Dictators, Democrats, and Government Performance

In an African Country

Chapter 6:

Leverage and Logic in Nigeria's Politics

Since Independence

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I elaborate on the framework for counting the number of veto players established in the previous two chapters. I begin by outlining the basic distinctions among regimes with many or few veto players and describing practical guidelines for counting veto players. I also simplify and specify my operationalization of informal vetoes.

Next, I code the number of veto players for each of the thirteen regimes in my sample in detail. I organize regimes based on the number of veto players rather than chronologically in order to emphasize analytical similarities. I uncover several factors critical to understanding the distribution of policy making authority in each regime: the strength of the bureaucracy, the autonomy of subnational tiers of government, and the relationship between the executive and law making authority. A table at the end of the section identifies the veto players and summarizes my rationale for each one.

I pay careful attention to informal veto players throughout this chapter. Just like other veto players, these policy actors must possess both cause and capability to exercise a veto. This means that they must collectively organize their shared policy preferences somehow. For regional vetoes, governors associations and networks of traditional rulers often serve this purpose. Other informal vetoes emerge when distinct factions organize themselves within non-democratic regimes. For the five cases coded with a regional veto, I point to at least one major policy in which a regional preference prevailed. This strict standard sorts out other examples I refer to in which regional grievances existed but a veto failed to materialize. For the cases with regional vetoes, I produce an identity matrix when necessary to simplify the overall balance of zonal and regional

representation. Appendices provide additional details about electoral results discussed when coding these cases.

HOW MANY VETOES?

In this section, I define "regimes" not in terms of whether they govern democratically or not but rather by the number of veto players generated by their constitutive rules. I maintain that single veto player regimes are rare, whether they are democratic or not. Then I incorporate insights about regional veto players described in Chapter 5 and specify my criteria for identifying other informal vetoes, rooted in factions. I establish a standard general enough to cut across dictatorships and democracies and to maintain its comparative leverage over time. Yet I also aim to convince the skeptical reader that these policy actors are not merely a residual category. My subsequent coding of Nigeria's regimes mentions several instances when regional or factional vetoes might have emerged but actors failed to meet this standard.

Counting Vetoes in a Multi-Regime Model

A regime is "a system of rules and practices that determine who has political rights, how they can be exercised, and with what effects for the control of the state" (Przeworski et al. 2000, p. 18). Comparative politics typically focuses on democracy and authoritarianism as basic regime types. Consistent with the idea of a regime as a set of rules for allocating power, I take the number of veto players as the most important source of variation among regimes. This tells us little about whether a regime guarantees civil liberties or allows political parties to organize. But it is at the heart of distributional questions because each player can extract concessions. Thus by referring to a new regime, I have in mind a new configuration of veto players. This means that the number

of veto players sometimes changes even though the regime's formal, constitutive rules do not. Chapter 4 describes various scenarios for why this occurs, including the existence of "partisan" veto players. Similarly, my coding allows for collective actors that are more temporary than the institutions that generate them. But they survive long enough to sustain collective action and enforce internal discipline over multiple, unrelated policy issues.

A single, individual veto player is less common than the colloquial characterization of autocracy suggests. When there is only one such veto player the chief executive must so dominate other collective bodies of governance that their preferences are indistinct from hers. More that just being internally cohesive, these collective bodies must actually behave like unitary actors. This is an exceedingly difficult presumption (Tsebelis 2002). Given the interests every regime has in recruiting expertise, insuring against risk, and acquiring legitimacy, executives govern through some type of collectivity. As Nigeria's most famous constitutional scholar argues, "Rule by force or the threat of such force is inadequate" (Nwabueze 1992). Thus a single but collective policy actor for whom discipline is not costless is my minimum standard for a single veto player regime. Westminster parliamentary governments are therefore also coded as single veto player regimes, just as the existing veto player literature prescribes.

Two veto players present a different set of governance dynamics. Governments attempt to marginalize alternative centers of power and they often succeed. Removal of the chief executive is a possibility but it requires meeting a high threshold. By definition, one veto player can effectively "check" the other. Regimes with two veto players include parliamentary systems that produce a government dependent on the confidence of two

political parties in coalition. They also include dictators who depend on the collective cooperation of some ruling council that has at least some sovereign authority over policy areas. The council itself might seek the advice of technocrats or ministers. However these bureaucrats and appointees typically lack any political or legal autonomy; their authority is strictly delegated and therefore vulnerable to retraction.

Presidential systems typically produce at least three veto players because no new policy can advance without the consent of the legislature's upper chamber, lower chamber, *and* the president who typically has "veto" power (in the classic Madisonian sense).[1] In general, the executive has trouble dominating alternative centers of power and political recruitment in regimes with three or more veto players. Dictators depend not only on a ruling council but also on the collective advice of a cabinet or the governors. For these governors to exercise a collective veto, some organization must internalize the costs of their collective action. Otherwise it is too easy for the executive to divide them against each other.[2]

In regimes with four or more veto players, the executive still takes the lead on policy. But she definitely must contend with alternative centers of power. Such power may be located in a council of governors, the bureaucracy, or a coalition of traditional authority figures allied with disenfranchised politicians. In these situations the executive finds it difficult to monopolize political recruitment. In these regimes the removal of the

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[1] Most presidential systems do provide the executive with a veto and require at least a majority if not a supermajority to override it (Shugart and Mainwaring 1997, 12-54).

[2] This is unfolding for example in post-Soviet Russia, where Moscow co-opts individual oblasts (provinces), thereby weakening their ability to act in concert vis-à-vis the center (Treisman 2001; Solnick 2002, 171-205).

chief executive is a political possibility, and checks and balances may conduce to policy gridlock.

Identifying Informal Vetoes

By building a model of politics around veto players, my theory incorporates a variety of institutions and organizations that coordinate subnational interests. As one necessary condition for these collective actors to be treated as an informal veto, the costs of organizing must be assumed by some organization that explicitly coordinates preferences. This gives actors a *means* to organize. My second necessary condition for coding requires that an informal veto player must actually exercise a veto on at least one major policy issue. This concretizes political action, meaning the leverage is not merely abstract.

In addition to these two criteria for informal vetoes, regional vetoes require that a geopolitical region must be substantially under-represented in the existing veto players. This is visible in electoral results (when available) and through a qualitative analysis of the governing actors and the constituencies they claim to represent. As explained in Chapter 5, this gives subnational actors in the marginalized region an incentive to organize. I draw identity matrices in each instance of a regional veto to illustrate how subnational organizing adds up to broader regional political leverage. Political parties (or party coalitions) are an important feature of the political landscape that can help interests overcome the challenge of coordination. When these organized interests substantially transcend geographical bases of support, regional vetoes do not emerge.

Subnational actors and states in particular play a critical role in coordinating the political interests through which regional and other informal vetoes emerge. The

sovereign power of governors implies a degree of genuine federalism, whereby subnational units possess authority in certain areas which the center cannot suspend or limit. Such autonomy does not automatically mean that these units have the means to act in their common interest. For example, a specific mechanism for coordinating a common agenda with the center does not exist in the quintessential federal case, the United States. Widespread cooperation among governors is not a systematic element of federal policy making. In fact, the governors have only met collectively with the president three times since 1787.[3] Coordination among states is rare because all "formally federal systems" have bicameral legislatures where a strong upper chamber represents the interests of the states (Lijphart 1999). To keep with the American example, the Senate in this federal system largely obviates any need for America's governors to unite against the center (or to form a new organization to do so). By contrast, Nigeria's governors meet frequently to coordinate their demands on the center.[4] This is true under both democrats and dictators. The sovereign power of their subnational units stems from the incentives and the means they have to coordinate common interests. Political parties are thus only one principal coordination device in these federal systems. These coordination devices help the center and the units alike avoid the constant re-contracting for sovereignty (Ordeshook and Shvetsova 1997, 27-42).[5]

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[3] See Marshall Ingwerson, "Bush, Governors to Discuss Goals for U.S. Schools," *Christian Science Monitor*, September 27, 1989, p.1.
[4] Examples from other federations include the First Ministers' Conferences in Canada and the Premiers Conferences in Australia. These meetings have emerged as a regular and significant feature of inter-governmental relations.
[5] Ordeshook and Shvestova call these federal systems "integrated federations." Since political parties in integrated systems such as the U.S. are decentralized, an important implication of the concept is its underlying claim that sovereignty actually originates from subnational coordination.

Because the sovereignty of states involves contracting, any autonomous authority which states possess is as much a consequence political efforts to coordinate (and thereby increase their collective leverage) as it is a result of any constitution or a military decree. African scholars frequently argue that authoritarianism is inherently incompatible with federalism (Elaigwu 1988, 173-88; Nwolise 2005, 114-123). In the veto players' view of federalism though, democracy or dictatorship is largely irrelevant. By recognizing the capacity for informal vetoes to emerge, my model thus allows for a substantial level of localized solidarity to produce autonomous subnational authority. As we shall see, traditional authority figures often play a crucial role here. Sometimes they conspire to protect local authority, constructing sovereignty from the ground up. Other times they are complicit in the subversion of state autonomy.

A List of Political Actors

The above discussion provides some clues about the cast of characters to look for in the coding exercise that follows. Presidents, prime ministers, heads of state, and military councils all populate the executive branch. Executives cannot ignore the cabinet or senior bureaucrats because they generally rely on them to implement policy. Even where limits exist on federalism, states, governors, and military administrators also construct authority that is counterpoised to formal authority at the center. Whereas Chapter 5 largely discussed states as constitutive units of regional vetoes, we now see how states can also conspire to collectively defend their interests when federalism is at stake. Political parties, traditional rulers, and organized factions all emerge as potential players in Nigeria's struggle to coordinate interests and consolidate power.

NIGERIA'S REGIMES AND RULES, 1960 – 2003

Applying the above criteria, I identify thirteen veto player regimes in Nigeria since 1960. The only single-veto player regime existed briefly during the final two years of Sani Abacha's rule in 1997 – 1998. I identify six regimes with two veto players: one occurred during the parliamentary coalition government from 1960 to 1964, another during the short-lived government that followed in 1965, and a third in the country's first authoritarian regimes in 1966. The other dual veto player regimes occurred during Yakubu Gowon's military government from 1967 to 1974, the Buhari-Idiagbon junta from 1984 to 1985, and the first years of Sani Abacha's rule from 1994 to 1996. The regimes with three veto players include the military government that took over in 1975 and ruled until October 1979, the first two years of the Second Republic (1980 – 1981), and the first several years of Ibrahim Babangida's military government (1986 – 1989). The final years with Babangida (1990 – 1993) are coded as four veto players, as are the last two years of the Second Republic (1982 – 1983) and President Obasanjo's first term during the Fourth Republic (1999 – 2003). The rationale for each of these regimes is described in detail below.

Several coding issues arise in this section. Obviously, the timing of coups rarely coincides neatly with calendar years. This poses a problem for my dependent variable's data. As a working solution, I code the regime in power for more than six months of the calendar year as that year's regime. This is also reasonable since it takes at least a few months for the incoming regime to announce, much less implement, new policies. Operationalizing the internal coherence of collective actors poses a second challenge. This is important for determining whether a set of preferences is stable enough and

sufficiently coordinated to exercise a veto. Only when these preferences are sustained over time and across multiple legislative issues do I assign such collective actors a veto. For these actors as for any I code as a veto player, the policy process cannot ignore them on important national issues. To persuade the skeptical reader, I identify at least one instance where each such veto player actually successfully exercised a veto. The coding of the regimes is summarized at the end of this section in Table 5.

Single Veto Player Regimes

Abacha's Final Years (1997 – 1998)

Nigeria's only single veto player regime existed during Sani Abacha's final years. General Abacha set out to concentrate power early on. But he lacked the infrastructure and the political base to implement such a regime for his first few years. I do not pinpoint the shift to a single veto player until 1997.

Abacha began with a largely symbolic National Defense and Security Council and a weak cabinet in his Federal Executive Council (FEC). While Abacha reorganized the cabinet several times, he did not dissolve it wholesale until November 1997. He reshuffled the governors, by then called "military administrators," on various occasions. By 1996 Abacha was confident enough to say: "This is normal military posting [*sic*] and the commander-in-chief does not owe anyone any explanation."[6] Decree No. 6 of that year permitted Abacha to remove local government chairs or appoint provisional councils. He also pursued a contradictory policy that involved lifting the ban on political activities while cracking down on the press, banning protests, and outlawing various unions and civil society organizations (Amuwo 2001, 1-56). In sum, the governors, the

[6] "Nigeria: New State Administrators," *Africa Research Bulletin*, August 1-31, 1996, p. 12366.

FEC, and the bureaucracy never really had much power to check the Head-of-State to begin with. The restraints on his power since 1993 had rested elsewhere.

A single player regime emerged in 1997 for three reasons. First, until this time Abacha's unilateral actions were restrained by a faction that supported the presumed winner of the annulled June 12, 1993 election (see below). Their anger remained visible until the end of the regime. Abacha continued to plan purges of them until his final days in mid-1998.[7] Paranoid that they would back their kinsman, Abiola, Yoruba officers were disproportionately purged in August 1997. Out of 63 officers forced out, 49 percent were Yoruba and 60 percent were from the south generally. Only 6 northern officers were affected.[8] In the Abacha government's final eighteen months, the "June 12" faction lacked the leverage to exercise an effective veto. The erstwhile leader of the faction, Lt. Gen. Oladipo Diya, Chief of General Staff, was framed in a 1997 conspiracy. The infamous "phantom coup" came only three months after the devastating purge of the Yoruba officers. Diya was entrapped by the Chief of Army Staff, Maj. Gen. Bamaiyi, who proposed a coup to Diya when he apparently had no such plans.[9] With Diya imprisoned, Abacha had a freer hand within the Provisional Ruling Council (PRC). Moreover, he could advance his "self-succession" plan to skeptics in the military and civil society, through which he aimed to compete in the transitional elections. But by now the only remaining members of the government were those who mirrored his preferences. The alleged "co-conspirators" who avoided prison were exiled to busywork

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[7] John Okafor, "Rumbles in the Military," *TELL*, June 1, 1998, pp. 16-20.
[8] John Okafor, "Panic Grips the Military, *TELL*, September 8, 1997, pp. 18-24.
[9] Abdullhai Sule, "Much Ado About General Oladipo Diya," *Vanguard*, May 30, 2004, p. 43. Interview, "10 Minutes in the Toilet Saved Me," *The Guardian*, April 3, 2004, p. B8.

for the military.[10] The junta received an unexpected boost when President Bill Clinton said in March 1998 that the United States would not oppose an Abacha presidency if he won in a fair election. Such overtures undercut the domestic opposition to the dictator's plan for self-succession (Amuwo 2001, 1-56). Alienation also grew with a key ally: the Hausa-Fulani elites. Many of them had hoped that scuttling the 1993 transition might maintain northern political hegemony. They now started to turn against Abacha. First they rejected overtures from former President Shagari on Abahca's behalf. Then, eighteen traditional rulers issued a statement opposing him as did a coalition of former politicians.[11] The junta rebuffed their complaints.

The second reason for coding this regime as a single veto player lies in the neutralization of the military as an institution. After the deposition of Diya and his senior supporters, the regime lacked any politically based restraint. Professionalism within the military still might have undermined Abacha's efforts to consolidate power. Completely aside from any loyalists lingering from the previous regime, many generals within Abacha's inner circle feared that another democratic transition gone awry would reflect poorly on the military's traditions of honor and professionalism.[12] However, less enlightened views prevailed. Abacha's sabotage of the military culture was gradual but ultimately successful. He worked to circumvent the PRC by unilaterally creating a National Security Advisor responsible directly to him. This effort faced opposition from the Chief of Naval Staff and others in his inner circle, which drew heavily from the Army

[10] John Okafor, "New Postings for Diya's Men," *TELL*, June 15, 1998, pp. 20-21.
[11] Ima Niboro, "No Way!" *TELL*, March 31, 1997, pp.10-14. Danlami Nmodu, "The Battle for Kahim Ibrahim House," *TELL*, May 18, 1998, p. 23. Uche Maduemesi, "A Dictator at Bay," *TELL*, June 1, 1998, pp. 21-22.
[12] Muyiwa Akintunde, "Firming Up," *Newswatch*, December 6, 1993, pp. 11-16. Luckham offers a thoughtful sociological analysis of this culture of honor within the military (Luckham 1971, 38-55).

(Alli 2001, 298). After years of attrition, he prevailed over their attempts to preserve a balance of power.

The third reason for the single veto lies in the emergence of jealousies that weakened the military's ability to coherently articulate its institutional interests. Nigeria's military lacks the tradition of service rivalry that Americans typically view as healthy competition – presumably because it is confined to congressional funding requests and football games. Rather, the fear in Nigeria had always been ethnic rivalry within the military. This could manifest itself in coups, as it did in 1966. Or it might show up in promotion rate among officers of different backgrounds (Luckham 1971; Onyejekwe 1981). The implementation of a quota system through the "federal character" tradition aimed to prevent this in both military and civil affairs (Adekanye 1989, 230-255). An early sign of intra-military jealousy was the Navy's failed attempt to check Abacha's power by weakening the National Security Advisor (NSA). Then the Air Force complained about selective enforcement in corruption investigations. These setbacks came on the heels of compulsory retirements that unevenly affected the Air Force in particular. The NSA's escape of scrutiny in the corruption investigations stimulated additional resentment throughout the military.[13] Abacha succeeded in consolidating power as no other dictator had. But he alienated and excluded powerful actors. Eighteen months later he was dead.

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[13] John Okafor, "Grumblings Over Court Martial," *TELL*, October 27, 1997, pp. 16-21. Madu Agbo, "The Purge Begins," *TELL*, September 1, 1997. Director and Mumuni, "Gwarzo Goes Home," *TELL*, November 2, 1998, p. 22.

Regimes with Two Veto Players

Aguiyi-Ironsi (1966)

There are six regimes that I code with two veto players, starting with the first military government of Nigeria. General Aguiyi-Ironsi ruled through a small circle of decision makers. Upon assuming power in a counter-coup January 1966, he fused executive and legislative powers around himself. Decree No. 1 established him as Head of National Military Government and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. It created a Supreme Military Council (SMC) and an ineffective Federal Executive Council (FEC) to manage the ministries.[14] It was clear that Ironsi concentrated power considerably. His legislative powers seemed virtually unlimited; Section 4 of the Decree outlined the law making process simply as any decree signed by the Head of the Federal Military Government. The decree also chipped away at the significant authority the regional governments had enjoyed. Section 2 vested the authority of any regional minister in the military governors. To co-opt elements of the political class and recruit expertise, each governor employed the former civilian governor as an advisor (Dent 1971, 78-93).

Under the decree, the SMC consisted of twelve members and only six had direct political responsibilities (Luckham 1971). The SMC did sometimes disagree with Ironsi, which would seem to suggest that it provided a balance of power. It opposed numerous military promotions of Igbos, and against Ironsi's wishes it voted for a trial for the leader of the failed January coup (Muhammadu and Haruna 1979, 25-46). Most significantly, the SMC and Ironsi deadlocked on how to handle anti-Igbo riots in the north which raged

[14] Decree No. 1, January 17, 1966.

for two months. However the SMC tended to dissent privately, and it ultimately failed to enforce its will over his. In other words, the general largely got his way (Luckham 1971).

Table 1: Northern Regional Veto, 1966

Post-independence "regional" structure	**North**	**South**
North	Alienated and excluded from government	
West		Allied with north on several issues; threatened to secede if East did
East		Igbo aligned with Ironsi
Midwest		Feared Eastern domination

The center of opposition rested elsewhere, with the mobilization of regional interests. Table 1 shows how Ironsi faced opposition from the north and eventually from the west too. Some Yoruba in the hwest at first saw the coup as a victory for the coalition of southern-based political parties. But Ironsi imprisoned Awolowo, the opposition leader of the ousted parliament and a Yoruba from the west. A strong movement to unify the Yoruba existed at the time, with the full support of the military governor of the west. As the most senior officer in the Army, the governor apparently felt slighted after being passed over for head of state. Then Ironsi's military promotions almost completely excluded Yoruba and Hausa officers that spring. His civil service reforms similarly met stiff opposition since they would have undermined western (and northern) interests. By June 1966, Yoruba members of the government were boycotting and protesting policy planning meetings (Dudley 1971, 94-110).

An eastern Igbo, Ironsi faced tremendous pressure to show good faith toward northern interests. Following the wholesale dismissal of elected politicians, he initially

sought the advice of chiefs and traditional rulers. But northerners increasingly saw Ironsi and his government as "representatives of the Ibo Tribal Union in arms," particularly after the military promotions. Then military officers and other northern elites colluded to successfully block Ironsi's civil service reforms. Activists from the northern-based political party ousted by the coup funded and generated visible opposition (Dent 1971, 78-93; Dudley 1973). Northern military governors played a crucial role in coordinating these regional interests. Whereas strong class-based political forces had previously dominated northern politics, Hausa-Fulani commoners now moved to rally in favor of regional grievances (Kirk-Greene 1971). Ironsi forced the regional opposition to prove its mettle when he abolished the country's federal system. He had already insinuated that the regions lacked political autonomy and referred to them as merely "areas" requiring governance.[15] Then in May he decreed the end of federalism, renaming the Federal Military Government the "National Military Government" and dropping "Federal" from the FEC's name.[16] Like the other reforms which stumbled in the face of northern opposition, the regional veto once again prevented him from moving forward. Less than two months later, Yakubu Gowon easily routed him from office in a coup.

Yakubu Gowon (1967 – 1975)

The two veto players of Gowon's regime, which I date from 1967 through 1975, consisted of a unified bureaucracy and a cumbersome ruling military council, weighted down by powerful state administrators. This regime differs from Nigeria's other authoritarian regimes in three important respects: First, unlike other military regimes, the

[15] "Nigeria Settles Down," *West Africa*, February 5, 1966, pp. 137-38.
[16] Decree No. 34, May 24, 1966.

head of state did not hold an individual veto. As the following discussion demonstrates, Gowon generally failed to impose his preferences over other regime elements on major policy debates. One general complained that the inclusive decision process significantly slowed down decision making.[17]

Second, the military governors enjoyed greater authority. Unlike later administrations, they were members of the Supreme Military Council. Gowon as Head of State chaired the SMC but he treaded lightly on governors' authority. The governor of the Eastern State in fact boycotted the SMC's maiden meeting, publicly declaring "Gowon is not my superior and the question of acknowledging him does not arise."[18] The power of the governors emerged as a major grievance of northern elites who were hardly consulted by Gowon and resented inexperienced young officers holding authority above the traditional rulers (Vaughan 2000).[19] Gowon's chief rival, Murtala Mohammed, who had played a key role in bringing him to power, also complained about the governors' authority (Othman 1989, 113-144). Only one governor was ever fired.[20] By 1974 the governors were discredited and corrupt but the SMC was unable to remove this large bloc of its own members. This was Gowon's "most obvious failure," as the colonels later made clear.[21] For these reasons, we can take the deliberative nature of the SMC seriously.

[17] Meeting with a retired one-star general, Ibadan, April 1, 2006.
[18] "Military Governors to Meet Soon," *West Africa*, October 15, 1966, p. 1195.
[19] "Nigeria: A Pride of Governors," *Africa Confidential*, July 18, 1975, pp. 1-3.
[20] "New Governor for West," *Nigerian Tribune*, December 28, 1970, p. 1. "Who's Who in the West," *West Africa,* November 19, 1971, p. 1347.
[21] "Nigeria: A Transitional Regime?" *Africa Confidential*, September 26, 1975, pp. 1-3. "Nigeria's Want in the Midst of Plenty," *West Africa*, August 11, 1975.

Third, technocrats in the bureaucracy acquired unprecedented sway over policy making through the Federal Executive Council. The permanent secretaries' power had earlier grown under Ironsi, whose decrees failed to specify ministerial responsibilities for the members of the SMC and the FEC. This meant that senior bureaucrats gradually realized that they could operate with considerable latitude concerning day to day activities since there was no institutionalized oversight mechanism (Luckham 1971, p. 256). Gowon's decrees formally stipulated that the FEC could only "exercise such functions as may be delegated to it by the Supreme Military Council."[22] A starkly different reality emerged though.

Coming to the helm of government with little experience, Gowon relied heavily on technocrats for advice and to garner needed legitimacy for his regime. Senior bureaucrats self-consciously filled the political void left when the government explicitly banned politicians. In effect, they capitalized on the absence of a parliament (Asiodu 1979, 73-95). They met almost weekly, making decisions according to a logic of collective responsibility.[23] The emergence of oil exports as a major source of federal revenue after 1971 further increased their influence as the ministries suddenly commanded huge budgets. Even without explicit legal or political authority to do so, senior bureaucrats began attending meetings of the FEC alongside the commissioners (ministers). This consolidated a government that a classic essay on the Gowon regime refers to as a "military-civil service coalition government" (Olugbemi 1979, 96-109). The so-called "Super Permanent Secretaries" who advised the ministers overturned key

[22] Constitution (Suspension and Modification) Decree No. 8, 1967, Section 6.
[23] My source is a former Ambassador and cabinet official, Abuja, Nigeria, March 31, 2006.

decisions of Gowon's, such as the appointment of his oil minister (see Othman 1989, 122). One of Murtala Mohammed's first acts after his 1975 coup was therefore to fire 11,000 civil servants in a legendary purge intended to both weaken and professionalize the bureaucrats. Olusegun Obasanjo commented of the civil service under Gowon: "What they ordained and what they wished would happen in most cases, no matter the pronouncement or desire of government."[24]

Gowon made some critical mistakes in 1974. In October, he publicly aborted the transition plan to democracy that he had announced four years earlier. "It would indeed amount to a betrayal of trust to adhere rigidly to that target date," he said, declaring that the general ban on politics would continue indefinitely. He re-stated the message in February 1975 when he complained that the public should not "keep on talking about 1976." The comment invited criticism from his Commissioners.[25] At that point, his most prominent civilian cabinet member, the former leader of the opposition in the First Republic, had already resigned in anticipation of the ban being lifted. Gowon then appointed new commissioners, nearly half of whom were civilians.[26] He discussed appointing new governors with the SMC in May 1975. But their membership on the SMC ultimately thwarted his ability to orchestrate and implement such a plan. In retrospect, numerous political elites reflected that Gowon had become inaccessible and

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[24] Cited in Adamolekun (1987), p. 366.
[25] "Gowon Wants Peace Not Politics," *West Africa*, February 11, 1975, pp. 141-42. "Army Will Stay After 1976," *West Africa,* October 7, 1974, p. 1236.
[26] "19-Man Federal Cabinet Named," *Nigerian Tribune*, January 25, 1975, p. 1. "Gowon Picks His Men," *West Africa*, February 3, 1975, pp. 122.

self-centered.[27] On July 29, Murtala Mohammed staged a coup. Within a month, a new regime was in place.

Buhari-Idiagbon (1984-1985)

The military regime that came to power on New Year's Eve 1983 presents several seeming contradictions that must be treated in detail in order to code it accurately. Despite Buhari's pervasive powers, and some similarities with the three-veto player Mohammed/Obasanjo regime, this regime operated with Buhari and Idiagbon as two distinct veto players.

The regime's founding decree points to the first notable similarity with the Mohammed/Obasanjo regime (see below). Decree No. 1 of 1984 stipulated a governing structure closely resembling the Mohammed/Obasanjo regime, which had ruled a few years earlier. For example, Buhari's executive authority formally required consultation with the Supreme Military Council (Ojo 1987). The SMC was "the final arbiter on all the national issues" with the power to "overrule any decision or action of any individual or institution."[28] Secondly, the regime substantially weakened the powers of the governors, starting with the arrest of fifteen civilian governors (and 400 other politicians) following the coup.[29] The Council of State and the governors who sat on it played an entirely consultative role. For example, early on in the regime the SMC fired the governor of

[27] "Gowon will Reshuffle Governors," *West Africa*, May 26, 1975, p. 612. "Mohammed Speaks to the Nation," *West Africa*, August 4, 1975, p. 913.
[28] "Military Rule in Nigeria Part 1: Building a New Framework," *West Africa*, March 26, 1984, pp. 858-59.
[29] "400 Detained," *The Punch*, January 20, 1984, p. 1.

Rivers State. In a new encroachment on subnational authority, the SMC actually dictated the composition of the ministries within the states.[30]

A third misleading similarity with the Mohammed/Obasanjo regime is that the new SMC swiftly moved to undermine senior bureaucrats. It dismissed 17 permanent secretaries and reduced the number of federal ministries from 26 to 18. Tens of thousands of federal and state civil servants went with them. All of this came on the heels of mass firings of virtually all of the senior police commissioners and inspectors. In a gesture to the public, eleven of the 18 new ministers were civilians.[31] But the consultative status and the strictly delegated authority of the Federal Executive Council was eminently clear, both in the decree and following the purge of the technocrats. The weakened FEC, alongside a feeble Council of State, meant a much narrower policy process.

Despite these three apparent similarities, the regime is more accurately described with two veto players: Buhari and Idiagbon. By decree and in practice, the role of head of state was distinct from the Chief of Staff, Supreme Headquarters. Buhari was Commander-in-Chief but not Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. This role fell to Brigadier Tunde Idiagbon, whose influence was sufficiently pervasive that scholars commonly refer to the regime as the "Buhari-Idiagbon regime." Hailing from the southwest, Idiagbon brought a regional balance to a regime brought to power with northern support. Since the Yoruba had failed to capture the presidency during elections

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[30] Taiwo Okutubo, "SMC Drops Netimah as Rivers Governor," *Daily Times*, January 10, 1984, p. 1. "19 Governors Named," *Daily Times*, January 4, 1984, p.1. "Rivers Governor Charged," *West Africa*, January 16, 1984, p. 134.

[31] "17 Federal Permsecs Retired," *Daily Times*, January 27, 1984, p. 1. "Axe Falls on 34 Police Chiefs," *Daily Times*, January 25, 1984, p. 1. Sola Oyeneyin, "SMC Names Ministers," *The Punch*, January 18, 1984, p. 1.

in 1979 and again in 1983, this gesture seems especially calculated to generate needed legitimacy. Idiagbon also managed the regime's most infamous policy initiative, the "War on Indiscipline." WAI took a populist but extrajudicial approach to rooting out corruption (Diamond, Kirk-Greene and others 1997). In addition, he managed a new, dreaded internal security apparatus, the National Security Organization. The NSO's reach extended even to senior members of the military (Othman 1989, 113-144). Later autocrats would take a different tact, concentrating such sensitive functions around themselves.

In sum, Idiagbon's authority stemmed from a balance of power, not from a temporary or narrowly defined delegation of authority. One theory on the origins of this balance says that Idiagbon and Babangida both wanted to be head of state. Supposedly the coup planners settled on Buhari as a compromise candidate only very late in the plot's execution.[32] The coup that eventually terminated the regime in fact arose from the Babangida faction, which fought nearly every major policy posture of the government. In terms of politics, this faction opposed the treatment of the detained politicians. On the economic front, it strongly criticized a deflationary economic strategy without structural adjustment. This faction also advocated for defense to assume a much larger share of the domestic industrial base. Even with his powerful position as Army Chief of Staff and his persistence within the SMC, Babangida failed to advance the faction's position on any of these issues (Othman 1989, 113-144).[33]

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[32] "Nigeria: Deadly Serious," *Africa Confidential*, March 14, 1984, pp. 1-5. "Nigeria: The General's Grip," *Africa Confidential*, January 30, 1985, pp. 1-2.

[33] "IMF Should Review Loan Terms – Buhari," *Daily Times*, January 25, 1984, p. 1. The split on defense industrialization is also discussed in "Nigeria: Competitive Generals," *Africa Confidential* (circa).

The regime's governance strategy might have been sustainable but for critical miscalculations. Without the sympathy of the technocrats, traditional authority figures were the obvious alternative partners for the ruling coalition. "Having no constituency of their own," explained one editorial, "the military people find it easy to fall back on ready-made vehicles of influence" through traditional rulers.[34] The regime early on made various gestures to traditional authority figures. This included granting traditional leaders expanded powers of local government policy, referring to them as "an informal second tier of authority," and consulting the Sultan of Sokoto (Vaughan 2000). Shortly after taking power, Buhari received the Benue State Council of Chiefs. Military governors in various states had cordial relations. In Cross Rivers the governor urged greater involvement of traditional rulers. But in the end the administration alienated traditional rulers as allies. Buhari dethroned several Obas (kings) in Yorubaland and relations with the Emir of Kano turned quite hostile.[35]

The regime had a paradoxical relationship with traditional leaders in the north in particular. On the one hand, the regime suffered from a widespread perception of northern bias. Lists of the SMC members make clear that a solid majority of its members were northerners (Ikoku 1985).[36] When 185 senior ranking Army officers were retired, a majority was Yoruba (from the southwest) while no more than 10 were ethnically Hausa.[37] Worse, the anti-corruption prosecutions smacked of selective enforcement. Northerners such as the governors Kaduna and Sokoto were acquitted. The former

[34] "The Uncertain Reign of Traditional Rulers," *Concord Weekly*, August 24, 1984, pp. 11-12.
[35] "Traditional Rulers: Men of the People, or Relics of the Past?" *Concord Weekly*, August 24, 1984, pp. 6 – 9.
[36] Banji Adeyanju, "The 'Federal Character' Serenade," *Concord Weekly*, January 28, 1985, pp. 7 – 9.
[37] "The Fallen Officers," *Africa Confidential*, January 30, 1985, p. 2.

president was under house arrest while his vice president, from the south, languished in jail. Prosecution of the now banned opposition also weighed heavily against southern-based opposition figures of the United Party of Nigeria and the Nigerian People's Party. Many SMC members publicly had close ties the president's party, the NPN, during the Second Republic. Sentencing too, favored northerners (Osaghae 1998).[38]

On the other hand, the north failed to see Buhari as one of its own, even with his Fulani background and his stated support for Islamic law. Traditional rulers could not agree on how to implement sharia and the governors orchestrated a campaign of pan-northern solidarity (Othman 1989, 137). The Maitatsine riots in Yola State graphically illustrated this paradox, where tensions with Islamic radicals led to riots killing over 5,000 people (Ibrahim 1997, 427-447).[39] When the military governor for Kano State asked the Emir for his resignation for disrespecting the federal government, Muslim protestors seized symbols of government and burned the governor's top advisor alive.[40] In another dramatic incident, the administration punished the Emir for traveling to Israel with the Oni of Ife. This further weakened the regime's legitimacy among traditional rulers.

The broader explanation for the junta's paradoxical relationship with the north is that Buhari rose to power at the behest of the "Kaduna Mafia." In the 1970s, this powerful alliance grew out of the common ambitions of newly educated northern technocrats, military officers, and politicians who were increasingly impatient with the

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[38] Onyema Ugochukwu, "A Parade of Gubernatorial Convicts," *West Africa*, July 2, 1984, pp. 1349-51. "Nigeria: Alienation," *Africa Confidential,* June 6, 1984, pp. 1-2. "Nigeria: Balancing Act," *Africa Confidential*, October 31, 1984, pp. 1-3.
[39] "Maitatsine et al.: Undercurrents in the North," *Africa Confidential*, March 14, 1984, p. 2.
[40] "Traditional Rulers: Men of the People, or Relics of the Past?" *Concord Weekly*, August 24, 1984, pp. 6 – 9.

conservatism of the Muslim caliphates. The emirs, for their part, felt threatened by this new educated class that had risen to power largely independent of their patronage (Olukoshi 1995, 245-278). Many governors were not indigenes of their appointed state. Moreover, the unpopular policies of northern governors in Kano and Borno reinforced a perception of their loyalty to the center. The SMC's ambiguity, if not hostility, could not have been more pronounced when the governor of Niger State mocked traditional leaders, saying they should live in "mud huts."[41]

Buhari's miscalculations meant that he lacked a clear foundation for a political coalition. He lacked the support of the senior bureaucrats. He could not count on the traditional rulers either, particularly after punishing some of the most important traditional rulers in the north and the southwest. Already facing a military restive with General Babangida's prompting, the regime crumbled.

The First Face of Abacha (1994 – 1996)

Little is known about the inner workings of Sani Abacha's government, which took over following an aborted 1993 democratic transition. It is clear though that in its first few years, governance rested on a balance of power. On one side stood those who fought to restore the results of the annulled transition elections. As the election issue dragged on, some agitated for a constitutional conference (a proposal adamantly opposed by many northerners). On the other side were those who feared a shift of power to the south or who capitalized on such fear for self-interest. At least until 1996, these factions faced off regularly on the type of transition desirable as well as day to day policy issues.

[41] "Nigeria: Shadows of the Mafia," *Africa Confidential,* circa February 1984, p. 4. "Nigeria: Deadly Serious," *Africa Confidential*, March 14, 1984, pp. 1-3. "The Generals' Grip," *Africa Confidential*, January 30, 1985, pp.1-3.

Abacha indisputably possessed a veto and constructed complex political coalitions to maintain it. I code the pro-democratic faction as the other veto player within the regime. This faction exercised leverage until it lost its coherence in late 1996 after years of cooptation and subversion.

To start, the regime inherited some the basic structures put in place during the transition under Ernest Shonekan. This included a Federal Executive Council (FEC) and a National Defense and Security Council (NDSC). Divisions within a deliberately weak NDSC prevented it from playing a conciliatory role. It suffered from divisions over whether to install the winner of the June election, and if not, precisely how to proceed with new elections (Emelifeonwu 1997, 193-216). Abacha immediately replaced their members, particularly weeding out those close to Babangida. Decree No. 13 created a new "Provisional Ruling Council," in lieu of the AFRC, with legislative powers. Abacha's maiden speech announced the dissolution of the Interim National Government (ING), all legislative assemblies, the two political parties that competed in 1993, and "any consultative committee by whatever name."[42]

The FEC was weak from the beginning. When Abacha moved to appoint military administrators instead of civilians as promised a few months earlier, the FEC fought the decision and lost. By late 1995, the FEC stopped meeting according to several former ministers who served in the government (Babatope 2000).[43] This undermined any potential for collective protest by them and also kept the senior bureaucrats at bay. The governors were also weak. Abacha appointed a National Council of State, composed of

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[42] Decree No. 13: Constitution (Suspension and Modification) (Amendment) (No.2) Decree 1994. "Cover: A Child of Necessity," *Newswatch*, November 29, 1993, p. 18.
[43] Anthony Asuquo Ani, "Abacha's Loot and I," *TELL*, January 10, 2000, pp. 48-50. Wale Akin-Aina, "Jobs for the Boys," *Newswatch*, December 20, 1993, pp. 26-27.

"military administrators" in place of governors. A recent World Bank report confirms this interpretation. The report classifies state autonomy under this regime as the lowest in Nigeria's history, including the colonial era (World Bank 2002).

The regime also inherited the political crisis of the short-lived Interim National Government (ING) which it replaced. Two major political factions appeared around this time. The first included those with close ties to Babangida, who were now viewed with some suspicion since he still watched politics from the sidelines. For purposes of self-preservation, Abacha avoided appointing any generals to his maiden PRC who were sympathetic to the previous regime. Some of the "IBB Boys," as the Babangida loyalists were called, had their passports confiscated to prevent them from traveling.[44] Abacha dismissed the Chief of Army Staff only two months into his regime, suspecting that he still held loyalties to the previous regime. Many of Babangida's last minute military promotions were actually reversed. Several officials who served in Babangida's AFRC then died under mysterious circumstances.

The second and arguably more important group was the "June 12" faction, referring to the date on which M.K.O. Abiola presumably won the 1993 election. The Vice Chairman of the PRC, Chief of General Staff Lt. Gen. Oladipo Diya was its most prominent member. A Yoruba, he served as the regime's first Minister of Defense (Babatope 2000). During these years I claim that Diya, working through this faction, effectively held a veto. It was Diya, in his first portfolio as Minister of Defense, who had fielded complaints from the top brass about the appointments of civilian governors. The

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[44] "Armed Forces Reshuffle," *Africa Research Bulletin*, September 1-30, 1993, p. 11141. For a thorough discussion of the IBB Boys' treatment, see Ima Niboro, "Caging in the Turks," *TELL*, September 4, 1995, pp. 10-15.

service chiefs, along with some junior officers, feared political marginalization. They prevailed over the FEC that had argued for civilian governors. Colonel Abubakar Umar, a former military governor of Kaduna, spoke for the most radical elements of the June 12 faction. He resigned his commission and publicly informed the military government that he would not command his subordinates "to put down any civil disturbance that may arise" in support of the June 12 mandate. Although Umar denied any conspiracy, such statements lent credence to the widespread view within the upper echelons of the regime that the faction conspired to install Abiola by force (see Alli 2001, 291-292).[45] Abiola's vice presidential candidate, Baba Gana Kingibe, was actually implicated in the coup that ushered in the regime. He apparently also believed these colonels would install the winners of the 1993 elections.

Whereas the deposed ING slanted toward Abiola's opponent's party, Abacha's civilian cabinet drew heavily from the Social Democratic Party (SDP).[46] The nod to the SDP was also visible in that Kingibe was among only four ministers who sat on the 12 member PRC. Although he never admitted a deal with Abiola (for obvious reasons), Abacha consulted him constantly on cabinet appointments. Another SDP baron, the new Inspector of Police Solomon Lar, participated in many of these conference calls. The June 12 crisis had paralyzed the country in 1993 and as long as this faction stood behind Diya, governance required their participation. The regime's innermost circle, the so-called "Abacha caucus" unanimously agreed that Diya and Abacha should be the *only* two members of the junta with political positions (Alli 2001).

[45] Nats Agbo, "Coup Report is Rubbish," *Newswatch*, November 8, 1993.
[46] Muyiwa Akintunde, "Firming Up," *Newswatch*, December 6, 1993, pp. 11-16.

For reasons still being debated, Abacha went to work dividing the Abiola clique. It gradually became clear that elites from Abiola's party had been co-opted into the government on the condition that they temper their position on June 12 (Lewis 1994, 323-40). After a 1995 "phantom" coup, these junta members were constantly accused of being spies for the National Democratic Coalition (NADECO), a civil society network agitating for the June 12 cause. By the end of 1996, Nigeria's Civil Liberties Organization counted 87 purges directed at this faction (Amuwo 2001, 1-56). The government imprisoned former Head-of-State Obasanjo and other critics. These victims later recounted how their prison interrogators drilled them above all on Abiola and June 12.[47] The repressive sweep extended to traditional leaders in the southwest, including the octogenarian chief of the pan-Yoruba group, *Afenifere*.[48]

However, Abacha's efforts to subvert the clique took some time to succeed. When the PRC underwent a major reshuffling in October 1996, Diya and other June 12 sympathizers curiously survived. It is also notable that in 1996, all three military chiefs were Christian. This suggests that the regime still thought it necessary to "rotate power" and buy consent from the south (Sklar 2001, 259-288). The opponents of June 12 included the governors from the political party that ran opposed to Abiola (the National Republican Convention) and the Sultan of Sokoto. Like other religious groups and members of the bourgeoisie, many traditional rulers prioritized stability over democracy (Jega 2001, 101-144). The Sultan allegedly told Babangida in 1992 that neither Abiola nor his running mate could represent northern interests. When the government annulled

[47] "Abacha Digs In," *Constitutional Rights Journal,* October-December, 1995, pp. 12-16. Interview with Colonel Michael Ajayi, *TELL,* March 22, 1999, p. 29. Major Adeyi, "Obasanjo Saved Us from the Firing Squad," *TELL*, March 22, 1999, pp. 26-27.

[48] "The Renewed Clampdown," *Constitutional Rights Journal*, July-September, 1995, pp. 15-16.

the elections the following year, a number of northern elders actually gathered at the Hilton in Abuja, the nation's new capital. Neither they nor the pan-northern organization, Arewa Consultative Forum, moved to defend the June 12 mandate. Instead, they hoped to preserve northern political hegemony.[49] In the east, some Igbo leaders saw a rebuffed Abiola as a way of getting even with the west for the Biafran Civil War (Omoruyi 1999). Igbo elites initially lent some support for Abacha's self-succession bid. But their ringing endorsement failed to go over very well at the grassroots. Influential ethnic organizations such as Ohaneze Ndigbo later mocked the military's attempts to manipulate them.[50]

By 1997 the tide had shifted against the June 12 faction for a variety of reasons, denying it the leverage to exercise a veto. In February, Abacha systematically retired every military administrator known to sympathize with NADECO. The "ethnic cleansing," as the press labeled it, was directed toward the south and Yoruba officers in particular. Abacha created a special task force to identify and spy on them.[51] In addition, the civil society opposition had not been able to sustain the public pressure it generated in 1993-94. The regime easily circumnavigated the weak international sanctions imposed on it (Osaghae 1998; Sklar 2001, 259-288).

Its coherence now rent, the June 12 clique waged a losing battle within the PRC against Abacha's self-succession bid. The dictator's ambitions conflicted with his earlier promise to not contest for political power in any transition. The PRC argued over the issue during heated 1997 meetings. In May, a minister for special duties issued a

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[49] Interview with Colonel Umar, "I Forsee a Wind of Change," *TELL*, November 13, 2000, pp. 20-30.
[50] Stepp Offi, "A Belated Vote," *TELL*, October 13, 1997, pp. 26-27. Chukwujama Eze, "Ahman in the Storm," *TELL*, May 18, 1998, pp.24-25.
[51] John Okafor, "Marching Out the Parade," *TELL,* February 10, 1997, pp. 18-19. The former military administrators (governors) affected included those for Kogi, Oyo, Anambra, Kebbi, Taraba, and Lagos.

statement ordering government officials to not campaign for any presidential candidate. A scandal erupted when the Minister for Information said this was not the government's official position. Senior PRC members stood diametrically opposed to each other on the issue. The soft-liners complained that the image of the military would be badly damaged by such obvious intervention in politics.[52] Debates the following month concerning the transition timetable further exacerbated tensions within the PRC. An official PRC spokesperson said the Council was deadlocked on the matter. Then Abacha told former U.S. President Jimmy Carter that the elections were postponed. At this point Diya was still attending these meetings, arguing the June 12 faction's case against self-succession.[53] He was deposed only a few weeks later in the "Phantom Coup" plot. After this coup de grace, Abacha's policy preferences prevailed over every potential political voice, inside or outside the government. The regime's only other veto player had disintegrated.

The First Republic's First Government (1960 – 1964)

Nigeria's only democratic years with two veto players occurred during the First Republic, a Westminster-style parliamentary system. I distinguish between two distinct veto player regimes in this era. Here I discuss the first, which begins with the period when the government that came to power with independence in 1960. It ends with the dissolution of parliament and the parliamentary elections of December 1964. Two political parties entered into a coalition government, each with a veto.

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[52] Mikail Mumuni, "The Warring House of Abacha," *TELL*, May 12, 1997, pp. 21-22. Anselm Okolo, "Now, Abacha's Constituency Decides," *TELL*, June 30, 1997, p. 18.
[53] John Okafor, "Aso Rock's Power Play," *TELL*, July 21, 1997, pp. 18-22. Ade Olorunfewa, "Coup Scare," *TELL*, February 16, 1998, pp. 12-18.

In the 1959 elections the largest party, the Northern People's Congress (NPC), won only 134 out of 312 seats in the House. It fell well short of the majority necessary to form a government without a partner. After some initial jockeying among the other parties, the NPC invited the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) to form a coalition government. Each party in this coalition exercised a veto. The NPC's support was strongest in the north; incredibly *all* of its victories were in the north. It captured 134 out of the available 174 seats in the region. Appendix 1 reports the election results, demonstrating the regional concentration of party strength. (Since it was a Westminster system, there are no Senate results.)

The NPC exacerbated the widespread perception of its regional insularity by insisting upon the "northernisation" of the civil service. At the time, Yorubas from the southwest held a disproportionate share of influence within the bureaucracy. The NCNC resented its partner's posture but the eastern-dominated party managed to secure key cabinet posts, including foreign affairs and finance.[54] A minority government in the European tradition was simply out of the question; no government could maintain confidence without a substantial showing of support from both north and south. The cabinet formed by Abubakar Tafawa Balewa in 1960 consisted of 23 portfolios, with eight going to the NCNC (and several to ministers of no party affiliation). Even after a row over the NCNC foreign minister's radical demands for African liberation, *West Africa* in 1962 saw "no reason why the NPC-NCNC Coalition should not last until the elections in 1964."[55]

[54] "Face-Lifting the NPC," *West Africa*, May 28, 1960, p. 591.
[55] "Nigerian Foreign Minister Attacked," *West Africa*, December 2, 1961, p. 1339. "Minister from Idoma," *West Africa*, March 3, 1962, p. 229.

The reasons for the death of the coalition are complex but two stand out: One cause of the split stems from an acrimonious battle within the opposition Action Group (AG), based in the Yoruba-dominated west. The party suffered defeat in both the federal and the regional government elections. At the AG's annual meeting, the disintegration became very public. The party divided over whether its leader in the federal parliament retained authority over the Regional Premier, whether it should offer to join the coalition cabinet, and over the centrality of socialism to the party. The feud climaxed with the expulsion of the regional premier, Chief Akintola from the party.[56] Akintola responded by creating the Nigeria National Democratic Party (NNDP). This splinter party attracted a few members from the NCNC and two other minor parties in the Western Regional Government (Diamond 1988).[57] The NPC viewed this as a new opportunity to undermine the AG opposition based in the Western Region.

The incendiary dispute over the national census accounts for the other cause of the coalition's infamous decline. The Prime Minister insisted on the validity of preliminary, officially unpublished census results which gave the north a substantial edge. The Constituency Delimitation Commission opted to move forward anyway. It conceded that the provisional figures were a serious handicap, writing "This situation rendered some areas for consideration as border line cases" (Constituency Delimitation Commission 1964). Foreseeing the huge repercussions for constituency delimitations in the forthcoming elections, the eastern-based NCNC protested. The NPC Prime Minister supposedly told the NCNC ministers to accept the results or resign, retorting "my

[56] "Action Group Split at Jos," *West Africa*, February 10, 1962, p. 158. "Awolowo versus Akintola," *West Africa*, May 19, 1962, p. 550. "Chief Akintola Dismissed," *West Africa*, May 26, 1962, p. 579. Machet's Diary, *West Africa*, June 30, 1962, p. 711.
[57] "New Party in Nigeria W. Nigeria," *West Africa*, March 14, 1964, p. 298.

acceptance and publications of the figures is final." He denied making the comment. But then the NPC national spokesperson made much the same error a few weeks later. He said whether the NCNC liked it or not, "the NPC will rule the Federation forever."[58] Such comments set off alarm bells throughout the south. The Yoruba, already hostile to the idea of northern domination, moved toward a coalition with the NCNC. The NCNC was further infuriated when its coalition partner in the federal government offered new cabinets seats to the newly formed NNDP. The NCNC Premier of the Eastern Region toured the West to build solidarity with the Action Group. The Western Premier's popular visit laid the groundwork for regional solidarity throughout the south and the formation of a new coalition of parties in January 1965.[59] North-south cleavages now polarized political society (Dudley 1971, 94-110).

The First Republic's Final Year (1965)

The other veto player regime during the First Republic lasted barely a year, beginning with the new government formed after the December 1964 federal elections. Appendix 2 reports these results by region. As in 1959, *all* of the NPC's victories were in the north. Yet the entirely different political climate produced a different configuration of veto players, one rooted in the NPC's majority and another organized through a southern coalition of regional interests.

The political climate differed first and foremost because the NPC secured a majority, winning 162 out of 312 House seats. Abandoning the NCNC, it formed a coalition with the NNDP called the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA). The junior

[58] "The State of the Nigerian Parties," *West Africa*, January 25, 1964, p. 91. "Census Result in Nigeria," *West Africa*, February 29, 1964, p. 243.
[59] "Dr. Okpara on the Move," *West Africa*, June 13, 1964, p. 669.

coalition partner panicked when the prime minister initially failed to include *any* NNDP ministers in the cabinet. The Party secured huge victories against the AG in the west, surprising even Prime Minister Balewa.[60] Eventually the coalition included the NNDP and the new government displayed some balance between north and south. The cabinet even included two UPGA members. But the coalition government retained a distinctly northern bias. Even though the prime minister doubled the number of portfolios, the cabinet still slanted heavily toward the NPC (Diamond 1988).

The political climate also differed because the party coalitions reinforced the most dangerous elements of north-south polarization. The two predominately southern parties, the NCNC and the AG, had teamed up with progressive dissidents in the north to create a new coalition: the United Grand Progressive Alliance (UGPA). The parties stood united in their anger over the census and in the need for the creation of new regions (which were only later called states). The census presented the politically unacceptable possibility of permanent northern domination (Suberu 2001).[61] As a gesture of solidarity, the NCNC also demanded the release of the former AG party leader who was jailed on treason charges. An UPGA boycott in the east brought elections there to a standstill. A delicate political compromise led to a special election in the east in March 1965. UPGA won an impressive 52 out of the 54 re-contested seats.[62]

This under-representation of the south in the federal government and the intense regional mobilization are both compelling reasons to identify a regional veto. While the

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[60] "The Calm Before the Storm?" *West Africa*, March 6, 1965, p. 251. "The Last Interview," *West Africa*, January 29, 1966, pp. 113-14.
[61] "Nigeria's Election Eve 1," *West Africa*, August 22, 1964, p. 931.
[62] "Nigeria's Little Election," *West Africa*, March 27, 1965, p. 339. (The other two seats went to independents.)

UPGA did not control the regional government in the West, it completely dominated the governments of the Eastern Region and the recently created Midwest Region. The First Republic's subnational governments were more powerful than the state governments of later years. And since there were only four regional governments, subnational elections carried huge consequences for political alliances and outcomes at the center. Thus when a one-party government appeared in the Midwest following the opposition's defection en masse to the NCNC,[63] this gave the southern region the substantial majority required by my coding for an informal regional veto. This balance is reflected in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Matrix Reflecting Southern Region's Veto, 1965

Post-independence "regional" structure	**North**	**South**
North	Aligned with NPC/NNA	
South West		NNDP aligned with NNA AG aligned with UGPA
South East		Aligned with UPGA
Midwest		Aligned with UPGA

A conventional coding of veto players would exclude the NNDP and the NCNC, since the NPC won enough seats to form a government alone. If the NPC could maintain even modest unity, then a majoritarian parliamentary government could survive a confidence challenge. However the NCNC's support at the subnational level, ongoing grievances directed at the north as a whole, and a mechanism for coordinating regional solidarity endowed the south with a veto. The federal government's 32-portfolio cabinet announced in April 1965 included seven NCNC ministers. With this calculated move, the Prime Minister hoped to undercut southern solidarity. He also completely excluded

[63] "One-Party System in the Mid-West," *West Africa*, April 17, 1965, p. 434.

the AG from the broad based government, but the party stated its continued loyalty to UPGA.[64] The NNDP swept the Western Regional elections later in 1965. UPGA alleged and the Federal Electoral Commission confirmed massive fraud. Opposition protests paralyzed the west and the NNDP government responded with widespread repression. After a few more months of instability, the military took over (Diamond 1988).[65]

Regimes with Three Veto Players

Mohammed/Obasanjo (1975 – 1979)

There are three regimes with three veto players in my sample. The first of these consists of the governments under Murtala Mohammed and Olsegun Obasanjo, spanning the era between the 1975 coup and ending with the hand over to civilians in 1979. During this regime the head of state, the Chief of Staff Supreme Headquarters, and the Supreme Military Council each held a veto.

I code these governments under one regime due to the significant continuity between them. After the assassination of Mohammed in 1976, Obasanjo retained the same structures of the regime and even the same members of government. Upon taking office, Obasanjo said "All policies of the Federal Military Government continue as before and all ministries should continue their usual duties." The SMC actually held votes for Obasanjo and Lt. Col. Shehu Yar'Adua as the new Head of State and Chief of Staff, Supreme Headquarters, respectively.[66] Decree No. 32, which outlined the regime's

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[64] "Nigeria's New Government," *West Africa*, April 10, 1965, p. 395.

[65] As additional evidence of a regional veto orchestrated by UGPA, one could also point out that when Major-General Ironsi staged his 1966 coup, he immediately replaced the NNA governor of the Western region with a known UPGA sympathizer (Osaghae 1998, 58).

[66] "No Policy Change in Nigeria," *West Africa*, February 23, 1976, p. 233. See also Osaghae (1998) p. 79.

structure, was the first in Nigeria to provide a succession mechanism within the SMC should the Head of State be overthrown or killed (Ojo 1987, 49).[67]

Decree 32 also created a new organ to represent the interests of the governors, the National Council of States. Significantly, the purpose of the Council was actually to weaken the authority of the governors. Mohammed and Obasanjo believed the states had enjoyed too much power in the previous administration. They also hoped that positioning the Council between the FEC and the SMC would weaken the technocrats who Gowon became so dependent upon (see Othman 1989, pp. 124-25). To this end, they were removed as members of the SMC. Mohammed described the SMC as "the highest body in the hierarchy, providing general policy guidelines."[68] Section 9 of the Decree reflected this by making clear that the Council of State's authority was always contingent upon the SMC's approval and supervision (Ojo 1987).

The head of state maintained a veto in federal policy making. For example, when Mohammed took over he quickly appointed new governors whereas his predecessor had been unable to do so. However constitutional scholars emphasize that Decree 32 limited his title to "Head of State and Commander-in-Chief." Thus unlike the Ironsi regime, the head of state was not "Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces." The regime went to great lengths to give the impression that this distinction was meaningful. Internal government documents describe Obasanjo as the de facto prime minister, responsible for the "day to day running of the government." When Yar'Adua became Chief of Staff, Supreme Headquarters after Mohammed's assassination, his active role in policy further

[67] Nevertheless, the surprisingly smooth succession after the assassination is likely attributable to the popular belief that Mohammed was murdered by elements sympathetic to Gowon, not by an Obasanjo faction.
[68] "Brig. Mohammed Calls for 'Clean Government,'" *West Africa*, August 11, 1975, p. 945.

suggests this was no fiction. Yar'Auda led the SMC initiatives on local government reform, launched the draft constitution discussion, and chaired an inter-ministerial committee on industrial development.[69] His reforms allowed for the election of Local Government Councils calling them "the training ground for democracy." The SMC apparently took the idea fairly seriously (Oyediran and Gboyega 1979, 169-191). Noting the significance of these initiatives, scholars later called the reforms "a major achievement of the military administration" (Gboyega 1989, 159-193).

In sum the SMC stood as the ultimate authority, appointing members of both the Federal Executive Council and the National Council of States. But the regime's key constitutive decree emphasized that the SMC made decisions collectively. Yar'Adua's agenda setting authority suggests this was indeed the practice. The SMC also came to agreement about 17 provisions of the draft constitution it changed before the final promulgation (Gboyega 1979, 235-58). The head of state, with the third veto, possessed enough authority to stop policies he opposed. Yet he also understood that doing so would carry political costs for the regime as a whole.

The Dawn of the Second Republic (1980 – 1981)

The regime that replaced the Obasanjo Government is the only democracy in my sample with three veto players. Nigeria's Second Republic began with the transition from military rule in October 1979 and ended with a coup on New Year's Eve in 1983. The basic constitutional structure for the regime suggests that the conventional coding criteria from the veto player literature should suffice: a president, a Senate, and a House

[69] "The General's Vision of Nigeria," *West Africa*, November 1, 1976, pp. 1610-11. "The Brigadier and the Guidelines," *West Africa*, November 1, 1976, pp. 1611-12. See also "Nigeria: A Transitional Regime?" *Africa Confidential*, September 26, 1975, p. 1-3.

of Representatives, each with a veto over legislation (Haggard and McCubbins 2001). However, applying this standard without more careful analysis would overlook the actual vetoes held by two distinct parties in coalition. Thus I code the country's first experiment with presidentialism as two distinct regimes. In this sub-section I dissect the first of these regimes, covering the early years where the president and the two coalition parties each held a veto. When this coalition collapsed in 1981, a new regime emerged in which the House, the Senate, and the president each had to contend with strong regional forces in the south.

Shehu Shagari, a northerner, became president in 1979 only after an extraordinary legal and political battle. The election law mandated a concurrent plurality for the election of the president. As stipulated by Article 126 of the new constitution, the winner must win a plurality nationwide and also secure 25 percent of the vote in at least two-thirds of the states. The new institutional literature points out that these "concurrent plurality" systems encourage broad coalitions before the election of the executive. But there is no incentive for politicians elected with separate and sovereign origins to remain loyal to the coalition afterwards (Shugart and Carey 1992). As we shall see, Nigeria's experience confirms such expectations.

Since the presidential election yielded no clear winner, a constitutional crisis ensued. The constitution failed to provide clear guidelines for victory should no candidate satisfy the electoral thresholds. The constitution also lacked a clear contingency plan regarding what to do in the meantime.[70] After 13 years of military rule, the country was on edge. Shagari became president only after an extremely contentious

[70] Sections 133-134 of the 1999 constitution currently in effect are scarcely any better.

Supreme Court decision interpreting two-thirds of 19 states as 12 ⅔, rather than 13 (Falola and Ihonvbere 1985).

Shagari won, but with a fragile mandate to rule. On top of his narrow victory for the presidency he lacked a majority in either chamber of the National Assembly. His political strategy in response to this dual challenge involved creating a legislative coalition between the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) and the Nigeria People's Party (NPP). The NPN's leadership and general appeal bore a resemblance to the NPC in the First Republic, while the NPP was a splinter party that attracted support in Plateau State as well as the predominantly Igbo east. In the House, the coalition consisted of 168 NPN and 78 NPP "honourables," totaling 246 out of 450 members. In the Senate, the 16 NPP seats combined with 36 from the NPN brought the coalition to 52 out of 95 Senate seats.[71] NPP participation brought both the seats required to garner a legislative majority as well as a southern (largely Igbo) voice. Without its partner, the president's party had not only slipped to minority status in both legislative chambers, it also lacked the geographical distribution of support that the concurrent plurality electoral system meant to promote.

Some scholars portray the coalition as more casual than official. However President Shagari was present at its creation with the Assembly Leadership. According to the Senate President, it also involved fairly specific quid-pro-quos, giving the NPP ten leadership positions in the National Assembly. These included the speaker and deputy

[71] The separate sovereignty of the legislative elections weakens any incentive for party discipline. Yet Shagari's response was in fact largely typical of presidential systems: contrary to long-held conventional wisdom, we now know that they operate with coalition governments 40 percent of the time. If no party secures a majority, coalitions are actually slightly *more* likely under presidential than parliamentary systems (Cheibub 2007).

senate president positions and numerous cabinet positions. The legislative productivity of the coalition early on suggests a level of party discipline sufficient to place the vetoes within the parties rather than in the institutions of the House and Senate. As discussed in Chapter 5, institutions can sometimes generate a stable set of preferences that can exercise a veto. Such internal coherence was visible in the early years of the legislative coalition: Between October 1979 and July 1980, the Senate passed 17 bills and 92 motions. This included major legislation such as the 1980 appropriation bill. The executive introduced *all* of the bills that passed, pointing to the influence of President Shagari and the cooperation of the National Assembly leadership. In addition, *none* of the 11 private bills introduced even reached their second parliamentary reading. This suggests that the party coalition had solid control over the agenda.[72] For example, when the opposition brought a motion to not accept the executive's supplemental appropriations bill in 1980, only five members of the coalition voted with the opposition.[73]

The death of the NPN-NPP coalition began with the decline of party discipline around mid-1980. The problem, as new institutional scholars expect, was that nothing "tied the President to the Party or the winning coalition after the election since he could act independently in the choice of his cabinet and in the performance of his activities once elected" (Omoruyi 1989, 188-229). All five of the Senators who voted with the opposition on the supplemental bill were NPP members, and the opposition's motion on the supplemental bill passed by a single vote. The NPP was also irked by revelations that

[72] "House of Reps Proceedings," *Daily Times*, March 18, 1980, p. 3. "Senate Passes 17 Bills," *Daily Sketch*, July 24, 1980, p. 4.
[73] "Senate Proceedings," *Daily Times*, April 1, 1980, p. 3.

their coalition partner had secretly agreed to more than double a "contingency fund" to pay off military debts to the states.[74] Another little noticed factor is that Igbos within the NPP were furious about the president's choice of nominees from the east. The Senate President referred to them as politicians who no longer "came home," meaning they lacked credibility at the grassroots.[75] Chuba Okadigbo and other Igbo elites duly noted the slight to the NPP, as the Party had carried the two largest Igbo states by overwhelming margins in both the House and Senate elections.

In January 1981 NPP members voted against an NPN bill reforming the country's revenue allocation system. To retaliate, the NPN refused to ratify ambassadorial nominees. The Chairman of the NPP accused NPN members of "bare-faced rape" of the coalition agreement. The NPN retorted that its partner had been "an unfaithful wife" in politics.[76] The assignment of "Presidential Liaison Officers" to the National Assembly further contributed to tension within the coalition. The PLO's generally weakened legislative-executive relations and seemed to strengthen the NPN's hand since it controlled the presidency. To make matters worse, other nominees aside from the NPP candidates for ambassador were summarily rejected (Joseph 1991; Falola and Ihonvbere 1985). The tension between the parties climaxed in July when the NPP announced it would formally withdraw from the coalition in six months. Four of its cabinet ministers resigned, apparently under presidential pressure. Interpreting this as an insult, the NPN urged termination.[77]

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[74] Amma Ogan, "The Picture as Senate Goes on Easter Recess," *Daily Times*, March 31, 1980.
[75] My source is a senior Senator who served in the Second Republic, Abuja. May 29, 2004.
[76] Femi Johnson, "NPP Ready for Divorce," *Daily Sketch*, January 27, 1981, p. 1. "Break NPN/NPP Accord Now," *Daily Sketch*, February 2, 1981, p. 13.
[77] "Four Ministers Resign," *West Africa*, July 27, 1981, p. 1734.

The impeachment of Kaduna's governor, Balarable Musa, by the NPN-dominated state Assembly in early 1981 may be what ultimately doomed the coalition. Musa belonged to the radical People's Redemption Party (PRP), which had widespread support among Hausa commoners in the north. These *talakawa*, as they were known in Hausa, posed a challenge to the conservative authority of the emirates and thus to elites within the NPN. The opposition parties seized the opportunity to attack the incumbent NPN. Meanwhile, progressives in the NPP were furious with their coalition partner's reactionary response to Governor Musa's enlightened socialism. Then a destabilizing riot followed two weeks later in Kano when the NPN announced that it planned to remove the Emir from office (Diamond 1982, 629-68). The collapse of the coalition ushered in heightened regional tensions and prefaced the tragic fall of the Republic.

Babangida's Early Years (1986 – 1989)

I code the early years of Babangida as three veto players, including Babangida himself and the Armed Forces Ruling Council. A coalition of soft-liners with access to policy making structures also emerged. This critically included former politicians and retired senior military figures who maintained a high profile in national politics. They generally shared a reform agenda, and they capitalized on the government's weakness during economic turbulence. This coalition held the regime's third veto until its own internal coherence dissipated around 1989.

Following his successful 27 August 1985 coup, Babangida announced, "We recognize that a government, be it civilian or military, needs the consent of the people to govern if it is to reach the objectives." While acknowledging this was not without limits,

he said "we do not intend to rule by force."[78] The government released hundreds of political prisoners and quickly annulled unpopular and repressive decrees. It created a Political Bureau and other novel mechanisms for constituent feedback, public participation, and civic mobilization. Within three years, these goodwill measures dissipated.

As its first major initiative, the government launched the economic liberalization program that Babangida had failed to advance as a member of the previous government's Supreme Military Council. Another program involved broad efforts to professionalize the civil service. This time the bureaucrats caved in to the generals' politicization. They did not acquire the kind of autonomous authority they held under previous governments such as Gowon's (Adamolekun 1997, 363-75). The Political Bureau in particular was a hallmark of the regime. Senior bureaucrats resented its creation since a committee of eight federal permanent secretaries was already deliberating over similar issues. However their attempts to undercut the Bureau's efforts failed, meaning the bureaucracy posed no veto threat. The government's professed commitment to public participation afforded the Bureau a measure of latitude as well. Babangida was forced to expand the membership to better reflect "federal character." He also largely stood idly by as the Bureau essentially re-wrote and expanded its mandate (Diamond, Kirk-Greene and others 1997).

It would be unreasonable to assign the Bureau a veto given its advisory role. Plus the government accepted some of its recommendations and rejected others. But the Bureau did have important broader effects: It generated political cover for factions within

[78] Transcript of broadcast by Maj. Gen. Babangida, *West Africa*, September 2, 1985, pp. 1791-93.

the AFRC, supplanting their bargaining leverage on issues such as state creation and the nature of the transition plan. It also opened up political space for organized criticism from former senior military officers who emerged as a new force in politics.

That Babangida held a veto is not in dispute. He famously referred to himself as "President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces" and restructured the organs of government to reflect the change in title. Decree No. 17 endowed him with the exclusive authority to appoint the second ranking executive official, now referred to as the "Chief of General Staff, General Staff Headquarters." Ojo compares the position to a prime minister even though the new title forfeited jurisdiction over military affairs (Ojo 1987, 293). Moreover, the Chief of General Staff could now be removed unilaterally rather than collectively. Since this in fact what happened to the first holder of this office, Commodore Ebitu Ukiwe, it is clear he did not exercise a veto.

A 1988 speech made clear the contingent nature of the cabinet's authority, vested in the "National Council of Ministers." Babangida declared, "I shall not hesitate to remove from office any of you found wanting on grounds of incompetence, impropriety and disloyalty to me in any capacity" (Cited in Othman 1989, 142). Ministers were frequently reshuffled. For example, Babangida appointed his first cabinet in September 1985 and by January 1986 announced a pending reshuffle, intended to bring "fresh commitment to the values of efficient performance." The reassignments occurred in September. He juggled the ministers in March 1989 and again later that year when he announced a new AFRC. He sacked 10 ministers again in 1992.[79] The authority of the

[79] "New Ministers in Lagos," *West Africa*, September 16, 1985, p. 1896-97. "President Babangida Re-Shuffles," *West Africa*, January 27, 1986, p. 212. A. Adelegan, "IBB Drops 10 Ministers," *The Punch*, January 14, 1992, p. 1.

states through the new "National Council of State" was also consultative in nature, and the governors were also whimsically re-assigned. Eight new governors were appointed in 1986 only to be re-assigned a few years later.[80]

The Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC) held this regime's second veto. This body replaced the Supreme Military Councils as the highest governmental authority. In a shift from previous regimes, Decree No. 17 stripped the Council of the power of appointing the chiefs of each armed service and the Police Inspector General. Like other self-perceived military reformers, the 1985 coup leaders claimed that Buhari had replaced "the concept of collective leadership" with "stubborn and ill-advised unilateral actions."[81] Whether the AFRC fulfilled this expectation is a matter of some dispute. Nwabueze for example claims that most decrees emanated directly from Babangida and never went through the AFRC: "He was for all intents and purposes the sole legislature of the Federal Military Government" (See Osaghae 1998, 192-93). If true, this would argue against coding the AFRC as a veto player.

Other factors contradict this view of a feeble ruling council. In formal terms, the regime's constituting rules vested the AFRC collectively with the authority to consider and approve revenues and expenditures of the government, declare a state of emergency, and to make laws which would then require the president's signature.[82] More significantly, the issue of state creation divided the AFRC. Those in favor of creating more states eventually prevailed. In September 1987 the administration announced the

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[80] "Shuffling the Governors," *West Africa,* September 1, 1986, p. 1815; *Nigerian Economist*, January 22, 1990, pp. 28 – 31.
[81] Excerpts from broadcast by Brig. Dogonyaro, "Why Buhari Had to Go," *West Africa*, September 2, 1985, p. 1828.
[82] Decree No. 17, "The Constitution (Suspension and Modification) (Amendment) Decree of 1985." Cf. Schedule 2.

creation of two new states, increasing the number from 19 to 21 and declared the issue closed. The rancorous response from groups including the Igbos in the east and minorities in the south forced the administration to revisit the issue. A government White Paper on state creation leaked a few years later exposed the extent of the divisions within the AFRC (Suberu, Rotimi 1994; Diamond, Kirk-Greene and others 1997). Eventually nine more states were created in 1991. Circumstantially, it is also significant that Babangida could only make minor changes in the composition of the AFRC until its re-organization in 1989, which I pinpoint as the end of this veto player regime. This reshuffling reduced the AFRC's numbers from 29 to 19.

Soft-liners in the government allied with senior former military officers held the regime's third veto. During this time, retired military officials became publicly involved in politics on a scale never seen before. This afforded government soft-liners valuable political cover, which made it much harder for Babangida to ignore them. Many of these politically moderate officials still had strong links to their former colleagues now serving in government. The Political Bureau and other quasi-governmental entities also helped channel their preferences directly to incumbent government elites. These factors afforded them a measure of autonomy that previous (and subsequent) elites of their stature and background lacked.

In January 1987 other soft-liners, including a former military governor who had been Army Chief of Staff, levied incendiary charges of northern bias against the government. That same month the recently-retired General Obasanjo published a controversial biography casting the leader of Nigeria's first coup in a favorable – or at least a humane – light. The government was already alerted to Obasanjo's potentially

subversive sympathies; only two weeks before Babangida overthrew the Buhari-Idiagbon regime, Obasanjo "commended" key policies of the government.[83] Later in 1987 Obasanjo delivered a major speech, criticizing government's economic policy and denouncing proposals to extend the transition date. The comments created "rumbles in the corridor of power" and cemented his status as a particularly thorny critic of the government (Adekanye 1997, 55-80).

Other relevant former military figures include Obasanjo's former deputy, the former leader of the Biafran secessionist movement defeated in the Civil War, and General Yakubu Gowon. They all publicly nursed political ambitions. Several other generals who governed during previous military thought it necessary to volunteer their views to the Political Bureau – and let this be known. The participation of this segment of the population was so widespread that Babangida attempted to impose a ban on their activities in September 1987. Yet the ban failed to cover or affect many of the government's harshest critics. It did not cover those who had served in the SMC during the regimes of Ironsi, Gowon, or Murtala/Obasanjo, nor those who had served as ministers or police officials under these regimes (Adekanye 1999). By evading the ban on politics and then helping to push the government to change course on the state creation issue, this community's political preferences could not be ignored, whether the issue was the distribution of power or the allocation of public services.

As the novelty of government experiments in public participation faded, the government retreated to more conventional modes of authoritarianism. Structural

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[83] Excerpts from the speech, "Which Way Forward?" *West Africa*, August 19, 1985, pp. 1694-95. Obasanjo's book was about Nzeogwu (Obasanjo 2004).

adjustment proved so unpopular that the government abandoned its pretenses of civil liberties, jailing thousands of students, human rights activists, and union members (Diamond, Kirk-Greene and others 1997; Olukoshi 1997, 379-400). By the end of 1989, Babangida took over as Minister of Defense and abolished the National Security Organization. He replaced the NSO with three new internal security organizations, directly responsible to him.[84] Babangida the reformer was no more.

Regimes with Four or More Veto Players

The Pending Collapse of the Second Republic (1982 – 1983)

Three regimes in my sample have four veto players. The first is the Second Republic spanning 1982 – 83, following the withdrawal of the NPP from the coalition. Several factors highlight why a new veto player regime emerged at this point. Previously, the coalitions of two political parties each held what amounted to "partisan" vetoes. They managed to maintain enough internal cohesion that their preferences transcended regional cleavages as well as the institutional separation of the two chambers of the National Assembly. Now the House, the Senate, and the president each possessed an institutional veto over policy. A 1982 supplemental appropriation bill provides the strongest evidence of this shift. The National Assembly resoundingly defeated the bill. The Senate specifically objected to efforts by the executive to allow states to make foreign loans without the approval of the legislature.[85] The institutional basis was even more obvious after the 1983 elections, where the NPN secured solid majorities in the House and Senate. The party consolidated its support in the north, capturing 13 (out of

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[84] "New Ruling Council Announced," *Africa Research Bulletin,* March 15, 1989, p. 9177. "Sweeping Cabinet Reshuffle," *Africa Research Bulletin*, February 15, 1990, pp. 9544-45.
[85] John Uyakonwu, "Senate Says 'No' to Shagari," *The Punch*, October 22, 1982.

19) governorships. This obviated the need for a coalition and diminished progressive hopes that parties would serve as instruments of inter-ethnic cooperation across regions.

In addition to the three institutional vetoes, a regional veto emerged in the south. Each of my criteria for the exercise of such informal authority was distinctly present: First, the collapse of the coalition in 1981 meant that the government now under-represented the interests of the south in the policy process. (This was especially dangerous for a government which had come to power only after the infamous Supreme Court decision interpreting two-thirds of 19.) Until the collapse of the coalition in 1981, the alliance of NPN and NPP had thus diluted any significant efforts to exercise regional solidarity from the south. In the 1979 elections, the NPN showed its strength in only two southern states: Rivers and Cross River. Those states had the only NPN governors in the south. They were the only states where the party received more votes than any other in the House, Senate, or the presidential elections.

Second, when the NPP defected from the coalition, it explicitly aligned itself with the two opposition parties rather than taking up an independent mantle. The opposition United Party of Nigeria (UPN), led by the loser of the 1979 presidential election, completely dominated the southwest. In the four states of the zone, it held all four governorships, 71 out of the 85 Federal House seats that represented the south west states, and all 24 Senate seats. Table 3 illustrates this new arrangement of political alliances.

Table 3: Matrix Reflecting the South's Regional Veto, 1982-1983

Four zone Structure:	**North**	**South**
Northeast	NPN strongest party but not dominant	
Northwest	NPN strongest party but not dominant	
South West		Aligned with UPN (Now allied with NPP)
South East		Aligned with NPP (Now allied with UPN)

The "Nine Progressive Governors" point to a third reason why the region held a veto. This alliance of southern and Middle Belt governors incorporated the three other opposition parties and began meeting in 1979. All of them hailed from either the south or the so-called middle belt states. When the NPP governors of Anambra, Imo, and Plateau joined in the wake of Governor Musa's 1981 impeachment in Kaduna State, the group re-christened itself the "Twelve Progressive Governors" (Diamond 1982, 629-68). The monthly meetings of this cohesive group served to facilitate a carefully coordinated opposition that constituted a regional veto.

When the NPN-NPP coalition collapsed, the south was therefore equipped with both grievances and organizational mechanisms for exercising regional leverage on national policy. The north, by contrast was divided. The Middle Belt's defection, on the edge of the regional north, was problematic enough. Now Northern elements within the NPN were split between its "Northern Caucus," dominated by the Kaduna Mafia, and other factions who supported President Shagari. This rancor weakened northern solidarity even though the Party was well represented in government. In the disastrous August 1983 elections, the NPN dominated the National Assembly, winning 264 out of 450 House Seats and 61 out of 95 Senate seats. Aside from inroads it made into Oyo

State, the southwest remained almost completely dominated by the UPN. The House elections were so acrimonious that results for Ondo and Oyo States were not even finalized; "defeated" candidates overwhelmed the courts with complaints. When Nigeria's second democratic experiment died in December 1983, much of the country heaved a sigh of relief. The nation also suspected that they had the Kaduna Mafia to thank (Othman 1984, 441-61). Under the new military government, the relief was painfully short-lived.

Babangida "Steps Down" (1990 – 1993)

Babangida's final years in office present a puzzle: By the end of 1989 he had effectively marginalized the Armed Forces Ruling Council, undermining its collective authority and curtailing its jurisdictional scope. However important shifts beneath this move prevented the unilateralism often presumed of the policy process during these years. As a result of southern mobilization and fractionalization of the military, I argue that the number of veto players actually increased from three to four. This is due in no small part to the momentous decision by the government to lift the ban on politics in 1989. In addition to Babangida's veto, the AFRC split between a powerful Army faction and soft-liners, who included a group called the "Langtang Mafia." A regional veto from the south formed the fourth veto.

Shortly after the government lifted the ban on politics, Nigerians elected a National Assembly and new state governments. Democrats hoped this would amount to a meaningful step in the larger democratic transition plan. In state level politics, the power of governors increased. According to one former Speaker of the House, the governors

circumvented the state assemblies' authority on spending "as a matter of routine."[86] But because of the states' dependence on the center for revenue, local realities did not really increase their insulation from federal encroachment. The National Assembly also enjoyed a limited influence over policy. But these institutions did provide a platform for hundreds of national elites to criticize and mobilize.

Aside from the individual veto retained by Babangida, major policy initiatives now had to pass through three other gates. Following the sweeping reorganization of the AFRC in 1989, the Council lacked collective veto authority. However Babangida could not ignore two military-politico factions. Already a pivotal figure in the government, Lt. General Sani Abacha emerged from the AFRC reorganization an even more powerful figure. The young Chief of Army Staff had announced the August coup in 1985. He then helped foil a coup against the regime that same December.[87] Abacha moved to keep the army united after this incident, a loyalist role he played again following a failed April 1990 putsch. As the AFRC lost ground in 1989, Abacha's authority expanded. It now included the sensitive (and strategic) portfolio of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. By 1990 he held a veto within the regime. While the AFRC was increasingly marginalized Abacha and his cohort of Army allies were not.

It is hazardous to pinpoint where Abacha really stood on the transition plan during the tumultuous years of 1992 – 1993. However, his "Lagos Group" prevailed over the military faction that outright opposed the democratic transition. Abacha then negotiated exit guarantees for Babangida that helped keep the peace following the nullification of

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[86] My source is a former speaker of a State House of Assembly. Ibadan, April 1, 2006.
[87] Juilyeme Ukabiala, "Abacha Defrosts Coup Plot Freeze in Barraks," *The Guardian*, January 7, 1986, p.1.

the June 1993 election. When a weak and divided Interim National Government fell apart after only three months, many supporters of a democratic transition lined up behind Abacha as the consensus candidate to take over (Omoruyi 1999).[88] Whether he would install the presumed winner of the election or set in place a new transition plan became an explosive matter.

Government policy at this point also required at least tacit support from soft-liners within the government who formed the third veto. This faction centered on the "Langtang Mafia." This group of largely Christian Army officers included the prominent Army Major General Domkat Bali. Like Abacha, he had helped bring Babangida to power. He also had a respectable constituency within the military for helping to foil the December 1985 coup attempt. Babangida was thus indebted to both men on both issues.[89] When Bali, as the most senior and longest serving Army general, publicly protested his reassignment from Minister of Defence to Minister of Interior, other powerful officers backed him up. The "Bali Affair" as it became known, exposed the limits of the regime's centralization. Babangida backed down and took steps to placate the Langtang Mafia by promoting Gen. Bali. Following the 1990 coup attempt he went even further, placating other influential Army officials. Osaghae suggests that the Mafia – by itself – lacked comprehensive influence over policy (Osaghae 1998). However many of the same retired generals who had criticized Babangida's government in the

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[88] Abacha's opponents advocated "diarchy," a government balancing the military and a corporatist arrangement of civil society as equal and autonomous partners. Rooted in a British proposal for colonial rule of India, it implies that civilians do not control the military but a binding social contract impedes any military takeover (Ikoku 1985; Adekanye 1997, 55-80). Ikenga Nuta, "The Diarchy Proposition," *West Africa*, April 1, 1985, p. 610.

[89] "Coup Plot Verdicts," *West Africa,* March 3, 1986, pp. 444-46. The plotters even claimed in their radio broadcast that Bali's demotion was central to their cause, thus making his loyalty to Babangida all the more significant. See "A Bloody Attempt," *West Africa*, April 30-May 6, 1990, pp. 696-97.

1980s such as Gowon, Obasanjo, and Yar'Adua generally stood with Bali. These men provided political cover, geographical reach, and helped rally the constituency within the military favoring democratic transition. In effect, these allies gave a public face to like minded soft-liners within the regime (Adekanye 1997, 55-80).

Chief among the reasons for Babangida's "stepping down" in August 1993 was a regional veto from the south that took shape after 1990. In the wake of the Bali Affair, transition advocates drew support from retired southern senior military officials and from key Christian officers. Four other critical factors contributed to regional solidarity that the regime could not afford to ignore: First, the regime's decision to join the Organization of Islamic States in 1986 created a cause célèbre for the overwhelmingly Christian south. Not only did this mobilize the Christian Association of Nigeria, it also introduced widespread skepticism about the regime's commitment to ethnic balancing (Kukah 1999). Babangida tactfully suspended the OIC membership. The largely southern and middle belt Christian profile of the 1990 coup plotters did not go unnoticed either.[90] The financier of the 1990 coup later claimed that despite its failure, the coup attempt restrained Babangida's excesses and pressured him to exit.[91] Second, the 1989 AFRC reshuffling left only Muslims in charge of the armed services and the presidency. This was unacceptable to a military that had operated on the federal character principle for a generation. It was a key reason for Gen. Bali's risky and very public dissent. It is also a clear example of a cautious policy reversal as regional actors flexed their muscle.

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[90] "Coup Attempt Foiled," *Africa Research Bulletin*, May 15, 1990, pp. 9666-68. This also made their attack on the credibility of Sultan Dasuki particularly suspect and he rallied against them. See FN 96.
[91] "Cover Interview: the Godfather," *Tell*, July 2000, pp. 21-27.

Third, conservatives in the National Assembly worked to awaken sectarian regional concerns. “We were selfish and without foresight,” explained a House member of the National Republican Convention (NRC) who supported the election annulment. Regional politics took over as northerners from Abiola’s party now openly organized against a southern politician assuming the presidency. This led them to an alliance of convenience with hardliners in the military government. The “military was looking for legitimacy and NRC members were looking for patronage,” recalled the member.[92]

The fourth and final reason for the regional veto is that the loudest civil society voices, on the whole, spoke from the south. The pro-democracy movement could always count on militant activism in Lagos and the southwest, where most of the civil society groups were concentrated. The Nigerian Labor Congress regrouped after suffering for their opposition to structural adjustment in the 1980s. In the south south zone, militant oil workers (on whom the federal government depended for most of its revenue) lined up alongside minorities in the east and the middle belt on strategic issues (Osaghae 1998; Edozie 2002). Zonal preferences are less distinct here than with other regional vetoes, so I do not hazard an identity matrix here. But these four reasons offer compelling evidence of a regional veto.

The Babangida government worked hard to undermine Igbo support for regional solidarity. The Igbo in the east had a mixed attitude toward the June 12 cause. Some felt they should have a “turn” at power while others insisted that a democratic transition required honoring the June 12 results. The government began attacking the Senate President, from the Middle Belt state of Plateau, for his insistence on June 12. Eastern

[92] Meeting with a PDP Senator in Abuja, June 3, 2004.

senators initially opposed the impeachment plot against him in July 1993. The administration's machinations eventually won out. Before the vote, a few governors from the east and from the southwest rallied to support the Senate President by reaching out to Igbo senators. Their efforts failed and the Senate impeached him on a vote of 55 to 25 in November.[93] That same month the Interim National Government collapsed and its head stepped down. Above all, he blamed agitation by June 12 sympathizers. Nigeria's Third Republic was officially dead.

Given all that northerners had to complain about during this time, we might have expected an informal veto to arise there. Babangida's disagreements with the Kaduna Mafia during the Buhari regime are well known, as are his ambiguous relations with the northern elite. Only four of the initial 28-member AFRC were sons of the northern establishment; only seven of the 24-member cabinet could claim the same. As if to make the shift to the Langtang Mafia painfully obvious, only two members of the AFRC were actually Hausa-Fulani at this time.[94] Given this apparent under-representation, we might have expected a northern regional veto to emerge. Yet one did not. Various regional issues played out in geo-political blocs within the Political Bureau. Northerners were particularly well represented in the Bureau meaning they could scarcely complain for lack of voice. They formed a "Committee of Elders," recruiting traditional elites from throughout the region. Traditional rulers finally presented a more united front on the shari'a issue and opposed customary court reforms (Vaughan 1997, 413-34).

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[93] Remi Ibitola, "Plot to Impeach Ayu Uncovered," *The Punch*, July 10, 1993, p. 1. Chekwuemeka Gahia, "Grace to Grass," *Newswatch*, November 15, 1993, pp. 12-17.

[94] "Nigeria: The Young Turks?" *Africa Confidential*, September 4, 1985, pp. 1-2. "Nigeria: Khaki All Around," *Africa Confidential*, 1985, p. 3. "Nigeria: Sour Grapes in Sokoto," *Africa Confidential*, Feb. 1985, pp. 4-5.

Despite all this, the government politically outmaneuvered the emirs on these and other key issues. The creation of new states pitted the three northern zones against each other, undermining regional solidarity. Only one new northern state was created in 1987. When other requests were rejected in 1991, riots broke out in Kano and Sokoto but to little end.[95] More significantly, Babangida engineered the replacement of the Sultan of Sokoto with Imbrahim Dasuki, rejecting the more conservative candidate favored by many local elites. The Hausa-Fulani kingmakers resented Dasuki for cultivating a support base over the years through national level politics, rather than within the caliphate (Paden 2004, 17-37).[96] The regime's Director of Military Intelligence later reflected that this posture toward the north contributed significantly to the government's failures (Alli 2001). The government did not embrace the Political Bureau's near hostility to the emirs' requests for reforms. It did accept the Bureau's recommendation to limit traditional rulers' authority to local affairs, even as it elevated their stature in other ways (Diamond, Kirk-Greene and others 1997). Ultimately traditional leaders' victories on local government, sharia, and the courts were limited. And with Muslims in control of all the armed services after 1990, northern marginalization was no longer a credible rallying cry.

The Fourth Republic (1999 – 2003)

The other regime which I code as four veto players is President Obasanjo's first term in office during the Fourth Republic, from 1999 to 2003. Chapter 5 already outlined the broad set of regional grievances. I demonstrated how a veto was only possible after a

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[95] Dan Agbese et al., "Two Dozen and Six," *Newswatch*, September 9, 1991, pp. 9-17.

[96] Dasuki returned the favor a few months later, lining up 63 traditional rulers behind Babangida and against the 1990 coup attempt. See "Ten Coup Suspects," *Newswatch*, May 14, 1990, pp. 17-20.

substantial level of inter-zonal coordination and the organizations which performed this function. I argued that the president's sensitivity on the Shari'a issue and his reversal on the revenue allocation debate provide evidence of the region's successful exercise of political leverage. I also outlined a theoretical model showing how subnational coordination is more difficult among many smaller units (states) than it is among a few larger units (zones). Here I complete the account of this veto player regime with evidence of the widespread perception of the south's under-representation.

The 1999 election results do not offer a clear pattern to give the south "cause." In fact the majority party, the People's Democratic Party (PDP), seems well represented. The election results reported in the appendices show that the Alliance for Democracy dominated the southwest. But they also show that the PDP had a majority of the House and Senate seats in the southeast and the south south. It also held all of the governorships in these zones. How then can we claim that a regional veto existed?

Like the previous presidential system from 1979 to 1983, the president, the House of Representatives, and the Senate each held a veto over policy. Unlike the Second Republic though, the president's party enjoyed majorities in the House and the Senate. A standing legislative coalition therefore seemed unnecessary – as long as the president could maintain an adequate level of party unity. The acrimonious first six months of the Fourth Republic made obvious that this would not be the case. Both the House and the Senate had cause and capability to exercise vetoes over the policy process.

By the end of 1999, the Speaker of the House, Salisu Buhari, had been forced to resign for falsely claiming he had studied at the University of Toronto. The Senate soon thereafter impeached the Senate President, Evans Enwerem, for lying about his age and

credentials.[97] Within months their replacements, Speaker Ghali Na'Abba and Senator Chuba Okadigbo, were under attack. Police with armored vehicles surrounded the Senate President's house in June 2000 after he refused to convene the Senate to vote on a bill supported by President Obasanjo. Some PDP members thought Na'Abba was also too confrontational. In September 2000 they allied with members of Obasanjo's cabinet and quietly began convening caucus meetings to impeach the Speaker. By August, the Senate had impeached its new President, Chuba Okadigbo, for gross abuse of public office.[98] Na'Abba's battle stretched out until the PDP primaries in 2002 when he was expelled from the party.

A variety of policy issues, including a motion to impeach President Obasanjo, drove the National Assembly and the president apart. The "honourables" parted ways with the president on amendments to the Electoral Act out of concern that the sequence of presidential and legislative elections could influence their outcome.[99] The most contentious battles arose over spending bills and the budget for Fiscal Year 2000 above all set the tone for much of what followed. The Chairman of the Senate Public Accounts Committee commented, "We are seriously concerned about the ability of the president to comply with whatever we approved for him, especially in view of the obvious cases of non-compliance with the contents of the 1999 budget." This included both budgetary impoundments and at least 71 charges of unauthorized spending by the president. These

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[97] Anselm Okolo, "End of the Road," *TELL,* November 29, 1999, p. 25.

[98] Obiora Chukwumba and Anselm Okolo, "End Game for Okadigbo, Abubakar," *TELL*, August 7, 2000, pp. 26 – 28. Obiora Chukwumba, "Gone with the Wind," *TELL,* August 21, 2000, pp. 37. "Senate Purge," *Africa Research Bulletin*, August 1-31, pp. 14076–77. Major Adeyi, "Na'Abba's Many Wars," *TELL*, October 2, 2000, p. 39.

[99] Shola Osunkeye and Dayo Ayetan, "Not Yet a Victory Song," *TELL*, January 14, 2002, pp. 44-48. See Shugart and Carey on the general impact of election sequencing and timing on results (Shugart and Carey 1992).

charges exceeded tens of billions of naira.[100] The president also fought a significant Anti-Corruption bill after the Senate Judiciary Committee created an Independent Counsel provision. The Senators sought to allow Federal High Court Judges to appoint a counsel to investigate allegations of serious wrongdoing by senior executive officials.

Although the frustration within the PDP appears generalized, much of it took on a distinctly zonal character. National Assembly rules "zoned" the office of the Senate President to the southeast. This guaranteed an Igbo would hold the office (since it was highly unlikely the Senate would vote for a southeastern minority). With an estimated seven impeachment plots against the Senate Presidents before 2003, Igbo politicians smelled conspiracy. One Igbo founding member of the PDP commented that the Party has failed to address their grievances, including integration of Igbos into the civil service and the military.[101] Senator Okadigbo used this to his advantage. He appealed to the pan-Igbo organization, *Ohaneze*, for support in May 2000. The group organized rallies, a constitutional rationale for Okadigbo's survival, and acted as mediator with the presidency.[102] In keeping with the zoning rules, the Senate picked another Igbo to succeed Okadigbo. The new Senate president had much more cordial relations with President Obasanjo. When he came under attack for changing the committee funding structure, the southeastern senators declined to rally around him. While certainly not unanimous, the propensity of opinion in the southeast had shifted; opposition to the regime had taken on an ethnic dimension.[103]

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[100] Anselm Okolo, "Tackling the President," *TELL*, February 21, 2000, pp. 34-35.
[101] Meeting with a House Committee Chairman, Abuja, May 28, 2004.
[102] Uche Maduemesi, "The Senate Should Dissolve," *TELL*, August 21, 34-35. Uche Maduemesi, "Playing the Ethnic Card," *TELL*, May 15, 2000, pp. 18-20.
[103] Dele Agekameh, "A House Divided," *TELL*, December 18, 2000, pp. 36-39.

Other issues with a distinctly zonal character included the onshore/offshore dichotomy detailed in Chapter 5. Politicians and civil society throughout the south south zone also supported a 1999 bill in the National Assembly to create a Niger Delta Development Commission. The NDDC aimed to create a commission to improve the socioeconomic conditions in the oil producing areas. According to the Chair of the Senate Committee on the Niger Delta, the south south governors unanimously and vocally opposed amendments that Obasanjo proposed to the bill. In particular the president aimed to increase the role of the military in the region. A Senate tour of the area reinforced its opposition to the amendments.[104] The Senate insisted on confirmation of the Commission's appointees and a 3 percent tax on oil companies to help finance the Commission. When the president vetoed the bill, the National Assembly voted overwhelmingly to override it. The regional dimensions of these alignments are captured by Table 4.

Table 4: Matrix Reflecting the South's Regional Veto, 1999 – 2003

Six zone Structure	**North**	**South**
Northwest	Aligned with PDP but APP strong	
Northeast	Aligned with PDP but APP strong	
Middle Belt	Aligned with PDP with APP presence	
Southwest		Dominated by AD
Southeast		Discord within PDP
South South		Discord within PDP

In sum, a PDP president from the southwest had virtually no electoral support from his home zone. He then alienated party on two fronts: first on issues with a zonal

[104] Interview, "Militarising the Niger Delta Will Fail," *TELL*, November 13, 2000, pp. 12-14.

character such as the the impeachment conspiracies. Second he attempted to sabotage the constitutional integrity of the National Assembly. This combination encouraged governors' associations and various sectional groups to organize for regional interests over party interests. The regional veto succeeded in reversing the president's position on the resource control issue. It also pressured the government to moderate clamor for religious law in the north.

CONCLUSION

Several important patterns emerge from this discussion: First, regimes with fewer veto players move quickly to dominate any regional centers of power. Powerful, decentralized bases of power are most visible in multi-veto player regimes. Second, military governments in Nigeria quickly encounter critical choices about their relationship to the bureaucracy and to traditional leaders. No junta built an equally effective political coalition with both of these constituencies, and no military government that excluded both lasted more than a year or two. Finally, as the previous chapter explains, ethno-regional balancing is a constant in Nigerian politics even as the number of states and zones changes. The sensitivity over this issue emerges in the various purges, promotions, and in executive appointments. Authoritarian governments in particular used promotions and demotions to limit the pool of potential successors and consolidate power.

Although these generalizations are merely tentative, they suggest important new lines of future research. These distinctions could lead to predictions on a new range of dependent variables, such as regime stability or democratization. The analytical framework employed here also shows how veto players sometimes straddle the formal

and informal political realms. In particular, the leverage that players in government exercise over policy often depends on their links to the broader political society. Finally, cross-national studies that use veto players would fail to capture nuances that became central to an effective coding in this study. This was visible from the analysis of the First Republic. It is also visible in Babangida's later years, where he marginalized the AFRC yet the number of veto players actually increases. Without this rigor, the numbers assigned to complex social and political factions would be arbitrary. Now that we have credibly counted the number of vetoes, the next chapter will take the next step by testing to see if this analytical framework can indeed predict patterns of government performance.

Table 5: Veto Players in Nigeria's Regimes

Vetoes	Years	Description and Distribution of Veto Authority (Regional Vetoes in Shaded Boxes)			
1	1997 – 98	Decision making concentrated around Abacha loyalists within Provisional Ruling Council. He abandons transition and neutralizes PRC members opposed to his "self-succession." Federal Executive Council stops meeting.			
2	1966	Aguyi-Ironsi as Head of State rules through a limited Supreme Military Council. Federal Executive Council confined to policy implementation.			Northern politicians, military officers, and elites coordinate through governors to successfully oppose key policies.
2	1960 – 64	Westminster parliamentary system elected in 1959. A majority = 156 seats + 1. NPC holds 134 seats in a coalition government.			NCNC holds 89 seats in a coalition government.
2	1965	Westminster parliamentary system. NPC runs in a coalition but wins a parliamentary majority on its own: 162, all in the north. Other parties selectively invited to participate in government.			After NPC wins a majority of seats in 1964 election, southern interests marginalized. UPGA mobilizes an informal veto for the region.
2	1967 – 74	The Supreme Military Council rules collectively. Unlike in other regimes, it includes governors. Head of State Gowon never successfully dismisses them, despite widespread corruption and frustration with the states.			Gowon relies heavily on technocrats for political support and advice. Cabinet and "Super Perm Secs" capture authority to make *and* implement policy.
2	1984 – 85	Buhari is Head of State but not head of the military's Supreme Headquarters. Governors through the Council of State limited to consultative roles. Senior bureaucrats politically marginalized.			Idiagbon, Chief of Staff, Supreme HQ, enjoys substantial authority. He runs the security apparatus and one of the government's major policy initiatives.
2	1994 – 96	Abacha as Head of State governs with Provisional Ruling Council, which has legislative powers. Weak cabinet and weak National Council of State.			Chief of General Staff, Lt. Gen. Diya and the "June 12" group is the only faction within the PRC to hold a veto.
3	1986 – 89	Babangida declares himself "president and commander in chief" with Army support. Weak governors and a consultative cabinet.	Armed Forces Ruling Council has collective authority in policy making.		Former military rulers, governors, and ministers engage in sustained criticism against government. Although the Political Bureau weakens senior bureaucrats, it provides this faction with political cover and access to policy channels.
3	1975 – 79	Mohammed, then Obasanjo Head of State have veto over policy	Obasanjo then Yar 'Adua, has veto as Chief of Staff, Supreme HQ		SMC collectively involved in policy making and transition plan. Local governments strengthened.
3	1980 – 81	President has constitutional veto authority over legislation	NPN with 36 seats in Senate and 168 in House form coalition with NPP		NPP with 16 Senate seats (out of 95) and 78 House seats (out of 450) enters coalition with NPN
4	1982 – 83	President possesses a constitutional veto.	House	Senate	After party coalition breaks down, a southern regional veto forms with marginalized parties and elites.
4	1990 – 93	Babangida expands his powers over the AFRC.	Abacha thwarts coup and uses Army to acquire veto.	A softliner faction composed of Maj. Gen. Bali, the "Langtang Mafia," and moderates in AFRC.	A pro-democracy coalition including civil society groups, politicians, and traditional leaders coordinate a sourthern regional veto.
4	1999 – 03	President possesses a constitutional veto.	House	Senate	The south coordinates through zonal and regional governor associations, and state delegations in National Assembly.

APPENDIX: GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF ELECTORAL RESULTS

Table 6: House Seats Won, By Region, in 1959 Elections

NORTH					**SOUTH**				
	AG	**NCNC/ NEPU**	**NPC**	**Small Parties**		**AG**	**NCNC/ NEPU**	**NPC**	**Small Parties**
North	25	8	134	7	**East**	14	58		1
					West	33	21		8
					Capital	1	2		
TOTAL NORTH	**25**	**8**	**134**	**7**	**TOTAL SOUTH**	**48**	**81**	**0**	**9**

Source**:** *Report on the Nigeria Federal Elections December 1959*

Table 7: House Seats Won, By Region, 1964/65 Election

NORTH						**SOUTH**					
	AG	**NCNC**	**NPC**	**NNDP**	**Small Parties**		**AG**	**NCNC**	**NPC**	**NNDP**	**Small Parties**
North	0	0	162	36	5	**East**	4	64	0	0	2
						West	15	5	0	36	1
						Mid West	0	14	0	0	0
						Capital	2	1	0	0	1
TOTAL NORTH	**0**	**0**	**162**	**36**	**5**	**TOTAL SOUTH***	**21**	**84**	**0**	**0**	**4**

Source: Larry Diamond, *Class, Ethnicity and Democracy in Nigeria: the Failure of the First Republic* (England: Macmillan Press, 1988), 227.
Notes: *Incorporates results from the March 1965 “Little Election.” (The other data displayed in Appendix 1 is not available for this election.)

Table 8: House Seats Won, By Zone and State, 1979 Elections

NORTH								SOUTH							
	State	**# Seats**	**UPN**	**GNPP**	**PRP**	**NPP**	**NPN**		**State**	**# Seats**	**UPN**	**GNPP**	**PRP**	**NPP**	**NPN**
	Kaduna	33	1	1	10	2	19		Bendel	20	12			2	6
Northwest	Kano	46			39		7	**Southwest**	Kwara	14	5	1			8
	Niger	10					10		Lagos	12	12				
	Sokoto	37		6			31		Ogun	12	12				
									Ondo	22	22				
									Oyo	42	38				4
Northwest subtotal		**126**	1	7	49	2	67	**Southwest subtotal**		**122**	101	1	0	2	18
	Bauchi	20		1		1	18		Anambra	29				26	3
Northeast	Borno	24		22			2	**Southeast**	Benue	19				1	18
	Gongola	21	7	8		1	5		Cross River	28	2	4			22
	Plateau	16				13	3		Imo	30				28	2
									Rivers	14				4	10
Northeast subtotal		**81**	7	31	0	15	28	**Southeast subtotal**		**120**	2	4	0	59	55
TOTAL NORTH		**207**	8	38	49	17	95	**TOTAL SOUTH**		**242**	103	5	0	61	73

Sources: Toyin Falola and Julius Ihonvbere, *The Rise and Fall of Nigeria's Second Republic, 1979 – 84*, (London: Zed Books 1985); "79 Election" *The Punch*, July 16, 1979; "79 Election," *The Punch,* July 17, 1979.

Table 9: Senate Seats Won, By Zone and State, 1979 Election

NORTH								SOUTH							
	State	**# Seats**	**UPN**	**GNPP**	**PRP**	**NPP**	**NPN**		**State**	**# Seats**	**UPN**	**GNPP**	**PRP**	**NPP**	**NPN**
Northwest	Kaduna	5			2		3	**Southwest**	Bendel	5	4				1
	Kano	5			5				Kwara	5	2				3
	Niger	5					5		Lagos	5	5				
	Sokoto	5					5		Ogun	5	5				
									Ondo	5	5				
									Oyo	5	5				
Northwest subtotal		**20**	0	0	7		13	**Southwest subtotal**		**30**	26	0	0	0	4
Northeast	Bauchi	5					5	**Southwest**	Anambra	5				5	
	Borno	5		4			1		Benue	5					5
	Gongola	5	2	2			1		Cross River	5		2			3
	Plateau	5				4	1		Imo	5				5	
									Rivers	5				2	3
Northeast subtotal		**20**	2	6	0	4	8	**Southeast subtotal**		**25**	0	2	0	12	11
TOTAL NORTH		**40**	2	6	7	4	21	**TOTAL SOUTH**		**55**	26	2	0	12	15

Sources: Toyin Falola and Julius Ihonvbere, *The Rise and Fall of Nigeria's Second Republic, 1979 – 84*, (London: Zed Books 1985); "79 Election" *The Punch*, July 16, 1979; "79 Election," *The Punch,* July 17, 1979.

Table 10: Governorships Won, By Zone and State, 1979 Election

NORTH							SOUTH						
	State	**UPN**	**GNPP**	**PRP**	**NPP**	**NPN**		**State**	**UPN**	**GNPP**	**PRP**	**NPP**	**NPN**
Northwest	Kaduna			1			**Southwest**	Bendel	1				
	Kano			1				Kwara					1
	Niger					1		Lagos	1				
	Sokoto					1		Ogun	1				
								Ondo	1				
								Oyo	1				
Northwest subtotal				2		2	**Southwest subtotal**		5				1
Northeast	Bauchi					1	**Southeast**	Anambra				1	
	Borno		1					Benue					1
	Gongola		1					Cross River					1
	Plateau				1			Imo				1	
								Rivers					1
Northeast subtotal			2		1	1	**Southeast subtotal**					2	3
TOTAL NORTH		**0**	**2**	**2**	**1**	**3**	**TOTAL SOUTH**		**5**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**3**

Sources: Toyin Falola and Julius Ihonvbere, *The Rise and Fall of Nigeria's Second Republic, 1979 – 84*, (London: Zed Books 1985); "79 Election" *The Punch*, July 16, 1979; "79 Election," *The Punch,* July 17, 1979.

Table 11: House Seats, By Zone and State, 1999 Election

NORTH						SOUTH					
	State	**# Seats**	**PDP**	**AD**	**APP**		**State**	**# Seats**	**PDP**	**AD**	**APP**
Northwest	Jigawa	11	3		8	**Southwest**	Ekiti	6		6	
	Kano	24	23	1			Lagos	24		23	1
	Kebbi	8	5		3		Ogun	9		9	
	Kaduna	15	13		2		Ondo	8	1	7	
	Katsina	15	15				Osun	8	1	7	
	Sokoto	11	2		9		Oyo	14	2	12	
	Zamfara	7	1		6						
Northwest Subtotal		67	39	1	28	**Southwest Subtotal**		48	2	39	1
Northeast	Adamawa	8	7		1	**Southeast**	Abia	8	7		1
	Bauchi	10	8		2		Anambra	11	10		1
	Borno	10	4		6		Imo	10	6		4
	Gombe	6	5		1		Ebonyi	6	6		
	Taraba	6	5		1		Enugu	8	3	2	3
	Yobe	6	2		4						
Northeast Subtotal		40	26	0	14	**Southeast Subtotal**		43	29	2	9
Middle Belt	Abuja, FCT	2	2			**South South**	Akwa Ibom	10	10		
	Benue	11	10		1		Bayelsa	5	4	1	
	Kogi	9	4		5		Delta	10	5		5
	Kwara	6	1		5		Cr. River	8	3		5
	Nasarawa	5	5				Edo	9	8		1
	Niger	9	8		1		Rivers	13	11		2
	Plateau	8	7		1						
Middle Belt Subtotal		50	37	0	13	**South South Subtotal**		45	36	1	8
TOTAL NORTH		**157**	**102**	**2**	**55**	**TOTAL SOUTH**		**136**	**67**	**42**	**17**

Sources: Independent National Electoral Commission. Chris Anyanwu, *The Law Makers*, 3rd ed. (Korea: Startcraft Publishers, 1999.)

Table 12: Senate Seats, By Zone and State, 1999 Election

NORTH						SOUTH					
	State	**# Seats**	**PDP**	**AD**	**APP**		**State**	**# Seats**	**PDP**	**AD**	**APP**
Northwest	Jigawa	3	1		2	**Southwest**	Ekiti	3	1	2	
	Kano	3	3				Lagos	3		3	
	Kebbi	3	1		2		Ogun	3		3	
	Kaduna	3	3				Ondo	3		3	
	Katsina	3	3				Osun	3		3	
	Sokoto	3	1		2		Oyo	3		3	
	Zamfara	3			3						
Northwest Subtotal		21	12	0	9	**Southwest Subtotal**		18	1	17	0
Northeast	Adamawa	3	3			**Southeast**	Abia	3	2		1
	Bauchi	3	3				Anambra	3	3		
	Borno	3	2		1		Imo	3	2		1
	Gombe	3	1		2		Ebonyi	3	3		
	Taraba	3	2		1		Enugu	3		2	1
	Yobe	3	1		2						
Northeast Subtotal		18	12	0	6	**Southeast Subtotal**		15	11	2	3
Middle Belt	Abuja, FCT	1	1			**South South**	Akwa Ibom	3	3		
	Benue	3	3				Bayelsa	3	2	1	
	Kogi	3	2		1		Delta	3	3		
	Kwara	3			3		Cr. River	3	2		1
	Nasarawa	3	3				Edo	3	2		1
	Niger	3	3				Rivers	3			
	Plateau	3	3								
Middle Belt Subtotal		19	15	0	4	**South South Subtotal**		18	13	1	2
TOTAL NORTH		**58**	**39**	**0**	**19**	**TOTAL SOUTH**		**51**	**25**	**20**	**5**

Sources: Independent National Electoral Commission. Chris Anyanwu, *The Law Makers*, 3rd ed. (Korea: Startcraft Publishers, 1999.)

Table 13: Governorships, By State and Zone, 1999 Election

NORTH					SOUTH				
	State	**PDP**	**AD**	**APP**		**State**	**PDP**	**AD**	**APP**
Northwest	Jigawa			1	**Southwest**	Ekiti		1	
	Kano	1				Lagos		1	
	Kebbi			1		Ogun		1	
	Kaduna	1				Ondo		1	
	Katsina	1				Osun		1	
	Sokoto			1		Oyo		1	
	Zamfara			1					
Northwest Subtotal		3	0	4	**Southwest Subtotal**		0	6	0
Northeast	Adamawa	1			**Southeast**	Abia	1		
	Bauchi	1				Anambra	1		
	Borno			1		Imo	1		
	Gombe	1				Ebonyi	1		
	Taraba	1				Enugu	1		
	Yobe			1					
Northeast Subtotal		4	0	2	**Southeast Subtotal**		5	0	0
Middle Belt	Benue	1			**South South**	Akwa Ibom	1		
	Kogi			1		Bayelsa	1		
	Kwara			1		Delta	1		
	Nasarawa	1				Cr. River	1		
	Niger	1				Edo	1		
	Plateau	1				Rivers	1		
Middle Belt Subtotal		4	0	2	**South South Subtotal**		6	0	0
TOTAL NORTH		**11**	**0**	**8**	**TOTAL SOUTH**		**11**	**6**	**0**

Source**:** Independent National Electoral Commission, Department of Planning, Research and Statistics, "List of Elected Governors and Members of the State House of Assembly" (updated September 23, 2000)

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