sworn enemy of Chad, and induced the Chadian National Assembly to pass a resolution denouncing him. Attacking Foccart personally was almost certainly a safer move than attacking the French president or France's public support of Chad, but risky nonetheless.³²⁶

France developed a substantial and variably mobile force projection capability in Africa over the decades, and substantially improved its speed of response over time not only with better technology but also with a continued focus on good intelligence through its relationships with African armies, leaders and government functionaries. In terms of actual speed of response, those actions that were able to use French troops based already in Africa [like the Togo and Central African Republic interventions] could act with all necessary speed. Interventions like those in Zaïre and Chad, which required larger-scale troop transport occasionally ran into logistical difficulties, and actions that required massive deliveries of troops and armament (like France's participation in the first Persian Gulf War), ran into real political and logistical constraints at home and overseas. By the spring of 1978, with simultaneous interventions required in both Chad and Mauritania/Western Sahara, it had become evident that France's ability to fulfill its commitments under the cooperation agreements was seriously limited by the original concept of the French army as primarily a conscript force. Since the 1964 intervention in Gabon, draftees could not be sent overseas or even into foreign countries at all without the permission of the *Assemblée Nationale*. The whole intervention capacity of France was composed of enlisted personnel, all of whom would be sent overseas in the event of action on two fronts, leaving the draftees to defend the homeland. Prolonged interventions would cause even more severe problems in terms of service and in further unbalancing the composition of France's forces at home and abroad.³²⁷

At one point, the contribution of France's elected representatives to the intervention process became so scanty that the soldiers' organizations themselves protested their own use for what they saw as undemocratically driven purposes. Chipman quotes a 1984 statement from the *Mouvement Information pour les Droits du Soldat*, which complains that "with the professionalization of a quarter of our armed forces ... the government has given itself an intervention capability of a colonial type -- without the parliamentary debate considered a democratic minimum."³²⁸ This is also an excellent example of the (nominally) socialist government of France making full use of the potential power inherent in Gaullist *presidentialisme*. It is also an indication that the conscription problem of the early twentieth century, described in the historical introduction to these cases, continued to contribute to the paradoxical duality of France as a democratic "nation in arms" which had nonetheless retained much of the imperial intervention capacity of a colonial military organization.

This institutionalized duality was not merely political, but translated into concrete logistical problems in troop deployment. There were continuing difficulties with those interventions that required something more than the logistics support necessary for the simple in-and-out operations envisioned by those who designed the *FAR*. *Operation Manta* in Chad required a refueling detachment that could not be sent immediately (when needed) because all of the technicians were conscripts. This problem has been corrected by forming the technician corps entirely of enlisted volunteers.

During the 1980s, Mitterand's *Force d'Action Rapide*, as with *the Forces d'Intervention* of de Gaulle and Giscard in the 1970s, remained effective as a force of first resort on some long-term peacekeeping missions where troop commitments and logistical requirements were carefully limited, but was unable to prosecute a full scale African war far from home, or any long-term war against insurgents with sophisticated training and any significant resources. The mobility and flexibility which helped the *FAR* on short-duration operations making use of the base troops also made it unsuitable for some larger-scale overseas operations. Ground forces remained the bedrock of the French intervention forces, but air transport and "marine" specialists were critical components as well.

The Chad intervention in 1968, which had its roots in the "minor uprisings" of 1963, was the final French intervention in Africa before the death of President de Gaulle. It marked the beginning of France's most serious, long-term, and significant series of military actions in a francophone African state until the recent policy disaster represented by *Operation Turquoise* in the wake of the Rwandan Genocide of 1994.³²⁹ It began in 1968 because of a matter of breached territorial integrity in the north of Chad by an externally-supported revolt. Not intervening in such an instance would have been a blow to the credibility of the Franco-African defense agreements with several different francophone countries: the neighboring governments of Niger and the Central African Republic were also concerned about the spread of violence throughout the region. In addition, CAR, Chad, and neighboring Niger all held significant uranium deposits³³⁰ which

remained of importance to France, although it defended Chad publicly on the internationally-recognized principle of "territorial integrity" rather than its own strategic interest. 1968 saw the start of an ongoing problem for France in containing insecurity in Chad and honoring its security agreements with successive victors in the Chadian conflicts.³³¹

Of all of the interventions during the 1970s and 1980s, the multiple interventions in Chad represented perhaps the greatest test of the credibility and effectiveness of France's military cooperation with a former colony. In point of fact, these interventions went well beyond what was acceptable according to Chad's cooperation agreements, particularly in the mid-1980s, given that the agreement prohibited French military personnel in Chad from participating directly in war operations or in operations maintaining or re-establishing "order or legality."³³² In its central location, Chad was regarded from the colonial period as the "vital hinge," [Clayton's term] connecting the French territories of North, West, and Central Africa. Its political identity has always been problematic, as a country created somewhat artificially out of largely Moslem North African groups and generally non-Muslim southern populations, creating a non-cohesive mixture of Arab-influenced Northern Chadians, nomadic Saharans, and non-nomadic sub-Saharan. For the first period of unrest was under President Tombalbaye, French troops were needed to contain disorder in 1962 and 1963. Further unrest occurred in 1965 in central and eastern Chad. By 1967, Tombalbaye's administration and military had lost the ability to govern effectively. 1968 was to signal the beginning of France's need to give Chad more constant military

attention than any of the other francophone states in the region. The Chadian Army had become divided and government troops were engaged in serious and arbitrary repression. In 1968, Toubou Guard irregulars spread the revolt northward, massacring the Chadian government troops garrisoning the Aouzou region, which contained strategic mineral resources. The loosely federated revolt was first drawn together organizationally as FROLINAT (*Front de Libération National Tchadien*) by Ibrahim Abatcha, who had received his military training in North Korea and was killed by the Chadian Army in 1968. At this point, the roughly 3,000 FROLINAT insurgents not only overwhelmed the capacity of the Chadian government to respond, but began to receive significant assistance from Libya.³³³

De Gaulle responded initially by flying in both an administrative team charged with the hopeless task of reforming Chad's civil government (which had been a loyal, if occasionally embarrassing, supporter of French policy), and a company of Foreign Legion *parachutistes*. The armed contingent was followed by a large training group commanded by General Arnaud, two more companies of *Legionnaires*, and part of a Marine infantry regiment with helicopters. General Cortadellas was appointed overall commander of an effort that was defined "selective pacification." In 1971, after considerable fighting during which 50 Frenchmen (including Cortadellas' son) were killed, FROLINAT was at least contained, if not removed. The solution had not been the tidy engagement that France had projected, and the ongoing commitment to Chad remained.³³⁴

France's enthusiasm for intervention was considerably dampened by the difficulties encountered in Chad. In addition, France began to negotiate various agreements with Libya that were to complicate further involvement in the region. 3,000 French troops were withdrawn from Chad by 1972, leaving a single French Marine regiment and 600 other French Army advisers, who were deployed in Chadian uniforms. In 1974, FROLINAT captured the wife of an archaeologist, along with a German doctor (who was ransomed immediately by the German government). Madame Claustre, however, remained FROLINAT's hostage for three years, joined in captivity by her husband in 1975. In the meantime, President Tombalbaye had become mentally ill and was removed in 1975 by the head of Chad's Army, General Félix Malloum. Malloum demanded a complete withdrawal of France's combat troops, but signed a new cooperation agreement in 1976, receiving several hundred French advisers to help him contain FROLINAT. These advisers were not supposed to engage in combat, but this provision of the agreement was ignored.³³⁵

FROLINAT was also in some disarray, allowing Malloum and the French to contain its activities in the south and center of Chad, if not in the north, where Libyan-equipped and supported insurgency from FROLINAT took Faya-Largeau, the most important northern center of government. The Chadian Army lost 2,000 troops defending the north, threatening its ability to hold the capital, N'Djamena. France prevented the loss of N'Djamena by sending strike aircraft and 1,500 troops, but incurred significant enough casualties in this assault that the Chadian effort became politically quite unpopular in France. To discourage further French

domestic opposition, Paris tried to increase the capacity of the Chadian government to solve its own problems by encouraging Malloum to share his government with the leader of one of FROLINAT's more moderate branches, Hissène Habré. Habré became Prime Minister, with Malloum as Head of State, in 1978. The majority tendencies within FROLINAT, however, continued to fight under Goukouni Oueddai, and remained in control of the north. At this point, Libya annexed the Aouzou strip in the northwest of Chad. A new era in the Chadian saga began, as France tried simultaneously to (1) maintain a stable Chadian government with cooperative links to France, (2) contain Libyan expansionism (without losing its options to deal politically and economically with Libya in the future), and (3) limit French engagement to what was considered politically acceptable in Paris.³³⁶

As the political alliance between Malloum and Habré began to disintegrate, France managed to maintain a low French casualty rate, relative to the early 1970s, and based Foreign Legion and Marine parachute infantry and artillery regiments in Chad, supported by *Jaguar* strike aircraft. FROLINAT and Libya obliged France unintentionally by engaging in factional disputes among themselves. France was able, temporarily, to enforce military order in the south, but could not prevent Habré and Malloum from disagreeing with one another. The situation collapsed when a southern Malloum supporter, Colonel Kamougué, fought Habré for control of N'Djamena and lost. Oueddai and FROLINAT moved southward, and Habré had to re-take N'Djamena from him. All the while, the French remained in their barracks.

Between 1978 and 1980, after numerous incidents of factional fighting and shifting alliances, diplomatic solutions were proposed, along with a first attempt at an all-African peacekeeping mediation effort. French and African diplomacy resulted in a new Chadian coalition that appointed Oueddai and Kamougué as President and Vice President, with Habré as a Minister. Other African countries (Congo-Brazzaville, Benin and Guinea) were to supply peacekeeping troops whose presence in Chad would allow for a French military withdrawal. The 2,000 French troops based in Chad were halved to 1,000 and one African country (Congo-Brazzaville) provided 600 soldiers, which arrived at the point where the political alliance in N'Djamena collapsed. Oueddai was unable, as he had thought, to remove the Libyans, which was to be the rationale for France's pullback. Habré was removed from the coalition government and took his loyalists to the east. Kamougué consolidated his forces in the south, and Oueddai returned north to work again with Qaddafi. Chad was again officially at war.³³⁷

Habré retained French support and training assistance and came to terms with Kamougué. Oueddai continued with Qaddafi, but the relationship deteriorated due to Qaddafi's desire for complete Libyan hegemony over northern Chad. In 1982, Habré regained what was left of the capital and declared a government of national unity. France withdrew the last portion of its combat troops.³³⁸

In 1983, Libyan support was given to Oueddai and Kamougué for further insurgent efforts. An alternative government was established in Bardai by this

newly reconstituted movement. Habré, whose Chadian resources were small and badly trained, and whose only external help came from Zaïrean Army troops and some limited US air support (contributed because of Qaddafi's participation with Soviet-trained troops), again found it necessary to call for French assistance. *Operation Manta* (Stingray) was the response from Mitterand, France's fourth president in succession to deal with the Chadian problem. *Manta* sent 4,000 French troops, mostly Legionnaires and Marines, including parachutists, infantry cavalry and marine artillery units. *Manta* also brought, for the first time, some of France's newest anti-aircraft and anti-tank weapons, and electronic equipment. Faced with this display of support for Habré, Qaddafi and Oueddai withdrew, and Qaddafi made an agreement with Mitterand that both French and Libyan forces would be withdrawn from Chad, except for a few advisors from each, and replaced by international supervision. Mitterand did not forcefully contest Libyan annexation of Aouzou at this time, and withdrew as promised.³³⁹

Libya did not completely withdraw, and supported further insurgency by Oueddai in early 1986. Habré was able to counter the first attacks, but appealed yet again for French military support. At this point, however, Mitterand was managing political problems at home in the context of parliamentary elections. His response to Habré, *Operation Épervier* (which is translatable as either Sparrowhawk or Sweep-net), featured a French Air Force attack on the new Libyan air field in northern Chad, with some limited ground defense of Chadian airstrips. A force of 1,000 men was then stationed in Chad to provide daily

northern patrol flights in the north, and effectively partitioning the country along the 16th parallel.³⁴⁰ *Épervier* was politically risky in that it was apparently open-ended, but the risks of French casualties incurred by the previous operations in Chad were minimized. There was a greater risk in leaving Chad to disintegrate on its own, because this would have caused every other francophone African nation to question the value of its French cooperation agreements, with the subsequent loss to France's credibility as their security guarantor. It would also have caused France's fellow European powers to question its commitment to constraining Libyan (and proxy Soviet) aggression. France's strategic and economic power in Africa would be compromised seriously, therefore, if it abandoned Chad.

In 1987, Habré received significant support not only from France, but also from the United States in the form of arms, ammunition, and equipment. French garrison troops secured Habré's supply routes and bases, without having to participate much beyond this work. Eventually, Habré inflicted a series of losses on Libya and FROLINAT, while the French remained visibly ensconced on the 16th parallel, still known as the Red Line.³⁴¹

The ability to intervene militarily was preserved post-independence in the form of the *Force d'Intervention*, combined with the continuing presence on African bases of the *Forces d'Outre-Mer*. Chipman lists the following French military interventions in Chad since decolonization in 1969, which do not include the more "discrete" actions (e.g., pre-emptive aid increases and garrison

reinforcements) that are less documentable but as frequently effective as obvious shows of force³⁴²:

Chad in 1969-1975 (Intervention in the war against FROLINAT)

Chad in 1978-80 (More war against FROLINAT)

Chad in 1983-88 (Various operations supporting President Habré)

President François Mitterand's adherence to his own initially stated constraints on African intervention became most difficult to uphold during France's continuing series of interventions in Chad. From 1983 on, Mitterand found that he needed to keep an active military presence in Chad, both to deter Libya (thereby preserving a Soviet containment credential without directly confronting the USSR), and to preserve Chad's always-problematic territorial integrity. The continuing presence in Chad posed real political problems for the Mitterand government at home, because high casualty levels were possible there, and France showed an apparent inability to leave Chad completely.³⁴³

Épervier demonstrated, however, that France's airlift capacity needed enhancements, if it were to remain effective in the African region by Air Force interventions rather than with massive ground troop actions. Algeria criticized overflight by the French to Chad, and Libya was actively hostile to overflight. Supply flights generally came from Senegal's Dakar base and Cameroon, and commandeering civilian aircraft for some of these flights caused additional controversy.³⁴⁴

Chad is another case of protracted and lethal factional conflict, one where a succession of presidents with brutal human rights records and favoritism

toward their own ethnic groups have been given French support, and military cooperation/presidential defense agreements. In the case of Chad, as in the case of Rwanda, the costs of this relationship had begun to outweigh the benefits very early on, since Chad's various presidents had been making war on various other groups in Chad from independence onward. The Northerners competed against the South for fertile land (and now control of the oil fields), Southern separatism was a continuing threat against successive governments, the far northern Aouzou strip's uranium was a temptation for Libya, which supported Northern separatists, and Sudan continues to play a long-running role as a refuge for anti-government insurgent groups (which at one time included the current president).

Indeed, France's cost/benefit analysis for remaining in Chad would seem to have been weighted on the side of risk. It had uranium for the *force de frappe*, but France had other sources (Niger) for this, and the cotton production of the south was no longer as much of an investment as it had been in the colonial period. The oil fields were discovered fairly early on, but not exploited until the 1990s were initially part of France's desire to keep Chad, but the ongoing conflicts in the south made the region unstable, and landlocked Chad did not receive attention from the major oil companies until early in the 1990s. The United States oil companies Chevron and Exxon, and the World Bank essentially took on the financial supporting roles that France's oil companies could have played, with all of the results initially predicted by France and the World Bank's earlier analysis of the political and security climates in Chad which would prevent the project from succeeding in its development goals for ordinary Chadians.

And yet, France has stayed on in Chad, although it considerably lowered the base troop levels for *Operation Épervier* during the 1990s. However, two other civil wars during the past five years have required an increased presence of intervention troops to protect Chadian President Déby from coup attempts and attacks on the capital by the new leaders of those ethnic groups from whom his own government took power in the early 1990s. France is now obligated to the European Union in addition to its other security arrangements. This places additional pressure on France not, as before, to police its former possessions by unilateral interventions, but to support its obligations under the African military cooperation agreements by encouraging multilateral interventions by the European Union, the United Nations, and the African Union, in which France will of course play a part. At this time, however, the “multilateral” EUFOR peacekeeping force in Chad, placed there to protect the refugee camps and allow humanitarian aid to be delivered, is mostly (at least 60%) French troops. EUFOR’s commander is from Ireland, but the group is still a target for the rebels because they still regard it as a French initiative and therefore on the side of the Chadian president, even though it is international in composition and support.

“*Épervier*” remains to this day the name of the French forces based in Chad. The French garrison in Chad for *Épervier* is now largely based in N’Djamena. This deployment is designed to safeguard the vital air bridge into and out of Chad in the event of a national emergency. The present French forces are equipped with armored fighting vehicles, five Mirage-F-1 combat aircraft, three Puma helicopters, two transport aircraft, and significant air defense

technology.

Local constraints on French military, political and economic actions in Chad have included an inability to control the ethnic rivalries resulting in conflicts among its Chadian contacts and leaders. This has translated into a consequent inability to control the actions of the Chadian armed forces in spite of high levels of French aid and Chad's long-term relationship with France.

Chad's inter-African relations have resulted in military aid by Chad to at least two other francophone nations. Between September 1998 and June 1999 Chad sent up to two thousand troops to fight on behalf of President Laurent Kabila of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Chad was also one of seven African states that provided troops, support units and observers for the 1350-member UN Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA) to restore security. Largely at the suggestion of President Déby of Chad, who also chaired the UN Standing Advisory Committee on Security Issues in Central Africa, a UN Peace-Building Office in the CAR, BONUCA, replaced MINURCA in February 2000. Since the presidents of Chad and CAR are allies, and the Chadian troops who supported President Bozizé of CAR were very unpopular in Bangui due to numerous accusations of rape and other human rights violations, keeping the UN in Bangui as well is to Chadian President Déby's political advantage.

Since Chad's government is still essentially a military regime in all but name, President Déby makes political appointments from his friends in the military ranks, and controls the disposition of Chad's armed forces as would a military, not a civilian, commander-in-chief. The command structure of Chad's

armed forces is completely in the president's power, implemented by the minister of defense and the chief of staff, and internal conflicts often result in political arrests of dissenting officers within the military. Chad's armed forces in 2000 were estimated at 20,000 in the army and 350 in the air force. The Presidential Guard numbers roughly 5000, and there is also a considerable force, numbers unknown, belonging to Chad's notoriously corrupt and often vicious *Agence Nationale de Sécurité* (National Security Agency), the primary force used to control political dissidents and other perceived enemies of the government. In spite of considerable French training and tactical workshops for these various forces, France is far less able to require operational discipline on their part than it has been in the past. This is partly due to the frequent *ad hoc* addition of independent armed opposition militia members into the Chadian armed forces without sufficient time to train.

France has been unable to control regional separatist movements, not only due to their frequency in Chad, but also because of external interventions by other neighboring countries in the political affairs of their neighbors, some of whom may share a territorial interests across borders. One recent case of this is the Zaghawa ethnic group in Chad, which not only has members leading Chad's government, but also has members who have been attacked by Sudan's janjaweed militias across the border in Darfur.

As Foltz demonstrates, external intervention of various kinds contributed to internationalizing and escalating the internal conflicts in Chad. Contested and weakly defended borders, acute poverty and dependence on French aid³⁴⁵, and

the constant solicitation of outside help by all parties in Chad's factional conflicts produced a situation of long-term regional insecurity. Libya, Nigeria and Sudan have each defended various Chadian factions, and Morocco, Zaïre, Egypt, Algeria, Congo-Brazzaville, Benin, Burkina-Faso, and Gabon have all contributed various forms of direct or indirect aid to the Chadian groups, depending upon their alliances with, and external patronage from, larger external powers or interest groups: France, the US, the USSR, and the Arab states. Saudi Arabia and Iraq even offered arms and made diplomatic initiatives, and some Arab states provided FROLINAT with operational bases from which to launch attacks. Aid from the Arab states to Chad was made easier by Chad's complete break with Israel in 1972.³⁴⁶ Nigeria's interest in the conflict came not only from its wish to play a powerful role in the West African region, but from a history of border clashes in the Lake Chad area, centering around disputed islands, in the early 1980s.³⁴⁷ Finally, however, it was only France's presence in central and southern Chad that prevented Libya's air power preponderance over the Chadians from making inroads beyond the northern section that contained most of Qaddafi's factional allies. Qaddafi's only partial hold on the territory, his diplomatic mistakes, and his frequent lack of trust both in his own military, and in his Chadian allies, cost him the Aouzou strip and eventually most of his influence in northern Chad.³⁴⁸ Since Chad is an expensive place to police, given miles uninhabited space punctuated by intense episodes of anti-civilian guerilla action, it cost France dearly in both financial and political terms.

A major part of France's difficulty in preventing conflicts in Chad is that it has been unable to prevent Chad's neighbors (Libya and Sudan) from delivering financial and military aid to the various internally warring parties, thereby maintaining the conditions for civil war over the long term. Libya and Sudan remain major regional influences even on the present-day conflict in Chad, and may ultimately have more power to influence the eventual outcome of Chad's current civil war than France itself. Libya has acted on numerous occasions as a mediator between Chad and Sudan in the latest conflict, and Sudan has been accused, as in the past, of harboring armed opposition movements working against President Déby's presidency of Chad. Ironically, it was from Sudan in 1990 that Idriss Déby mounted the coup d'état that brought him to power.

France's earlier interventions in the Chadian conflict could be considered a success if defined only in terms of containment, although a series of different interventions was required, which signally failed to solve the essential problems there over the long term. The current civil war is an indication of this, and armed conflict with Chadian separatist groups continues to be a threat in Chad's oil producing region in the South. The operations in Chad have pinpointed some problematic aspects of France's intervention capacity, and also the occasionally unpredictable vicissitudes of France's relationship with the largest competing regional power, Muammar Qaddafi's Libya. These successive interventions showed the results of France's more streamlined and more restrained approach to peacekeeping, and also demonstrated many of its limitations. On balance, France did manage to hold off Libyan expansionism during the 1970s and 1980s,

prevent any large-scale Soviet influence from taking hold, and also began to make some use of regional institutions like the OAU and the African Union in order to bolster and legitimate its efforts. Libya has probably been the largest source of competition for France in Chad (and southward in the CAR) during the 1970s through the 1990s.

Ultimately, France's political goals for Chad as a continuing member of its francophone posse have been even more difficult to meet than the military ones. As a result of the serial civil wars in Chad, France was unable to control the choice of presidents in Chad, nor insure that they follow French political preferences. In spite of the consistent and continued French presence, there was a succession of successful military *coups d'état* in Chad.³⁴⁹ However, all of the new leaders proved to be able to work with France eventually. France showed a remarkable ability to roll with the punches and maintain its military presence and cooperation agreements with successive regimes, but this required enormous political, moral and financial flexibility.

In such a context, France's ability to hold on as the major external influence that eventually won the field should probably allow us to call the Chad interventions a "success" for France, even though the protracted conflict was costly and demonstrated a number of the weaknesses in France's intervention capacity. France not only managed to bring Hissène Habré, its chosen candidate, to power, but also managed to retain enough influence to continue their role as a major military and economic backer for the military regime of Idriss Déby that ousted Habré by force of arms in 1990. Habré lost power because, in

spite of his strong nationalism, his considerable negotiating skills and adaptability, and his military skills, he allowed his own relationship with the Chadian military to decay once he became president. He also allowed considerable corruption and violations of the human rights of his citizens that were criticized abroad, and embarrassed France. When Mitterrand announced at the La Baule summit that future foreign aid would begin to take more account of democratization, Habré's reaction was less than diplomatic, and French aid slowed down. The French military garrison remaining in Chad began to take a neutral stance between Habré's regime and Déby's rebel faction, allowing Déby both a military and diplomatic advantage. France was well acquainted with all parties in the dispute, and maintained its contacts with Déby during his rebellion. France's in-depth, long-term relationship with the Chadian military, combined with Chad's continuing military and economic dependence on France, was probably the major factor that led to President Déby's continued use of France as an influential patron in the 1990s.³⁵⁰

Chad was a notable example of one place where one nation (Libya) attempted to replace the colonial legacies implanted by France with its own *mission civilisatrice*, including people's revolutionary committees, compulsory use of Arabic, and ideological tutoring from Qaddafi's own *Green Book*. That Libya was ultimately unsuccessful after nearly fifteen years of intervention, reflects not only on the incompetence with which Qaddafi used his enormous military power, but the historically entrenched power of France, which was supported not only in military and diplomatic terms, but in Chadian economic and cultural habits as

well. Qaddafi attempted to draw on Libya's historic relationships with its southern neighbor, but his reasoning resonated solely with inhabitants of the northern two-fifths of the country that shared a measure of "Arab" history with Libya.³⁵¹

France during the 1970s onward continued to possess the military capabilities to offer humanitarian assistance in the event of a human- or naturally-caused disaster, and to offer "peacekeeping" assistance in the form of a barrier between warring parties or groups. In both of these cases, the French preference has been for preventive policies that forestall the need to intervene in the first place. If intervention becomes necessary, the French have had the capacity to intervene, but their *forte* (as with the interventions described in the previous section) has been short-term intervention using base troops and the professional forces, rather than long-term, larger-scale operations which would require extensive airlift capacity (always problematic), more troops, and the need for parliamentary permission to employ conscripts overseas. The need for the latter type of intervention has increased, however, as African militaries have grown in technical capacity and troop strength, and as regional hegemonic hopefuls like Nigeria, Libya and Angola have grown in strength and have become more willing to intervene in their neighbors' affairs. The consequences are notable in terms of casualties, internally and externally displaced refugees, and the kind of general economic disruption that brings extensive misery, destitution and disease. Even civil wars in Africa in the 1990s have increased in their magnitude and severity.

“Peacekeeping missions” continued to be a problematic term as the French used it, since it is presently used in an international legal sense to refer to situations where a neighboring state or great power might intervene between two warring parties in order to prevent their engagement. France used the term “selective pacification” to refer to some of its interventions, but these were still mostly shows of force which are billed as “peacekeeping.” France continued during this period to conduct operations that it defined as peacekeeping, including most of the operations that involved riot suppression and the containment of civil disturbances. However, these were not peacekeeping missions in the 1990s sense of military “operations other than war.” It remains difficult to know if these policing activities qualify as humanitarian. They continued to appear to be military actions that preserved French power in the region rather than humanitarian missions.

Local Chadian obstacles to French control presented many of the problems discussed in the context of Gabon, Congo, and the CAR. These included ethnic conflict, enduring rivalries, and overt prejudice against “out” groups once conquered, job and business opportunity patronage systems based on ethnic favoritism where each presidents’ ethnicity dominated security forces, judiciary, and government positions, enduring religious and political conflict between Muslim “Arab” North and non-Arab South (also seen, but less of a factor in the CAR); and the almost total repression of anti-government opposition parties and NGOs who would have been key players in moving Chad toward parliamentary democracy in real terms.

Given the difficulty of achieving its military and political goals in Chad, France kept its economic goals simple, even dropping out of Chad's most complex economic development project due to a lack of will on the part of France's financial backers and oil companies to support a long-term project in what it knew to be a war zone.

Chad's primarily agricultural economy will continue to be boosted by the international energy companies making direct investments to develop the Chadian oil sector. At this time, in spite of oil flowing through the new pipeline since 2004, about 80% of Chad's people still depend on subsistence farming and livestock raising for their support. Chad's landlocked economy and political instability has also made energy costs high, hampering the development of an industrial or manufacturing base. Chad continues to rely heavily on foreign aid and capital for public and private sector investments. Its total oil reserves are estimated at 1.5 billion barrels. Oil production began in late 2003, with exports in 2004. Cotton, cattle, and gum arabic provide most of Chad's non-oil exports earnings. Chad continues to be a member of the *Communauté Financière Africaine*.

Although uranium markets are depressed at this time, Chad's uranium is still considered by France to be an important source for its nuclear power plants and the *force de frappe*. Chad is financially unstable in spite of potentially lucrative resources (uranium, oil, excellent quality cotton). Prices for uranium and cotton fluctuate according to demand. French financial interests, with the exception of uranium, have been a less cogent reason to stay than strategic

bases and location, and the historic importance of Chad to France. Chad's extreme poverty, endemic corruption, and high rates of illiteracy are factors that have also discouraged investment by outsiders, with the notable exception of the oil pipeline.

France was an initial investor in the pipeline project, but was much less of a factor in the oil exploitation process than it had expected to be, either in the well and pipeline building development of the Doba region in southern Chad or in the pipeline's roughly 650 mile continuation through Cameroon to the exit port at Kribi on Cameroon's Atlantic coast. The Doba-Kribi pipeline was initially a project that included France's oil companies and the World Bank in an effort to exploit one of Chad's unused natural resources in such a way as to benefit the environmental and social circumstances of Chadians living in the area of the pipeline. The project also intended to prevent the social conflicts and environmental degradation that had accompanied previous efforts to make use of African oil (for example, in the Niger Delta region). After exploring the issue initially and receiving trenchant criticism for working with two of the more financially corrupt single-party autocracies in Africa (Presidents Déby in Chad and Biya in Cameroon), the World Bank reconsidered and pulled out.

The American ExxonMobil energy company stepped into the breach, and led a consortium of oil companies that took over the development of a plan for the Doba oil fields. Other members of the consortium included Chevron Corporation (25 %) and Petronas of Malaysia (35%). The pipeline would also cut through Chad's most fertile agricultural region and Cameroon's Atlantic Littoral

Forest, a richly biodiverse area and home to the forest-dwelling Bagyeli.

Construction on the \$3.7 billion oil project, Africa's single largest investment ever, began in October 2000 after the World Bank Group agreed in June 2000 to provide \$200 million in loans and to mobilize hundreds of millions of additional dollars from commercial banks. The reconsidered rationale for providing development aid money to the project is that it would provide substantial monetary benefits to Chad, one of the poorest countries in the world.

Human rights and environmental activists expressed concerns about the project based on the history of the countries and companies involved. The oil fields were located in a region characterized by regional separatism and internal conflict. The Chadian government had been criticized for systematic harassment and detention of local activists and elected officials critical of the project. In March of 1998, Chadian security forces reportedly killed more than 200 unarmed civilians in the villages of Dohara and Lara in the Doba oil region. The massacre was never investigated. The community consultation process for the oil project in Chad took place largely in the presence of the Chadian security forces responsible for these human rights violations, creating a climate of fear and intimidation. There was and remains well grounded concern that the pipeline project will exacerbate existing conflict and lead to increasing militarization of the region, particularly since the Consortium will need to provide for an increased security presence to guard the pipeline once construction was completed and the oil began to flow. To make the cost-benefit analysis even more troubling, the initial money given to Chad from the

oil consortium, which was originally slated for development projects such as schools and hospitals, was diverted by President Déby for weapons purchases. Déby acknowledged that \$4.5 million (a portion of the \$25 million signing bonus) had been used to purchase military equipment, including helicopters and jeeps used in counter-insurgency operations the latest conflict in northern Chad.

Under pressure from local and international organizations and activists, the World Bank established an International Advisory Group (IAG) in February 2001 with a 10-year mandate to advise the World Bank and the governments of Chad and Cameroon on overall progress in the areas of accountability, transparency, governance, environmental management, and in meeting social goals. Some of the major problems identified by the IAG in its report issued on December 11, 2002 included communications between NGOs and the consortium, problems with capacity building in Cameroon, political insecurity and police impunity in Chad, and a lack of resources for the oversight structures to effectively do their work. Well into construction, it was acknowledged even by the World Bank monitors that the promised measures to improve the lives of poor people and to protect the environment had been seriously delayed and might never be implemented. Oil production started in July 2003 and environmental defenders in both Chad and Cameroon have devoted themselves since that time to monitoring the social and environmental impacts of the project and the implementation of the revenue management law in Chad.³⁵²

Due to the strong influences of Islamic and Arab culture in Sahelian Africa in general, French culture has far more competition here than in the other 3 cases. Islam is a pervasive cultural influence in Chad, and a major religion. This has facilitated an on-and-off political and military relationship with Libya that has been extremely important to maintaining Chadian presidents in power or challenging their power. Libya is possibly France's major political and cultural competitor in Chad, and Qaddafi's diplomatic and military initiatives on behalf of Pan-Arabism and Pan-Africanism have exacerbated the existing religious and political conflicts between the Muslim "Arab" North and non-Arab (but also somewhat Muslim) South. Southern non-Muslims have experienced decades of prejudice under predominantly Muslim governments, and represent the remnant of the influence of France's colonial-era missionaries.

C. What other powers competed with France for attention in Chad?

In 2001 Foreign Military Assistance from the US to Chad was a comparatively tiny \$0.7 million. The influence of the United States in Africa has generally been far more *ad hoc*, compared to its other interests in the developing world, although US interest in Africa grew significantly in the 1970s and 1980s as a way of countering the considerable Soviet influence in Angola, Mozambique, Libya, and Guinea. Covert assistance during the Reagan administration went to insurgent forces in Chad, as well as Libya and Angola.³⁵³ The US supported France's interventions in Chad, since they countered the aggressive intentions of Libya in the region. US resources were also invested at that time in neighboring Sudan to counterbalance Libya (and in Zaïre and South Africa, to balance

Cuban-supported Angola). US aid was given to Chad's neighbor, Cameroon, in return for overflight rights and access facilities on a possible route for rapid deployment forces. In spite of the prominence of the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in African demonology, there was only occasional evidence of its operations in francophone Africa in the past (a possible indication of either inactivity or success), most notably in Zaïre but not in the former French colonies, where presumably the Foccart network and the Elysée's *Cellule Africaine* would have objected.³⁵⁴ Decalo also mentions that the Chad-Libya merger announcement of 1981 triggered CIA support for future Chadian president Hissène Habré's faction.³⁵⁵

Bratton and van de Walle note that the end of the Cold War had a significant effect on US policies in Africa, at least temporarily. The US found less reason to intervene in Africa when the USSR was no longer a factor, failing to protect Samuel Doe in Liberia (although it did send financial support to ECOMOG), and sending missions to Somalia and Rwanda only when the humanitarian dimensions of these conflicts became large enough to provoke international outcry. The US government took advantage of the choices made possible by the no-longer bipolar security climate by cutting back on overall aid to Africa and concentrating aid only on those places where it perceived openings for democratic governance, free markets, and political liberties (although market reform took precedence).³⁵⁶ The resurgence of US interest in Chad during the past decade as a focal point for anti-terrorist aid and military training, added to the separation of the US "AFRICOM" command from the former European

command structure, probably indicates that the US will continue to take an interest in the Sahel for some time to come. The growing importance to US energy policy of African oil sources such as those in Chad and Sudan also foreshadows continuing US strategic and economic interest in the Sahel in general and Chad in particular.

Between 1974 and 1978, 22 sub-Saharan states and African liberation movements received USSR and other communist country arms and equipment. Of these, the only central African francophone recipients were Congo-Brazzaville and Chad.³⁵⁷ In Chad's case, the Soviet weapons were most likely supplied to opposition movements rather than to the government. In neither of these countries was the USSR a major strategic factor or a director of regional policy by the end of the 1980s. The USSR was active and capable of intervening; however, its influence in francophone Africa remained marginal.

During the first decades after independence, Chinese interest in Chad was not very evident. However, in keeping with China's renewed interest in using its development capacity to win allies and markets in Africa, Chinese companies are presently expanding exploration efforts and plans are under way to build a refinery in Chad for its own energy needs.

D. What international regimes or institutions worked for or against France's goals in Chad?

Probably the most important local international institution of importance in Chadian affairs has been the Organization of African Unity (OAU), now the AU. The OAU has largely supported and augmented France's own pacifying and/or peacekeeping missions in Chad. Most of the OAU and AU operations can be

characterized as state-supportive, in keeping with its early policy of support for its constituent nations' new and hard-won territorial sovereignty and political independence. However, such interventions as the OAU-backed intervention in Chad were expensive, logistically complex, and troop contributions were difficult for the smaller and less developed countries to maintain for long periods.³⁵⁸

President Mobutu of Zaïre also stationed a small air-liaison unit in Chad under Tombalbaye, and later contributed fighter aircraft and 2,000 ground troops to assist President Habré against the Libyan-backed opposition army of Goukouni Oueddai. Zaïre also joined the OAU-sponsored inter-African force in Chad in 1981.³⁵⁹

Nigeria's most notable intervention has been as the leader of ECOWAS with the ECOMOG forces in Liberia. However, Nigeria has also been involved in Chad, and perhaps on both sides of some conflicts there. Nigeria has sent forces twice to Chad as peacekeeping troops, and also probably supported the opposition FROLINAT's Third Army.³⁶⁰

At the 1977 OAU summit in Libreville,³⁶¹ the issue of military intervention by the troops of other nations, colonial or neighboring, became prominent, as it continues to be even now, when the African Union sends peacekeeping troops of its own into African countries in conflict (e.g. the AU force in Sudan which was the sole international peacekeeping presence during the earlier years of the Darfur crisis). At the Lagos OAU conference in 1979, as noted in the Gabon section, Libya got a resolution passed condemning French troops in Chad as "an obstacle to peace." France left Chad in 1980 upon receiving the promise that the

other African nations would step into the breach, but Libya was attacking N'Djamena eight months later.³⁶²

Another related problem has been to determine the theoretical and practical distinctions between an intervention and an invasion. The OAU's charter mandates non-intervention in the affairs of member states, a mandate that has recently been broken a number of times by Africans participating in multinational United Nations forces, by Uganda and Rwanda in the ongoing war in eastern Zaïre, by Liberia in Sierra Leone (and vice versa), by the ECOMOG force members in Liberia, by Zaïre in Angola, by Libya in Chad, and in more minor militarized interstate conflicts such as the current territorial dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon. As of 1989, no collective security measures had been taken by the OAU. Its supposed role in conflict resolution via its Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration Commission has been nonexistent.³⁶³

It may also be that the recent disappearance of superpower rivalry will have an effect on the effectiveness of regional institutions. However, Ayooob suggests that the removal of superpower restraints on regional systems may encourage the appearance of "regionally-preeminent powers interested in translating their preeminence into hegemony or at least into a managerial role within their respective regions."³⁶⁴ Nigeria's intervention in Liberia is an illustration of this.³⁶⁵ Since it is becoming more difficult every year for France to act as Africa's "gendarme," there may be an opening in regional policing and peacekeeping work which will need to be filled by the regional organizations. Failing this, the opening may well be filled by the United States which, if it

behaves too much as France has in the past, will also be told that its behavior is "neocolonial."

The Organization of African Unity has largely supported France's larger peacekeeping objectives, particularly the intervention in Chad. In return, France has acted as a stabilizing force, and has generally backed the OAU's attempts at mediation. France knew that giving political backing to the efforts of the OAU improved the apparent legitimacy of France's own interventions, particularly when OAU members contributed troops to France's missions.³⁶⁶

The attempts by the OAU to make peace in Chad and end the need for external interventions by France and Libya faced many of the same difficulties, however, that the UN has faced in its multi-lateral interventions in Africa (such as that in Shaba). The OAU made three different attempts in Chad, with Nigeria acting somewhat on its own parallel to these efforts. First, in 1979, Nigeria (which shares a frontier with Chad), summoned conferences in Kano and Lagos, and sent a military force of 1,600 to Chad to uphold the Kano agreement. This force was ineffective, criticized by the Chadian factions for misbehavior by the Nigerian soldiers, and seen in Chad as an attempt to install Nigeria's own candidate, Chona Lol, in the Chadian presidency. Second, when the transitional Government of National Union of Chad (GUNT) was formed in 1979, a multinational OAU force was supposed to be sent to preserve the peace agreements, composed of troops from Congo-Brazzaville, Benin and Guinea. Only the first sent a unit, and these only stayed for a week, remaining in their barracks. Only \$600,000 of the promised \$6 million to support this force was

actually paid by member states. Third, during the temporary political and military defeat of Habré in 1981, and the gradual withdrawal of French and Libyan troops, the OAU put together another inter-African force to be composed of six country contingents under a Nigerian commander. Guinea, Benin and Togo did not send their troops, Nigeria sent 2,000, Zaïre sent 800 to 2,000, and Senegal probably sent about 500. This force achieved little and was withdrawn by June 1981. The force was dependent on Nigeria and the United States for financial and logistical support, and weakened by political divisions. The Chad efforts were very discouraging to proponents of an all-Africa intervention force within the Organization of African Unity.³⁶⁷

There have been attempts to create an OAU pan-African defense force, but the more salient defense agreements have been regional in nature like ECOWAS, and of limited effectiveness. The French interventions in Chad have highlighted the continuing possibility of neocolonial interference if the OAU countries remain unable to interact in such a way as to make such extra-continental interference unnecessary or unprofitable. The OAU's intervention failures have many causes: the essential weakness of the OAU's non-intervention principle and consequent variance in its application, Africa's multiple regional connections and mutual issues, the militarized strategic culture of many states, shifting alliances among African states and leaders, and the ever-present problem of funding inter-African expeditions when promised contributions do not arrive. Supplying weapons from states that have very little in the way of surplus weaponry and equipment is another frequent problem. A number of interventions

have been fueled by fear of a common enemy by several states within the OAU, resulting in varying levels of support from those nations who are less concerned with a particular opponent. The best example of common enemy intervention here is the fear of Libyan expansionism in Chad, which led to OAU-sponsored intervention by Senegal, Nigeria, and Zaïre³⁶⁸, and also fear of Libyan expansionism *via* proxy in Liberia, which led to the ECOMOG intervention.

The influence of the World Bank on Chad as a developing oil economy has already been mentioned, and Chad is a continuing member of “*La Francophonie*” worldwide. US dominance of the World Bank has been of concern to France, as has the now global reach of US-based energy companies like ExxonMobil and Chevron. Finally, new developments in international law and the increasing acceptance of the ability of one country to prosecute national of another for war crimes and crimes against humanity, may ultimately provide some embarrassment to France as Senegal continues to be urged to prosecute former Chadian President Hissène Habré for the human rights violations committed under his presidency, while he was receiving support from France. That France also supported his overthrow by Idriss Déby may not help, since Déby’s regime has been guilty of so many similar violations of the rights of Chadian citizens.

E. What domestic constraints in France presented obstacles to the French government’s goals in Chad?

As with the CAR, the interventions in Chad were neither limited nor short-term (to use Giscard’s formulation), and therefore quite unpopular in France.³⁶⁹ The continued expense of multiple, long-term military interventions funded by

French taxpayers had become steadily more and more unpopular in France, even with those Gaullists who remembered Chad's contributions to France's power and liberty during both World Wars. France's interventions in Chad, since they were far and away the most expensive and lengthy, were the most unpopular. Continued evidence of this is provided by France's newest President, Nicholas Sarkozy, who has insisted on multilateral interventions in Chad and the CAR, for which France may take some leadership, but will not be the sole provider of troops, transport and logistical help

As described above, France's legal limitations on types of troop involvement (no draftees) was an additional strain on the continued use of the specialist troops, parachutistes and foreign legion troops.

There have been a few instances where France's access to African seaports was useful, however. The 1983 Chad intervention equipment was brought in by sea to Cameroon and taken overland to Chad. However, air transport remained a necessity for most operations, and has been a historically weak link in the crisis intervention process. Getting a large force to fight against Libya in Chad, which was France's biggest troop commitment overseas since Algeria in the 1950s, was exceedingly difficult. Defined as a "peacekeeping mission" rather than an overseas war, it required, even so, a total of about 10,000 Frenchmen, over thirteen months from all three branches of its armed services. The initial deployments and most others were by air, and arguably, France could not have deployed many more than this for a longer period without

considerable cooperation -- both logistical and political -- from neighboring African governments as well as from Paris.³⁷⁰

Additional difficulties for France included the unpopularity, expense and ultimate futility of supporting a large number of repressive undemocratic regimes in an attempt to increase French influence and prestige thereby; the truly scandalous human rights reputation of each successive Chadian presidency, with consequent criticism in the French media and legislature'; the need for operational secrecy in many interventions because of the active and critical French media; the strain on the French franc on supporting the poorer members of the Franc Zone, and France's increasing political need over the past decade, both internationally and domestically, to present its interventions as multilateral (internationally-sanctioned and organized), and not unilateral (*i.e.* neocolonial).

F. Conclusions about Chad:

France's only real successes in Chad have come as military containment actions, preventing the spillover of its civil wars into other francophone clients, and preventing Libya from gaining a foothold in the *chasse gardée*. It has not been able to prevent some of its least favorite client leaders from coming to power or causing further conflict. In political terms, Chad has been a long-term drain on France's time, energy and resources, with very little to show in the way of profit or power. In economic terms, France has been able to maintain currency stability but no real economic development or growth in Chad, which has not become the lively cultural contributor to francophone culture or a useful commodity exporter like Congo-Brazzaville, or even Gabon. Indeed, culturally,

Chad remains largely an Arab state and not as French as one might expect given its long and interesting history as a French possession.

France's intervention capacities as described here were clearly inadequate for making France a full participant in any full-scale regional or interstate war involving large armies, operations in which she clearly could not use the *FAR*, since the *FAR* was constituted purely as an intervention force. France would intervene with the *FAR* only if it appeared that a smaller intervention could head off a larger problem, as it did in Chad with *Operations Manta* and the continuing *Operation Épervier*, but as it signally failed to do in Rwanda with *Operation Turquoise*.³⁷¹

Chad's objectives in common with France were framed completely in the context of the military and economic cooperation agreements, which required a number of modifications over time but which are still believed to include a clause mandating protection of the Chadian president in the event of an attack on his authority, something which has occurred several times during the past two years and which is likely to be a probable feature of President Déby's tenure in office for some time to come. That clause provides a continuing means for the current Chadian leadership to put pressure on France.

V. Comparisons Among the Four Central African Cases.

Some of the African states had clearer common objectives with France than others. States in West Africa like Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire, whose presidents had brought their countries to independence by working within the French political system, had a common interest in perpetuating a system profitable to both France and its colonies in terms of political stability, territorial integrity and the mutual enrichment of French and African political elites. Where interests diverged greatly, as with Guinea, commonality of objectives was lost with the rupture of the historic relationship. With those states that remained in the middle of these two extremes (Accepting French bases or allowing no French presence at all), such as Chad, the Central African Republic, Cameroon, and Congo-Brazzaville, the African state's objective became to see how much security and support could be obtained from France without sacrificing the apparent independence of one's nation to French control. As has been noted, some of these shifting conditions left room for indigenous military coups. France, in turn, would try to get as much political support as possible from these states, pulling the strings attached to military cooperation agreements, and preventing as much Soviet or anglophone encroachment as possible, without getting pushed away too often for looking like an overlord instead of a partner.

Interestingly, as Welch notes³⁷², Gabon, Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire, at one end of the continuum, having continually accepted French garrisons on their soil since independence, have never experienced a successful intervention in government by their own military. Gabon's attempted coup in 1964 was reversed

immediately by the action of French paratroopers.³⁷³ Although the presence of these French garrisons is perceived by the other francophone nations as a sacrifice of Gabonese, Senegalese and Ivorian sovereignty, the leaders of these three nations have found it to be a sacrifice which pays considerable dividends toward their internal security and personal power. Decalo is even stronger in emphasizing the role that the French base garrisons in the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal and Gabon have played in discouraging coups. He includes CAR (even with Bokassa and Kolingba's coups) because France accepted and even assisted both coups, the implication being that French permission was a factor in removing regimes that had become costly or embarrassing to French interests.³⁷⁴

France's ability to deter domestic-level conflicts and civil wars within the francophone African states just after independence had been excellent once its willingness to use force during the postcolonial period had been demonstrated only a few times; the old philosophy of "*Il faut manifester la force pour en éviter l'emploi*" was still the most potent strategy in the early period.³⁷⁵ The major exception to this, however, was Chad. Occasional conflicts did occur during the 1960s that required France's immediate attention. However, the historically-entrenched military and economic dependence, and the personal relationships developed between French and African military and political figures during the colonial period and thereafter, gave France a number of useful options and considerable flexibility in the event of the usually internal postcolonial conflicts during this first decade.

France's goals in its African colonies during the post-war period and the first post-independence decade were largely met. It maintained its military presence, its ability to intervene effectively, and its economic strength there, and lost very little of its influence in West and Central Africa, especially when compared to its setbacks in Algeria, its need to share the rest of North Africa with its NATO allies, and its complete loss of Indochina.

The military cost was considerable, as is the cost of maintaining the Franc Zone, but many of the costs were spread out over a period of decades, during which time France retracted most of her soldiers from Africa, leaving just enough for effective *Présence*, and placing enough others in specially-targeted forces to convince African clients and other great powers that she was still capable of immediate and reliable *Intervention*. The returns on de Gaulle's investment in the *chasse gardée* have been demonstrated in benefits to French wealth, military reach, diplomatic influence, anti-Soviet and anti-*Anglo-Saxon* insurance, and general prestige brought by de Gaulle's African initiatives. The cost of maintaining a sub-Saharan sphere of influence was returned in a number of ways during the 1960s by exploiting control of African resources, particularly petroleum and uranium, by creating markets for French goods and French investments, and by preventing Soviet influence from establishing enough of a foothold to cause major wars of independence in France's backyard.

After independence, the French presence in African domestic politics remained pervasive. Increasingly, independent African leaders made the discovery that France itself had strategic, economic, and political needs that

could be manipulated. The African states did not have a large influence over French policy in their region, but the military cooperation agreements provided some room for maneuver, and the ambiguous nature of the France's continuing cultural and linguistic relationship with the former colonies provided some of the same anti-colonial rhetoric of democracy which leaders like Senghor, Houphouet, and Touré used to their advantage during the decolonization period. Especially after the first decade of independence, renegotiating the cooperation agreements provided a significant opportunity for putting pressure on France. Since these agreements, as Welch states³⁷⁶, carried "a strong odor of neocolonialism," there was always the opportunity to threaten to renegotiate them, or even to reject them altogether, as Congo-Brazzaville, Mauritania and Madagascar did in the early 1970s. Indeed, after the death of de Gaulle, many of the agreements were revised or dropped in favor of less all-encompassing forms of aid agreements.

African governments became more adept at exploiting these needs, in spite of their relative weakness. They have gained more leverage over the relationship as the twentieth century comes to a close. However, France's freedom of action remains nearly absolute within the flexible interpretations allowable in the cooperation agreements.³⁷⁷

In spite of the French presence, there were quite a few successful military *coups d'état* in a number of the francophone states during the period 1970-1984, including:

Benin/Dahomey (1972)

Rwanda (1973)

Upper Volta (1974, 1980, 1982 and twice in 1983)

Niger (1974)

Chad (1975)

Burundi (1976)

Congo-Brazzaville (1977 and 1979)

Mauritania (1978, 1979, 1980, and 1984)

Central African Empire/Republic (1979 and 1981)

This list does not include unsuccessful or abortive *coups d'état*, which included one in Congo-Brazzaville in 1972 and another attempt in the CAR in 1982.³⁷⁸ As in the first decade after independence, coup leaders who were willing to work with France were generally not prevented from taking power, provided that local unrest was kept under control and no French interests or personnel were threatened. For purposes of comparison, and in apparent congruence with Decalo's conclusion above, those francophone states which maintained civilian control from independence through late 1980 included Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, and Senegal, and also Guinea (which had a military coup in 1984 after the death of Sekou Touré). In all of these cases, it might be said that the heavy presence of French troops (or the Soviets in the case of Guinea) guaranteed the continuing presence of certain civilian leaders (Ahidjo, Houphouët-Boigny, Mba and Bongo, Senghor, and Touré).³⁷⁹ An additional French presence within minutes of any attempted coup in many cases (bases in capital cities included the ones in Bangui, CAR, Libreville, Gabon, and N'Djamena in Chad) provided a reminder of the agreement to protect each African president in those countries,

and a visible deterrent to rebellion. Also, the French base troops interacted so frequently with those of the host country that they provided additional apparent strength to the host forces. Supporting interoperability and ease of liaison, even nominally civilian leaders in Central Africa hold power in an atmosphere that is highly militarized, and where ethnic control of leadership positions and numbers in the security forces is often a factor in determining which leader holds power. This is particularly true in modern Chad, which is now, in name at least, a non-military government, but where membership in the Zaghawa ethnic group determines one's access to power in both the civilian branches of government, the security services, and the military. France is seen in Chad not only as a protector of the Déby government, but as a protector of the Zaghawa as well.

Great power intervention is another area where some broad comparisons can be made among the countries discussed here. Regional power politics and global politics can be factors in interpreting the strength of the French cooperation agreements in delimiting the boundaries of *the chasse gardée*. The British-French rivalry of the early colonial period has been transformed into a set of linguistically-based alliances, but the public rivalry between anglophone and francophone parts of Africa continues to this day in spite of the independent status of Britain and France's former colonies on the continent. "Proxy" relationships occurred among these, where the US, the USSR, and European nations provided diplomatic, intelligence, training, and financial and arms aid to friendly African counterparts, without contributing actual troops³⁸⁰ By the end of the first post-independence decade in 1970³⁸¹, only three Western European

countries were listed by IISS as having a significant troop strength on the African continent. France had a total of 12,500 troops stationed in various parts of its former colonies. Spain had 27,000 troops, all of which were in Spanish Sahara, or Ceuta and Melilla. Portugal had 125,000 troops, all in Angola, Mozambique and Portuguese Guinea. Spain and Portugal maintained a very large military presence in Africa in order to retain their colonies, which were not to achieve independence until 1975. Of the three, France was the only one with a significant troop presence based in nations that had been politically independent for ten years.

The other former colonial powers have done less than France to remain military, political, economic and cultural forces in their former colonies. Great Britain, although it left no permanent military garrisons at independence, offered military training aid to African countries, largely to its former possessions and the Commonwealth countries, and particularly to Nigeria during its civil war (which was probably an additional impetus to French aid to Biafra). Britain and the US have also aided the Portuguese-speaking nations since independence in various ways, largely to groups countering Marxist leadership. Portugal's intelligence activities have been more evident than its military: it gave covert aid to Biafra during the Nigerian Civil War, and may have helped to assassinate the Mozambican leader of FRELIMO in 1969. Belgium has intervened twice in its former colony of Zaïre, and has provided that country with training aid. Belgium is a small power, but a frequent contributor to multinational forces, and it maintained a connection with President Mobutu (as part of Mobutu's supportive

"Troika," the other two partners being France and the US) in what had been the Belgian Congo.

Soviet policy in Africa was reinvigorated by the various anti-colonial movements of the 1960s, and by the USSR's development of an ocean-going fleet of large warships posing an extra-European threat with a potentially global reach. Africa's three strategic seaways, Suez, the Horn of Africa and the southern Cape, therefore required renewed attentiveness from the Atlantic Allies. African governments noted these changes in the global environment, and found ways to exploit the ensuing great power rivalries for their own benefit in terms of domestic and external security. The Soviets tended to prefer funding proxy interventions by Cuba in a number of francophone African countries, including Congo-Brazzaville (where Cubans had an air staging post for their Angola forces), and also Benin.³⁸² Soviet objectives continued to include securing logistical rights, encouraging the removal of as much French and other Western influence as possible, establishing friendly alliances by supporting various liberation movements, and discouraging Chinese influence.³⁸³

Data from 1979-1980 for the Communist "military advisor" presence (which does include troops) shows that at least seven thousand Soviet and East German "technicians" were placed in North and sub-Saharan Africa, with about three thousand of these in Algeria and Libya, and the rest concentrated largely in Angola, Ethiopia and Mozambique. While French presence remained fairly constant in the same group of historically linked countries throughout the region over the decades, waxing and waning according to policy decision made in Paris,

Soviet presence was more opportunistic and tended to oscillate widely according to which African countries went Marxist or acquired an insurgent liberation movement. It is therefore more difficult to find a "representative year" from which to offer data on the presence of Soviet troops and technical advisors. Cuban "technicians" (mostly soldiers) numbered roughly 30,000 in sub-Saharan Africa, of which 50 were in Guinea, and the remainder in Angola and Ethiopia.

Francophone African nations during the post-independence period offered France some voting bloc strength in the United Nations (although this also gave them some small leverage occasionally with which to influence France). It is not clear, however, how necessary this voting bloc was to France, although de Gaulle made an effort to stand as UN sponsor for the new African nations, and this was an issue at independence for all parties. The most concrete evidence of France's ability to ensure congruence of foreign policy lies in the continuing willingness of some of the francophone nations to support French policy, and even to act as proxies for it, as several of them did in conducting French aid to Biafra during the Nigerian Civil War. Francophone African nations have also contributed troops to French intervention efforts, although this happened more often during the 1970s through the 1990s. France's continuing policy influence was evident in some of the failures of the Organization of African Unity to reach agreements on important issues such as a pan-African defense force. The disagreements within this organization often occurred along "linguistic" lines, as the francophone nations would occasionally be in opposition to perceived attempts at Nigerian hegemony. However, the language spoken may have been

less of a factor than Nigeria's burgeoning ability to throw around its considerable weight in terms of population, oil wealth, and military power.

The best evidence of French control over African foreign policy during the 1960s is the fact that, in spite of continuing and persistent attempts on the part of the Soviet Union, China, Libya and Cuba to penetrate francophone countries, the communist countries made only temporary gains in the *chasse gardée*. These temporary gains were made possible by these countries' opportunistic support of opposition factions and nationalist movements that espoused Marxism (as in Congo-Brazzaville) or Maoism (as did Dacko in CAR), or did so on an occasional basis in order to attract aid from as many sources as possible, like Bokassa in CAR. Wherever these countries gained a foothold in the region (usually by supplying military aid and arms), France had enough economic or military leverage to balance them, and often enough to nudge them out eventually or marginalize their influence.

Although the OAU and the African Union both uphold the principle of territorial sovereignty, there have been regime-opposing interventions in African states by other African states in Central Africa, but generally not in the former French colonies, with the exception of Angola's support of Congo-Brazzaville's Sassou-Nguesso against President Lissouba, and Sudan's support of both Idriss Déby's move against Hissène Habré in Chad and the armed opposition movement presently opposing the Déby government. However, they are far fewer than those of internal regime-opposing movements, although not few enough to discount as evidence of the growing military power of some sub-

Saharan states.³⁸⁴ This is an area of challenge to French dominance to watch for the future, however.

Bayart suggests that the threat of a quarrel among two francophone clients, and the consequent loss to France of its unified support, is occasionally enough to win further concessions from France, a point which underlines the importance of the annual francophone summit meetings. Bayart explains that

“It would be insulting to infer from these admissions that political power in Gabon was mere puppetry, masking a false independence. Far from being the victims of their very real vulnerability, African governments exploit, occasionally skillfully, the resources of a dependence which is, it cannot ever be sufficiently stressed, astutely fabricated as much as predetermined. Both on their political stage and within the world system, they pursue their own objectives, within the margins of failure and success that the implementation of any strategy entails.”³⁸⁵

In another example, when Cameroon and Niger refused to support Biafra during the Nigerian Civil War along with Côte d'Ivoire, it may have been a successful attempt to get a renegotiation of their cooperation agreements and diversify their economic relations. Bayart also refers to the 1981-1986 African exploitation of the "dependantist" assumption of the French left wing during the Mitterand period as "blackmail diplomacy." Mitterand did make a large number of promises at the beginning of his presidency concerning aid to Africa, and the francophone nations were not slow to remind him of these upon occasion. President Mobutu of Zaïre became particularly fond of pulling France's strings by maintaining close relationships with rival powers (Belgium and the United States) and calling France to account for what had been promised.³⁸⁶

Another area in which it is possible to compare the influence of France in its former colonies relative to other powers active in the region is to look at the

change in the character and number of arms sales to the region by the main manufacturers and sellers during the first decade after independence, and to compare those countries' transfers during the decades following. France was by far the biggest seller to its former colonies during the 1960s, but it lost its near monopoly on this market during later decades.

Appendix I offers data on arms sales to francophone Africa by the other principal armorer nations during the decade just after independence. In 1980,³⁸⁷ France provided the following percentages of these central African countries' armaments: Gabon (52.7%), Cameroon (34.5%), Central African Republic (98.1%), Chad (98.4%), Congo-Brazzaville (24.7%), Rwanda (71.6%), and Zaïre (68%). Overall, France contributed more than 50% of the arms acquired by its former colonies in 1980, in addition to the technical and logistical support donated under the cooperation agreements. Of the remaining arms, 30% came from NATO countries, 13% from the USSR, and 7% from other sources.³⁸⁸ Note also that the character of the arms transferred by China and the USSR tended to be heavier (*e.g.*, more anti-aircraft and anti-tank weapons).

These figures make clear that, although some items were sent to francophone African countries by the US and the USSR during the first decade after independence in 1960, the most consistent supplier of the former French African colonies in this earliest period was France, particularly in the four countries studied here. Infantry arms and training remained the highest priority for French security purposes in the region, because the more sophisticated training and arms were in the hands of the French base troops and intervention

forces, and France needed to be able to maintain its technological advantage if some of those arms were turned against the African host client government. Arms transfers by the US and USSR continued to favor clients chosen for their immediate strategic value as Cold War proxies (e.g. the Angolan government and UNITA), rather than for their historic relationship. For France, however, history and strategy were still inextricably intertwined.

See Appendix II for some figures for the period 1970-1989 giving the types and sources of arms transfers to francophone African nations during the two decades following the death of de Gaulle. Note particularly that infantry weapons have been joined by much more heavy weaponry in the French section than was evident during the 1960s. *Mirage* counter-insurgency aircraft also start appearing in the totals for countries with French bases (Gabon and Côte d'Ivoire). However, the 1970s and 1980s also saw significant transfers by the USSR of MIG17, MIG19, and MIG21 combat aircraft to a few francophone countries (Guinea, Mali, Madagascar, and Congo-Brazzaville), although most of the Soviet attention (with MIGs) went to Angola, Ethiopia, Somalia and Mozambique. In 1979, the USSR supplied about \$4,635 million of the \$5,400 million in arms that went to its allies in sub-Saharan Africa. China was not even a close second: in 1964-1978, China provided only \$191 million in weapons to sub-Saharan Africa, although that figure jumped to \$400 million in 1979.³⁸⁹ France began to experience far more competition from other nations in its francophone African arms markets during this period.

One noticeable trend during the 1970s and 1980s was still that most African governments, with a few exceptions, resisted buying large numbers of expensive fighter aircraft or tanks without good reason, although they continue to buy or request some of these in order to modernize their forces. Although symbolic of military independence, they require a high level of technical expertise for maintenance, expertise which is often locally unavailable except from expatriate trainers. Spare parts for repairs are equally expensive. In 1970, the only tanks found in sub-Saharan Africa were 5 French tanks in Côte d'Ivoire, 12 Soviet tanks in Guinea, 50 US tanks in Ethiopia, 150 Soviet tanks in Somalia, and 10 Soviet tanks in Mali. Jet fighters in Africa in 1970 were: 8 Soviet planes in Guinea, 6 Soviet planes in Mali, 15 Soviet planes in Nigeria, 26 US/UK planes in Ethiopia, 18 Soviet planes in Somalia, and 7 Soviet planes in Uganda. Many of these items were undeployable in a short time after acquisition because of maintenance problems, or unused due to the lack of trained military personnel. Since 1970, tank and aircraft levels have increased, even in francophone Africa, but mostly in those countries which continued to be supplied at high levels by the Soviet Union: Ethiopia, Somalia, Angola and Zambia. The North African states are also very well armed by comparison, as befits their status as a strategic zone of greater interest to NATO, as well as their oil-enhanced finances. Of these, Libya has demonstrated the most significant increases in hardware.³⁹⁰

Francophone African armies have received most of their equipment from France, and also tended to rely on France for repairs and spare parts. From the 1960s through the early 1980s, the entire sub-Saharan African region acquired

only 5% of its imported arms from the United States, and never accounted for more than 3% of US military transfers during this time.³⁹¹

Francophone African military training, however, continued to be largely under France's patronage, given the language barriers faced by the US and USSR in countries where the "second" language learned in school was always French. In some places, French was the third language, but that was in cases where both the first and second languages were African, as in CAR where one's "mother tongue" might be Gbaya, one's "country language" would be Sango – a regional trading language much like Swahili - and one's language as an educated elite would be French. African students are often remarkable linguists compared to students in the West.

The "second generation" of military cooperation agreements broadened the African nations' ability to seek arms and training elsewhere. However, in large part, French arms transfers, up until the Chad interventions demonstrated a need for modern weaponry in order to fight Libya's influence in Chad and CAR, have emphasized less expensive, less complex arms that are appropriate to difficult African conditions (damp in the jungle and sand in the desert) and easy to repair and maintain. Dual-use (civilian and military) technology is favored, hence the emphasis on cooperative operations which build civilian capacity, like roads and airstrips, and on transfers of communications equipment. Sub-Saharan Africa has not been, until recently, a primary market for France's more sophisticated arms products, and the training offered until recently has been more as an adjunct to France's own military resources on the ground and

external intervention forces. Now that France has removed the base troops, however, it may be that it will need to offer more sophisticated training and weapons systems in order to remain competitive in the region.

The larger part of France's arms market remains North Africa and the Middle East. *Mirage* and *Alpha-Jet* fighters were occasionally sold to the richer states, but France remained in control of the military balance among its sub-Saharan allies throughout the 1980s by refusing some requests for the pricier arms. Interoperability has remained high, as the African troops were equipped and trained by France. The arms transfer policy has been another means by which France has encouraged these states (not always successfully) to develop at least some commonality of security interests, if not a common or entirely consistent security policy.³⁹² However, most African governments wish to modernize their armies as much as possible, and continue to request more state-of-the-art equipment and training from France, or to seek it from elsewhere.³⁹³

Africa's own arms manufacturing remained quite limited, with the notable exception of South Africa, which became a major across-the-board manufacturer and supplier of arms, including aircraft, armored vehicles, missiles and naval vessels. In 1980, the only three francophone African nations manufacturing any type of major armament were Gabon, Senegal, and Côte d'Ivoire, all of which were able to manufacture naval vessels for their coast guard and river security. In addition to these three, out of all of the other francophone African nations, the only ones with any domestic arms production capability in 1980 were Burkina

Faso, Cameroon, Congo-Brazzaville, and Guinea, all of which could produce small arms and/or ammunition.³⁹⁴

The political economy of foreign aid cannot be examined without considering the balance between military aid (including arms contracts of various preferential kinds) and non-military (economic, capacity-building) aid. Both bilateral aid, such as that from one country to another, and multilateral aid, such as that from institutions like the World Bank or other international development banks, are ways in which the great powers have real effects on the peacetime security of developing countries. In 1983, the major economic aid donors to Africa were the leading capitalist countries: the US, France, Japan and West Germany. The Soviet Union continued to give more military aid than economic aid; however, economic aid makes it easier in some ways to shift budgets and spend more money on arms.³⁹⁵

For the most part, however, France continued to fulfill its preferences during the decades following colonial independence for obtaining the desired resources, strategic flexibility, and global prestige and power in the region. The legal and structural components of this policy were provided by the military cooperation agreements that had been signed with France by most of the newly independent francophone African nations in 1960, which were revised throughout the following three decades. This paper has focused mainly on the military factors: troop presence and intervention forces, intelligence capacity, and arms transfers, which France used in the context of these cooperation agreements to control the post-colonial environment. However, economic and political factors

were also significant as means to reinforce the thorough French penetration of the region. Zartman also notes that French diplomatic efforts aimed at conflict management during the later periods were "less distinctive" than its military responses to internal conflict or external insurgency, and included several procedural facets: repeated offers of diplomatic "good offices" and often "good places" as venues for peace conferences, calls for restraint and respect for established boundaries and borders, and a concern with francophone prestige as a criterion for involvement.³⁹⁶

As a result of this "cooperative" shaping process, which can also be characterized as a deeply rooted, flexible, and well-integrated military, economic, political and cultural penetration of the African region, France was able to respond to, and manage, most of threats to its position as the dominant great power in the francophone sphere of influence. In spite of its predominance, however, France was unable to completely control or eliminate the larger-scale, more regionalized conflicts that occurred in the francophone African region after the 1960s. In other words, France was well prepared for the smaller scale policing duties, e.g., predicting, assisting, preventing or otherwise managing the various military *coups d'état* like those in the Central African Republic. France's leaders found that long-term insurgent warfare, like the war in Chad, involving external interference on the part of regional neighbors (like Libya), was much more of a challenge to its military and political capabilities, and also challenged the political tolerance of French citizens.

France's ability to influence the outcomes of the smaller regional conflicts in francophone Africa during the immediate post-independence decade was quite strong. During the various incidents of armed revolt or civil uprising in francophone Africa during the 1960s, the following countries required armed intervention on the part of France: Cameroon in 1959-60, Mauritania in 1961, Senegal in 1959-60, Congo-Brazzaville in 1960-62, Gabon in 1960, 1962, and 1964, Central African Republic (CAR) in 1967, and Chad in 1960-63.³⁹⁷ The fighting that occurred in these incidents was suppressed, and France remained the paramount influence in all of these countries for the remainder of the decade, with the exception of Chad, where the initial conflict died down only temporarily, leaving antagonisms which surfaced later in the 1960s as a full-scale civil war lasting a couple of decades, and which France was only partly able to control.

France was generally able to ride out each domestic conflict, civil riot or armed revolt, by finding sufficient leverage and strings to pull among its clients to remain an influential *patron*, leaving old friends in power or facilitating the installation of new ones, and more often than not controlling the outcome in its favor. Occasionally, a conflict occurred that France was not able to control or manipulate completely. Niger proved to be an interesting exception to this rule. The French presence was partially removed at the request of Niger after the 1965 insurrection, and 1974's military coup expelled the French military mission. However, even in Niger, France's economic power, particularly over the extraction and marketing of uranium, has remained strong enough to retain significant influence for France even with the loss of some of its military

presence.³⁹⁸ Economic ties with Niger have remained important to both Niger and France.

However, France's ability to control the outcomes of inter-state conflicts involving both francophone and non-francophone countries was much more limited. This was demonstrated by France's unsuccessful attempt to support the secession of Biafra during the Nigerian civil war, and also by France's inability to prevent Chad's neighbors (Libya and Sudan) from giving aid to the various internally warring parties, thereby escalating and continuing that civil war over the long term. Indeed, Libya and Sudan remain major regional influences on the current conflict in Chad, and may ultimately have more power to influence the eventual outcome of Chad's current civil war than France itself.

France's ability to control the outcome of regional conflicts as the decades progressed was therefore somewhat mixed. Some of the conflicts that occurred remained within the boundaries of the countries concerned, as in the cases of Gabon and CAR, and were largely matters of internal security affecting friendly governments. France was able to contain these using the base troops and a timely, short-term, display of force in order to obtain the desired outcome. However, ongoing conflicts in several countries in the central African region highlighted some clear limitations in France's ability to control the outcomes of regional conflicts, particularly those involving the chronic political targeting of particular ethnic or regional minority groups, as in Chad, Congo-Brazzaville, Rwanda, and Burundi. France has had no success in controlling inter-ethnic warfare in Burundi over the decades of its presence there. The magnitude of

these conflicts was severe enough in terms of the loss of human lives to warrant some rethinking of France's role in Africa during the 1980s and 1990s. Some of these revisions were evident in France's more restrained and subtle tactics during the Congo-Brazzaville civil war, and may have given France a better long-term result in terms of maintaining French economic influence in an important oil-producing country.

French presence did manage to prevent many Soviet military and diplomatic initiatives in the Central African countries, though there were some encroachments in Congo-Brazzaville. The United States, until the end of the Cold War, had concentrated its attention on other parts of Africa where the Soviets had far more influence, as in Angola and Mozambique, where late decolonization from Portuguese rule on the part of Marx- and Mao-inspired rebel forces allowed the Soviets a chance for a influential footholds on the continent.

Despite the global superpower rivalry, French power in Africa from 1960 through the 1980s remained a significant and reliable balancing force of "*equidistance*"³⁹⁹ between the poles, preventing US or USSR influence from gaining much of a foothold in the francophone nations until only recently. In francophone central Africa (with the exception of Zaïre, where the US assisted Mobutu in order to balance the USSR and Cuba's influence in Angola), France remained the preponderant and most influential great power during the 1970s and 1980s.

During the 1960s, France was able to reassure its francophone African allies that they would be protected from both external threats and internal

destabilization. The visible consistency and constancy of France's economic and military presence, combined with its willingness (except in cases of disloyalty or uncooperative leadership) to live up to the provisions of the cooperation agreements, provided African leaders with reassurance that their interests would be protected as long as they supported the interests of France.

The confidence that African leaders placed in Charles de Gaulle was, for the most part, absolute. President Mba of Gabon knew with certainty that de Gaulle would protect his interests on the basis of a phone call to de Gaulle or to Jacques Foccart, or any signs of unrest detected by their local French intelligence coopérants. After the death of de Gaulle in 1970, this confidence was less obvious, but remained relatively strong. The defense agreements were signed, revised, and re-signed by enough of the most faithful allies, like Gabon, to continue a strong and visible troop base in sub-Saharan Africa. Not every state had a French garrison, but their leaders were aware from past experience that the French would consider using any or all of the available garrisons in west or central Africa to protect those states without them. France's refusal to intervene in Togo in 1963 when President Olympio was assassinated had also provided an object lesson to African leaders as to what could happen in the event that their support of France wavered or was withdrawn.⁴⁰⁰ Compliance would insure continuing support from France.

However, even those states which fell from grace occasionally, or who held France at arms length or lapsed in their support, were continually invited back in to the community, and were reminded in a number of ways of the

potential advantages of doing so. French arms sales and training were still offered as "carrots." The relative economic stability of the nations of the *chasse gardée* provided a constant object lesson to those who did not belong to it, and an incentive for those who did belong to stay put. The establishment of the Franc Zone was perhaps the most concrete daily reminder, with Central or West African Francs in everyone's pocket, that France was their financial guarantor, and the ultimate arbiter of patronage opportunities for loyal clients. So many of the elite administrators and military leaders in each country profited visibly from this system, that it appeared to be possible for all to do so as long as they cooperated and caused no disruption. The continuing willingness of French companies, and even companies of other nations, to invest in francophone Africa was primarily based on the stability provided by the Franc Zone. Even the poorer nations of the Zone remained convinced that French influence was a sure hedge against total economic collapse.

Where domestic-level conflict resulted in a change in government, such as a military coup, France was frequently able to remain in control of the policies of the African state even if the coup had taken place without the participation of French troops. In a number of these cases, of course, French troops or French intelligence personnel did play a role in the transition to a new government, whether publicly or "deniably." A public show of arms, or even the presence of a base, was often enough to keep whichever African faction rose to power in line with French preferences. While not all of the new nations fell into line, only one was lost to French influence completely, and even Guinea was edging back into

the French sphere of influence by the early 1980s. Even those that resisted complete French control, like Congo-Brazzaville (whose cooperation agreements were less extensive in scope than, e.g., Gabon's), were indebted and francophile enough to continue receiving considerable French training, aid, and arms during the 1960s and thereafter, and more often than not, rejected any policy initiatives on the part of either the US or USSR which conflicted with French preferences.

Two countries discussed in depth here, which followed French preferences particularly closely, were the Central African Republic (or Empire), and Gabon. The CAR and Gabon were also chosen as examples of two different kinds of peacetime intervention involving military means, and were also quite supportive of French intervention elsewhere using the troops based on their soil. Gabon has had more peacetime stability in terms of regime changes. It has had only two heads of state since independence, and France's protection of Gabon's heads of state has been handled in a highly personal fashion through both official military protection and unofficial intermediaries whose ties to the French and Gabonese presidents were forged during World War II.⁴⁰¹ Gabon is a relatively wealthy state (oil) and CAR is not (although it has uranium and diamonds), and the relative economic pressures on the two formed an interesting contrast. Both countries housed French military bases, soldiers, and *coopérants* during the last four decades of the 20th century. Gabon's domestic events of violence were controllable with the French base troops, with less frequent need for additional airborne intervention forces than were required in CAR.

The case of CAR is a continuing illustration of French choices to intervene or not in support of presidents who were deemed more or less cooperative with French preferences and interests. In this case, intervention was successful in each instance, and probably smoothed over some potential violence that probably would have occurred if Bokassa (and then Dacko) had needed to be overthrown entirely by indigenous forces at home. France maintained its connections by replacing Bokassa with Dacko, a choice which it knew it could work with, and then (when it was clear that Dacko would not be able to hold on to power), France assisted quietly in the Kolingba coup and maintained a fairly smoothly functioning relationship with that regime until the mid-1990s, when it became clear that the *Centrafricains* democratization impulses needed to be recognized and responded to.

France was successful most of the time in manipulating the foreign policies of its francophone African allies during the 1970 and 1980s. Their policies continued in large part to mirror France's own independence and non-alignment during the Cold War. They collected what aid they could from other great powers and regional allies, the US, USSR, China and Libya, but their willingness to follow France's global or regional goals continued strong.

France did not manage, however, to remove the lingering taint of neocolonialism that attended its efforts. French gains in prestige as a preponderant great power must be weighed ultimately against the potential loss in *grandeur* from appearing to hang on too tightly to a highly militarized region where it had led Africans to sacrifice much of their own sovereignty, autonomy,

and pride as independent nations in order to preserve their economic and military security. The costs of French neocolonialism, and of its persistent and pervasive pull on the strings of its African marionettes become much more obvious during the following three decades. It became increasingly evident that the relationship, while still one of preponderant power, was no longer as easily manipulated. While still the weaker partners in the cooperation agreements, the puppets found their strings, and began to pull back.

The French could still be considered quite successful, during the later decades, in developing the political, economic and military capacities of the *chasse gardée* insofar as such development was consistent with French values and preferences. William Zartman describes the nature of the French commitment to African security as having four aspects, relating to culture, morality, economic interests, and power:

“There are at least four elements in this commitment: a cultural element that emphasizes the common heritage of French-speaking societies; a moral element that translates the experience gained during the colonial years into a sense of ongoing responsibility; an economic element that seeks sure sources for crucial raw materials and growing markets for goods and investments; and a power element that recognizes that a large following within the Third World makes France a more important state. All but the economic element are absent from the attitudes of other European countries, including Great Britain, which might have been expected to hold similar views. The French view is perhaps most closely approximated by the attitudes of communist countries toward the Afro-Marxist regimes in Ethiopia, Angola and Mozambique.”⁴⁰²

African military, political and economic development occurred in a controlled fashion, along these aspects, that allowed France itself to stay well ahead of its clients militarily, politically, and economically, and to preserve its status as the dominant partner in its "cooperative" relationships.

France's overall goal was to maintain French power in Africa in such a way as to encourage African states to remain as military and economic extensions of France itself. France's allies' relationships to the metropole during this period were still framed by the cooperation agreements, although these were modified considerably during the 1970s and 1980s, and the agreements continued to offer consistent and extensive military and economic benefits in return for economic, diplomatic, and military loyalty to France. Economic cooperation insured continuing dependency and cemented relationships between France and Africa elite leaderships. However, the continuing military relationship showed that sovereignty and security in Africa were still subject to France's interests and manipulation.

French preferences continued to show evidence of the duality that has marked French political engagement in Africa from the beginning of the colonial period. Democratic France largely refrained from encouraging any semblance of democracy and complete freedom in political expression in its allies, allowing the rest of the world (and its African allies) to level occasional accusations of neocolonialism against France whenever this charge was politically convenient.

CHAPTER 6:

CONCLUSIONS, AND THE CHALLENGES FOR FRANCE IN THE 1990s AND BEYOND

I. Conclusions

From independence in 1960 until the early 1990s, France's political effectiveness in francophone Africa can be considered surprisingly strong, particularly in comparison to the other great powers operating in Africa during the same period: the United States, China and the former Soviet Union. However, even before the military and public relations disaster of *Operation Turquoise* in Rwanda in 1996 France's ability to manipulate its former colonies politically and militarily was beginning to show gaps and inconsistencies. Its inability to prevent continued conflict in Chad, a particular sore spot, shows this fluctuating power level. The Central African Republic, a former stronghold, has become far more independent of French influence during the most recent decade, although it is not yet completely independent. Gabon remains a steady ally for now, but the strongest French bastion of all, Côte d'Ivoire, has become a political and military basket case following the death of de Gaulle's friend and long-time ally, President Houphouët-Boigny.

For four decades after francophone African independence, there was more military, political, economic and cultural influence in the francophone African states than any other former colonial power was able to project along all of these dimensions. On the ground *présence* could be extended quickly: the base troops could be used elsewhere, and the neighboring countries without

them knew that they could be flown in from CAR or Gabon if France wished it. Coups generally brought cooperative leaders to power who were aware enough of France's power, and their own dependency, to continue to make France their primary military, political, and economic partner. The operative term was always "cooperation," but patronage and a show of force helped France get it.

However, Chad throughout its first five independent decades has demonstrated the limits to France's influence, in spite of cooperative agreements with successive French and Chadian presidents. France's presence could not necessarily prevent long-term conflicts that featured external intervention from neighbors like Libya and Sudan, or prolonged interethnic rivalries expressed in a series of civil wars. In the Chadian case, while French power was palliative on a number of occasions, it did not provide either a solution to any of the conflicts, or even an uncontested leader.

French base troops and intervention forces were trained for work in Africa. The professional marines, and the *Légion Étrangère's* intervention specialists, were backed up by a pervasive and culturally aware intelligence capacity, and training and arms aid programs for African militaries that maximized interoperability with French forces. A merely symbolic presence was never considered or even desired by France's leadership. Symbolic presence does nothing to maintain a relationship of dependency, is not well integrated with local militaries and political tendencies, and offers less flexibility of response. It cannot keep enough bread on the ally's table or currency in his treasury to sustain a

relationship over the long term. France could not simply show the flag and go home. A *chasse gardée* is part of one's home estate, after all, and requires care.

The reputation (history of use) of both military and financial support mattered as much as their presence. Part of France's local strength lay in its reputation for action, bolstered by the relatively frequent and deliberate use of its base troops and the trust placed in France's currency and financial system. A symbolic presence would not have provided the varieties of leverage France required. Large numbers of *coopérants* of all types were less necessary after independence, but there needed to be enough of them for an immediate response, an early warning system, and a pervasive cultural presence to encourage and perpetuate French linguistic and political connections

Maintaining military dependency on the part of the client nation was as important as the presence of preponderant power on the part of France. Since African countries had small militaries, and since these militaries were largely trained and equipped by France itself, France parlayed its initial advantage into continuing patronage and control. Not intervening in some cases (Togo) and intervening in others to remove uncooperative leaders (CAR) demonstrated a watchful deterrent capacity, and maintained France's reputation for supporting friendly leaders and containing internal disorder. This did not last into the 1990s, however. France's reputation for maintaining control suffered most in Chad, the largest-scale intervention with the greatest domestic political risks to France itself. Chad illustrated France's limitations, particularly where long-term use of the France-based *Force d'Intervention* was concerned.

Not all *présence* was overt. A combination of military presence and intelligence presence was key in maintaining French power in Africa. Being able to predict and manipulate the outcomes of various changes in government was important to maintaining control. Careful preparation for potential crises included maintaining a French military component in most francophone African presidents' personal guard, having another leader lined up in the event of the death of a complaisant leader (as in Gabon), and maintaining some military and political ties with potential opponents of the current regime in order to maintain control in the event of a military coup (as in CAR).

The Rapid Reaction forces were innovative and also important. De Gaulle's Africa policy was designed with the idea that France had to lessen its troop presence in Africa while retaining its military, political and economic influences. He also needed financial support for the nuclear research & development program and for developing other parts of the arms industry. France's restriction on conscript postings abroad was a serious limitation, and meant that the volunteer marines and foreign legionnaires had to be improved and trained as intervention specialists. This had the effect of making the French forces overseas into pre-eminent rapid reaction/insertion specialists, which they remain to this day.

Reacting quickly seemed to be enhanced by having authoritarian military governments as partners -- perhaps democratic governments are less inherently predictable and have more variables resistant to control? Reacting quickly was functionally different from having "staying" power, however. France's small-scale

"internal security" interventions in the first couple of decades following African independence were reasonably efficient and effective, the later, larger-scale, external interventions less so. However, some "wars of liberation" did occur, although most were not as lengthy or intractable as Chad's. The more difficult interventions were often because insurgent forces received extensive help from neighboring countries, and France's contracted support for its presidential allies did not work as well in these cases (e.g. Chad, Congo-Brazzaville, and Rwanda).

Technological advantages certainly helped France maintain a comparative advantage with its former colonies. However, advanced technology cannot be credited with too much of France's success. France made use of every one of its advantages in maintaining its influence as long as it has. France's nuclear capacity, for instance, made it a great power on the world stage, but it might well have remained a great power in sub-Saharan Africa without the *force de frappe* (although the desert was useful for testing and uranium deposits). France's main technological advantage lay not only in superior weaponry and flexibility, but in the fact that the African armies at independence might have started out with very little modern weaponry at all if France had dropped them as clients. Patronage, preponderant military, political and economic power, and the poverty of her African clients were far more important in insuring continuing dependency and cooperation.

France's behavior, options, and resources as a great power in this particular region were framed and defined by its history there, and francophone African options were, until quite recently, inextricable from the historically

disadvantaged relationship now often referred to as neo-colonialism. That the French language has been so deeply embedded in the political, economic and cultural realms occupied by the elites in these countries may well be more important than France's technical or training transfers in preserving what remains of these political relationships.

Since, over the course of her considerable history in Africa, France was perceived, and perceived itself, as being both technologically and culturally superior, it is difficult to say how things might have gone had she not recovered so quickly after the Second World War. France's influence in Africa during the post-WWII period remained remarkably strong in spite of the considerable efforts of the anti-colonial independence movements. It must be remembered, however, that Indochina and North Africa could not be held as closely, if at all. The question of whether a great power which is not perceived as technologically superior can maintain an advantage is an interesting one in Africa, because of what happened when Portugal "emancipated" its colonies into dire poverty. Portugal had maintained power in Mozambique and Angola mainly with a very large troop presence, and very little in the way of economic, educational, or political assistance. Portugal's influence in Africa basically disappeared when Angola, Mozambique and Sao Tomé became independent, with the exception of the language, still spoken by political elites, but mostly because of the prominence of the revolutionary poets and writers which fuelled these colonies' independence movements.

In spite of its relative success compared to other great powers in maintaining its political influence in Africa, some of France's political objectives were either only partially achieved or not at all. France was signally unable to convince the rest of the world that she was entitled to the position of democracy's flagship, having supported some egregiously venal and occasionally vicious (if loyal) military dictators (Bokassa, Sassou-Nguesso, Mobutu, Habyarimana), as well as a number of less overtly nasty but still firmly authoritarian Presidents-for-Life like Houphouët-Boigny of Côte d'Ivoire and Omar Bongo of Gabon. The salient political dilemma, however, was that completely discouraging all African anti-colonial, anti-authoritarian, democratic impulses might ultimately diminish France's own influence. Another factor in this was the growing influence of African regional organizations and a few would-be hegemons. Particularly during the past 10 years, France was not completely successful in discouraging non-francophone African neighbors with a taste for military intervention like Libya and Nigeria in Chad, Nigeria in ECOWAS, and Uganda in Rwanda. International regimes and institutions were not much of a factor in restricting French influence during the 1960s, but became more influential in later decades as the UN, ECOWAS, and the AU started to provide peacekeeping missions in the region.

Other challenges for France in this area had their origins at home. Particularly difficult was retaining the political capacity on the home front to keep an intervention force in a foreign theater. The base troops became a politically unpopular option as well, both in France and in Africa. Keeping the anglophone economic and cultural competition away completely has also proved impossible,

even with enforced trade loyalties of the Franc Zone. Preventing members of "la Francophonie" from becoming more independent politically as new leaders replaced the old faithfuls (as in Cote d'Ivoire) has also proved to be a major challenge, largely because France's Africa policy in the 1990s was no longer as coherent as it was in the days of de Gaulle when French and African members of the networks and alliances forged after World War II died off or became politically irrelevant, and as African nations become more active in intervening militarily on their own initiative in various parts of their continent.

As France deals with the challenges of the next century in its African alliances, it should be remembered how much it managed to accomplish over the 45-year period of this study. It maintained its influence via patron-client dependency in most of the former colonies during at least two decades of the post-colonial period by keeping African governments tied to France's economic and military largesse. It was able to effectively and swiftly rescue French citizens when this was required during a coup or conflict situation. It preserved and considerably expanded French culture and linguistic influence by promoting it in education, economic affairs, military training, and political relationships, and la Francophonie has survived over time as an institution that promotes interaction among French speakers worldwide.

France maintained a consistently excellent intelligence presence in a situation where African elites speak French and are used to having French *coopérants* located in a variety of leadership and teaching positions in African businesses, government offices, military command structures, private security

firms, churches, schools, and courts. France protected a number of its allied presidents, imperfect though they were and held a reputation for well-organized response to crises. Some of the regimes protected may not have deserved the approval of their citizens, France's citizens or anyone else, for that matter in terms of their governance, but France did act according to the terms of its cooperation agreements as each French president interpreted them. Given a well-organized intelligence and troop presence and intervention capacity, France was, in the past, able to insure that a cooperative leader came to power in the event of a change in government. This capacity still exists, but to a far lesser degree: the political risks to France at home of supporting dictatorships to the south have grown greater.

For most of the years after colonial independence in 1960, France reduced or controlled the influence of the United States, the USSR, Cuba and China in the *chasse gardée*. For the most part, however, the francophone African countries were of strategic interest to the USA and the USSR largely as proxies for Cold War conflicts. There were easier pickings available in Africa for the US, which had only a minimal and very selective interest in francophone Africa until recently. The US pattern of paying attention to Africans strategically only when they are useful in other wars has continued, the most recent example being US involvement in training antiterrorist troops in northern Chad. The USSR was countered most effectively by France's tolerance of nominally socialist states, especially when socialist rhetoric was combined with economic pragmatism and implemented by a military government.

Military power alone cannot explain what the French achieved in Central Africa, and the resiliency with which they have maintained their influence there, even now. For decades, the French consistently staved off the complete political, military, and economic independence of their former African colonies by carefully maintaining their political, cultural and economic influence, backed up by consistent military presence and a reputation for rapid reaction. This continues to be done via the economic and military cooperation agreements as a matter of policy at the highest level of the French government.

II. Challenges in the 1990s and the Next Century in the *Chasse Gardée*

How did political and economic changes during the 1990s affect France's presence in central Africa? How does a great power maintain its influence in a post-imperial world? In spite of many changes in the mutual cooperation agreements over almost a half century of francophone African independence, and the encroachments of other Western powers and China in its *chasse gardée*, France is still the foremost European military and cultural presence in the political centers of Gabon, the Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic, and Chad. Although not an expansion of France's power by any means, and not anywhere near the level of influence that Gaullist France had over these countries during the 1960s through the 1980s, the 1990s nonetheless demonstrate a remarkable extension of France's ability to protecting its power and presence in these countries over time.

The dimensions that most clearly demonstrate the continuing success of France's forward presence, in spite of some tapering-off during the past decade, include:

- 1) France's ability to prevent, or control to its advantage, internal conflicts occurring in the former French Equatorial states;
- 2) France's ability to influence the outcome of regional conflicts between states in the region;
- 3) France's ability to reassure the central African states and remain the *patron* of first resort;
- 4) France's ability to protect its economic interests in the region by encouraging economic policies beneficial and even preferential to France;
- 5) France's ability to insure that these states pursued foreign policies congruent with those of France;
- 6) France's ability to shape the governments of the central African states as politically consistent with French preferences;
- 7) France's ability to promote francophone cultural preferences in the central African states.
- 8) France's ability to convince both the French public and its African clients of the continuing value of its role as *patron* in a neocolonial relationship that was becoming, variously, a strain on French resources, an imperialistic embarrassment to many French and African citizens, and an increasingly burdensome co-dependent obligation to

both parties in spite of its utility to a succession of French and African leaders.

A. Military Challenges to French Dominance During the 1990s:

Rwanda was a political turning point for military interventions and military policy change in the 1990s. Operations *Turquoise* and *Amaryllis* took place in the wake of the genocide that was planned during 1993 by members of the conservative Hutu government in Rwanda, and executed against Tutsis and moderate Hutu critics of the regime starting on April 6, 1994.

Amaryllis was simply an operation to protect and evacuate French citizens from Rwanda after the violence began. "Peacekeeping" was the expressed intent of 1994's *Operation Turquoise*, which the French presented publicly as a humanitarian *cordon sanitaria* for saving lives during a genocidal civil war. However, one of the results of *Turquoise* was more war, not less, because France protected a large portion of the command and control capability of the former *génocidaire* Rwandan government that fled into Eastern Zaïre. This group remains an insurgent force to this day in northern Rwanda and Uganda, and has assisted President Kabila militarily during the present war in the Democratic Republic of Congo. *Turquoise* was, quite possibly, the first time France offered its troops for a short-term "peacekeeping" mission in the current sense of the term, but its effect was temporary, and the lives it saved were largely those of members of the particular political group who had been France's allies before the Rwandan conflict came to a head in 1994. France's supportive relationship with a genocidal government was given far more public scrutiny than

it could withstand, and it was not a political or public relations success, nor a humanitarian *coup* for the French military.

France's major failure in controlling the outcome in Rwanda was a major military and policy failure. France's prestige suffered worldwide, and her government's suffered at home. Another, very important, result of this failure was diminished trust, on the part of all of France's other regional francophone clients, in France's ability to act effectively according to the terms of their military cooperation agreements.

As Prunier shows, France's nearly-unconditional loyalty to the Habyarimana regime, and to the northern anti-Tutsi extremist Coalition for the Defense of the Republic (CDR) that planned the 1994 genocide, was a major setback in France's relations with most of the countries in East and Central Africa. France had been supplying weapons and training to the groups that eventually planned and executed the genocide. It is impossible to understand, given the publicity with which the government's preparations for murdering a sizable portion of its minority population were made, and the UN force commander's clear report of their plans to the Security Council, how France could have been unaware of the uses to which their military aid was being put.⁴⁰³ The Habyarimana dictatorship was on shaky ground politically, and was under attack by the Rwandan Patriotic Front, largely composed of Rwandan refugee Tutsis who had grown up in Uganda and received their military training in the Ugandan armies. Prunier suggests that France was desperate to hold on to Habyarimana in Rwanda because the alternative was an RPF victory, an

English-speaking regime, and the loss of a piece of the *chasse gardée*.⁴⁰⁴

However, France was not able to protect President Habyarimana, or his coterie of conservative Hutu officials, when this loyal French ally became not only an embarrassment, but a lethal source of international shame. When it became clear that the Northern Hutu regime had lost the war, leaving hundreds of thousands of traumatized and murdered Rwandans spilling over the borders and down the rivers of East Africa, and that legitimate and effective UN and OAU intervention had become an impossibility, France launched its most controversial and ultimately disastrous series of intervention operations. These were *Operation Amaryllis*, a small-scale intervention during the week of the April plane crash which merely evacuated all French nationals and provided no protection whatever to any of France's Tutsi and moderate Hutu employees, and *Operation Turquoise*, which set up a *cordon sanitaire* during June through August 1994 in the south of the country after the fall of the capital, Kigali, to the insurgent RPF. This safe zone saved the lives of a number of refugees, but also provided immediate protection to many of the CDR *génocidaires*, allowing them to escape to into Eastern Zaïre and regroup for further action against the new RPF government. Many of them took their weapons with them, and became the leaders of the resulting refugee camps in the northeastern Kivu provinces, some of which have never entirely disappeared. While France claimed that *Turquoise* was in response to humanitarian outcry in the wake of the carnage, it was also a convenient means by which to contain some of the damage done by its own military policies in Rwanda, placing many of its former allies in hiding and

allowing numerous members of the CDR to escape capture and live in other countries.⁴⁰⁵ Many of these former *génocidaires* have been involved in the ongoing civil wars which have destroyed the lives of millions living in the war zones in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, a conflict which continues to this day.

Violence in Congo-Brazzaville's civil war in 1993 claimed a further 2,000 lives. However, Congo-Brazzaville can be said to be a limited success for France in maintaining French influence in the central African region. This is a somewhat surprising development, given a lengthy civil war in the 1990s that tore the country into ethnic factions, each with its own militias. France was able, by standing back and using the influence of its oil interests, instead of its military specialists, to help its ally Sassou-Nguesso return to power in Congo-Brazzaville. France's oil company, ELF-Congo, backed former President Sassou while Sassou's militias, with Angolan assistance, ousted the government of Pascal Lissouba, which had come to power in what was said by observers to be a somewhat fair election, although there had been accusations of intimidation during the voting, and Lissouba's partisan militias took part in the following civil war as well.

France also allowed Sassou's partisans in exile in France and other francophone countries to function as adjuncts and fundraisers for his movement, and maintained the French government's deniability and military restraint throughout. One of the ways that France has been able to control outcomes in francophone Africa has been by the seemingly passive method of providing a

safe haven in France to francophone African dissidents in exile. In spite of France's overt support of Chad's President Déby, France is also providing political asylum at the moment for a number of Chadian dissidents who have been attacked, arrested, tortured and exiled by the government. France's more subtle diplomatic interventions in Congo-Brazzaville's civil war and Chad's present one may well represent France's preferred tactics in the future, now that *Operations Turquoise*, *Épervier*, and other military missions have proven both expensive and fallible, and have created considerable doubt about their function in any disinterested or humanitarian *missions civilisatrices*.

Sivard records 110,000 civilian and military casualties in the Burundian government's anti-Hutu campaign of 1972, with a further 170,000 dead during similar massacres between 1988 and 1995. Rwanda's total of at least 750,000 civilian and military deaths during the 1994 genocide and its aftermath in sparking and continuing the war in DR Congo across the border demonstrates the real political risks that France has incurred as part of its long-term policy of assisting governments on the basis of their loyalty and usefulness to France, in spite of demonstrably awful human rights records. This policy came under considerable revision post-Rwanda but France still finds the entanglements of the cooperation agreements difficult to avoid. France's participation in these conflicts was limited by some of the terms of the cooperation, but seems in the case of Rwanda to have exacerbated rather than mitigated that country's insecurity.⁴⁰⁶ The worsening conflict in Chad is already testing the terms of

Chad's military cooperation and presidential defense agreement with Chad's president to its military and political limits.

Operation Licorne in the late 1990s Côte d'Ivoire has been another long-running operation that has become so unpopular in France that it has been called "France's Iraq." It was necessitated by the constitutional and military chaos following the death of President Houphouët-Boigny. *Licorne* (Unicorn) is still present in Cote d'Ivoire, in the form of about 3000 troops under the aegis of the United Nations peacekeeping forces. The troops are ostensibly there to maintain control on the border between the government- controlled south and the rebel opposition-held parts of the north. This intervention force (since Côte d'Ivoire no longer has its French base *présence*) has been supported with soldiers and air transport based in Togo. Côte d'Ivoire descended into violent conflict during the years following the death of its only post-independence president, Houphouët Boigny, and remains a divided state in which the current government is only vaguely committed to democratization.⁴⁰⁷

So, in spite of France's continued military superiority in the Central African regions, a number of serious conflicts took place during the half-century following independence. The major Chad wars of 1980-1987 and then again during 1990-1994 resulted in 7,000 and 6,000 civilian and military deaths, respectively, and the latest civil war by an armed opposition based in Sudanese Darfur and eastern Chad has taken the lives of thousands more and further endangered the lives of the already desperate Darfuri refugees who have taken refuge in the territory currently raided for child soldiers and adult recruits by the Chadian rebel

forces. *Operation Épervier* remains in place at this time, the longest running of all of France's *interventions*.

France continues to station thousands of its troops on the African continent. Its priorities have changed over time, however, and the *Operation Turquoise* debacle in Rwanda strengthened public demand that France's operations should no longer be unilateral apparent exercises of neocolonial power but rather, parts of multilateral peacekeeping projects in concert with other countries within the purview of the European Union and the United Nations. As of 2007, roughly twelve thousand French intervention peacekeeping troops and military advisors were serving in multilateral operations around the world, of which nearly half were in Africa, according to France's Ministry of Defense. Protecting the over 240,000 French citizens living on the African continent remains a priority as well.⁴⁰⁸

France's three present-day military commitments in Africa include two in the countries studied here (Chad and CAR) and *Licorne*, as described above, in Côte d'Ivoire.

In addition to its international troop commitments with the EU's EUFOR protection force in eastern Chad, and the UN's MINURCAT forces deployed in eastern Chad/Darfur and northern CAR, France has also placed a "logistical" continuation of *Operation Épervier* of about 1200 troops and a squadron of *Mirage* fighter planes at Hadji Koussei, an air field close to the capital which are charged with upholding the terms of France's current military cooperation agreement with the government of Chad and providing logistical and intelligence

support to the Chadian army. France has insisted that this support is merely logistical and advisory, but there are many in Chad who state that they have witnessed the French troops deployed in defensive military positions to protect the President, and that the French have even fired on rebel troops. Because this last force has defended President Déby on several occasions in the past couple of years against the armed Chadian opposition forces that attacked the capital, France's troops in the EUFOR and MINURCAT missions are distrusted by ordinary Chadians. The Chadian rebel forces have actually said that, if they encounter French troops, they will make no distinction between those who are acting on President Déby's behalf and those who are committed to the international EUFOR and MINURCAT forces charged with protecting the Darfuri refugees. Both will be considered targets because of France's continued support for President Déby.⁴⁰⁹

As of 2007, France had roughly 300 troops in Bangui, the capital of CAR. This was *Operation Boali*; its task was to advise in the restructuring of CAR's army. It also provides support for the African forces of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (FOMUC). France has stated that Operation Boali is a contribution to stability in the region, given conditions in war-torn Darfur, eastern Chad and northern CAR. However, France also still has a military cooperation agreement with CAR and this operation largely provides support for President Bozizé rather than acting in an intervention capacity in the regional conflict surrounding Darfur in Sudan and Dar Sila in Chad. The troops are "special forces," supplied with attack helicopters, and participated in

preventing a rebel advance on Bangui in 2006. Since the north of CAR continues to experience armed rebellion, the mere presence of this small French force in Bangui may be a deterrent to a direct attack on the capital.⁴¹⁰

France's ability to achieve its military, economic and political goals during the first three decades after the sub-Saharan colonies' independence was remarkable even as it waned. However, lasting and complete control over its African allies' military cooperation and political agendas became much more difficult to maintain during the final decade of the past century, and the military interventions in particular increasingly difficult to justify at home and internationally. From the 1960s through the 1980s, with the notable exception of Chad, which was discussed at greater length in Chapter 5, conflicts in the former equatorial French colonies were largely contained within their own borders and local in scope. During the 1990s, however, Africa in general experienced more regionalized conflicts such as those in Liberia/Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of Congo (Zaire), and Darfur (Sudan)/Chad, all of which have involved neighboring francophone countries both as combatants and as hosts for hundreds of thousands of refugees. These conflicts also saw more serious attempts by African nations to provide allied forces to the various sides in each conflict, plus peacekeeping and intervention forces. These conflicts were true multi-party wars, and required far more large-scale interventions than just France could supply using its resources unilaterally. They stretched the resources of those of France's former colonies that had territory bordering the conflict areas, and turned vast areas into no-go zones dotted by refugee camps. Liberia's

conflict and its long-term spillover into Sierra Leone involved francophone nations Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea as allies, refugee hosts, and providers of ECOWAS intervention troops. DR Congo's war in the northeast was a closely related sequel to the Rwandan genocide, and has involved both Rwandan and Ugandan troops as combatants, neighboring Angola and Zimbabwe as allies of DRC, and has sent thousands of refugees northward into the Central African Republic, and westward into the Congo-Brazzaville and Cameroon. The present conflict in Sudan's Darfur region has involved nearly all of the former French Equatorial Africa in one way or another, whether as providers of African Union peacekeeping troops, as refugees, or as diplomatic negotiators (a role played by the current presidents of both Gabon and Congo-Brazzaville). The Sudanese government has provided safe haven for antigovernment Chadian troops on the Sudan side of the border, hundreds of thousands of refugees from Darfur live on the Chadian side of the border in Dar Sila, attacks on the Chadian government and the resulting state of emergency has sent thousands of Chadian refugees into Cameroon, and conflict in the northern Central African Republic has sent Centrafricain refugees into southern and southeastern Chad, Cameroon, and even into Darfur. Cameroon is still hosting Congolese from both the Republic of Congo's civil wars of the 1980s and the continuing DRC conflict that began in the 1990s. The only country in former French Equatorial Africa to have escaped this current state of shared woe is Gabon, still the most stable of the former francophone colonies. (For the current conflicts in Chad, Sudan and the Central

African Republic, Presidents Bongo of Gabon and Qaddafi of Libya have offered their assistance as regional mediators.)

Maintaining the level of “*Presence*” on the ground became too expensive, and has been replaced in most areas by greater flexibility of “*Intervention*” forces. Only three French troop bases remained in Africa as of 2007, one at Libreville in Gabon (the only country in this study to retain a permanent base), one at Dakar in Senegal, and the main base in Djibouti. They continue to be intended as guarantors of regional security in Africa, except for the base at Djibouti that supports French interests in both Africa and the Middle East. Since 2003, 1500 American naval personnel of the Combined Joint Task Force for the Horn of Africa have also been stationed in Djibouti, using the former French Camp Lemonnier as their base.⁴¹¹

Agreements covering internal security and French garrisons have been revised in some places to remove the base troops altogether, as in the CAR, and replace them with a smaller logistical or advisory force of intervention troops. However, although France has not always provided the highest technology weapons it is capable of manufacturing, it has come through with some form of military assistance in most cases, and the continuing need for spare parts, new weapons and training on the part of African allies will probably insure a continuing *Assistance Militaire Technique* presence in many cases. Francophone Africans are by no means entirely comfortable with their great power overlord, but they recognize the fact that France and francophone Africa

have forged integrated ties over the past hundred years that would be difficult to break without immense costs to both parties.

During the 1990s, France scaled back its more obvious military base presence but continued to influence the region as much as possible, given increasing political constraints at home and the need to restructure the Franc Zone in order to put less pressure on France's own economy. Supporting the African Franc Zone had also become an increasingly expensive proposition during times of economic hardship in Africa, and offered new challenges as both its own and its allies' economies became more globalized and France had greater competition for central Africa's resource exploitation.

France's major miscalculation has been, first, its assumption that it could continue to aid repressive regimes without containable diplomatic embarrassment and second, the assumption that further intervention would be accepted at face value without scrutiny of who exactly it was that France had rescued. The damage done by these actions had major repercussions in France's Africa policy of the late 1990s and early 2000s, and further interventions and military aid to the *chasse gardée* are said to be under serious revision by the first French president of the Fifth Republic to have ties to African leaders dating from the post WWII period.

France withdrew its garrisons in the Central African Republic in March 1998 although it continues to maintain a large group of diplomatic economic and security advisors. French control over conflicts in the Central African Republic, formerly able to deal with regime changes almost seamlessly throughout the past

four decades until part way through the 1990s, appears to have become somewhat ragged during the past 10 years. However, in both of the more cooperative countries, Gabon and the Central African Republic, it was evident during the 1990s that a greater desire for economic, political and military independence from France in these two quite loyal allies would be a factor in France's future Africa policy. In 1993, students from the University of Bangui in CAR protested in the streets and were tear-gassed by Kolingba's security forces. Conflicts within the army arose from the country's economic constraints, and troops remained unpaid for months, at which point the army began a series of mutinies which resulted in the withdrawal of the most important French official in the CAR government, Col. Jean-Claude Mansion, the resident French diplomatic advisor since Kolingba's coup in 1979. The first presidential elections were set up for August 1993 but took place with such factional acrimony that the winner, Bokassa's former prime minister, Ange Patassé, was unable to control revolts on the part of the armed forces. French troops played a logistical role in the elections, but the violence sparked a major reformulation of French policy in this key strategic area of the *chasse gardée*. An African regional force of 800 troops was brought in for the official peacekeeping duty in CAR, followed by a UN peacekeeping force. The French closed its two military bases in CAR in March of 1998.⁴¹² After successfully maintaining power through diplomatic, military, and economic means in CAR for decades, France has finally decided to remove the larger military presence and rely on less obvious military, economic and diplomatic initiatives in the future, such as *Operation Boali*.

The rapid technological and political changes of the past three decades have required France to examine continually its priorities in Africa, although its approach was still characterized by the consistency and clarity of the original Gaullist vision of the French Community, where France and African nations would interact as independent states, but where France continued to be the first among equals, and guarantor of the others' sovereignty. Under these conditions, France was able to intervene militarily to protect French citizens and economic interests, to protect the territorial integrity of its cooperating allies, to defend strategic natural resources and transport routes, to fulfill France's contracted obligations under its military cooperation agreements, and to participate in missions which it continued to define as "peacekeeping," even if they occasionally led to further war, as occurred after *Turquoise* in Rwanda. These goals were clarified and restated under the Mitterand government, but did not differ from the intentions of previous French governments. However, these goals may well be revised during the next several years, as a new phase is apparent in the French relationship with its former colonies.

B. Political Challenges to French Dominance During the 1990s

France's ability to protect its economic and political interests in francophone Africa has been consistently excellent, occasionally even more so than its considerable ability to protect its military interests during the earlier decades. A centrally-directed, coordinated, and pervasive intelligence presence provided on-the-ground insurance that the *chasse gardée* continued in every country except Guinea to be a potential, if not always extremely profitable,

extension of France's economic empire. During the first decade of independence, the former colonies remained almost as dependent on France as they had been during the colonial period. Francophone Africa continued to offer France the most favorable access to raw materials and strategic resources.

For the most part during the 1970s and 1980s, France was able to insure a reasonable amount of diplomatic and foreign policy cooperation and coordination in the region, as shown by the numerous occasions on which African governments offered at least token troop or logistical support for French operations in their region. However, this friendly climate has changed significantly during the 1990s because of level and number of military interventions necessary, and the growing strength of African democratization efforts which actually complicated France's enduring relationships with friendly government leaders. Many of the African and French leaders who worked well together from the colonial period onward (*e.g.*, Senghor, Houphouet-Boigny, Bokassa, Mobutu, de Gaulle, Pompidou, Mitterand and Foccart) are now dead and those who remain face more serious challenges to their continuing leadership as they grow older. This is even true of President Bongo of Gabon, who has failed to groom a political successor with any kind of support from within his own political structure, thereby preventing internal challengers to his regime from gaining any kind of power. Military governments still exist in the region, but are somewhat more independent from France than their predecessors (like those in Chad and the CAR). Even perennial ideologues with French sympathies like Sassou-Nguesso in Congo are finding a need to present a more independent

attitude in order to attract allies other than France and retain the loyalty of their political constituencies at home. In addition, strikingly in the case of Sassou-Nguesso who owes his presidency to outside military aid from Angola, more powerful African states like Angola, Nigeria, Uganda, and South Africa, are beginning to have real effects as power brokers in the region.

According to French rhetoric during the entire period following independence, francophone African states and France did share a number of common objectives. However, by the 1990s there were incidents of attacks on French citizens in francophone Africa countries that indicated a growing willingness on the part of ordinary African citizens to get rid of French influence in spite of the economic and security risks. There were also many indications that the interests shared by African and French leaders were not necessarily shared by ordinary African citizens, or by particular ethnic or social groups.

The Gabon case in Chapter 5 provides the example of Gabonese employees of a French enterprise (Elf-Gabon) threatening French interests even where this action threatened their own livelihood. Even in the Central African Republic, regarded as one of the countries most loyal to France, the French Cultural Center in Bangui was attacked for the first time during a series of army mutinies in the mid-1990s. There have also been a larger number of attacks on French citizens in central African countries since *Operation Turquoise* in Rwanda. Even if their leaders maintain a high level of loyalty to France in return for the guarantee of continuing power, many francophone Africans are showing a high level of resentment against continuing French influence. Many of those

leaders are also beginning to demonstrate greater independence, and France's ability to roll with these punches was already being tested in the late 1990s.

The francophone leadership summits are still one place where common objectives between France and African nations can be articulated and supported. However, since these meetings have been used so frequently as the place where new French policy is announced, only to fall back on the same practices and assumptions later on, some cynicism on the part of African leaders is understandable as to whether France's goals are indeed in concert with theirs. For example, at the 1975 Francophone Summit in Bangui (CAR), Giscard told the assembled leaders that "the only competition which is in accordance with Africa's interests is that which promotes economic, social, and cultural development."⁴¹³ By the Dakar summit in 1977, Giscard had returned to an earlier formula, warning that prosperity and development could only occur if there was peace and stability, and a willingness on the part of those assembled to avoid the inducements of both poles of the Cold War in favor of alignment with French policies.⁴¹⁴ The priority, therefore, continued to be security as the condition of development and self-sufficiency (which could only be achieved with French help), rather than development as a condition of security (leading to greater African self-sufficiency and less loyalty to France).

Prestige, sovereignty, independence and autonomy are as important to leaders in Africa as they were to de Gaulle and to the French in the European Community and the present-day EU. Perhaps, since francophone African governments were supposed to accept French culture as a priority import, and

take France as their model in all things, these preferences are predictable. However, the ongoing relationship that many central African countries have maintained with France has involved a sacrifice of all four to some degree or another. This ambiguity has provided a continuing element of tension in the relationships between African governments and their French patron. In order to continue receiving French aid, the leaders of African states needed to maintain the stability of their country (or risk losing their presidency), and guarantee France access to their territory for military purposes and economic investment. Doing these things has often appeared to require repressive or at least undemocratic forms of government, a certain sacrifice of national autonomy, and loss of an opportunity for the sort of prestige that France itself claims as one of the philosophical birthplaces of popular sovereignty. Elected French leaders can claim with some justification to lead in the name of the French people. While, for example, President Bokassa claimed this role also, largely on the basis of his military leadership during the pre-independence phase of the Central African Republic, his tenure in the presidency post-independence was guaranteed by France's cooperation agreements and the loyalty of his own military elites rather than by democratic election.

Only in the 1990s did France really begin to encourage the appearance, at very least, democratic government in the former French colonies. Having sacrificed autonomy in favor of security, the grandeur and trappings of public office became all the more important to African presidents, and France often colluded in providing these trappings in order to sweeten the deal. Presidential

jets, limousines, and elegant uniforms were the most outward forms of solidarity with African governments shown by France, along with compliance with the use of aid money to purchase French villas, or to sustain foreign embassies -- and ambassadors -- at the requisite level of ostentation. The most extreme evidence of this collusion was probably the Napoleon-inspired coronation, complete with a golden eagle throne and ermine robes, of Bokassa the First of the Central African Empire, paid for in large part with French aid, derided in the French and international press, and merely winked at by the Giscard government. Thomas O'Toole⁴¹⁵ states that when President-for-Life Bokassa crowned himself Emperor in 1977, the lavish ceremony also "made a number of French people very rich." The United States promptly suspended its aid in 1977, although not the Peace Corps program; France did not suspend aid, but made arrangements for transferring the regime's leadership to a less peculiar partner.⁴¹⁶

Nonetheless France's goals of retaining its great power status, and its strategic and economic preponderance in the region, were largely met up until the mid-1990s. It maintained its military presence, its ability to intervene effectively, and its economic strength. The military cost was considerable, as were the supporting costs of the Franc Zone, but as in the first case, the costs were spread out over decades, and balanced somewhat by economic gains. The forces of *Presence* and *Intervention* were used frequently enough to demonstrate that their power was effective for limited operations, but the very frequency of their use has caused their ultimate utility to be questioned both internationally and domestically. France tarnished its prestige in Rwanda, CAR

and Gabon, and Chad was a long-drawn out series of operations that raised serious questions concerning the potential benefits of remaining Africa's *gendarme*. The *chasse gardée* may persist for a time but its structural integrity is slipping, its rangers have become less effective at controlling the inhabitants, and the costs to France's budget and reputation of maintaining its sphere of influence in the classic Gaullist configuration are increasingly high. There has been continuing fallout from the Rwanda intervention, including accusations that France helped the old regime train for the genocide and then saved many of the *génocidaires* with *Operation Turquoise*. Almost every trial by the International Tribunal for Rwanda of members of the old Rwandan leadership who planned the genocide (most recently, Colonel Théoneste Bagosora) has sparked new accusations of French assistance to the *génocidaires*.

There has been far less challenge from the former USSR and its constituent independent republics during the period after the dissolution of the USSR as a competing military, political and economic power. On the other hand, there has been an increased challenge from China as a competing political and economic power.

Attempts for influence by the USSR were unsuccessful in francophone Africa, but the US influence has grown even greater since the end of the Cold War, and has been spread over more countries than before, most recently in response to a need for strategic bases from which to counter threats from the Middle East and Islamic terrorism. US involvement has become quite substantial during the late 1990s. The Friends Committee on National

Legislation listed 33 African countries that participated in joint combat exercises with the United States during the years 1995-1998, four of which were Chad, CAR, Gabon, and Congo-Brazzaville. Also according to FCNL's research, between 1991 and 1995, 50 out of the 53 African countries received some form of U.S. military assistance, 42 African countries received military training from the US, and the US transferred \$249 million worth of weapons to Africa, mostly small arms.⁴¹⁷ Uganda has become a major military presence in the East African region which borders on Rwanda, Burundi, and Zaïre, and receives significant military aid from the United States. Turning to the United States may well become the primary diplomatic bargaining chip for African governments to use if they need concessions from France and, given the preponderance of US power and intervention capacity over France, this may well prove to be France's most significant foreign policy challenge in future in the *chasse gardée*.

France continues to train Africans in peacekeeping and joint troop maneuvers and workshops are still performed. The current names of the agencies that organize these trainings are the RECAMP program (Reinforcement of African Peacekeeping Capacities) program and the EMP officer candidate school in Mali. Hundreds of francophone African officers have trained at the latter. The establishment of RECAMP and the EMP was a part of a plan for a rapid-response peacekeeping force of 20,000, the African Standing Force. France's intention in supporting the creation and training of this last so as to provide a replacement for its own overstretched and politically unpopular intervention forces in the African theatre of operations.⁴¹⁸

The biggest future political challenge will most likely come from the United States' increased strategic interest in Africa. During the 1990s, the US foreign policy presence in central Africa began to loom larger, and this may well become a constraint on France's ability to make its African allies pursue French policies. The losses of friendly authoritarian governments in Rwanda, and then Zaïre, were tremendous blows to French prestige and power in the central African region, and the great power gap in Rwanda after the genocide was immediately filled by the United States with the help of its firm regional ally, Uganda because the new RPF leadership had grown up in Uganda and spoke English. However, in the original French colonies, France has been able to retain a significant ability to influence their foreign policies. With the loss of Soviet competition, however, the United States has become the viable alternative to France, and a much more congenial economic presence to many of the francophone governments than the Soviets were. Those governments who prefer fewer conditionalities on their aid have turned to China.

In addition to the damage done internationally to its reputation by Operation Turquoise in Rwanda, other factors which have nudged France toward at least an appearance of multilateralism in Africa include financial problems caused by open-ended and expensive pits of quicksand, as represented by France's many interventions in Chad. A situation such as the second Gulf War, in which France's traditional competitor, the United States, found itself accused of neocolonial interventionism, would of course have suggested to France that a strategic change in the direction of multilateralism would make it look good by

comparison so long as it maintained a firm stance against international terrorism. Closing the central permanent bases in CAR at the end of the 1990s meant that France no longer had as much capacity to mount long-term interventions to the neighboring states. Henceforth, it was hoped, France's considerable intelligence and logistical *presence* would be used to prevent the need to project force as massively and expensively as before. Forces of intervention could then be smaller, briefer, more focused, and less expensive or embarrassing. Using the smallest possible force with the greatest possible amount of forethought, pre-positioned and culturally attuned intelligence, and optimal technology is now France's stated strategy for the future.⁴¹⁹

It remains to be seen if this will remain the case while the United States is currently augmenting its troop and base presence on the African continent, and has separated AFRICOM out of its past subordinate status within the European command structure. The global war on terrorism has brought far more attention to Africa, particularly northern and Sahelian Islamic Africa, than it has ever had historically during peacetime. The US has signed a number of new defense logistics cooperation agreements of its own with various African countries, and establishing the presence of a permanent, probably Africa-based command may well stimulate France's ancient competitive animus against potential *Anglo-Saxon* hegemony.

French citizens agree less than ever that African affairs should rank as a priority in their country's foreign policy. The Council on Foreign Relations quotes François Roche, editor of the French edition of *Foreign Policy*, who argues that

resources spent on Africa would be better placed in Asia and South America, where France's future economic and geopolitical interests are likely to be.⁴²⁰

Many of the bilateral cooperation agreements signed at independence remain in some form today, but most have changed some of their specific provisions depending on the willingness of French and African presidents to cooperate in formal terms. A few of the cooperation agreements are only assumed to exist, and their terms are unknown beyond each African president's office and the *Elysée*. France has yet to renegotiate a number of them, e.g., that of Cameroon, where France is regarded as a long-term friend of the Biya government, but the cooperation requirements of this relationship remain secret. Chad's defense cooperation agreement is similarly opaque. France is attempting to get other countries in the EU to contribute troops to the 3 remaining permanent bases but this has been a hard sell. It appears in many instances that, although France would prefer multilateral interventions with help from other European nations, it still wishes to remain in control of what is or is not considered to be a threat either to a particular African president's interests or its own, and how any given threat will be addressed in order to protect those interests. Inviting other countries to participate, assuming they were to accept, would also be a way of controlling the financial and political costs of a given intervention, but would also require France to give up some of its leadership role.⁴²¹

Other changes in the political climate will also affect the way France conducts itself in the future in the *chasse gardée* countries. Continued meetings by heads of state in *La Francophonie* and individual re-negotiations of the

cooperation agreements make it clear that French must continue to offer its military and economic aid even if African leaders want more independence under the terms of the cooperation agreements.

Now that Foccart has died and his memoirs have been published, the old intelligence services have come under much more scrutiny, something that has generated both fascination and disgust on the part of French citizens. France must keep a good intelligence presence in the *chasse gardée* in order to remain a viable power there, but more subtlety may be required, and a new generation of operatives and *coopérants* will have to be trained and stationed. Some of the old methods of the *Réseau Foccart* have become publicly unpopular in both France and Africa and overt manipulation of African presidential successions may no longer be possible. Most of the original Gaullist and Mitterand-era advisors who formed the “*Cellule Africaine*” in the *Elysée* are also now dead or retired, and Nicholas Sarkozy is the first French president in the experience of independent francophone Africa not to have come from the generation that fought with de Gaulle or was otherwise part of the World War II resistance. Then again, with the death of Houphouët-Boigny of Côte d’Ivoire, most of the African leaders who knew de Gaulle, Pompidou, Mitterand and Chirac as their patrons and generational leaders are now dead as well. President Bongo of Gabon may be the last of this generation to rule in francophone Africa, as Chirac was most likely the last of de Gaulle’s protégées to lead France.

C. Economic Challenges to French Dominance During the 1990s

French businesses continue to have long-term business operations in francophone central Africa. As a whole, however, the African continent only accounted for 5% of France's exported products as of 2007. The four countries examined here remain, however, key sources of France's raw materials and energy needs. The latest two presidents, Jacques Chirac and Nicholas Sarkozy, have both publicly promoted a strategy of encouraging economic development and democratic governance as key precursors to regional stability.⁴²²

France's commitment to pro-democracy policies was far more evident by the 1990s. France introduced conditionality issues when Mitterand announced at the 1990 La Baule Franco-African summit that "heading toward more freedom," would be a condition for French aid. In spite of this announcement, regime stability and economic and military cooperation have continued to take precedence over political liberty as conditions for French aid. Mitterand's support for conditionality had become more lukewarm by the following year's francophone African leadership summit in Paris. Indeed, Benin became democratic following La Baule, and actually experienced a decline in French aid, while Togo, Cameroon and Zaïre (all of which continued to be authoritarian) received increases in French aid.⁴²³

France no longer moves as quickly, if at all, to protect loyal authoritarians who head African governments.⁴²⁴ When France does so, its actions are more limited. Its ability to reassure its allies remains strengthened, however, by the consistent economic support that has been offered throughout the past four

decades, even after the alterations made to this relationship by France's membership in the EU and its conversion to Euro currency.

During the 1990s, France needed to restructure the Franc Zone in order to put less pressure on France's own economy. Supporting the African Franc Zone became an increasingly expensive proposition during times of economic hardship in Africa, and offered new challenges as both its own and its allies' economies became more globalized and France had greater competition for central Africa's resource exploitation.

France's record of economic support has been consistent throughout the decades covered by this study. This will likely continue, for the reason that African governments have become well aware that France needs them for a number of reasons, as extensions of French influence, but also as markets for French manufactured goods and cultural products. Although France has made it clear that not all leaders will receive unqualified and complete support, and that France is still capable of military intervention, the francophone sub-Saharan countries themselves are still of importance to France and will remain so. French support has a reputation of maintaining its availability to all of these places, even if the French do not necessarily approve of who has taken charge and the type of regime they run. African governments are beginning to achieve more leverage in their continuing special military and economic relationships with France, which may give France fewer options in the future but possibly more lasting influence, if African resentment against the dependency of the past can be mitigated. France's continuing advantage is its comparative wealth, and control of superior

technological resources that it can use toward a relationship of continuing economic dependency. African leaders have learned to use other donors, markets and investors to induce cooperation from France; however, most of the francophone sub-Saharan countries still choose France as a major, if not the major, trading partner. It has become evident to France, however, that these relationships actually improve with the strength and stability of a particular country's economy, even if that means the risk of other major nations acquiring an interest in that country also as a potential investment site. Encouraging dependency is now no longer the preferred mode for many French companies and governmental projects, since it has become apparent, first, that this may actually slow growth and destabilize these poorer francophone partners to the detriment of the investment, and second, that those partners with greater resources, particularly those with oil or other resources needed by France, may be developing the capacity to look elsewhere for investment and development aid, particularly toward countries which may attach fewer conditions to a particular investment, *e.g.* China.

In the past, France has intervened so frequently in non-military ways that it has appeared excessively (and literally) patronizing, but its economic and development assistance was, and remains, a necessity to most francophone African clients, even those with oil. Where French citizens and economic interests are threatened, France will probably continue to want to intervene militarily and economically, and these same citizens and economic interests may well end up used as bargaining chips by future African governments. The

economic support is so woven into the fabric of French-speaking Africa that the French and African economies are seemingly inextricably linked. Although France is commonly criticized throughout Francophone Africa and elsewhere for its continuing paternalism regarding its former colonies, the leaders of these nations appear to believe that, even if France might be temporarily distressed by a change in government, a coup or civil war, they will be back to protect their interests eventually.

France's ability to protect its economic interests was consistently excellent, more so than its ability to protect its military interests. A centrally directed, coordinated, and pervasive presence provided on-the-ground insurance and intelligence for preserving key French investments (e.g., Elf-Congo, Elf-Gabon) and the safety of expatriate business and banking personnel, and also offered some warning of impending disturbances. The former colonies continued to be almost as dependent as they had been during the 1960s throughout the following two decades, and well into the 1990s. Francophone Africa continued to offer France the most favorable access to raw materials and strategic resources. Development of an African industrial base continued to be slow, perpetuating dependence on French imports for arms, manufactured products, luxury goods, and even food and clothing. African cultural assimilation of French consumer preferences remained quite strong, although access to globalized production of a number of basic resources increased and provided alternatives to French-produced items and cultural propagation, which also began to see competition in the areas of film, fashion, music, radio and television.

The integration of the Franc Zone into the commercial and lending structures in the region was deeply rooted, and integration with the French financial systems continues to help many of the former Franc Zone's countries maintain a relatively safe macroeconomic market environment for investors. Countries which have not managed to control their armed conflicts, like present-day Chad and the CAR, have remained poorer than their more stable francophone neighbors Gabon, Cameroon, and a now more-peaceful postwar Congo (Brazzaville). They remain recipients of French economic support, however, although not as tempting for foreign investment. While the Franc Zone was in full force, however, since so many French interests were tied to the Zone, any changes in the rate at which the CFA Franc was pegged to the French Franc affected both Africa and France in a significant fashion. The greatest congruence of shared interests among France and the francophone African countries during the first four decades of independence was probably in the area of economic stability, largely because changes in the Zone affected even France, its largest member. The future of France's economic security in the region is less certain, due to recent developments in Europe and changes in policy by the Bretton Woods institutions. It has yet to be seen what the advent of the Euro will mean for both the FF and the CFAF. Intended as another engine of regional financial stability, the IMF has become a less predictable influence in sub-Saharan Africa since the 1980s. IMF lending was \$1 billion there in 1988, but only \$527 million in 1992, and its structural adjustment programs are no longer looked upon by African states as an automatic guarantee of eventual prosperity

via temporary retrenchment. The experience of Gabon and other IMF loan recipients indicates that IMF-ordered government cutbacks can cause enough impoverishment in the general population to translate into internal instability. The 1989 World Bank study attempted to win back some of the damaged reputation of the Bretton Woods institutions but it remains to be seen how France's African interests will be affected by these developments.⁴²⁵

The World Bank also concluded that most African countries lack sound economic policies, and that macroeconomic stability in the region would require a change in the currency. France and the francophone economic community devalued the CFA franc in 1994. While the resulting inflation was not as high as was anticipated, this was an additional shock to a region where economic difficulties often do political damage, with security implications for France and its African clients. As one means of softening these financial blows, France has recently created a "conversion fund" whereby West African creditors can exchange nearly \$1 billion of their debt into infrastructural development, and environmental improvement projects.⁴²⁶

Finally, France is reassessing its aid policies, taking note of the current security climate and the revised policies of the Bretton Woods institutions. As Bernard Conte notes, unlike the other OECD countries, France increased its overseas development aid in recent years, but is revising its aid policies with an eye to both political and economic cost-effectiveness. Conte states that,

"In future, French overseas aid will be redeployed towards selected 'emerging countries' with a view to expanding trade relations; aid to Africa will be reduced and concentrated on a few countries, notably Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroun, Congo, Gabon, Senegal and South Africa. Both bilateral

conditionality and commitments to non-project aid will be reduced in favour of greater coordination with other donors (including the Bretton Woods institutions). These changes in strategy will be accompanied by reforms in the French aid machinery, designed to 'modernise' and streamline administration." ⁴²⁷

The aid policy will continue to place importance on France's sub-Saharan commitments as part of the historic relationship between France and its former colonies; however, the revisions are intended to move away from a relatively inflexible political client-based system and toward more efficient less "patrimonial" relationships with recipient countries. It is worth noting that of the six "notable" continuing aid recipients listed by Conte above, five of them are easily most well-endowed francophone African nations in terms of natural resources, political stability and francophone loyalty, economic stability, and strategic military importance to France. ⁴²⁸

The Franc Zone itself, perhaps the most durable of France's institutional "présence," and certainly a large source of its power, has come under increasing criticism by African technocrats and economists who see it as a throwback to the days when Africans could not be trusted by Europeans to run their own affairs, or at least to run them in a fashion which would benefit their *patron*. Perhaps the most eloquent of these is the Cameroonian economist Célestin Monga, who described the Zone only a few months ago as,

"a seemingly inexpugible reminder from the colonial past, this bizarre entity continues to reflect the intellectual mimicry of African elites who forever dwell on past oppressions as well as the self-serving cupidity of a number of "Françafrique" networks whose members still dominate the French political class and effectively undermine the managing of Development Cooperation in Paris." ⁴²⁹

In decrying this continuing need to root its economic affairs in a French financial institution as “intellectual mimicry,” one hears echoes of Fanon’s criticism of the African bourgeois’s inauthentic and alienated consciousness, and a continuing neocolonial mindset on the part of both African and French elites. Monga’s rallying cry for those in the Franc Zone is to separate before an uncaring European economy drags African financial institutions down with its own social and economic crises, restricting African trade, external competition, and the development of financial policies that take account of African exigencies and economic strengths. In his own experience, the vaunted stability of the Zone is not only mythical, but also stymied by additional layers of bureaucracy:

“As for the mythical comfort of convertibility credited to the Franc CFA, just try to make a bank draft transfer from Brazzaville to Bangui or from Bamako to N’djamena. Immediately you run up against a barrier of administrative procedures not to mention steep transaction fees, numerous paid intermediaries, high amounts of additional taxes and commissions as well as much time wasted to perform these complicated operations. Topping off this procedural chain is the guarantee provided by the Bank of France, which in return requires all countries within the Franc zone to maintain open accounts with the French Treasury where at the least 65% of all export revenues must be deposited! Surprising advantage... but for whom? ⁴³⁰

The seemingly greatest advantage of a monetary union, employment flexibility as a guarantee against externally generated price shocks, is an impossibility in a region where individual economies are weak, jobs are often encumbered by local patronage, and are hard to come by. To Monga, the advantage is still on the side of the country that runs the market and has the banks in its pocket, and the francophone African countries have handed over their financial sovereignty to a neocolonial anachronism.

D. Cultural Challenges to French Dominance During the 1990s

The most persistent vestige of France's colonial legacy, once those who lived under colonial rule are all dead, will probably be the French language. There are now many writers in French from Africa, in literature, poetry, philosophy and many other artistic and scholarly areas. African films in French continue to be produced and screened not only at the continent's various film festivals like the annual one in Brazzaville but at Cannes and internationally as well. This means that there may still be a role for *La Francophonie* as an organization that preserves, promotes and disseminates the broader francophone culture produced by colonization. Continued use of French as the *lingua franca* among many Africans allows it to continue as a "world language" at the UN and elsewhere.

As Savorgnan de Brazza hoped, the colonial "hand" of trade has been reinforced by the development of francophone cultural preferences in the African marketplaces of goods and ideas. African governments are now somewhat more able to restrict and manipulate market access according to what they want France to give in return

French language and culture, French legal and pedagogical methods, French banking and investment concerns, and French religion have also become integral structural parts of the daily life of every "francophone" African, even for those who cannot speak or read French because they have not attended school. A francophone African's level of ability in French continued to define his or her access to power and economic resources throughout the decades following independence. Conversely, this widening of "*la Francophonie*," the cultural

expression of what it means for a non-Frenchman to speak the French language and participate in the French political sphere of influence, has proven to be not only a boost to French prestige, but also a challenge to French identity. This challenge to what it means to be French has not always been welcome to the French themselves. Nonetheless, the resulting internationalization of French society has arguably enriched francophone culture and preserved French influence in countries which provide France with a continuing claim to global great power "*grandeur*." There does exist some rejection of francophone culture as neocolonial on the part of some francophone Africans, especially and most recently in Rwanda, which has declared that English is now the national language instead of French, mainly since it is now run by English-speaking Rwandans who grew up in exile in (formerly British) Uganda.

III. The Costs and Benefits of the Continuing Neocolonial Relationship for Both Francophone Africa and France: Topics for Further Study

The important problem of neocolonialism lingers and, by lingering, raises some further topics for study, now that we have considered the relative success of France's first four decades in independent 20th century Africa, and the challenges it faces now in preserving something valuable from its *chasse gardée*. Was France's enterprise in independent central Africa neocolonial imperialism in an entirely negative sense, *i.e.* what were the costs and benefits to the peripheral nations involved? Possible positive outcomes for Gabon, Congo-Brazzaville, CAR and Chad as a result of continued French presence could be said to include:

1. Reliable protection from outside invasion by a major power with

continuing interests in the region.

2. Modern military training and reliable arms transfers.
3. Consistent economic support while their neighbors suffered.
4. A relatively stable and modern banking system, in contrast to those of their neighbors.
5. Early international development of oil industries.
6. Organized cooperative opportunities among leaders with a common language and colonial experience.
7. Opportunities for international interaction as independent nations.
8. Opportunities for African citizens to study in France and emigrate there.
9. An established and enduring educational system in many towns and cities.

Certainly, France would argue that its presence has provided all of these and more, and that it has been a good influence on Africa over the long term. However, the Africans whose sovereignty has arguably been damaged or at least negatively challenged by France's continuing presence might argue that the following negative influences have also been evident, certainly for the four countries examined in this work. Negatives for Gabon, ROC, CAR, and Chad as a result of continued French presence might be said to include the following:

1. Continued psychological destruction and devaluation of their own cultures and self-image as individuals and as peoples, in Fanon's terms.

2. A history of strong presidencies, weak legislatures, and military dominance in government mirroring an early and quite authoritarian version of Gaullism.
3. A history of repressive government and corrupt judiciary systems, with almost no encouragement toward democratic change.
4. A legacy of dominance by an outside power, with the consequent damage to their own international prestige; they are still somebody else's backyard.
5. The identification of France with the dominant political party and consequent distrust of France by African citizens not in power.
6. The encouragement by France of particular ethnic groups as elites with the consequent increase in ethnic rivalry and inter-ethnic violence.
7. The use of arms and training transferred by France to their militaries against their own people in the event of civil war (in Congo, CAR and Chad).
8. A legacy of economic dependency on another nation with less opportunity to develop indigenous African economic structures and strengths.
9. Environmental degradation due to patronage-oriented exploitation of oil industries.
10. A French-infiltrated, ethnically favoritist, politically corrupt and consequently untrusted bureaucracy

11. Less opportunity to develop ties with other major world powers, or a delay in doing so.
12. Less opportunity to encourage and develop indigenous languages for producing non-francophone literature, music and film.

The list of negatives is longer than the list of positive outcomes from France's presence and offers many problems currently examined by others or begging for further work. This dissertation has addressed how and why France was successful in obtaining so much of what it desired from its newly independent colonies. More work is needed on how and why what France wanted was not what independence could have meant to its African clients, and whether or not the ultimate results were worth the costs to both the client states and their *patron*.

After more than four decades, the sheer duration and scope of France's continued influence in a significant portion of Africa remains remarkable in spite of the challenges and costs. Here are some of the continuing benefits to France of perpetuating at least a vestige of the neocolonial relationship with Africa:

1. A lingering tradition and capacity for establishing military bases and continued troop presence in allied African states compared to other great powers, who will have to build this capacity from the ground up.
2. France and many of its former African colonies have at least interoperable, if not completely equal levels of technical ability and can work efficiently together in international operations.
3. France retains at least a "first among equals" diplomatic status

among those countries involved in francophone Africa, and in many of its former colonies, it is still the dominant political influence.

4. The relative economic strength of the Franc Zone, in spite of the continuing dilemmas posed by integrating it within the European Union and French economic spheres.
5. French still an international language, and French literature has been expanded and enhanced by the contributions of writers from the former colonies and overseas *départements*.
6. France is still a great power in Africa even if its status as a great power worldwide is no longer recognized.
7. Africa is still contributing to France's wealth and prestige .

France is still first among the great powers in its *chasse gardée* for the most part in terms of strategic territory, access to markets, and opportunity to develop raw materials, in spite of now-serious competition from the US and China. However, there are the following costs to consider as well:

1. The expense of maintaining intervention forces capable of unilateral intervention according to the cooperation agreements is a continuing problem.
2. Intervention in African conflicts is increasingly unsuccessful and French presence is not always welcomed.
3. The cooperation agreements themselves have become quite

constricting and some are albatrosses. Some of the African clients are pulling back on their puppet strings and making demands that France will find difficult to fulfill.

4. Cognitive dissonance: there is a persistent comfort with Gaullist practices in Africa has persisted long after Gaullism has become attenuated at home.
5. The French legislature and people are tired of supporting dictators, and tired also of the cognitive dissonance between French democratic ideals and French policy and practices in Africa.
6. Anti-immigrant feeling in France is a strong and indeed dangerous factor in French politics. Africans living there feel increasingly threatened. French conservatives feel threatened by increased African influence on French culture.

Compared with France's outlay, and counted out over nearly two centuries of colonial and neocolonial domination and measured in blood and treasure, Africa's costs far outweigh the benefits that France claims to have brought. However, in order to be able to claim that a conqueror must completely disentangle itself from the conquered people's security, political structures, economy and culture, we must be able to measure the cost to the contemporary individuals affected at the time the conqueror pulls out. France did not, as Portugal did, leave its African colonies impoverished, at the mercy of their neighbors and internal conflicts, but still free. It took the opposite route, and maintains its relationship with most of them as cared-for clients that remain in a

condition of competing cultures, externally-directed economies, and stunted political development that has maintained what power exists largely in the hands of their military leadership. Their presidencies are strongly personalized, and draw their strength more from the loyalties of their military leadership than from their citizens or their legislatures, in the image of their first patron, Charles de Gaulle. France has not punished its colonies' desires for independence by pulling out abruptly, but it has patronized them by prolonging their dependent condition.

Appendix I

Arms transfers during the period 1960-1969 by non-African countries, including France, to African francophone countries (from Anthony Clayton, "Foreign Intervention in Africa," in Baynham, 228-249; and also Joshua and Gibert, 34):

France:	Infantry weapons incl. mortars and a few 105 mm howitzers to Dahomey. Infantry weapons and mortars to Upper Volta. Infantry weapons incl. mortars, and field howitzers to Cameroon. Infantry weapons and mortars to Central African Republic. Infantry weapons and mortars to Chad. Infantry weapons (at independence) and a few guns to Congo-Brazzaville. Infantry weapons and mortars to Gabon. Infantry weapons and mortars to Côte d'Ivoire. Infantry weapons, mortars and some light artillery to Madagascar. Infantry weapons, mortars and rocket launchers to Niger. Infantry weapons, mortars and rocket launchers to Senegal. Infantry weapons, mortars and rocket launchers to Togo.
Great Britain:	A few scout cars to Upper Volta, a few armored cars to the Central African Republic. (Most UK arms transfers were to anglophone Africa.)
Belgium:	A few antitank rocket launchers to Burundi, Cameroon and Rwanda, and infantry weapons to Zaïre.
USSR:	45 medium tanks, 35 armored vehicles, 40-60 armored Personnel carriers, small numbers of artillery pieces and anti-tank guns, infantry weapons and 7 surface-to-air missiles (some weapons may be Chinese or Czech in origin) to Guinea. 45 medium tanks, 40 armored personnel carriers, light artillery pieces, and infantry weapons to Mali.
China:	Light anti-aircraft guns, rocket launchers and light anti-tank guns to Cameroon.
Czechoslovakia:	Infantry weapons to Guinea. (These were sent after 1960.

Appendix II

Arms transfers during the period 1970-1989 by non-African countries, including France, to African francophone countries- (from Clayton, in Baynham, 228-249. See also Edward J. Laurance, "Soviet Arms Transfers in the 1980s: Declining Influence in Sub-Saharan Africa," and also George T. Yu, "Chinese Arms Transfers to Africa," in Arlinghaus, 1983, 46-47 and 110; also IISS 1981-1982:

- France:* 15 armored cars, 13 armored personnel carriers, a few field guns, mortars, infantry weapons and rocket launchers to Burkina Faso.
 27 armored cars to Burundi.
 Infantry weapons, mortars, anti-tank guided weapons to Chad.
 10 armored cars, infantry and artillery mortars, anti-tank guns to Djibouti.
 15 armored cars, 12 armored personnel carriers and Mirage COIN (counter-insurgency) aircraft to Gabon.
 5 light tanks, 23 armored cars, 22 armored vehicles, 4 howitzers, large mortars, light anti-aircraft guns, and 5 COIN aircraft to Côte d'Ivoire.
 65 armored cars, some armored personnel carriers, mortars, and anti-tank rocket launchers to Mauritania.
 46 armored cars and 14 armored personnel carriers to Niger.
 27 armored cars, a few light artillery pieces and mortars to Rwanda.
 54 armored cars, armored personnel carriers, mortars, and anti-tank guided weapons to Senegal.
 10 armored cars, 5 armored personnel carriers to Togo.
 140 armored cars, 80 armored personnel carriers, and light field guns to Zaïre.
- (France also sold weapons to Kenya and Nigeria during this period, largely armored cars and armored personnel carriers. 50 Franco-German-designed ground-to-air missile units were also sold to Nigeria.)
- Belgium:* Field howitzers and anti-tank guided weapons to Cameroon.
- Brazil:* 16 armored cars and two maritime reconnaissance aircraft to Gabon.
 A COIN (counter-insurgency) aircraft to Togo.
- W. Germany:* 30 scout cars and 6 load carriers to Benin.
 50 armored personnel carriers and a COIN aircraft to Togo.
- Sweden:* Light anti-aircraft guns to Cameroon.

Switzerland: Light anti-aircraft guns to Cameroon.

Israel: Automatic weapons to the Central African Republic.

USSR: 8 BRDM 1 armored vehicles, 10 PT 76 armored vehicles, infantry weapons incl. mortars, grenade launchers to Benin.
 A few mortars and light anti-aircraft guns to Burundi.
 Light mortars and anti-tank rocket launchers, and possibly 20 light armored vehicles to the Central African Republic.
 MIG15 and MIG17 combat aircraft, armored personnel carriers, and artillery rocket-launchers to Congo-Brazzaville.
 Some armored personnel carriers (possible origin Libyan) to Djibouti.
 MIG21 and MIG17 combat aircraft, also tanks and armored personnel carriers, to Guinea.
 A few armored vehicles (which may not be Soviet in origin), as well as anti-aircraft weapons, tanks, and MIG17 and MIG21 combat aircraft, to Madagascar.
 20 armored vehicles, surface-to-air missiles, 8 armored personnel carriers, tanks, and MIG21, MIG19 and MIG17 combat aircraft to Mali.
 A few anti-aircraft guns to Mauritania.
 2 medium tanks (probably Libyan) to Togo.
 Small numbers of armored personnel carriers and artillery pieces, possibly of Chinese origin, to Zaïre.
 Some arms went to Chad, but most likely to the opposition and not in concert with France's goals there.

China: 15 medium tanks and 14 light tanks to Congo-Brazzaville.
 Automatic weapons to Gabon.
 A few light tanks to Madagascar (unconfirmed).
 10 light tanks to Mali.
 Perhaps 50 light tanks and Shanghai-class naval craft to Zaïre.
 Shanghai-class naval craft to Guinea.

Cuba: 35 medium tanks, 37 armored vehicles, 68 armored personnel carriers, artillery weapons, artillery rocket launchers, light anti-aircraft guns (precise source of some weapons uncertain; may be Soviet or Cuban) to Congo-Brazzaville.

United States: 26 light armored vehicles to Cameroon.
 6 armored vehicles to Gabon.
 6 field guns to Senegal.

6 field guns to Togo.
10 medium tanks and a number of armored personnel carriers to
Zaire.

ENDNOTES

1. Védrine emphasizes that “hyperpower” is a neutral term in French, meant to mean something more all encompassing than “superpower” but not negative. See Védrine, Hubert, with Dominique Moïsi (Philip H. Gordon, transl.), France in an Age of Globalization, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2000, 3-4.
2. *Ibid*, 4.
3. Ginio, Ruth, French Colonialism Unmasked: The Vichy Years in French West Africa, Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2006, 162.
4. See, for example, John Chipman, French Power in Africa, Oxford (UK): Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1989, 126; and Douglas A. Yates, The Rentier State in Africa: Oil Rent Dependency and Neocolonialism in the Republic of Gabon, Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, Inc., 1996, 111.
5. Prunier, Gérard, The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide, New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1995, 103.
6. Mamdani, Mahmood, Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996, 17.
7. Mamdani, 82 (quoting Robert Delavignette, “French Colonial Policy in Black Africa. 1945-1960,” in Colonialism in Africa: 1870-1960, ed. L.H. Gann and Peter Duignan, vol. 2, The History and Politics of Colonialism, 1914-1960, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1970, 267).
8. Mamdani, 82-83.
9. The term “*évolué*” as used in the study of French Africa means “evolved” or “developed,” and is a much more loaded term than its modern idiomatic definition of “broadminded.” It was used by the French to indicate an African colonial elite who had assimilated, who used the French language and social behavior, and who was worthy of a managerial position or one of similar authority over other Africans.
10. Gordon, Philip H., A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993, 7-8.
11. *Ibid*, 12,15-16.
12. Pakenham, Thomas, The Scramble for Africa: White Man's Conquest of the Dark Continent From 1876 to 1912, New York, NY: Avon Books, 1991, 143.
13. On “surrogate terrain,” see Foltz, William J. and Henry S. Bienen (eds.), Arms and the African, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985, 2-10.
14. Schraeder, Peter J. Cold War to Cold Peace: Explaining U.S.-French Competition in Francophone Africa, *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 115, No. 3 (Autumn, 2000), 396.
15. Foltz and Bienen, 2-10.
16. *Ibid.*, 2-10.

17. Chaigneau, Pascal, La Politique Militaire de la France en Afrique, Paris: Le Centre des Hautes Études sur l'Afrique et l'Asie Modernes (CHEAM), 1984, 29.
18. Prunier, 105.
19. *Ibid.*
20. As reported, among a number of other places, in the *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, December 15, 1996.
21. Welch, Claude E., Jr. (ed.), Soldier and State in Africa: A Comparative Analysis of Military Intervention and Political Change, Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1970, 26-27.
22. See Baynham, Simon (editor), Military Power and Politics in Black Africa, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1986, 22-23; and also Clayton, in Baynham, 216, 226.
23. This was something France had failed to do in its Southeast Asian colonies. Watching the United States and USSR conduct a proxy war in France's former colony of *Indochine* (Viet Nam) during the 1960s and 1970s must have been a particularly dismaying illustration of what France had built, shaped, fought for, and lost.
24. Sautman, Barry, and Yan Hairong, "Friends and Interests: China's Distinctive Links With Africa," *African Studies Review*, Vol. 50, No. 3, December 2007, pp. 75-76.
25. Gordon, Philip H., and Sophie Meunier, The French Challenge: Adapting to Globalization, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2001, 8.
26. *Ibid*, 9.
27. Young, Crawford, The African Colonial State in Comparative Perspective, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994, 116.
28. See Chipman, 1989, 26-27, 50-52. Chipman also quotes the answer of Paul Déroulède to Ferry's contention that African colonies could replace Alsace-Lorraine, **"I have lost two sisters and you offer me twenty chamber-maids."**
29. *Ibid*, 26-27.
30. *Ibid*, 18.
31. Foltz, William J., From French West Africa to the Mali Federation, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1965, 143.
32. Challener, Richard D., The French Theory of the Nation in Arms 1866-1939, NY: Russell & Russell, Inc., 1965, 176.
33. Clayton, Anthony, France, Soldiers and Africa, Brassey's Defence Publishers Ltd., 1988, 6.
34. Young, Crawford, The African Colonial State in Comparative Perspective, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994, 150.
35. Clayton, 6.
36. Echenberg, Myron, Colonial Conscripts: The *Tirailleurs Sénégalais* in French West Africa, 1857-1960, Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books Inc., 1991, xvi.
37. Clayton, 6.
38. *Ibid*, 7.

39. Charles Balesi, "West African Influence on the French Army of World War I," in Johnson, G. Wesley (ed.), Double Impact: France and Africa in the Age of Imperialism, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985, 99.
40. Echenberg, 80-83; Challener, 81, 108.
41. Clayton 338; Echenberg, 29.
42. Balesi, in Johnson, 96.
43. Echenberg, 7.
44. *Ibid*, 88.
45. *Ibid*, 5-6.
46. *Ibid*, 66.
47. *Ibid*, 63.
48. Clayton, 361.
49. Quoted in Clayton, 5. "*Manifeste*" should be translated here as "to demonstrate" rather than to reveal or manifest.
50. *Ibid*, 12.
51. *Ibid*, 4.
52. Echenberg, 98-99.
53. Chipman, 1989, 88.
54. Serving as a possible models for dissident "governments in exile" formed by emigrés from modern francophone African regimes, most recently that of post-Lissouba Congo-Brazzaville.
55. Samuel Decalo, Historical Dictionary of Chad, 2nd edition, African Historical Dictionaries No. 13, Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1987, 124.
56. Chipman 1989, 90.
57. Yates, Douglas A., The Rentier State in Africa: Oil Rent Dependency and Neo-colonialism in the Republic of Gabon, Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, Inc., 1996, 97.
58. Foltz, 1965, 49-51.
59. Chipman, 1989, 56-57.
60. See Yates, 95.
61. Chipman, 1989, 57-58.
62. Prunier, 318.
63. Echenberg, 102, 127, 146-148.
64. Quoted in Chipman 1989, 76-77.
65. Chipman 1989, 7, 17; Foltz, 1965, 22.
66. Edward A. Kolodziej and Bokanga Lokulutu, "Security Interests and French Arms-Transfer Policy in Sub-Saharan Africa," in Bruce E. Arlinghaus (ed.), Arms for Africa: Military Assistance and Foreign Policy in the Developing World, Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Company, 1983, 126-127.
67. Foltz 1965, 54, 58; Echenberg, 148; Chipman 1989, 97; Foltz 1965, 58. Also George E. Moose, "French Military Policy in Africa," Foltz and Bienen, 87.
68. Aimé Césaire refused to meet the present President of France, Nicolas Sarkozy, in 2006. Sarkozy's party had supported a controversial law,

- criticized and soon repealed as colonialist and racist, which mandated that French teachers and schoolbooks promote the positive influence of the French presence in North Africa and elsewhere in its former colonies.
69. Fanon, Frantz, Black Skin, White Masks, Charles Lam Markmann, translator (published in 1952 as *Peau Noire, Masques Blancs*), New York, NY: Grove Press, 1967, 223-232.
 70. Fanon, Frantz, The Wretched of the Earth. Constance Farrington, transl. (published in 1961 as *Les Damnés de la Terre*), New York, NY: Grove Press, 1963, 210.
 71. Chipman, 1989, 258.
 72. Janet G. Vaillant, "African Deputies in Paris: The Political Role of Léopold Senghor in the Fourth Republic," in Johnson, 145-146.
 73. Foltz, 1965, 76; Chipman, 1989, 100; Echenberg, 162.
 74. Foltz, 1965, 69; Vaillant, in Johnson, 147.
 75. Chipman, 1989, 100.
 76. *Ibid*, 100-101.
 77. Chipman, 1989, 103; Foltz, 1965, 73-75.
 78. Foltz, 1965, 87.
 79. Martin, Michel L., Warriors to Managers: The French Military Establishment Since 1945, Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1981, 16.
 80. Chipman, 1989, 97-99; Foltz, 1965, 55-58.
 81. Vaillant, in Johnson, 149.
 82. Johnson, 382.
 83. Jean-François Bayart, The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly (Mary Harper, Christopher and Elizabeth Harrison, transls.), New York, NY: Addison Wesley Longman Publishing, 1993, 197; see also Vaillant, in Johnson, 142.
 84. David E. Gardinier, "The French Impact on Education in Africa, 1817-1960," in Johnson, 341.
 85. As late as 1979-81, France was the principal purchaser of Niger's uranium, buying twice as much in 1981 as its nearest competitor, Japan. Decalo, Samuel, Historical Dictionary of Niger, 2nd edition, African Historical Dictionaries No. 20, Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1989, xxv, 227-228.
 86. Martin, 21.
 87. Foltz, 1965, 91.
 88. Chipman, 1989, 104-106; Foltz, 1965, 92 and 106.
 89. Welch, Claude E., Jr. (ed.), Soldier and State in Africa: A Comparative Analysis of Military Intervention and Political Change, Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1970, 12.
 90. Chipman, 1989, 107. See also Foltz (1965) for greater historical detail.
 91. A glance at hundreds of years of French history indicates that the Fifth Republic represented a new start on these three rather traditional French projects.

92. Philip H. Gordon, A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy, Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 1993, 29; Martin, 22-24.
93. Martin, 34-35.
94. Chipman, 1989, 114-115.
95. Foltz, 1965, 182-183.
96. Rynning, Sten, Changing Military Doctrine: Presidents and Military Power in Fifth Republic France, 1958-2000, Westport CT: Praeger Publishers, 2002, 23.
97. *Ibid*, 30-31.
98. *Ibid*, 32-33.
99. Chipman, John, V^{ème} République et défense de l'Afrique, (R. Manicacci, transl.), Éditions Bosquet, 1986, 125.
100. Other francophone African cooperation agreements included Senegal (1960), Côte d'Ivoire (1961), Niger (1961), Dahomey (1961), and Togo (1963). Cameroon did not sign one of these agreements at independence, but had done so by 1970. Mali signed a more limited agreement in 1960 that had lapsed by 1970, and refused to sign a military agreement until 1977. Mauritania had signed an agreement by 1970, at which time Mali's agreement had lapsed. [Chaigneau, 22, 111; Chipman, 1989, 117; also see Joshua, Wynfred and Stephen P. Gibert, Arms for the Third World: Soviet Military Aid Diplomacy, Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1969, 34.]
101. Johnson, 31.
102. Chaigneau, 25-27.
103. Clayton, 382.
104. *Ibid*.
105. Chaigneau, 24.
106. *Ibid.*, 120.
107. Chipman, 1989, 117-119.
108. Chaigneau, 33.
109. Clayton, 389.
110. Chipman, 1989, 119, from SIPRI.
111. See Naeem Inayatullah, "Beyond the Sovereignty Dilemma," in Biersteker, Thomas J. and Cynthia Weber (editors), State Sovereignty as Social Construct, Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 1996, 60-61.
112. David Strang, "Contested Sovereignty," in Biersteker and Weber, 34-35.
113. Chipman, 1989, 153.
114. Biersteker and Weber, 2-18.
115. Hoffmann, Stanley, The Ethics and Politics of Humanitarian Intervention, Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996, 14-15.
116. Decalo, Samuel, Coups and Army Rule in Africa: Motivations and Constraints, 2nd Edition, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990, 27-28, 39.
117. Chipman, 1989, 152.

118. Charles H. Cutter, "The Genesis of a Nationalist Elite: The Role of the Popular Front in the French Soudan (1936-1939)," in Johnson, 115.
119. Chipman, 1989, 110.
120. *Ibid.*, 111.
121. Welch, 1970, 11. In contrast, Britain made only bilateral agreements with its former colonies; none were multilateral.
122. There were exceptions. Mali abrogated its signed military agreement (which had been made with the Mali Federation, including French Soudan and Senegal) shortly after independence, and refused to sign another military agreement until 1977, although it made other agreements with France. Foltz suggests that symbolic issues like Algeria's fate and Senegalese acquiescence to the Saharan atom bomb tests may have been a factor in the disintegration of the Mali Federation [Foltz, 1965, 173]. Upper Volta told France to dismantle its existing bases, probably because French soldiers had intervened there on behalf of the Mossi Emperor in an attempt to overthrow the Voltaic government in October 1959. France was able to retain its garrisons at Bobo-Dioulasso and Ouagadougou, but Upper Volta distrusted further direct collaboration between its troops and French soldiers. France was granted only overflight, staging and transit rights in Upper Volta. Mauritania and Cameroon signed much more limited military assistance agreements than the others. [See Pascal Chaigneau, *La Politique Militaire de la France en Afrique*, Paris: Le Centre des Hautes Études sur l'Afrique et l'Asie Modernes (CHEAM), 1984, 22; Chipman 1989, 117, and also Clayton, 382.]
123. Clayton, 383.
124. Chipman 1989, 121.
125. Chaigneau, 29.
126. Sivard, Ruth Leger, *World Military and Social Expenditures*, 16th edition, Washington, DC: World Priorities, 1996, 19.
127. Foltz, 1965, 33.
128. Michael T. Hadjimichael and Michel Galy, "The CFA Franc Zone and the EMU," IMF Working Paper 97/156, November 1997, pp. 6-8.
129. Decalo, 1989, 100; John F. Clark and David E. Gardinier (eds.), *Political Reform in Francophone Africa*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997, 15-16.
130. Clark and Gardinier, 15-16.
131. Welch, 1970, 26-27.
132. Joseph Smaldone has done some interesting work on local arms control initiatives in Africa, and particularly Mali's West African regional arms control initiative. Arms and military assistance have only recently seriously considered as a source of instability rather than as a means of assuring stability. Arms sales can enhance a nation's internal security but exacerbate regional tensions, they can either redress a power imbalance or create one, and they can be used to repress citizens as well as protect them from harm. In addition, arms aid can result in either increased

- influence or embarrassment for the donor, and the costs of arms purchases and/or maintenance can be a hindrance to the economic development of the recipient, which may also have to make considerable concessions of its national sovereignty in order to receive military aid [Arlinghaus, Bruce E., Military Development in Africa: The Political and Economic Risks of Arms Transfers, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984, 24-25].
133. Michael Chege, "Sub-Saharan Africa: Underdevelopment's Last Stand," in Barbara Stallings (ed.), Global Change, Regional Response: The New International Context of Development, Cambridge University Press, 1995, 332.
 134. Stephan Haggard, Developing Nations and the Politics of Global Integration, Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1995, 24. Actions by the IMF occasionally presented France with opportunities to strengthen ties with countries whose military and political cooperation had been less than it would have wished. When Benin's economically incompetent Marxist regime experienced several natural disasters on top of the man-made ones caused by waste of public resources, the Beninois government announced in 1987 that it could no longer balance budgets and remain independent of France (at least compared to previous governments). Dealings at this point with the IMF were sweetened by renewed French assistance, and the return in an advisory capacity of Jacques Foccart. Foccart arrived with much fanfare, having been *persona non grata* in Benin for 10 years since the attempted mercenary coup in 1977 (led by the most infamous member of le réseau Foccart, Bob Denard), an incident over which France tried to maintain deniability with little success. In 1989, France and the IMF bailed out the Beninois government, which had apparently decided to value its economic security over its national autonomy (Decalo, 1990, 123, 128, 130).
 135. *Présence Africaine* is still published quarterly in Paris. It was founded by the Senegalese philosopher Alioune Diop in 1947, and influenced Panafricanism and the *Négritude* and decolonization movements. Senghor, Fanon and Césaire wrote for it, as did Richard Wright, Albert Camus, and Jean-Paul Sartre. The associated publishing house, *Editions Présence Africaine*, was the first publisher of many of Francophone Africa's most distinguished writers including Mongo Beti and Cheikh Anta Diop. They were also the first to publish French editions of African writers in English, including Wole Soyinka, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Chinua Achebe, and the political writing of Presidents Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania.
 136. Chaigneau, 41; Martin, 42.
 137. Chaigneau, 49.
 138. Martin, 93-94.
 139. Chipman, 1989, 121-122]
 140. IISS, The Military Balance, 1970/71, 54.
 141. Martin, 36-38, 61-62.

142. See Pierre, Andrew J. (ed.), Cascade of Arms: Managing Conventional Weapons Proliferation, Cambridge, MA: Brookings/World Peace Foundation, 1997, 393.
143. Bruce E. Arlinghaus, Military Development in Africa: The Political and Economic Risks of Arms Transfers, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984, 71.
144. Arlinghaus 1984, Military Development in Africa, 73-74.
145. Table from J.M. Lee, African Armies and Civil Order, New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1969, 5.
146. Abbott A. Brayton, "Arms Control in Africa," in Baynham, 272, using IISS figures.
147. Snyder's West African francophone data compares as follows: Guinea's land army of 8,500 was well-regarded for discipline and training, and demonstrated the ability, as early as 1979 (in Liberia, as later in the 1990s) to intervene in neighboring countries. Senegal, which had a light mobile infantry force of 8,500, benefited from a large number of officers who had been NCOs and officers in the French colonial army. It intervened in Gambia in 1981, and was apparently capable of defending its borders. Mauritania lacked manpower and resources, and suffered from a racial divide between its Arab/Berber officers and largely black enlisted corps. Côte d'Ivoire's forces were small, but well trained to provide enough internal security in a crisis until French help arrived. Benin, Mali, Togo, Niger, and Upper Volta (Burkina Faso) were also small light infantry forces. In the cases of Mali and Niger, this made them underpowered for protecting their large desert territories. [Charles P. Snyder, "African Ground Forces," in Bruce E. Arlinghaus and Pauline H. Baker (eds.), African Armies: Evolution and Capabilities, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986, 128-132.]
148. Sivard, 28, 45-47, and also IISS, The Military Balance, 1994-1995, 22, 111.
149. Sivard, 47.
150. Samuel Decalo, "Military Rule in Africa: Etiology and Morphology," in Simon Baynham (editor), Military Power and Politics in Black Africa, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1986, 48; also, Pierre Kalck, Historical Dictionary of the Central Africa Republic, 2nd edition, Thomas O'Toole (transl.), African Historical Dictionaries No. 51, Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1992, 27-28.
151. Clayton, 360.
152. Graduates of EFORTOM during the late 1950s and early 1960s included a number of military presidents and presidential aspirants, including Seyni Kountché (president of Niger), Mathieu Kérékou (president of Benin), Moussa Traoré (president of Mali) and Seye Zerbo (president of Upper Volta). Many of these were second-generation soldiers educated at the African military academies established by France for the sons of veterans. [Echenberg, 122-126; Samuel Decalo, Historical Dictionary of Niger, 2nd edition, African Historical Dictionaries No. 20, Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1989, 138.

153. See Lawrence Freedman and Martin Navias, "Western Europe," in Pierre, 155, on the acquisition of Phillips by Thomson-CSF and the Space, Defense & Telecom Division of ACEL of Belgium by Alcatel.
154. Chaigneau's data is taken from Robin Luckham, "Le militarisme français en Afrique," *Politique Africaine*, no. 5, February 1982. and the trainee numbers from Jacques Guillemin's doctoral thesis, "*Coopération et intervention, la politique militaire de la France en Afrique Noire francophone et à Madagascar*, Université de Nice, 1979.
155. Clayton, 389; see also Chipman 1989, 132; Chaigneau's data is taken from Robin Luckham, "Le militarisme français en Afrique," *Politique Africaine*, no. 5, February 1982.
156. Harry E. Colestock III, "African Air Forces," in Arlinghaus and Baker, 141-147, and IISS, 1983-1984.
157. Larry D. Harrison, "African Sea Forces," in Arlinghaus and Baker, 168-173.
158. Chipman, 1989, 144-145.
159. Martin, 350-351.
160. Arlinghaus, 1984, Military Development in Africa, 37.
161. Chaigneau, 69, 75.
162. Clayton, 436, 382-384, IISS, The Military Balance, 1975/76, 21-22].
163. Chipman, 1989, 120-122; Martin, 355.
164. *Ibid.*, 124.
165. Chaigneau, 94.
166. Clayton, 383.
167. Foltz, 1965, 182-183.
168. Claude E. Welch, Jr., "Military Disengagement from Politics: Incentives and Obstacles in Political Change," in Baynham, 89-90.
169. Aristide R. Zolberg, "The Structure of Political Conflict in the New States of Tropical Africa," *American Political Science Review*, 62, 1968, 77-78; Welch, 1987, 14.
170. Zolberg, 77-78; Welch, 1987, 14-15.
171. In one notable case [told in Welch, 1987, 172-173], the presence of a strong president who maintained his close historical ties to Paris also staved off the possibility of a military coup. Military non-engagement in Côte d'Ivoire can be clearly tied to the enduring legitimacy of its head of state in the eyes of both Ivorian and French leaders. President Houphouët-Boigny, furthermore, was adept at constraining the political factionalism of his own colony (and then country) by non-military methods, particularly by the careful maintenance of networks that linked key Ivorian business and political elites to French investments and other opportunities available through Paris's political and economic patronage. As Bratton and van de Walle note, the use of state resources as patronage for elite clients was often an important factor in an African government's political legitimation. Government, parastatal and diplomatic positions increased vastly in number in Côte d'Ivoire after independence, increasing access by loyal elites to power and wealth, as well as to official houses, cars,

assistants and pensions. [Michael Bratton and Nicolas van de Walle, Democratic Experiments in Africa: Regime Transitions in Comparative Perspective, Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 1997, 66.] Close civil and military relations in Côte d'Ivoire, combined with one of the healthiest economies in West Africa, maintained Houphouët's power and, with the exception of a small and unsuccessful military revolt in Gagnoa in 1970 (at which the presence of French troops remains a persistent rumor), the Ivorian military has stayed in its barracks. The army did participate in a few joint maneuvers with the French troops based in Port Bouet near the Abidjan airport. Domestic peacekeeping in Côte d'Ivoire was in the hands of the gendarmerie, and the Ivorian military has been reputed to be the least politically active in Africa, even to the present day [Welch, 1987, 179-181].

172. Chipman, 1989, 125-126.
173. Kalck, 37.
174. Lee, 79.
175. Welch, 1970, 273; and Decalo, 1990, 214. The Togolese coup of 1963 also represented an instance where the coup produced a result desired by France in terms of new leaders who were approved by, if not welcomed by, Paris.
176. Gordon, 69.
177. Clayton, 436, 382-384, IISS, The Military Balance, 1975/76, 21-22.
178. Gordon, 101-104.
179. Chipman, 1986, 127.
180. Gordon, 89.
181. *Ibid.*, 127, 171.
182. Cited in Chipman, 1989, 137.
183. Chipman, 1989, 136-137.
184. From Chipman, 1989, 138-139; and IISS, 1988-1989.
185. Personal communication from Douglas Yates.
186. Gordon, 180-181.
187. Chipman, 1989, 165; Chaigneau, 85.
188. Chipman, 1989, 144.
189. *Ibid.*, 119.
190. Clayton, in Baynham, 213-214.
191. Clayton, 390.
192. Baynham, 22.
193. Clayton, in Baynham, 213.
194. IISS, The Military Balance, 1979-1980, p. 24, and 1987-88, p. 60.
195. IISS, The Military Balance, 1994-1995, p. 45.
196. Sivard, 28, 45-47, and also IISS, The Military Balance, 1994-1995, pp. 22 and 111.
197. Johnson, 384.
198. Chaigneau, 118.
199. Chipman, 1989, 197.

200. US Peace Corps volunteers (this author included), while serving in francophone Africa, were also referred to locally as *coopérants*.
201. Welch, 1987, 33; Lee, 39.
202. Welch, 1970, 10.
203. Chipman, 1989, 147.
204. Chaigneau, 45.
205. Chipman, 1989, 147.
206. Arlinghaus, 1984, Military Development in Africa, 37.
207. I. William Zartman, "Africa and the West: The French Connection," in Bruce E. Arlinghaus (ed.), African Security Issues: Sovereignty, Stability, and Solidarity, 1984, 48-49.
208. Gordon, 83; Martin, 26-27.
209. Chipman, 1989, 192, 232-233.
210. *Ibid.*, 155, 243, 249.
211. The name means "Daddy told me." It appeared frequently in Zaïrian emigré correspondence over the Internet whenever Jean-Christophe's presence was noted in Kinshasa on a visit to President Mobutu.
212. Gordon, 122.
213. *Ibid.*, 106, 108, 113.
214. Martin, 66-67.
215. *Ibid.*, 84-85.
216. Foltz, 1965, 21; Bayart, 159; Peggy Sabatier, "Did Africans Really Learn to Be French? The Francophone Elite of the École William Ponty," in Johnson, 179ff.
217. Yates, 122.
218. Chipman, 1989, 118.
219. The French military base at Dakar was turned over to the Senegalese government, although there remained French troops stationed there. Even without a full-scale agreement, substantial military assistance continued to Senegal, including service in the Senegalese army by French officers.
220. Chipman, 1989, 128.
221. Chaigneau, 29.
222. Chipman, 1989, 254-255.
223. Clayton, 389.
224. Chaigneau, 113-114.
225. Clayton, 389.
226. *Ibid.*, 389-390.
227. Decalo, 1990, 230. For example, international pressure from banks and the French government, which were tired of dealing with embezzlement of aid and loans by Togolese ministries, led to the firing in 1982 of one of the president's closest associates. France's ultimatum stated that it would have no economic dealings at all with any Togolese government that employed Minister Dogo, a Minister of Planning who had served in the Togolese cabinet since 1967.
228. Chipman, 1989, 171]
229. Commander-in-Chief in Algeria quoted in Chipman, 1989, 78.

230. Gordon, 194-195.
231. *CIA World Factbook*, December 18, 2008,
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gb.html#Intro>.
232. United States Department of State Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, Gabon, 1980-2007, March 11, 2008,
<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2007/100482.htm>, see also Amnesty International USA web page on Gabon, updated 9/27/2008:
<http://www.amnestyusa.org/all-countries/gabon/page.do?id=1011274>
233. Chipman, 1989, 144-145.
234. Clark and Gardinier, 149.
235. They were deployed into six interservice commands, and two independent commands. The interservice commands were in Antilles-Guyana, Cape Verde, Djibouti, South Indian Ocean, New Caledonia, and Polynesia. (Of these, the Djibouti command is the most likely to be used to support sub-Saharan operations.) The independent commands were based in Port Bouet (Côte d'Ivoire) and Libreville (Gabon). There were a total of 16,933 men under these commands, of whom only 2,828 were conscripts [Martin, 350-351].
236. Martin, 332. Since that time, the whole intervention capacity of France in Africa has had to be composed of enlisted personnel, all of whom would be sent overseas in the event of action on two fronts, leaving the conscripts to defend the homeland.
237. Chipman, 1989, 145-146.
238. Chipman, 1989, 149; also Chaigneau, 76-79.
239. Chipman, 1989, 136; Clayton, 383-384; Decalo, 1990, 236, 238.
240. Chaigneau, 92.
241. Chipman, 1989, 149, 150.
242. Moose, in Foltz and Bienen, 62-63.
243. Chaigneau, 37, using figures from Luckham, 99 and SIPRI.
244. Decalo, in Baynham, 51.
245. Foltz, 1965, 182-183.
246. Welch, 1970, 15-17. This was probably because of Olympio's ambivalence to the wishes of his own military leaders and to the constraints posed by continuing French influence.
247. Chipman, 1989, 123-125.
248. Yates, 112-114.
249. David Goldsworthy, "Armies and Politics in Civilian Regimes," in Baynham, 98.
250. Bayart, 25.
251. Yates, 114-116.
252. *Ibid.*, 86-87, 96, 107-111, 120.
253. *Ibid.*, 86-87, 96, 107-111, 120.
254. This whole story is told best in Yates, 125-134.

255. Chipman, 1986, 130. France's economic power and political leverage were inextricably intertwined during the period due to the interests of members of the African political elite, as well as the government-owned nature of many African companies, parastatals, and resource extraction sectors. France's strong links with the African members of its economic and military sphere of influence, and the relative steadiness of the Franc Zone economies, made the Zone itself a strong inducement to good relations with France, even on the part of countries that had initially rejected its help. In 1986, the new government of President Lansana Conté turned to Paris for aid to regenerate the Guinean economy, which France saw an opportunity to re-forge a relationship with one of its weakest francophone links. France proposed a program of economic cooperation with Guinea, which had not been part of the French sphere for a quarter of a century. On January 6, 1986, the Guinean franc replaced the Guinean syli, and Guinea joined the Franc Zone.
256. Yates, 99, 114.
257. Bayart, 159, citing M. Guéry.
258. Clark and Gardinier, 148.
258. During the early decades of African independence, the 1960s and 1970s, the US trained a number of sub-Saharan Africans in its military IMET and FMS programs, but very few from the francophone nations, with the notable exception of Zaïre, which had 160 trainees in 1971, and sent between 50-100 yearly throughout the 1970s. Joseph P. Smaldone, "U.S. Arms Transfers and Security-Assistance Programs in Africa: A Review and Policy Perspective," in Arlinghaus, 1983, 194.
259. The aid given to Congo-Kinshasa reflects the fact that the US was very much involved there both militarily and politically during the conflicts that attended the independence of this former Belgian colony, which was not yet as much under French influence as it became later as Zaire under Mobutu Sese Seko. However, the Congo intervention was the last major US military intervention in sub-Saharan Africa until the Soviets became active in Angola, and the US entered that conflict in 1975. George E. Moose, "French Military Policy in Africa," in William J. Foltz and Henry S. Bienen (eds.), Arms and the African, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985, 60.
260. Compare, for the same period, the US aid given to Thailand (\$600 million) or Ecuador (\$29 million). Africa during this period received 2% of the US military aid budget, and 1% of the Soviet military aid budget. (The Middle East received 48% of both the US and the USSR's military aid budgets, and Latin America -- the African continent's closest competitor -- got 14% of the US and 13% of the Soviet military aid budgets respectively). The data in this section was taken from Joshua and Gibert, 130-131, compiled from US Department of Defense Military Assistance Facts, and from figures in the *New York Times*.
261. Yates, 101.

262. Many of the British West African states achieved independence during the 1950s and 1960s. Independence in those colonies was also largely a matter of transferring command of the local armed forces to the newly independent states. As in francophone Africa, British officers remained in many of the command positions; however, this condition did not persist nearly as long as it did in the former French colonies, nor were their former colonies' economic and political ties with London as strong or persistent as those of the francophone states with the *Elysée*.
263. Clayton, in Baynham, 222-226.
264. Clayton, 383-384. The *Front de Libération Nationale Congolaise* (FLNC) invaded Shaba twice. Giscard had visited Zaïre in 1975 and improved French relations with the continent's largest francophone nation, not coincidentally improving as well French access to Zaïre's considerable cobalt, copper and diamond resources. Zaïre participated in Franco-African summit meetings, and also -- it was later discovered -- signed a military cooperation agreement with France. The May 1978 intervention included initially 600 Legionnaires and 100 parachutistes, followed in a few weeks by three further companies of French troops. 1,750 Belgian troops also participated. The US military's airlift command provided transport, using French bases for refueling at Libreville, Gabon (and Dakar, Senegal). The Giscard government justified the intervention publicly on the basis of keeping Africa free from great power rivalry, but the Gaullists contested this because US participation had been necessary for transporting French troops. Protecting and evacuating French citizens and other Europeans in Kolwezi was an important immediate factor in the decision, as was France's promise to protect Mobutu's government according to its defense cooperation agreement [Chipman, 1989, 133].
265. Bayart, 197.
266. *Ibid.*, 199
267. Francis M. Deng, "Security Problems: An African Predicament," and also D. Katete Orwa, "National Security: An African Perspective," in Arlinghaus, 1984, *African Security Issues*, 8, 206-207.
268. Lemarchand, 1988, 113. The issue was used opportunistically, most notably at the Lagos conference in 1979, when Libya succeeded in getting a resolution passed by the other nations that the presence of French troops in Chad was "an obstacle to peace." France left in 1980 upon receiving the promise that the other African nations would step into the breach, and Libya was attacking N'Djamena eight months later.
269. Chipman, 1989, 140-141, Chaigneau, 80.
270. The others were Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, and Senegal. (Chipman, 1989, 141-142) Replacement of the *Clemenceau* with a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier (the *Richelieu*) was also authorized in the Program Law and increased France's flexibility of response in the Atlantic.
271. Chipman, 1989, 152.
272. Chaigneau, 94.

273. Often in the *chasse gardée*, however, conflict could be deterred by means other than a show of preponderant force. In at least one case, Côte d'Ivoire, it is probable that the presence of French bases as well as an internal defense agreement mandating France's long-term loyalty to President Houphouët-Boigny, prevented opposition members or movements from ever using armed force to remove the government or begin a civil war. Indeed, pre-emptive military aid increases and garrison reinforcements often made more dramatic measures (like the use of the *Force d'Intervention*) unnecessary in other countries as well.
274. CIA World Factbook, December 18, 2008, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cf.html>
275. Clark and Gardinier, 63.
276. *Ibid.*, 65.
277. *Ibid.*, 74.
278. Chipman, 1989, p. 227.
279. *Ibid.*, p.155.
280. Chaigneau, 37, using figures from Luckham, 99 and SIPRI.
281. Welch, in Baynham, 89-90.
282. Joshua and Gibert, 137.
283. See, for a good account of Congo-Brazzaville, John F. Clark, "Congo: Transition and the Struggle to Consolidate," in Clark and Gardinier, 62-85. In West Africa, the agreement with Dahomey (Benin) lapsed altogether, leaving (as happened earlier with Mali) an opening for Soviet influence. Nonetheless, France maintained some contacts with both Mali and Benin over the years, as a small number of military coopérants continued to be based there. The defense and technical military cooperation agreements now vary more from state to state than they did in the early 1960s. Some of the lapsed or less controlling agreements left small openings for Soviet influence.
284. Arlinghaus, 1983, 223-224.
285. Decalo, 1990, 39.
286. *Ibid.*, 39-88.
287. *Ibid.*, 1990, 80.
288. Albright, in Arlinghaus, 1983, 30. The West African francophone recipients were Guinea, Benin (Dahomey), and Mali.
289. Hence Soviet willingness to support a monarchy like Ethiopia with economic aid, and pro-Western Nigeria with military aid, during the post-independence period. Sub-Saharan Africa remained a fairly low priority to the USSR, however, with a few exceptions where potentially powerful states like Ethiopia and Nigeria were concerned, or where influence could be tied directly to ideological commonality. Guinea, having rejected the French Community, was the first, and really the only, francophone West African nation to give the USSR, along with other Eastern bloc allies, a real opportunity for military and economic penetration. When de Gaulle withdrew all military, technical and economic cooperation, President Sekou Touré first asked the United States for aid, was refused, and

- accepted an offer of arms and military advisors from Czechoslovakia early in 1959. Russian advisors and technicians followed in 1960, as did a sizeable loan (at least \$3 million, not including some arms already received from the USSR). [Joshua and Gibert, 31-34].
290. Also 30 Dahomeyans, 75 Burundians, 885 Guineans and 360 Malians were trained in the USSR, and 60 Guineans and 10 Malians in Eastern Europe, mostly in East Germany. The number of Soviet trainees was far higher, of course, from more strategically important states like Libya (1,310), Ethiopia (1,290), and Somalia (2,395), and more in line with the numbers of African allies that France was training during the period. [Roger E. Kanet, "Military Relations Between Eastern Europe and Africa," in Arlinghaus 1983, 87.]
 291. The following other francophone African military personnel were trained in China: 125 Cameroonians, 360 Guineans, 50 Malians, 55 Togolese and 175 Zairians. [Chipman, 1989, 114-115.]
 292. Guinea, Mali, and Benin in West Africa, and Madagascar also hosted a number of Soviet advisors.
 293. Francophone countries receiving Chinese military training included Cameroon, Congo-Brazzaville, Guinea, Mali, Togo, and Zaïre. China has stepped up its aid to many African countries in the 1990s and thereafter. Chinese military personnel in sub-Saharan Africa in 1979 numbered only 305, largely concentrated in Equatorial Guinea. [Kanet, in Arlinghaus, 1983, 88; Yu, in Arlinghaus, 1983, 111.]
 294. Multiple-source acquisition was also a problem for Zaïre, which cultivated ties to the USSR and US respectively. [Ross, 1988, 166.]
 295. Schraeder, Peter J. "Cold War to Cold Peace: Explaining U.S.-French Competition in Francophone Africa," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 115, No. 3, (Autumn, 2000), 395-419.
 296. Zartman, in Arlinghaus (ed.), African Security Issues: Sovereignty, Stability, and Solidarity, 41.
 297. CIA World Factbook, December 18, 2008, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ct.html>
 298. Personal communication to the author from a fellow CAE Peace Corps Volunteer.
 299. Chipman, 1989, p. 110.
 300. *Ibid.*, pp 120-121.
 301. Chaigneau, 92.
 302. *Ibid.*, 37, using figures from Luckham, 99 and SIPRI.
 303. Chipman, 1989, 133-134.
 304. Chipman, 1989, 124. The unpopular Mauritanian intervention in 1977, one of the fewer (comparatively) in West Africa during this period, did not use French aground troops; but assisted the Moroccan forces employed against Polisario insurgents with Jaguar strike aircraft in 1977, 1978, and 1979, (Clayton, 383-384). The Mauritanian military expanded from 3,000 to 15,000 in order to defend Mauritania's claim to the Western Sahara, but they got the worst of most engagements, and French participation was

questioned at home. The July 1978 coup in Mauritania was encouraged by France as a means by which the country could be withdrawn from this war. France also encouraged OAU mediation efforts between Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania and the Polisario front [Moose, in Foltz and Bienen, 78-79].

305. Clayton, 383-384; Chaigneau, 94.
306. Clayton, 135.
307. Moose, in Foltz and Bienen, 87.
308. Clayton, 390.
309. Chipman, 1989, 135.
310. It does include cases where only the threat of force, if not its exercise, was used in order to make changes in government personnel, as in Mauritania in 1979 and 1980, and Upper Volta in May of 1983. (Welch, in Baynham, 89-90.)
311. Zartman, in Arlinghaus, African Security Issues: Sovereignty, Stability, and Solidarity, 1984, 49.
312. Kalck, 47.
313. Clayton, in Baynham, 225-226.
314. Kalck, 85.
315. United Nations website, Peacekeeping Missions background on MINURCA, <http://www.un.org/Depts/DPKO/Missions/minurcaB.htm>.
316. See the World Bank country website, December 2008, <http://web.worldbank.org/external/default/main?menuPK=350031&pagePK=141155&piPK=141124&theSitePK=349999>
317. Arnold Hughes and Roy May, "Armies on Loan: Toward an Explanation of Transnational Intervention Among Black African States: 1960-85," in Baynham, 191.
318. CIA World Factbook, December 18m, 2008, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cd.html>
319. Chaigneau, 37, using figures from Luckham, 99 and SIPRI.
320. William J. Foltz, "Libya's Military Power," in René Lemarchand (editor), The Green and the Black: Qadhafi's Policies in Africa, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1988, 53-59. What Jean-François Bayart calls the "horizontal structuring of space in Africa" occurred in this period around the regional poles of Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire in West Africa, Algeria, South Africa, and in the center, Zaïre (although Angola too has become a preponderant regional military power in Central Africa during the early 1990s). Demographic size, economic strength, or military might are all factors in these polar attractions, some of which are discouraged by the French as challenges to their regional military (and linguistic) hegemony. The French tried to deflect the rise to power of any leadership in Niger that might be too friendly to fellow Hausas in the government of anglophone Nigeria. Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana vied for influence in Togo and Burkina Faso, while Mobutu's Zaïre was influential on the governments (and opposition factions) in Central African Republic, Rwanda, Burundi, Chad, and Angola (Bayart, 202). Another recent "pole"

is being created in the mid-1990s in Museveni's Uganda, with the help of regional allies (like his former comrade-in-arms, Paul Kagame in Rwanda) and the United States.

321. Chipman, 1989, 142-143.
322. This was the same Rwandan government that planned the 1994 genocide. (Prunier, 221.) Prunier speculates, however, that it could not have been a short-range *Milan* which brought down President Habyarimana's plane in April 1994, but rather an anti-aircraft missile, probably either a US-built Stinger, or more likely (and more available on the international market) a Russian SAM-7 or SAM-16, which would have required outside training for use.
323. Lemarchand 1988, 113.
324. Foltz, 1965, 182-183.
325. Clayton, 438.
326. Decalo, 1987, 132.
327. Martin, 331-332.
328. Chipman, 1989, 140.
329. For a full account of the political and military aspects of *Operation Turquoise*, read The Rwanda Crisis by Gérard Prunier, a policy advisor who accompanied *Turquoise*.
330. Decalo, 1989, 227.
331. In the same year, with unintended irony, de Gaulle apparently contradicted the "territorial integrity" principle stated at the outset of the Chad action, and recommended to the francophone governments of West Africa that they support the secession of Biafra from Nigeria. France never officially recognized the Ojukwu government, but made arms transfers to Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon that were intended for further transfer to the government of Biafra. De Gaulle's interest in this conflict lay in his early recognition that anglophone Nigeria was not only a cultural and linguistic rival to French grandeur in West Africa, but also a potentially strong regional power that would soon be able to compete effectively with France in West Africa as a military and economic rival. In spite of considerable French investment and oil drilling concessions that remained under the control of the Nigerian government, de Gaulle continued his support for Ojukwu. The costs to de Gaulle and France of this intervention were soon evident: diplomatic relations were broken, French oil concessions were suspended, and the francophone states of Africa were divided concerning the wisdom of the choice that de Gaulle had compelled them to make. Francophone African leaders persuaded de Gaulle to reconsider. Only in the 1980s, with the sale of French military equipment to Nigeria, has some of the lingering resentment between Nigeria and France been repaired. [Chipman, 1989, 126.] The divisive memory of Côte d'Ivoire's support of Biafra has persisted in inter-African state relations in the form of occasionally strained relationships between the anglophone and francophone states of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). [Ellis 168].

332. Chipman, 1989, 158.
333. Clayton, 383-384; and also Clayton, 437, ftn.12.
334. Clayton, 384-385; Chaigneau, 96, and also Clayton, 437, ftn.13.
335. Chaigneau, 97; Clayton, 385; Lemarchand, 1988, 112-113.
336. Clayton, 385.
337. Clayton, 386; Hughes and May, in Baynham, 189.
338. Clayton, 386-387; Lemarchand, 1988, 113.
339. Chaigneau, 97; Lemarchand, 1988, 119-120.
340. Foltz, in Lemarchand, 1988, 65.
341. Decalo, 1987, 274.
342. Chipman, 1989, 124.
343. *Ibid.*, 136.
344. Clayton, 387-388.
345. Decalo, 1987, 12.
346. *Ibid.*, 12, 137.
347. *Ibid.*, 234-235.
348. William J. Foltz, "Reconstructing the State of Chad," in I. William Zartman (ed.), Collapsed States: the Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 1995, 18-27.
349. David Goldsworthy, "Armies and Politics in Civilian Regimes," in Baynham, 98.
350. Foltz, in Zartman 1995, 28-31.
351. Lemarchand, 1988, 106, 108. Lemarchand's edited volume on Libya, The Green and the Black, is a good source for military information on post-independence Chad.
352. "Chad-Cameroon Development Petroleum and Pipeline Project," report of the International Advisory Group (IAG), January 28, 2004. <http://www.gic-iag.org/doc/PR93125.016-Cameroon-ENG.pdf>; also "World Bank chiefs reject proposal to quit oil and coal finance," *Financial Times*, February 3, 2004; "World Bank mulls advice to end oil project funding," Reuters, December 9, 2004.
353. Michael T. Klare, "The Subterranean Arms Trade: Black-Market Sales, Covert Operations and Ethnic Warfare," in Andrew J. Pierre (ed.), Cascade of Arms: Managing Conventional Weapons Proliferation, Cambridge, MA: Brookings/World Peace Foundation, 1997, 55.
354. There is the notorious history of CIA penetration of former Belgian administrative structures in Congo-Léopoldville at independence, allowing the CIA to help President Kasavubu in Congo-Léopoldville (later Zaïre) to dismiss Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba in 1960, and possibly to murder Lumumba in 1961, to hire mercenaries and aircraft to defeat the Simba Uprising in 1964, to hijack Tshombe's movement in 1967, and to provide numerous but vague security-related services to President Mobutu Sese Seko throughout the following decades. Clayton also mentions CIA help toward the successful if brief accession to power of Colonel Ratsimandrava in Madagascar in 1975, and Zaïre-based CIA activities aimed at staving off Chinese influence in Burundi and Rwanda in the mid-

- 1960s. René Lemarchand, "The CIA in Africa," *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 14, September 1976, pp. 401-426; Clayton, in Baynham, 220-222.
355. Samuel Decalo, *Historical Dictionary of Chad*, 2nd edition, African Historical Dictionaries No. 13, Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1987, xxi; Yates, 101.
 356. Clark and Gardinier, 3; Bratton and van de Walle, 135, 241.
 357. Albright, in Arlinghaus, 1983, 30. The West African francophone recipients were Guinea, Benin, and Mali.
 358. Hughes and May, in Baynham, 187-189.
 359. *Ibid.*, 178-182, 194.
 360. *Ibid.*, 183-184.
 361. Francis M. Deng, "Security Problems: An African Predicament," and also D. Katete Onwa, "National Security: An African Perspective," in Arlinghaus, 1984, African Security Issues, 8, 206-207.
 362. Lemarchand, 1988, 113.
 363. Chipman, 1989, 173.
 364. Mohammed Ayoob, "The Security Problematic of the Third World," *World Politics* 43, January 1991, 282.
 365. Nigeria's leadership in the combined-African ECOMOG forces that "policed" the Liberian civil war had the effect of regionalizing the conflict, making it effectively an interstate war, and offered Nigeria as a candidate for regional hegemony. This was made possible by US refusal to intervene on behalf of the Doe government, and a timely lack of support from the Soviet Union which might have channeled some aid to the pre-eminent Liberian warlord, Charles Taylor, through his sometime ally, Libya.
 366. Chipman, 1986, 132, 159.
 367. Hughes and May, in Baynham, 188-190; Laurance, in Arlinghaus, 1983, 62-63.
 368. Hughes and May, in Baynham, 191-192.
 369. Chipman, 1989, 133-134.
 370. *Ibid.*, 141-143.
 371. *Turquoise* did save some Rwandan lives, but which also succeeded in offering France's protection to a group of leaders who had used French aid and training in order to destroy the security of their own citizens, threatening the territorial integrity of Rwanda, and striking a serious blow to France's continuing efforts to show itself as a regime modernizer and preserver in Africa. France rationalized aid to the Habyarimana regime by saying that it was "democratic" to support majority (*i.e.* Hutu) rule in Rwanda, even though that regime held no elections and repressed its Tutsi minority as a matter of policy. These leaders, more importantly to French interests, lost control of their country to the RPF invaders, who were allied with anglophone Uganda and -- through Uganda -- the United States. *Operation Turquoise*, and France's earlier aid to the Habyarimana regime (which included the president's downed plane itself, a four-year-old Falcon 50 flown by a 3-man French crew), may well prove to have been a

turning point in France's relations with its African allies -- Rwandan loyalty to France in return for aid proved to be very damaging to French interests in the region, and may no longer be reason enough to support a particular leader. [Prunier, 110-113, 211.] Another problematic intervention occurred in late-1990s Cote d'Ivoire with Operation *Licorne*, which became increasingly controversial on the ground with Ivoirians, and had to be framed politically by France as simply as a support operation for the main UN peacekeeping forces.

372. Welch, 1987, 188.
373. *Ibid.*, 188, 193.
374. Decalo, 1990, 14.
375. Quoted in Clayton, 5.
376. Welch, 1987, 197.
377. The 1963 insurrection in Niger, a country with similar resources and climate to Chad's, is interesting in that it is a case where too large a demonstration of French power actually worked against France's ability to maintain that power at the same level over the long run. The army mutiny may even have been caused in part by what Decalo calls the paternalism of *Nigerien* leadership, the heavy French administrative presence, and the lack of power given to the indigenous military, many of whom had been educated in France, but who continued to be commanded by French officers. The French commanders had more direct access to President Diori and were clearly monitoring the *Nigerien* army for evidence of subversion. The "direct" French presence in Niger ended in 1965, although as of 1974 there were still 250 French officers and NCOs serving in the *Nigerien* army and gendarmerie, and 1,000 troops from the *Forces d'Intervention*. In 1974, Kountché's takeover expelled the head of the resident French military mission, and evacuated most of the French military presence. Niger continued, however, to be enormously dependent on France economically, particularly for the extraction and marketing of strategic minerals. 5.97. Samuel Decalo, Samuel, Coups and Army Rule in Africa: Motivations and Constraints, 2nd Edition, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990, 265, 330.
378. It does include cases where only the threat of force was used in order to make changes in government leadership, as in Mauritania in 1979 and 1980 and Upper Volta in May 1983. [Welch, in Baynham, 89-90.]
379. Goldsworthy, in Baynham, 98.
380. The Nigerian civil war of the Biafran secession in the 1960s was one example of francophone-anglophone rivalry, as Côte d'Ivoire and other francophone nations supported Biafran independence at France's request, at times channeling French support to Biafra. The lingering resentment that this support caused between the anglophone and francophone West African nations translated decades later into francophone (and particularly Ivorian) support for Liberia's insurgent Charles Taylor, when Taylor's main regional opposition was coming from the ECOMOG forces led by Nigeria. Again, however, this reflects a much greater interest by anglophone

- powers in anglophone West Africa than in the regions that France continued to control. Chipman 1989, 126; also Stephen Ellis, "Liberia 1989-1994. A Study of Ethnic and Spiritual Violence," *African Affairs* (94), 1995, 168.
381. IISS, The Military Balance, 1970/1971, pp. 54-55.
 382. Clayton, in Baynham, 203, 220.
 383. Arthur Jay Klinghoffer, "The Soviet Union and Superpower Rivalry in Africa," in Bruce E. Arlinghaus (ed.), African Security Issues: Sovereignty, Stability, and Solidarity, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984, 27-29.
 384. The mid-1990s have given numerous other examples of inter-African and also unilateral intervention on the part of Angola (in Congo-Brazzaville against President Lissouba, and in Democratic Republic of Congo/former Zaïre against Mobutu), and also Uganda (in Rwanda against the Habyarimana regime, and also in DRC/Zaïre against Mobutu). Earlier interventions of this type by francophone nations include, by some definitions, long-term Zaïrean support for the insurgent movements of Holden Roberto and Jonas Savimbi in Angola (gaining in return Angolan support for anti-Mobutu insurgency), and a 1977 attack on the government of Benin by mercenaries possibly backed by the French with the help of Morocco and Gabon, but this (along with accusations of help by Senegal, Togo and Côte d'Ivoire) was never proved. The Tanzanian intervention in Uganda that overthrew President Idi Amin was the clearest, most provable case of regime-opposing intervention. [Hughes and May, in Baynham, 183-184.]
 385. Bayart, 26.
 386. *Ibid.*
 387. Chaigneau, 37.
 388. *Ibid.*, 37-38.
 389. David E. Albright, "Overview of Communist Arms Transfers to Sub-Saharan Africa," in Arlinghaus 1983, 21-22.
 390. Brayton, in Baynham, 282; see also Bruce E. Arlinghaus, "Linkage and Leverage in African Arms Transfers," and Edward J. Laurance, "Soviet Arms Transfers in the 1980s: Declining Influence in Sub-Saharan Africa," in Arlinghaus, 1983, 8-9 and 43-45, for values of arms transfers by country and supplier during the 1970s.
 391. The principal recipients of US military transfers to Africa between 1950 and 1980 were in North Africa. Libya received a surprising \$36.6 million worth of arms from the US between 1971 and 1975, which had dropped rapidly to \$1 million between 1976 and 1980. Of the francophone sub-Saharanans during this 30-year period, Cameroon received \$15.5 million in military transfers from the US, and Zaïre \$102.6 million. These were not the only francophone recipients, as the list above indicates, but they were the only two to receive amounts showing that they were of strategic importance to the US during this time. The US transferred arms to a number of other sub-Saharan nations, but assumed that France would be the main Western presence and anti-Soviet guarantee in its former

- colonies. In the 1990s, of course, the US has increased its presence considerably, and US arms transfers to Africa in general since the 1980s have accelerated upward. [Joseph P. Smaldone, "U.S. Arms Transfers and Security-Assistance Programs in Africa: A Review and Policy Perspective," in Arlinghaus, 1983, 179, 191, 193.]
392. Chipman, 1989, 148-149.
 393. Arlinghaus, 1983, 11.
 394. Andrew L. Ross, "Developing Countries," in Pierre, 94-95.
 395. Stephen Gill and David Law, The Global Political Economy: Perspectives, Problems and Policies, Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988, 294-295.
 396. Zartman, in Arlinghaus (ed.), African Security Issues: Sovereignty, Stability, and Solidarity, 56.
 397. Foltz, 1965, 182-183.
 398. Samuel Decalo, Samuel, Coups and Army Rule in Africa: Motivations and Constraints, 2nd Edition, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990, 265, 330.
 399. Chipman, 1986, 125.
 400. Foltz, 1965, 182-183.
 401. Yates, 85-136.
 402. I. William Zartman, "Africa and the West: The French Connection," in Arlinghaus 1984, African Security Issues, 40.
 403. The evidence of intent to murder large numbers of Tutsis was not only coming from the independent human rights organizations. See, for example, the 1993 US State Department Human Rights Report for Rwanda, published two months before the genocide "began" in April 1994, which talks about militia trainings in the north of Rwanda.
 404. Prunier, 99-103, 147-149, 164.
 405. *Ibid.*, 281-312, 110-113, 211.
 406. Sivard, 19.
 407. Hansen, Andrew, "The French Military in Africa," Council on Foreign Relations Backgrounder, March 22, 2007, pp. 1-4, <http://www.cfr.org/publication/12578/>
 408. *Ibid.*
 409. *Ibid.*
 410. *Ibid.*
 411. *Ibid.*
 412. "French Troops Die in an African Clash, and Some Question Why," New York Times, January 9, 1997.
 413. From Le Monde, May 11, 1976, p. 1, quoted by Moose, in Foltz and Bienen, 66.
 414. Moose, in Foltz and Bienen, 67.
 415. Thomas O'Toole, "The Central African Republic: Political Reform and Social Malaise," in Clark and Gardinier, 114.
 416. Kalck, xxxiv.

417. Friends Committee on National Legislation, Washington Newsletter, May 1998.
418. Hansen, *op. cit.*
419. *Ibid.*
420. *Ibid.*
421. *Ibid.*
422. *Ibid.*
423. Clark and Gardinier, 3; Bratton and van de Walle, 135, 241.
424. Chege, 328.
425. *Ibid.*, 326.
426. *Ibid.*, 327, 333.
427. Bernard Conte, "France's African Aid Policy: The End of an Era?" *Review of African Political Economy*, No.71, 1997, 139-140.
428. *Ibid.*
429. Célestin Monga, "1FCA=0,000154 Euros? The Franc Zone: Macroeconomics or Masochism," *Billets d'Afrique* No. 173, October 2008.
430. *Ibid.*

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Although presented here with a differing emphasis and research objectives, as part of a more in-depth study of the French postcolonial influence on Central Africa, a portion of the author's researched material in Chapters 3-5 has already been published as part of a US Navy-funded project completed under the auspices of the Center for Global Security and Democracy at Rutgers University. In addition to the report produced for the US Department of Defense, this project also generated a *CIAO*/Columbia University Press web publication, an article in the *Naval War College Review*, and eventually a book, Presence, Prevention and Persuasion: A Historical Analysis of Military Force and Political Influence, by Edward Rhodes, Jonathan M. DiCicco, Sarah S. Milburn, and Thomas Walker, published in 2004 by Lexington Books. Sarah S. Milburn contributed case studies #5 and #6 to this project, which later became two chapters in the 2000 *CIAO* publication and the 2004 book. These were: "*La Chasse Gardée: Post-World War II French West Africa (1945-1970)*", "*Toujours la Chasse Gardée: French Power and Influence in Late 20th Century Francophone Central Africa (1970-1995)*." These publications are all listed in the author's *curriculum vitae* at the end of this dissertation.

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