

A recommended solution is that, in this first great war between networks and nations, it behooves the latter to form their own networks—for it is growing ever clearer that it takes a network to fight a network. If the terrorists are operating in over 60 nations, then our own counter-terror network must span 60 nations—and more. ‘Networking’, in this instance, consists of the widespread sharing of information and co-operation in the field between intelligence, military, and law enforcement organizations in all countries involved. It means pre-emptive attacks will result from shared intelligence and will feature multinational assault forces. It means that nobody leads, but rather that all strive together toward a common goal.

In many respects, Australia and its neighbours are well poised to build a co-operative regional counter-terror network. There is ample precedent for regional networking in the experiences all have gained in fighting high-seas piracy over the past decade—a struggle in which the many successes have almost all been due to swift information-sharing and joint operations. Regional networking was also crucial in response to the crisis in East Timor. Most recently, the success in pre-empting a truck bombing campaign in Singapore—planned by an al-Qaeda affiliate—was another shining example of the power of sharing even very sensitive data about terrorists with each other.

If pre-emption is to prove an effective tool against terror in the months and years to come, it must be empowered by networking. And the beauty of the concept is that, even as it makes us more efficient, it also helps to master the political, legal and social objections to taking the initiative against terror.

John Arquilla is Professor of Defense Analysis at the US Naval Postgraduate School.

IPA

The Road to Serfdom

How Africa is Sliding Back to Servitude

JAMES S. SHIKWATI

DS AFRICA trudging the road back to serfdom? Friedrich A. Hayek, the 1974 Nobel Laureate in Economics, wrote in his book, *The Road to Serfdom*, that central planning systems are the surest way of enslaving people. Asked Hayek, ‘Is there a greater tragedy imaginable than that in our endeavour consciously to shape our future in accordance with high ideals we should in fact unwittingly produce the very opposite of what we have been striving for?’

With over 50 million Africans living on less than \$1 a day, African policymakers have focused on policies that encourage external donor funding to their governments. According to the World Bank, aid inflows to sub-Saharan Africa rose from 3.4 per cent of GNP in 1980 to 16.3 per cent in 1995. These official inflows typically funded basic government programmes, together with all or most of government development expenditures. Dependence on aid has led to African governments virtually ceding the shaping of their economic and social policies to external agencies. Wealthy nations and international institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund have become the central economic planners for Africa. The end result is sporadic project implementation, corruption, and poor economic performance attributable to inept policies, political tensions as each ethnic community jostles to partake of the ‘national cake’, and

disaster unpreparedness due to donor anaesthesia.

At independence, the African leadership was faced with the task of building nations and economic development. Given that the colonialists were mostly capitalists, the African elite sought to embrace socialistic strategies as a way of identifying with the masses. For the past 40 years, African countries have got stuck on the inherited economic systems that rely on production and export of primary resources. Sub-Saharan’s share of world trade has declined over this period from 3.1 per cent of world merchandise exports in 1955 to just 1.2 per cent in 1990. The entire continent of Africa accounted for a lesser share of the world’s exports than Belgium, 2.3 per cent against 3 per cent. Agricultural goods and raw extracted minerals form the bulk of the exports.

Most of the agricultural activities in Africa take place on patches of impoverished soil tilled by smallholder farmers. Seventy per cent of the African population is in the rural areas and depends mainly on agriculture. Sixty per cent of Africans are in absolute poverty, with 80 per cent of Africa’s expenditure going on food. Repeated attacks by pests and diseases, and expensive farm inputs coupled with natural disasters have put this industry in jeopardy. Food crises have exposed Africa to manipulation by wealthy nations that use food aid to further their agendas. Without analyzing the long-term impact of their decisions, African

policymakers have accepted food aid that further disorients their farming communities, making the continent even more vulnerable.

Extraction of mineral wealth, instead of making Africa wealthy, has turned into a curse. Gold, copper, uranium and oil wars in the Congo, oil and water wars in Sudan, diamond wars in Sierra Leone, clan land wars in Somalia, to mention but a few, have devastated a big section of the continent. It has also led to thousands of innocent people being displaced as refugees, family lives being disrupted and government systems destroyed. The conflict situation in Africa has made it difficult for strong institutions to be put in place that support predictable and enforceable laws. This has not only made it difficult for African entrepreneurs to prosper, but also for African countries to attract external investment.

Due to constant political instability and lack of security in office, African ruling elites tend to concentrate on looting, banking the proceeds outside of Africa. This breeds short-term policies meant to satisfy the regime in power without ever focusing on establishing conditions that will benefit future generations. Lack of proper institutional systems in Africa makes it difficult for individuals to explore new knowledge and utilize their potential to the full. Hayek observed, 'Only since industrial freedom opened the path to the free use of new knowledge, only since everything could be tried—if somebody could be found to back it at his own risk—has science made the greatest strides which in the last 150 years have changed the face of the world'. In Africa, entrepreneur-

ship is frowned upon by political elites who fear potential rivals. Many people are made to focus on salaried employment because commercial enterprise is viewed as immoral and exploitative. In Africa, anyone who employs a hundred people will be seen as an exploiter, but if he is put in command of the same number of people he will be viewed as a respectable member of society.

Unless Africa wakes up to the reality that international relations are driven mostly by commercial gains, it will be difficult for her to fit into the global economy. In market economies, the consumer is king; this was well illustrated when Kenya's tourism industry ended on its knees due its inability to honour the demands of the consumer.

In essence, African governments respond to the wishes of the donor community rather than to the views of their own citizens. Rather than strengthen the productivity of the agricultural sector, they provide food aid to farmers. Rather than strengthen their economies to enable Africans to afford drugs, they ask for free medicines for the sick. Rather than focus on increasing the volume of trade with the developed world, they focus on asking for donor funding. Instead of allowing communities to manage and benefit from wildlife resources, they protect the wildlife according to western environmental practices. If Africans are not already enslaved, they are steadily and surely trudging the road back to serfdom.

James S. Shikwati is the Director of the Inter Regional Economic Network (IREN) based in Kenya.

I P A

Musing...

Burning Issues

by Mike Nahan

There is no doubt that democracy works in Australia. Take the recent forest fires that burnt 1.5 million hectares in the Eastern States last summer.

Governments have for decades responded to the demands of 'deep' Greens and tried to protect an increasing proportion of state forests from the impact of Man and fire. Of course, the real political pressure came not directly from the deep Greens but rather from the millions of urbanites duped by the Greens' apparently simple and costless message.

Well, the fires have brought home to the urbanites the stupidity of the deep Green mantra. A parade of experts before various investigations into the fires has made it clear that the Greens' policy of reducing controlled burning was a major factor in the severity of the fires.

While officially in denial, the NSW National Park Department currently has 32 separate controlled burns under way and has advertised these heavily in the media. The Victorian and ACT Governments have been more forthright and admitted that the previous policy was a bad mistake and promised to reverse it.

Mind you, democracy is not the only motivating factor, as there are numerous groups of aggrieved landholders pursuing legal action against governments.

The real question is: will support for the Greens wane as people realise the stupidity of their ways? I doubt it.