

APPENDIX THREE

A Guide to the Republic of Zandia.

REPUBLIC OF ZANDIA.

Extracts from the *Area Handbook of Zandia*, published by the United States Department of State [Washington D.C. 2001].

1. Historical Background.

Zandia is an independent republic situated on the west coast of Africa on the Bight of Benin. The Republic achieved its independence in 1965 following a period of trusteeship under the United Nations. Between 1923 and 1942 it was an Italian colony and after the end of the Second World War it again fell under Italian administration, this time under the supervision of the U.N. Trusteeship Council. Italy relinquished its trust on January 1st 1965, following elections for the Presidency and for the National Assembly. This body replaced the appointed Legislative Council which had assisted the Italian High Commissioner in governing the country since 1961...

2. Social and Demographic Features.

...Roughly speaking, the population of the country [approximately 7.5 million, although no official census have ever been carried out] can be divided into three ethno-linguistic groups. The smallest of these are the *mestizos*, people of mixed parentage, who live in the main towns and in the coastal areas of the country and who form the commercial elite, running the small businesses and much of the export trade which provides the country with some but not all of its foreign exchange earnings. This group makes up roughly 5% of the population and uses Italian as its major language.

The largest group in the country are the Wabanda, who speak a Bantu language and are closely related to the Ibo peoples of Nigeria. This group, which makes up approximately 65% of the total population, tends to live in the west and south of the country and to engage in subsistence agriculture, although they also supply the workforce for the iron ore and diamond extractive industries, as well as the increasingly important logging industry. The Banda have also traditionally supplied most of the military forces of the country, and are politically dominant, particularly since the late President Otono [the country's third President] converted the country into a one party state in 1976. [See below the section on "Politics"] The Banda community have traditionally been animist in their religious practices, but during the years of Italian rule many of them, especially among the educated elite, converted to Roman Catholicism and it is estimated that between 12 and 15% of the community are members of the Catholic Church.

In the north and east of the country the third important group, the Azanians, present both a people and a culture in marked contrast to the "down country" Wabanda. Partly this is the result of the marked change in terrain and climate as one proceeds "up country"

from the coastal regions, where the country becomes drier, the rainfall less and the country passes from grassland suitable for cattle grazing to the semi desert, Sahel-like landscape of the frontier regions of the extreme north. Traditionally the Azanians have mainly practised a nomadic, pastoralist life style, their main source of support being cattle on the grasslands, recently under considerable pressure from over-grazing, periodic drought and the effects of the open warfare that has been raging in the region for the last eight to ten years, [see below]; and camel herding further north and across the border into the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Samaale.

[Note; It was only in 1998 that the border between Zandia and Samaale was finally agreed between the two governments – much to the fury of some nationalist leaders in Samaale who persist in calling the frontier region of north “South Samaale. The border has yet to be demarcated although a Joint Border Demarcation Commission has been appointed but has been unable to begin its task owing to the continuing security situation in the region.]

As a people, the Azanians tend to be physically distinguishable from the down country Banda. Inter-marriage between the two groups is rare, given the widespread Azanian adherence to Islam and the relative isolation of the two groups from one another. The Azanians speak a very different language – a derivation of Hausa - from the Banda and have resisted efforts by the dominant group to make Banda the official language of the state. [During the period following independence, both political and commercial transactions tended to be carried out in Italian, but since the 1978 boycott of the government and the National Assembly by Azanian political leaders – and the imprisonment and exile of many of this elite – government business has been carried out in both Banda and Italian.]

Even at the elite level there has been little contact between the two communities. Members of the WaBanda elite tend to have been educated initially in local Catholic schools and have undertaken university level studies in Italian colleges and universities, especially Bologna. The much smaller Azanian elite traditionally tends to have undertaken tertiary education in Cairo, in Jordan and [a few] in England, although during the 1980's some younger members of elite Azanian families spent some time in Moscow and others in Havana.

3. Internal Politics Since Independence.

“...The “model” parliamentary democracy left in place by the departing Italian colonial administration in the mid-1960's rapidly deteriorated into considerable political instability during the 1970s and 1980s.

Originally, the Italians had put in place a multi-party, electoral system with a figurehead president and power in the hands of a chief minister selected from the National Assembly. By 1972 most of the smaller parties had been dissolved, their members joining the Zandian Youth League which in 1974 changed its name to the Zandian National Alliance [ZNA]. By that time Zandian politics had become virtually a

one party system [the ZNA] with a few maverick individuals representing the peoples of the north east region in the National Assembly [at least until 1978] and power centralised in Zambasi, the capital. Corruption seemed rife and in 1979 occurred the first of the three military coups which have afflicted the country, to be followed by a second in 1984 when a group of mainly WaBanda officers, led by feared “strong man” Major Thado Andreoni, replaced the elderly group of generals that had seized power in 1979.

Announcing his rule as that of the “National Redemption and Unity Regime”, General Andreoni [his promotion was rapid] proceeded to re-equip and increase the size of the Zandian army. These changes were carried out under the *rationale* of modernisation and against “the threat from the north” – by which everyone understood him to mean the Democratic Republic of Samaale. [The situation in that part of the country is discussed below.] He also abandoned even the pretence of consulting civilian leaders and many of the admittedly very small Zandian elite [intellectuals, journalists, academics, former politicians and even church leaders] found themselves in prison for criticising the policies and person of the “General Mzee” and his army colleagues.

... General Andreoni finally overstepped his power and control by attempting to have his son acknowledged as “Deputy President” with the intention of having the latter take over the country and the army after his death. Other army leaders reacted with a third coup in 1995, during which both Andreonis and several other members of their clique were gunned down in the Presidential Palace in Zambasi. To nobody’s surprise, the junta of military officers that carried out the coup announced that they were merely forming an interim regime before handing back power to a civilian government. To everybody’s surprise, this is precisely what they did, two years later following somewhat chaotic but reasonably fair elections [according to observation teams sent by the UN and by the Carter Center]. However, it proved impossible to campaign or carry out voting in the north east of the country owing to the guerrilla struggle there and the activities of the ALF, which called for a boycott of the “rigged, illegitimate and fraudulent process...”

...As of the present writing [Fall 2001 CE] the current Zandian Government appears stable but fragile and the army leaders still have considerable influence over policies, particularly those to do with military spending and internal security. The President [a former economics professor from and later president of the National University] who was elected with 76% of the votes cast in those regions able to vote, seems reasonably popular. He has appointed a group of ministers from the variety of political parties represented in the single chamber National Assembly [which has amendment and veto powers on presidential legislation as well as the right to formulate and pass legislation of its own for presidential approval]. ..

...At present, aside from the country’s relative lack of experience with democratic and political processes, the main problems facing the President and the national government consist of the continuing and escalating guerrilla war in the northern regions of the country, the appalling state of the economy following three military regimes, and continuing uncertainty about the role of the large and powerful military in the new, 21st Century Zandia... The need to deal with what is virtually a civil war has become paramount...

4. The North and the Problem of Separatism.

..... Italian colonial administration had always treated the Islamicised north of the country as a separate region to be ruled separately from the rest of the country. For example, it had never permitted missionary activity in that region as it had in the south, the west and the coastal region.....It was only in the early 1960's that efforts were made to agree on the precise location of the international border in that region but this attempt ended on independence and negotiations were not seriously taken up again until the 1997-8 international negotiations, held under the auspices of a special commission from the Organisation of African Unity. For all practical purposes, an international border does not exist and pastoralists tend to cross and re-cross this notional international line with their animals in search of water and grazing but with scant regard for whether these valuable commodities are actually located in Zandia or the Republic of Samaale...

.... Immediately before independence in 1965, some younger and more educated members of the local elites began to organize themselves politically into a movement known as the Azania Popular Peoples Movement [APPM], and to press for the region to be joined to neighbouring Samaale rather than its remaining part of Zandia. A referendum – which some observers characterized as "highly suspect" was held throughout the territory and this revealed that 78% of those questioned favoured remaining part of Zandia. Shortly after independence many of the leading members of the APPM were arrested, while others left the country as speedily as possible....

....in spite of the effects of the droughts of 1974-5 and 1983 the region remained relatively calm, even though the local administrators and police chiefs were almost exclusively appointed by the President's Office from among 'down country' waBanda. Political protests arose after 1985 during the Presidency of General Thado Andreoni, mainly because of heavy-handed efforts to change the basic life styles of the Azanians living in the region and to implement a program of settlement and "villagisation", as well as the production of a "Development Plan" that included proposals to dam the major rivers in the region, and begin a program of irrigation and the settlement of landless "down country" Banda on the irrigated territory. Strenuous and popular resistance to these policies and proposals increasingly took the form of violence, while political leaders from the Azanian region boycotted the – admittedly fairly impotent – National Assembly. In 1989 President Andreoni responded by declaring the entire region an "emergency zone" and handing responsibility for "maintaining law, order and stability" to the army and the feared police General Service Units. Since then the situation has deteriorated into a major guerrilla war, with control of more and more of the region passing into the hands of those whom the government terms "rebels" but who regard themselves as "freedom fighters"...

...The origins of the Azania Liberation Front remain somewhat obscure, but it is generally believed that the movement originated among some of the students from the region who were attending university in Cairo and who were much influenced by some of the basic ideas of the Arab Baath Party, especially those concerning independence and the right of self-determination. What is clear is that since the early

1990's the ALF has led the struggle against the government with some success, replacing other "resistance" movements such as the Free Azania Movement [FAM] and Azania First....Although there are clearly divisions with the ALF based on family and lineage differences, these have yet to cause the kind of major splits that weakened FAM...

5. Economic Development and the Recent Financial Crisis.

...The Azanian economy had developed only a little beyond subsistence agriculture and nomadic pastoralism in the north when Italian colonial rule came to an end...plantations growing bananas and dates for export [mostly Italian owned until nationalised under the first military regime] existed near the coast around the capital but the country's main earnings of hard currency came from the export of iron ore from the ore fields near the Malagrian border [the West German company carrying out this activity used the navigable stretches of the Rio Roso to ship this commodity out of the country]; and the diamond deposits along the middle reaches of the Rio Negro...

...Under the Andreoni regime, the lumber for export industry grew quickly into a multi-million dollar business, although few benefits from this were derived generally for the Zandian economy; much of the profit from the Anglo-Zandian timber Company and Maderas de Zandia finished in London or Madrid, or in private bank accounts in Zurich or Basle... With the advent of the new civilian Government in Zambasi, the extensive private holdings of the Andreoni family and their supporters in these enterprises were nationalised and efforts are on-going to recover what are rumoured to be substantial sums of money deposited in Switzerland in the former President's name...

The recent increase in oil prices from the Middle East and elsewhere have hit Zandia very hard, as has been the case in most developing countries... Zandia for some time has been a member of the group of countries known as the Least Developed of the Less Developed – in other words, the very poor of the world. The Government has tried to deal with the current financial crisis by reducing military expenditure but this attempt has met with fierce opposition from the military and reductions have yet to take place...

....An IMF team is presently in Zandia advising on financial reforms and restructuring the country's economy..."