the Congo and Cameroon, does not appear particularly insecure (to an outsider), and only its desire to maintain a similar absolute level of spending (between $125 and $181 million annually, as indicated in Figure 27) could explain such a relatively high expenditure level.[7] Oil wealth also probably exercises an influence in Gabon's security spending, and although this spending does not impose any undue burdens on its citizens (Gabon's social welfare spending and per capita GNP are very high in relative regional terms, and its ratio of military to social welfare spending is 1:5.9), it could exert pressure on neighbouring states to keep up in a "slow motion" arms race, which could also be detrimental to regional security.

A large number of states in the region also have relatively poor military/social expenditure ratios, scoring below the 1:2.0 point. The worst cases are, perhaps not surprisingly, Zaire and Rwanda, which have ratios of 1:0.5 and 1:0.6 respectively. Likewise, Uganda, Congo and the Central African Republic all score 1:1.6 ratios.[8] Burundi, Cameroon and Gabon all score better than 1:2.0 (1:2.4, 2.2 and 2.9, respectively). On the other end, Nigeria scores very highly, with a 1:5.9 ratio, but the absolute level of its social spending is so low that perhaps this result should not be given much significance. It does confirm, however, that a "good" military/social welfare spending ratio is not incompatible with a military and authoritarian government. In any case, Zaire and Rwanda, along with Angola and probably Sudan, have the worst ratios in the African regions surveyed here. Since three of these states are or have recently been engulfed in violent conflicts, Zaire appears *prima facie* to be spending excessively on the military spending (relative to social welfare).

The last two figures attempt to assess the societal or economic consequences of the region's level of military development. Figure 30 illustrates dramatically some additional examples of the "lost decade" of African economic development: only two states managed positive growth rates since 1990. One of them, Uganda, did so only because it emerged from a bitter civil war that had severely curtailed economic activity. The other, Burundi, risks plunging into genocide.[9] All of the others, from Nigeria to Zaire, saw their economies shrink. Like previous tables of this sort, however, there does not appear at first glance to be a strong possible relationship between economic growth and military spending levels, since the higher spenders are not clustered with the lowest growth rates, and low spenders do not seem to have benefitted in economic terms. But once again, given the uncertainties of the data, the small size of the sample, and the probable existence of a host of confounding factors, any conclusions drawn on the basis

---

[7] It should also be noted that Gabon's small population is less than half that of the Congo and 10 percent that of Cameroon.

[8] In order to obtain these ratios, Zaire's education, and Uganda's health, spending for 1990 were used. The figures were two and one dollars per capita respectively.

[9] For some details see Philip Gourevitch, "The Poisoned Country," *New York Review of Books*, 6 June 1996.