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# *Socialism and Economic Development in Tropical Africa*

by GIOVANNI ARRIGHI and JOHN S. SAUL*

A noted economist (Perroux) has defined socialism as 'le développement de tout l'homme et de tous les hommes'. Providing the motor for a drive towards socialism there is generally to be found a conviction that man's creative potential can only be fully realised in a society which transcends the cultural centrality of 'possessive individualism' and in which a signal measure of economic and social equality, the preconditions for genuine political democracy, are guaranteed. In the best of socialist intellectual work, however, socialists have been equally interested in economic development and in the full release of the potential for growth of the productive forces in a society. Within this tradition it was perhaps Marx who most dramatically fused the concern for economic development and the concern for the elimination of class inequalities in his presentation of the socialist case. He argued that the inequalities of the bourgeois society of his day increasingly meant that the potential of the available industrial machine would not be realised: inequality and muffled productive forces thus went hand in hand.[1]

Certain class inequalities have sometimes proved to be historically necessary to foster the full release of the potential for growth of the social productive forces; this is too obvious a fact to require emphasis. But the existence either of some necessary dichotomy between 'development' and 'equality' or, on the contrary, of some necessary link between the two cannot be postulated *a priori*. It has to be ascertained empirically through an analysis of the relationship between the class structure of a society and its economic development at each historical juncture. A sophisticated socialist case in contemporary Africa must therefore fuse a concern for an increased rate of economic development with a perception of the role

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[1] On the continued validity of a much refined Marxist critique of contemporary capitalist society along similar lines, see P. Baran and P. M. Sweezy, *Monopoly Capital* (New York, 1966).

played in the development equation by the existence and emergence of classes and groups with differential interests and access to benefits. Moreover, as will be argued in this article, one does in fact find the productive potential of African societies, and therefore their development and structural transformation, constrained by the present pattern of world and domestic economy and society; the available surplus is ill utilised—drained away, for example, as the repatriated profits of overseas firms or consumed by self-indulgent domestic élites—and the generation of a larger surplus from, for example, an aroused and mobilised peasantry discouraged. As this suggests, it is the pattern of current inequality, in particular, which tends thus to hamper a rise in productivity.

A viable socialist strategy directed towards these twin concerns will have to face dilemmas of choice in three closely related policy areas. On the level of the international economic and social system, one confronts the spectre of international capitalism and a grave inequality of financial power, realities which, as will be shown, can be major constraints on general development. On the domestic scene, one faces the problem of the relationship between 'town', the centre of administration and of such industrialisation as takes place, and 'country', an interaction from which real development could spring but which all too often defines the split between unequal and unconnected spheres of a society falling short of genuine transformation. Finally, one has the problem of agricultural development itself in a rural sphere where inequalities can and do begin to emerge, although, at least in the short run, these have a rather more ambiguous impact on the pace of development than the other inequalities already hinted at.

It is the absence of a really hard-headed look at the actual pattern of inequalities within contemporary Africa and in the world at large *and* at the direct relationship of this pattern to the trajectory of growth and development itself which explains the superficial character of much of the gloss on 'African Socialism' presented by its practitioners. To this point we shall return. This failure of analytical nerve also explains the generally unsatisfactory character of the bulk of academic commentary on the phenomenon of African Socialism. Perhaps the *locus classicus* of this body of work is a much-cited article by Elliot Berg entitled 'Socialism and Economic Development in Tropical Africa'.[1] Berg makes much of the failure of the Guinean experience, as well as several points

[1] E. Berg, 'Socialism and Economic Development in Tropical Africa', in *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* (Cambridge, Mass.), November 1964. For typical citations see J. S. Coleman, 'The Resurrection of Political Economy', in *Mawazo* (Kampala), I, 1967; and C. Anderson, F. Van der Mehden, and C. Young, *Issues of Political Development* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1967), ch. 10.

of general interest, culminating in a swingeing dismissal of the pretensions of a 'socialist case' for tropical Africa. But his analysis is undermined by a seeming disinterest in defining or taking seriously the real dilemma of development common to all African states, or the relationship of a socialist strategy to them. To Berg we shall also return—by way of a brief conclusion.

The purpose of this article is limited, as, at the present stage of the debate, we can merely hope to raise some neglected questions, juxtaposing them with the theory and *praxis* of African 'socialists'. The fuller elaboration of a socialist strategy, on the other hand, can only emerge at a more advanced stage of debate and research. In section I we examine the relationship between current class formation in tropical Africa and economic development, focusing on the involvement of international capitalism in the area and on the emergence of what we shall define as the 'labour aristocracy' of tropical Africa. In section II we shall look, first, at the ideology of 'African socialism' and, secondly, at the policies of African 'socialists', subjecting both theory and *praxis* to careful critique. From this exercise the reader should gain a broader perspective on the problem of socialism in contemporary Africa; we shall conclude with some brief remarks on the future course of socialist debate and strategy in Africa, making some reference to the Tanzanian experience (section III).

## I. CLASS FORMATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The vast majority of the population of tropical Africa consists of independent producers who do not depend upon wage employment for their subsistence.[1] Any discussion of economic development in tropical Africa must therefore begin with a general description of African pre-capitalist or, as they are more often referred to, traditional economies. This is extremely difficult, in view of their heterogeneity;[2] but some common features of particular relevance to our discussion can be singled out.

Individuals can customarily acquire land for homestead and farms through tribal or kinship rights. Only comparatively rarely is land

[1] K. C. Doctor and H. Gallis estimate that the proportion of the labour force of tropical Africa in wage employment is, on average, 11·1 per cent. However, migrant labour, characterised by partial dependence upon wage employment for its subsistence, is included in the estimate, so that the proletariat proper accounts for a lower percentage than the above. The estimate is in 'Size and Characteristics of Wage Employment in Africa: statistical estimates', *International Labour Review* (Geneva), XCIII, 2, February 1966.

[2] For a bibliography on traditional African systems, see J. Middleton, *The Effect of Economic Development on Traditional Political Systems South of the Sahara* (The Hague, 1966).

acquired or disposed of through purchase or sale, though the commercialisation of agriculture has often been followed by a marked expansion of private land ownership. The specialisation of labour has generally not gone very far in traditional African economies; a relatively small range of commodities is produced and few full-time specialists are to be found. In addition, the technology is rather rudimentary from the point of view of the tools used, storage and transport facilities, the control of plant and animal disease, and the control of water storage. Market exchanges were—and still are in many areas—peripheral, in the sense that most producers do not rely on exchange for the acquisition of the bulk of the means of subsistence. Thus the high dependence on the physical environment, due to the rudimentary technology, is matched by a relative independence from market fluctuations.

Social cohesion is fostered by obligatory gift- and counter-gift-giving between persons who stand in some socially defined relationships to one another, and/or by obligatory payments or labour services to some socially organised centre which re-allocates portions of what it receives. Security of subsistence is therefore generally guaranteed to the individual in two ways: through socially structured rights to receive factors of production and through emergency allotments of food from the chief and gifts from kin.

It is widely accepted that African peasants have, in general, been highly responsive to the market opportunities that have arisen through contact with European capitalism. This responsiveness has manifested itself in the labour migration system and/or in the rapid expansion of production for the market of both subsistence and cash crops. It seems that this responsiveness was made possible by the existence in traditional African economies of considerable surplus productive capacity in the form of both surplus land and surplus labour-time.[1] This means that the confrontation of a traditional economy producing a limited range of goods with the sophisticated consumption pattern of an advanced industrial system led to a re-allocation of labour-time from unproductive traditional activities to the production of a marketable surplus.[2]

It has been pointed out, however, that the increase in peasant production for the market has had the character of a 'once and for all' change (though distributed over a number of years), as witnessed by the characteristic growth curve of such production; a curve, that is, rising

[1] Cf. H. Myint, *The Economics of Developing Countries* (London, 1964), ch. 3, and also D. Walker, 'Problems of Economic Development of East Africa', in E. A. G. Robinson (ed.), *Economic Development for Africa South of the Sahara* (London, 1964), pp. 111–14.

[2] The adjective 'unproductive' has, of course, no negative implication concerning the rationality or the necessity within the traditional society of activities so characterised.

steeply in the early phase and tapering off gradually.[1] This phenomenon can be accounted for by the fact that the social structure of the traditional economies favours, by maximising security, the adoption of a short 'time horizon' in the allocation of whatever surplus might have been produced as between consumption, unproductive accumulation, and productive accumulation.[2] In other words, peasants still largely involved in a pre-capitalist mode of production are likely to have a strong preference for present consumption and often for unproductive accumulation, which, by maintaining or strengthening social cohesion, preserves the security afforded by the traditional system. This preference is likely to be strengthened by the confrontation of the peasants with the sophisticated consumption pattern of advanced industrial systems mentioned in the previous paragraph.

It would seem, therefore, that we have two problems involved in promoting the growth of productivity of the African peasantry: (*a*) *the problem of creating incentives to exploit whatever surplus productive capacity in the form of surplus land and surplus labour-time may exist*; and (*b*) *the problem of raising the productive absorption of the surplus produced in the traditional sector in order to engender the steady growth of the productivity of labour*. The first problem concerns the relationship between the modern and the traditional sectors; that is, it concerns the pattern of surplus absorption in the former which is likely to maximise the incentives to increase productivity in the latter. The second problem, on the other hand, relates to the type of organisation of production and institutions in the traditional sector which is likely to guarantee the desired responses to the stimuli transmitted by the modern sector. In tropical Africa the first problem seems of primary importance because population pressure on the land, though growing, is generally not yet severe, so that most traditional economies still have some surplus productive capacity. For this reason we shall focus our attention on the development potential of the pattern of surplus absorption in the modern sector.

The 'ideal type', in Max Weber's sense, of surplus absorption in the modern sectors of present-day tropical African economies is characterised by three main forms of surplus absorption: the export of profits

[1] Cf. Myint, op. cit. and Walker, op. cit.

[2] We define 'surplus' as the difference between the aggregate net output produced (net, that is, of the means of production used up in the process) and the means of subsistence consumed by the community, both referred to a given period of time. By 'subsistence' we understand goods that are socially recognised as necessities, so that they exclude what may be called 'discretionary' consumption. On the concept of the surplus see P. A. Baran, *The Political Economy of Growth* (New York, 1967), ch. 2; and C. Bettelheim, 'Le Surplus économique, facteur de base d'une politique de développement', in his *Planification et croissance accéléré* (Paris, 1965). Our definition is closer to Bettelheim's than to Baran's.

and investment income in general; discretionary consumption on the part of a small labour aristocracy, as defined below; and productive investment, embodying capital-intensive techniques, mainly concentrated in sectors other than those producing capital goods.[1] In order to understand the relationship between these three forms of surplus absorption, it is convenient to begin by examining the causes and implications of the sectoral distribution and factor-intensity of productive investment.

The use of capital-intensive techniques of production in tropical Africa is not only the result of technological factors. Two other factors seem equally relevant: the investment policies of the modern international corporations in under-developed economies and the wage and salary policies of the independent African governments, which, in turn, depend upon the character of their power base. With regard to the former, the modern international corporations tend to adopt capital-intensive techniques mainly because of managerial constraints and because of their strong financial position.

Techniques of management, organisation, and control have evolved in the technological environment of the industrial centres and cannot be easily adapted to the conditions obtaining in under-developed countries. In consequence, the spectrum of techniques taken into consideration by the corporations may not include labour-intensive techniques. An equally and probably more important factor seems, however, to be the financial strength of these corporations, which they acquire through their pricing and dividend policies in the industrial centres as well as the periphery.[2] The international corporations apply to all their branches technical methods corresponding to their capital;[3] as a result, capital-intensive techniques are adopted in tropical Africa irrespective of the situation in the territories where the investment takes place.

But capital-intensity of production is also favoured by the salary and wage policies of the independent African governments. The salary structure of the independent African states remained as a colonial heritage and, as Africans gradually entered the civil service and the managerial positions in large foreign concerns, they assumed the basic

[1] This 'ideal' type is analysed in greater detail in G. Arrighi, 'International Corporations, Labour Aristocracies and Economic Development in Tropical Africa', in D. Horowitz (ed.), *The Corporations and the Cold War* (London, forthcoming). The category 'capital goods' must be understood in a very broad sense as including all those goods which directly increase the productive capacity of the economy.

[2] The concepts of 'industrial centres' and 'periphery' have been introduced by Raul Prebisch to designate the advanced industrial economies and the relatively under-developed countries, respectively.

[3] F. Perroux and R. Demonts, 'Large Firms—Small Nations', in *Présence africaine* (Paris), x, 38, 1961, p. 46.

salaries attached to the posts.[1] This unquestioning acceptance of a colonial salary structure brought about a huge gap between the incomes of the élites and sub-élites in bureaucratic employment and the mass of the wage workers. Thus the whole level of labour incomes, from the unskilled labourer upwards, came into question and, given the political influence of urban workers on African governments, the major employers of labour, a steady rise in wages ensued. This steady rise is also favoured by, and tends to strengthen, the capital-intensive bias of investment, discussed above. Capital-intensity generally means that labour is a lower proportion of costs, so that the individual concern is more willing to concede wage increases (especially foreign oligopolies which can pass on cost increases to the consumer). However, this reinforces the tendency towards capital-intensive (or labour-saving) growth and a 'spiral process' may ensue.[2]

With regard to the sectoral distribution of productive investment, besides obvious technological factors (economies of scale, advantages of operating in an industrial environment, etc.) there seem to be three main reasons for the observed under-investment in the capital-goods industries of tropical Africa. In the first place, the very bias in favour of capital-intensive techniques discussed above tends to promote the use of highly specialised machinery and consequently restrains the growth of demand for capital goods that could be produced locally. Other reasons relate more directly to the behaviour of the modern international corporations. In non-industrialised economies the market for capital goods is small; for such goods to be produced there must be good reasons to believe that the whole economy will develop in such a way as to nourish a market for capital goods.[3]

This fact was no serious obstacle in the nineteenth century, when competitive entrepreneurs and financial groups often undertook investment which was 'unjustified' by market conditions, thereby fostering the industrialisation of less developed economies. Nowadays the great calculating rationality, care, and circumspection in approaching new developments which characterise modern corporations prevent that process from taking place. As Sweezy has remarked, it is one of the many contradictions of capitalism that better knowledge may impair its functioning. Finally, the lack of investment in the sector producing capital goods is also determined by the oligopolistic structure of advanced capitalist countries because this implies that producers of capital

[1] P. Lloyd (ed.), *The New Elites of Tropical Africa* (London, 1966), pp. 10–11.

[2] H. A. Turner, *Wage Trends, Wage Policies and Collective Bargaining: the problems for underdeveloped countries* (Cambridge, 1965), p. 21.

[3] M. Barratt Brown, *After Imperialism* (London, 1963), p. 419.

goods, in deciding whether to establish, or to assist in establishing, a capital-goods industry, will generally take into account the effect of the decision not only on their own and their competitors' export interests but also on those of their customers.

The lack of development of the capital-goods sector has important implications for the growth of the modern sector. For such a development, when it does occur, can perform the dual function of expanding both the productive capacity of the economy *and* the internal market. This latter function, too often disregarded, was emphasised by Lenin, who argued that the development of the internal market was possible despite restricted consumption by the masses (or the lack of an external outlet for capitalist production) because 'to expand production it is first of all necessary to enlarge that department of social production which manufactures means of production, it is necessary to draw into it workers who create a demand for articles of consumption. Hence "consumption" develops after "accumulation".'[1] Thus under-investment in the capital-goods sector restrains the expansion not only of the productive capacity of tropical Africa but also of its internal market, perpetuating the dependence of the economy on the growth of world demand for its primary products. It is not surprising, therefore, that the economies of tropical Africa have been unable to grow faster than their exports. In the period 1950–65 real product seems in fact to have grown at an average compound rate of 4·2 per cent per annum,[2] which is about 1 per cent lower than the rate of export growth.

Given the high rate of population growth, *per capita* real product has increased at an average rate of 2 per cent per annum in the same period. This relatively low rate of growth, combined with the effects of the 'wage-mechanisation' spiral discussed above, has resulted in a decrease in the proportion of the labour force in wage employment in most countries and has been accompanied by a widening gap between urban and rural incomes.[3] It is far from correct, however, to assume that all classes in the urban areas have benefited from this widening gap. A large proportion of urban workers in Africa notoriously consists of semi-proletarianised peasants, periodically engaged in wage employment. This migrant labour force is not 'stabilised' and in general does not acquire that specialisation needed in industrial enterprises which use capital-intensive techniques. These labourers *as a class*, i.e. as peasants temporarily in wage employment, cannot gain from the 'wage-

[1] Quoted in H. Alavi, 'Imperialism Old and New', in *The Socialist Register 1964* (London), pp. 106–7.

[2] Cf. O.E.C.D., *National Accounts of Less Developed Countries* (Paris, 1967), preliminary.

[3] Cf. Arrighi, op. cit. and Turner, op. cit. pp. 12–13.

mechanisation' spiral we have been discussing, since higher individual incomes are matched by a reduction in their wage employment opportunities.

The higher wages and salaries, however, foster the stabilisation of the better-paid section of the labour force whose high incomes justify the severance of ties with the traditional economy. Stabilisation, in turn, promotes specialisation, greater bargaining power, and further increases in the incomes of this small section of the labour force, which represents the proletariat proper of tropical Africa. These workers enjoy incomes three or more times higher than those of unskilled labourers and, together with the élites and sub-élites in bureaucratic employment in the civil service and expatriate concerns, constitute what we call the labour aristocracy of tropical Africa. It is the discretionary consumption of this class which absorbs a significant proportion of the surplus produced in the money economy.

The third significant form of surplus absorption is the profits, interest, dividends, fees, etc. transferred abroad by the international corporations. It seems a well-established fact that foreign private investment in less developed economies (far from being an outlet for a domestically generated surplus) has been, in the recent past, an efficient device for transferring surplus generated abroad to the advanced capitalist countries.[1] It is a highly plausible assumption that, at least with regard to tropical Africa, this transfer of surplus is bound to increase in the future, for two main reasons: the high rate of profit expected by foreign corporations and the relatively slow rate of growth of the economies of tropical Africa. It appears that returns in the order of 15–20 per cent on capital, usually on the basis of an investment maturing in about three years, are required in order to attract foreign capital to tropical Africa.[2] The implication is that, in order to offset the outflow of profits, foreign investment in the area must steadily grow at a rate of 11–14 per cent, which seems impossible of attainment in economies growing at a rate of 4–5 per cent. Thus, while the transfer of surplus has been somewhat contained during the present phase of easy import substitution, the outflow can only become more serious in the years ahead as that phase comes to an end.

[1] In the case of the U.S.A., for example, figures contained in the *Surveys of Current Business* of the U.S. Department of Commerce show that total direct investment abroad, for the period 1950–63, amounted to $17,382m. against a total inflow of investment income of $29,416m. Cf. Baran and Sweezy, op. cit. p. 107. Data derived from the same source show that, in the period 1959–64, U.S. direct investment (excluding oil) in Africa amounted to $386m. and investment income to $610m.

[2] Cf. D. J. Morgan, *British Private Investment in East Africa: report of a survey and a conference* (London, 1965).

We may now turn to discuss the development potential of this pattern of surplus absorption. The focus of attention must be upon the creation of stimuli to exploit the surplus productive capacity existing in the traditional economies. There are two main ways in which African peasants participate in the money economy: through periodic wage employment and through the sale of agricultural produce. It follows that the development potential of a given pattern of surplus absorption in the modern economy is determined by its impact on the demand for peasant labour and produce. From this standpoint the pattern discussed has little, if any, potential. The slow growth of the money economy and the concurrent high rate of mechanisation and automation hold back the growth of wage-employment opportunities for the peasantry. More important still, the absorption of a considerable share of the surplus by the discretionary consumption of the labour aristocracy (which creates demand in the industrial countries or in the modern economies of tropical Africa themselves), and by the transfer of investment incomes abroad, restrains the growth of internal demand for peasant produce. As a consequence the creation of stimuli to increase productivity in the rural areas is left to the sluggish expansion of foreign demand for African produce and to those 'invocations to effort' which are a prominent feature of much 'socialist' practice in Africa and to which we shall return.

The slow growth of peasant incomes and productivity has in turn a negative impact on the growth potential of the modern sector itself, since it further hampers the expansion of the internal market. It would seem, therefore, that an acceleration of economic growth in tropical Africa within the existing political-economic framework is highly unlikely and, as the phase of easy import substitution is superseded, a slow-down may actually be expected. In the light of these considerations, the current economic growth of tropical Africa may be properly characterised as 'perverse growth'; that is, growth which undermines, rather than enhances, the potentialities of the economy for long-term growth.[1]

In describing theoretically the current pattern of growth in Africa we have argued in terms of an 'ideal type', as we were bound to in an essay of this sort. The full range of historical cases will undoubtedly include exceptions which do not fit our conclusions. Yet it is interesting to note that even the Ivory Coast, model of the international capitalist road to development, is beginning to feel the pinch which accompanies

[1] The concept of 'perverse growth' has been introduced by Ignacy Sachs. Cf. his 'On Growth Potential, Proportional Growth, and Perverse Growth', in *Czechoslovak Economic Papers* (Prague), VII, 1966, pp. 65–71.

that strategy; several authors have recently commented on the country's pattern of growth 'without development', without genuine self-sustaining transformation, which looks increasingly tenuous for the long run as profits begin increasingly to flow back to France and few reinforcing complementarities emerge. Indigenous sources of capital and 'entrepreneurial' ability (public or private), which might push in a more fruitful direction, are stifled by the emergent class structure and pattern of international involvement.[1]

The foregoing discussion suggests the advisability of a policy of self-reliance *vis-à-vis* international capitalism for two main reasons: (*a*) because of the drain on the surplus which, sooner or later, is engendered by dependence on foreign capital; and (*b*) because of the impact of foreign investment (with respect to choice of techniques and to its sectoral distribution) upon the structure of the tropical African economies.[2] It does not follow, however, that the disengagement from international capitalism is a *sufficient* condition for development. As we have seen, the emergence of a labour aristocracy, with considerable political power, was brought about not only by the pattern of foreign investment but also by the acceptance of a colonial salary structure on the part of independent African governments. The labour aristocracy will therefore continue to use its power in a state-controlled modern sector in order to appropriate a considerable share of the surplus in the form of increasing discretionary consumption. Under these conditions 'perverse growth' would continue notwithstanding state ownership of the means of production.[3] In order to achieve 'real' long-term development, disengagement from international capitalism will have to be accompanied by a change in the power base of African governments.

Yet even the re-allocation of surplus from the discretionary consumption of the 'labour aristocracy' to productive investment, though a necessary condition, is not sufficient for steady long-term growth. Productive investment in the modern sector must be directed towards the creation of development stimuli in the traditional sector; that is, it

[1] See S. Amin, *Le Développement du capitalisme en Côte d'Ivoire* (Paris, 1967); S. Amin, 'Côte d'Ivoire: valeur et limites d'une expérience', in *Jeune Afrique* (Paris), October 1967; Z. Dobrska, 'Economic Development of the Ivory Coast from the Winning of Independence', in *Africana Bulletin* (Warsaw), v, 1966.

[2] It is surprising that apologists of foreign private investment in Africa (who consider the drain on the surplus a payment for technical assistance and finance supplied by the international corporations) have seldom paused to consider whether the managerial, administrative, and technical skills supplied are suited to the requirements of the receiving economies from the standpoint of their growth potential (as opposed to some short-term effects on income and employment).

[3] Cf. Sachs, op. cit.

must be directed to the expansion of those industries producing the capital and the consumer goods most suited to the requirements of the traditional sector. Failing this, as the history of socialist development in non-industrial environments has so often demonstrated, the growing demand for labour and produce following upon industrialisation would merely lead to unfavourable terms of trade for the traditional sector, restraining the exploitation of its surplus productive capacity.[1]

The problem of creating incentives to exploit surplus productive capacity in the traditional sector is crucial because there still exist, among the peasants of tropical Africa, surplus land and surplus labour-time. The second problem involved in raising the productivity of African peasants (see p. 145, above) is that of ensuring the *productive absorption of the surplus produced in the traditional sector*. Here the question of rural transformation is more starkly posed, even if difficult to answer at the theoretical level. It will involve some calculations as to whether the transformation of traditional economies is best attained through the formation of an agrarian capitalist class or the gradual absorption of the individual peasant families into larger units (co-operatives, collectives, communes): whether through the utilisation or superseding of traditional forms of work co-operation: and whether through reliance upon central marketing boards or traders for the collection of produce from, and distribution of manufactured goods to, the traditional producers.

Certainly a process of very real differentiation is afoot in many parts of rural Africa. The commercialisation of peasant agriculture has often been followed by a marked expansion of private land ownership,[2] and a growing division between the nascent agricultural 'entrepreneurs' (the 'kulaks', as Professor Dumont recently referred to them in Tanzania), the more marginal cash croppers, the subsistence farmers, and the agricultural labourers. Increasingly these strata have differential interests with implications for rural strategy. Thus, for example, co-operatives may come to be manipulated by the more economically advanced peasants for their own benefit. If the instruments of 'generalised mobilisation' become mortgaged to one particular group, the thrust of such a development policy may well be blunted.

On the other hand, it has been ably argued that at this stage in development it may be wise to 'let the kulaks run', to allow the logic of the market to *briser la famille* (as Samir Amin has put it), and to

[1] For an excellent discussion of problems of socialist development in a non-industrial environment, see F. Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1966).

[2] Cf. S. Chodak, 'Social Classes in Sub-Saharan Africa', in *Africana Bulletin*, IV, 1966.

break down the attendant traditional economic constraints once and for all.[1] It is not inconceivable, of course, that links of common interest formed between emergent 'capitalist' farmers and the labour aristocracy could become a further force to sustain the present pattern of economy and society—one thinks of the symbiosis between planters and bureaucrats in the Ivory Coast. Yet much will depend upon the general framework provided by the trajectory of development in the modern sector as to how short-run compromises with 'inequality' in the 'traditional' sector are situated and perhaps eventually controlled.

In conclusion, the first part of our analysis raises a number of questions concerning the relationship between current class formation and long-term development in tropical Africa. The growth of a labour aristocracy and the reliance on international capitalism, far from being necessary for such development, seem instead to reduce the growth potential of the economies in question, although the relationship between class formation and development, for the short run at least, is much less clear in the rural areas. It may be argued that the changes in surplus utilisation, which we have seen to be necessary for real development, are not possible under present historical conditions, particularly in view of the short-term losses in economic growth and, quite possibly, in political stability that would ensue from any serious attempt at disengagement from international capitalism or reform of the power base of the African governments involved. This question, however, by no means invalidates the historical necessity of the change itself, which should therefore be of central importance in socialist debate.

## II. THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF AFRICAN SOCIALISM

It seems relevant at this point to appraise, using rather broad strokes, the theory and practice of African socialism as evidenced to date. In this way the nature of the limitations, both intellectual and contextual, upon socialist experiment in Africa may be clarified. It would, of course, be artificial to separate too categorically considerations as to 'theory' and 'practice'; an understanding of the latter must serve to illuminate the real texture and function of the former. None the less, many striking ambiguities are readily identifiable on the ideological plane itself, whether this be seen primarily as a determinant of practice or merely as its reflection and rationalisation. The broad outline of the constella-

[1] See S. Amin, *Trois expériences africaines de développement: le Mali, la Guinée, et le Ghana* (Paris, 1965), pp. 10–17 and 230–32; also 'The Class Struggle in Africa' (anon.), in *Révolution* (Paris), I, p. 9.

tion of ideas under discussion, sometimes identified generically as 'African Socialism', are by now familiar enough,[1] though they remain difficult to capsulise as we must do here. It should be noted that even the over-arching label of 'African Socialism' has been vigorously rejected by some of the continent's more militant practitioners; we must be careful not to schematise away real differences.

Yet there remain certain central themes common to most African writers and speakers on the subject and, more important, some common pattern to the seeming inadequacy of the analysis underlying many of their statements. Professed African socialists are, to be sure, uniformly interested in economic development; they have also sensed that some form of co-ordinated expansion on the agricultural and industrial fronts is required in order to attain that goal. The precise nature of the problems of 'structural transformation' which are involved is less clearly fixed in their minds, though certain echoes of these concerns are sometimes to be found scattered through their speeches and programmes.

Even socialists, however, have tended to operate in terms of the conventional model of development based upon the expansion of cash crops for the export market, increased industrial capital formation in consumer-goods industries, and the import of foreign—generally private —capital, the requisite amount of infrastructural investment being the responsibility of the state. This is, of course, in essence the ideal type of 'perverse growth' in Africa which we have discussed in section I. Thus the main intellectual limitations, whether they be conscious or unconscious, lie in an inadequate understanding of the process of sustained development and structural transformation, but also, as will become apparent, in an insufficiently subtle and critical picture both of the emerging pattern of African socio-economic stratification (particularly as regards 'town–country' relations) and of the realities of the international economy. Small wonder, then, that ideas about 'development' and 'equality' are themselves not systematically linked, and, in consequence, that 'socialist' strategies emerge which leave much to be desired.

In brief, a thoroughly disabused (and disinterested) look at such patterns has rarely been taken by African leaders. This is reflected by the extent to which the general tone of 'socialist' thinking in Africa tends to blur these concerns, despite the occasional admissions and qualifications witnessing to rather greater sophistication. Thus, to take

[1] See, particularly, J. Mohan, 'Varieties of African Socialism', in *The Socialist Register 1966* (London). Also W. H. Friedland and C. G. Rosberg Jr., *African Socialism* (Stanford, 1964); Charles Andrain, 'Democracy and Socialism: ideologies of African leaders', in D. Apter (ed.), *Ideology and Discontent* (New York, 1964); and Bernard Charles, 'Le Socialisme africaine, mythes et réalités', in *Revue française de science politique* (Paris), xv, 1965, p. 856.

one example, Senghor is sometimes alive in his writings to the dangers of a newly privileged, urban-based group of 'intellectuals—liberal professionals, functionaries, employers, even workers'—arising to exploit 'the peasants, shepherds and artisans'. But the point is not pushed nor possible institutional checks hypothesised; rather, he relies largely upon 'spiritual values' to avert the danger. Yet excessive self-denial on the part of this 'labour aristocracy '(as we have defined it) is certainly not to be expected when so militant a socialist spokesman as Touré himself can note:

In our denunciation of bourgeois tendencies we must not, as do specialists in confusion, accuse of being bourgeois the peasant, the worker or the civil servant who is a convinced democrat and devoted P.D.G. member and who by his personal efforts has been able to build a modern house, purchase a car or acquire honestly anything which contributes to the material well-being of his family. Since the main objective of our revolution is to make it possible for all to attain through work the highest possible degree of prosperity, we cannot blame these people. On the contrary, a man must utilize his energies and faculties for the constant improvement of his living standard.[1]

Surely this must amount to an overt sanction of the norm of *enrichissez-vous* for the bureaucratic groups (of party and state), 'the new élites of tropical Africa',[2] which have emerged to prominence in the post-independence period. There has really been little grasp, within the doctrine of African socialism, of such a form of inequality and the accompanying possibilities for exploitation by this labour aristocracy. The necessity of bridging the urban–rural gap is rarely given sufficient prominence; the sort of assault on privilege which would free a good proportion of the surplus from urban consumptionism for rural incentives and capital formation is deflected away.

Occasionally certain steps are taken and presented with a logic that seems impeccably to combine the twin concerns of development and equality. Thus an argument postulated upon the social necessity of capital accumulation and the imperative of 'hard work' is often used when African governments turn to deal with the trade unions. In most 'socialist' countries the latter have been brought to heel, absorbed organisationally into the network of the ruling party. It is argued that they represent a privileged cadre of workers and that their gains are being made at the expense of the country as a whole, of the rural sector in particular. As a step towards general development, they must be disciplined accordingly and redirected from 'consumptionist' to 'productionist' activities.[3]

[1] In *Africa Report* (Washington), May 1963, 'Special Issue on African Socialism', pp. 26–7.

[2] This is the title of a useful book on related themes edited by Peter Lloyd (London, 1966).

[3] For this distinction see Isaac Deutscher, 'Russia', in W. Galenson (ed.), *Comparative Labour Movements* (New York, 1952); and Friedland and Rosberg, op. cit. p. 19.

Another prime target is the trading community, and again the argument against it is often advanced in terms of the need for both a more egalitarian pattern of distribution and accelerated capital accumulation. The redistribution of excessive profits of local traders and (sometimes) foreign trading houses is demanded, to provide incentive payments for the growers and more finance for productive investment by the state. In addition it is argued that the marketing co-operatives which are further encouraged by such steps in the rural areas represent a collective, and therefore socialist, enterprise which is laudable in its own right. The fact that the trading group to be so displaced is often largely composed of a racial or cultural minority may, of course, ease the acceptance of such policies.

One might be better disposed to accept these latter moves on the terms in which they have been presented by the leaders, were the general line of argument which is used to justify them (that is, the criticism, by presumptive socialists, of inequalities which block development) more consciously and rigorously applied to the society as a whole. Unfortunately this has not been the case: perceived inequalities—what Touré has termed 'contradictions'—get very easily swallowed up and blurred analytically within the framework provided by the continent's distinctive 'socialist' ideology. Here we refer to that strand of the argument which has been characterised by Peter Worsley as 'populism'.[1] In Africa this has involved the claim, by almost all leaders, that African societies are, even now, classless. The foundations for pervasive social solidarity are to be found in traditional society and, mediated by a contemporary 'attitude of mind', continue to strike against meaningful stratification.

The most outspoken statement of this 'model' is to be found in Nyerere's early paper 'Ujamaa',[2] but even so Marxist-tinged a spokesman as Touré has fallen back upon the 'communocratic' nature of African society to smooth over, ideologically, certain of the potential class antagonisms he sees in Guinean society. To this Touré adds the argument that such classless uniformity is reinforced by the fact of the whole population's facing, as a body, the neo-colonialist exploiter. Not surprisingly, nationalism provides much of the cement for this populist edifice, being useful also for displacing continuing ethnic or tribal consciousness. Countless quotations could be introduced to demonstrate

[1] Peter Worsley, *The Third World* (London, 1964), ch. 4. For a detailed critique of 'populism' see John S. Saul, 'On African Populism', in E. Gellner and G. Ionescu (eds.), *Populism* (London, 1968).

[2] This essay is reproduced in J. K. Nyerere, *Freedom and Unity/Uhuru na Umoja* (Dar es Salaam and London, 1966 & 1967), pp. 162–71. It was first published in 1962.

these general emphases in Africa. Nor, within such a 'classless' society, is it surprising that any consideration as to the nature of the social relations of production is seen to be of little fundamental concern to socialist aspirations. Thus Kofi Baako, a man as close as anyone to Nkrumah in Ghana:

> In a Nkrumahist-Socialist state, the farmer will not lose his farm; the landlord will not lose his house, but will not be allowed to exploit the tenant; the employer will not be allowed to exploit the worker, nor will the worker be allowed to cheat the employer by idling about; the car owner will still have his car... the property or wealth which someone has acquired or earned through hard labour and through honest use of his mental and physical energies [will not] be taken away from him and shared among lazy, unscrupulous, indisciplined but able-bodied citizens.

As Fitch and Oppenheimer observe of such utterances: 'Neither landlords nor capitalists will be abolished—they will simply be regulated.'[1]

This 'populist' strain to African socialism also has important implications for the analysis of the rural sector; moreover, there it is perhaps even more likely to be taken seriously by the ideologues themselves. Worsley summarises this theme when he writes: 'Africa is its peasantry, subsistence producers and cash-crop producers, but independent peasants. This is the basic fact about the social structures of the new African states.' We have already seen this to be suspect, given the character of 'town–country' relationships in contemporary Africa, but within the rural area itself solidarity is (once again) felt to arise from these facts. Yet, as we have suggested, even the relatively unrevolutionised rural economies of tropical Africa are no longer as undifferentiated as these African leaders like to profess. What is clear, therefore, is that the issue of nascent rural class formation and its implications for development cannot be squarely faced, or effective 'long-run' strategies of socialist control and direction developed, within a populist framekwor of analysis which masks the process of rural change.

Even in the absence of such a searching examination of rural realities, it none the less remains true that the 'mobilisation' of the peasantry is regarded as a vital necessity much more vocally in states of 'socialist' bent than in others. There, a more generalised release of productive energies is looked to; it is in this context that the strand of 'African Socialism' which Friedland had termed 'the social obligation to work' becomes most prominent.[2] Socialism is presented as an invocation to

[1] Both Baako's remark and the subsequent comment are to be found in B. Fitch and M. Oppenheimer, *Ghana: end of an illusion* (New York, 1966), p. 112.

[2] Friedland and Rosberg, op. cit. p. 16.

effort and, implicitly or explicitly, a certain measure of sacrifice against the promise of some future day is encouraged, in however unspecified a way. Thus *investissement humain* and self-help become a collective exercise in some, often marginal, form of capital accumulation. These projects can be of value in educating people to national consciousness;[1] but, as should be apparent, such emphases may merely encourage the evasion of those more central problems which concern the interaction of traditional and modern sectors and the expansion of surplus productive capacity. All too rarely, for example, is the character of any choice between capitalist and collectivist agricultural accumulation spelt out or related to broader questions of development priorities such as we have posed; policies can therefore quite easily fall between two stools.

Just as the populist strand in African socialism obscures the realities of class formation, so it is important, if somewhat paradoxical, to observe that much of the criticism of 'neo-colonialism' in socialist Africa has served to obscure the realities of international capitalism's involvement on the continent. Of necessity, therefore, the range of specific policy options is also artificially narrowed. Even the most vocal of socialists assume the necessity of dealing with 'the enemy'; as Jean Lacouture observed in discussing the Dakar Colloquium on African Socialism: 'The distinction, always somewhat artificial, between "revolutionary" and "reformist" Africa now seems altogether obsolete...What is even more striking is that nobody challenged the necessity of calling upon foreign aid and investment.'[2]

But neither did anyone feel too compelled, it would seem, to analyse very systematically the arguments concerning the development potential of such investment by an increasingly monopolistic brand of international capitalism in terms of the choice of techniques and the absorption of labour, the reinvestment of profits, and the generation of internal demand. Policy statements thus oscillate rather erratically between the abstract slogans of 'neo-colonialism'—a useful instrument with which to forge national unity behind the leaders—and a 'forced' acceptance of the 'necessity' of encouraging foreign investment in order to obtain skills and capital.

Side-effects tend to drop out of the equation. The application of a long time-horizon might suggest that, despite a time lag, the inflow of unfettered foreign capital must eventually lead to a marked drain of repatriated profits and the like. Therefore an assessment must constantly be made as to its genuine development potential; as suggested, many

[1] Cf. K. Grundy, 'Mali: the prospects of "Planned Socialism"', ibid. p. 192.
[2] From *Le Monde* (Paris), 11 December 1962, cited in *Africa Report*, May 1963, p. 18.

forms of capital import may be worse than none at all, despite the subsequent existence of plant on the ground and a handful of newly hired indigenous employees. One can, of course, suspect that some of the encouragement given to an increased capital inflow may arise from the élite's concern with short-term balance-of-payments difficulties caused by excessive imports. None the less, for the genuine African socialist, the necessity of *internal capital formation* must be underscored in his arguments and, furthermore, explained clearly to the people.

For, all too often, the promise of a favourable deal to be made by the élite with that most powerful external constellation of technology and economic power which is the western economic system smacks of an attempt to get something for nothing (an unlikely occurrence, but perhaps a useful political case to make to the mass of the population in the short run). Given a clearer perspective, the definition of firmer conditions for such capital as did come in would also become a more pressing imperative than has been the case, however difficult such conditions are to apply in practice. And a vigorous attack upon 'balkanisation' and an advocacy of regional groupings, preferably of 'like-minded' states, to encourage complementarities and co-ordinated development would become an even more prominent feature.

The relating of an ideology like African socialism to the complex social structure of changing Africa and the identifying of its functions is not an easy task. We have said enough, however, to suggest that more than mere intellectual confusion is at issue. It is true that in colonial and economically under-developed Africa an indigenous dominant class with power grounded in the process of production had, by and large, not emerged;[1] the political and bureaucratic groups which did come forward to prominence were therefore defined by a greater 'relative social autonomy and plasticity', as Roger Murray has put it.[2] None the less, after independence, when a combination of past education and/or political record and current bureaucratic position came to be the chief determinants of privilege in the new society, it is clear that, in the absence of more rigorous organisation and ideological clarity, a rather narrow vested interest in the system had come to characterise the new élites, 'une bourgeoisie plus proche d'un mandarinat', as Dia has called them. Their growing consciousness of a differentiated position *vis-à-vis* the mass of the population was such that Lloyd, one of the shrewdest

[1] Though the emergence of a small but often outspoken trading class in a country like Ghana, for example, can play an important role in defining the trajectory of socialist experiments.

[2] Roger Murray, 'Second Thoughts on Ghana', in *New Left Review* (London), XLII, March–April 1967, p. 34.

observers of this process, could toy with the idea of discarding the 'élite' concept and substituting the notion of 'class' to describe the position in society of this group.[1]

Thus it is within this sort of context that one must place trends—to an increased centralisation of power, the absorption of quasi-autonomous bodies, and ideological myth-making for popular consumption of the sort we have examined—which are then seen to express a clear institutional and, behind that, a class interest.[2] And within this framework much state intervention, in so far as it seems only marginally related to a generalised socialist development strategy, can in part be explained as the conscious proliferation of jobs for incoming recruits to the dominant group. At the very least, given the nature of the bureaucratic élite, any glib identification, by leaders or observers, of socialism in Africa with *étatisme* and policies for centralisation of economic control must be viewed with suspicion. In addition, a sustained stand against the blandishments of foreign capitalism, or even a critical scrutiny of its potential contributions, is unlikely from such a group. There is some danger of crude reductionism in such a generalised formulation, but it remains a hypothesis which illuminates a great deal of the empirical evidence at our disposal.

A closer examination of the practice of African states conventionally labelled 'socialist' contributes markedly to such a picture. Thus Samir Amin's valuable study of Ghana, Guinea, and Mali demonstrates, with telling statistical force, the heavy weight of bureaucratic expense and conspicuous urban consumption, both public and private, in the budgets of these states. His conclusion is: 'L'austérité, l'effort révolutionnaire de mise en point de méthodes nouvelles moins coûteuses n'ont pas résisté aux appétits de la nouvelle bureaucratie.' In Guinea administrative expenditure rose by 80 per cent between 1959 and 1962, in Mali by 60 per cent; salary structures, inherited from the colonial era, have been only marginally reformed. The result: 'Les plans guinéen et malien prévoyaient un très gros effort de financement interne par voie publique qui n'a pas été réalisé.'[3]

Gérard Chaliand's figures for francophone West Africa as a whole reveal an important aspect of this tilting of resources towards an increasingly consumptionist middle class; uniformly across these countries

[1] Lloyd, op. cit. introduction.

[2] At the extreme, of course, one has the example of Kenya, where the ideology of 'socialism' is being used unscrupulously to rationalise the march of the new African élite into all sectors of the economy, public and private. Not all uses of this rationale are so crude, but there is a certain consistency to the African pattern, none the less.

[3] Amin. op. cit. p. 277.

there is a gross discrepancy between the amounts spent abroad for importation of drink and other luxury items (toiletries, certain kinds of motor cars) and the amounts of foreign exchange used for capital formation.[1] Similar statistics to document the importance of what we have termed 'discretionary consumption' could be produced for other countries on the continent. Amin (and others) stress the importance of this pattern for the traditional sector which in the absence of a genuine take-off he sees as still the major brake upon development efforts within the three national experiments he reviews. Certainly it becomes increasingly difficult under these circumstances for a rural population to take at face value the protestations and demands for sacrifice of such an élite. And, as should by now be evident, vital resources which could stimulate the dynamic interaction of the urban and rural sectors are being diverted from that effort.

In the Ghana of the early 1960s a reasonably sophisticated style of socialist debate which began in certain Ghanaian student circles abroad in the 1940s was revitalised;[2] this was characterised, for example, by 'the attempt to transcend the "African Socialism" current of thought in favour of a more universal and scientific theory; and the related effort to institutionalise and accelerate the formation of an *ideological vanguard* of cadres who might then strive to make ideology a mass force (Winneba)'.[3] Similarly the Seven Year Plan took seriously many imperatives concerning the 'extension of state economic activity and control over the private sector' and 'accelerated accumulation' in some relationship to a general socialist strategy.[4] Even at the level of analysis there were inadequacies:

> For if a reading of the Ghanaian plan demonstrates that the leaders are aware of the necessity of breaking with this type of development which has reached its limits, of revolutionising traditional agriculture, of radical industrialisation in the context of closer economic unity in West Africa, it is still necessary to say that the specific policies to be undertaken have not been sufficiently thought through.[5]

And the results were disappointing.

But the chief constraint remained the quality of the régime's political

[1] G. Chaliand, 'Indépendance nationale et révolution', in *Partisans*, XXIX–XXX, May–June 1966, special issue, 'L'Afrique dans l'épreuve'.

[2] On this subject see Colin Legum, 'Socialism in Ghana: a political interpretation', in Friedland and Rosberg, op. cit.

[3] Murray, op. cit. p. 35.

[4] R. Green, 'Four African Development Plans: Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and Tanzania', in *The Journal of Modern African Studies* (Cambridge), II, 2, August 1965; Amin, op. cit.

[5] Amin, ibid. p. 229 (our translation). Perhaps most markedly lacking was a sustained attempt to analyse relations between traditional and modern sectors and to integrate long-term industrial and agricultural strategies along the lines we have suggested in section 1.

and social base. Having over the years cut itself off from mass support, the C.P.P. became increasingly a 'town' organisation in the general sense we have suggested; the political instruments themselves were excessively bureaucratised, with their cadres marked by opportunism. They could muster little support either for socialism or against those other 'labour aristocrats' of the state bureaucracy (including the military) who were progressively more alienated from the régime by its overtly socialist drive, however much this was found to be half-hearted in practice. 'The spectacular purges, trials and appeals (Dawn Broadcast, etc.) merely revealed the inability to transform the C.P.P. and its satellite formations by mobilisation from the base up.'[1] Among other things, it is not surprising that efforts at rural transformation by means of novel crops and techniques suffered as a result of this peculiarly Ghanaian variant of the 'urban–rural' dichotomy.

Other aspects of so-called socialist 'practice' are revealing. We have spoken of government action *vis-à-vis* the trade unions, the rationale for which was often a variant upon the theme 'equalisation for development'. Yet the statistics are again striking; thus we have already cited Turner's findings that, while wage and salary employment in Africa has remained relatively static in the last dozen years, wages have risen markedly.[2] No real line has been held even where organisational control has been maximised. One may be forgiven the suspicion that jockeying for political control rather than the logic of a development strategy has dictated much of the interventionism that has taken place. Certainly wage workers have not been forced, in any marked way, to pay the price of development, despite what often amounts to a government take-over from the incumbent leadership; organised workers have generally been admitted into the privileged ranks of the 'labour aristocracy'. Of course, where wage restraint began to be demanded of these junior partners to the 'aristocracy' its imposition was made more difficult by the unambiguously privileged position of its other members, the politicians and the salariat: 'Essentially the C.P.P. solved the problem of moral versus material incentives by denying both: the workers were ordered to become Stakkanovites to defend a revolution that had never really begun.'[3]

Even the character of the take-over of the trading sector, attempted in one form or another in most African 'socialist' states, is revealing. It certainly promises a proliferation of jobs; it also provides sources of advantage for a leadership cadre whose highest level of consciousness is

[1] Murray, op. cit.
[2] Cf. Turner, op. cit. pp. 12–14.
[3] Fitch and Oppenheimer, op. cit. p. 105.

often *enrichissez-vous*. Once again, the norm of redistribution is shown to be ambiguous. The Abraham Commission's inquiry into corruptions in Ghana's trading corporations makes chilling reading; extended peculation has all too often characterised the substitution of a network of co-operatives and marketing boards elsewhere. Certainly any total take-over of the marketing system is sufficiently difficult to make one hesitate to see it as an early priority for a socialist strategy, especially in the light of our earlier discussion of the ambiguities involved in establishing socialist priorities for the rural areas.

But it is important to note that criticisms such as those by Berg and others concerning Guinea's sweeping 'nationalisation' of the marketing sector may oversimplify the case; it is not only administrative incapacity that is at stake.[1] Much of the failure had to do with the character of the Guinean élite and the norms of the bureaucratic machine that moved to assert control. A more generalised socialist strategy, establishing, for example, different priorities in training cadres and attempting to raise the socialist consciousness of the people concerned through political education, might possibly transcend some of these problems.

Finally, we should appraise socialist practice in the relations of African states with foreign capital. We have already suggested the extent to which slogans have served to blur the real choices here. Yet the question is a crucial one. As noted, even in a country like the Ivory Coast economic problems are beginning to arise from its 'international capitalist' strategy of growth. And most socialist countries have been loth, by and large, to chart very divergent paths. Even in the heyday of Guinean socialism, for example, there was little attempt to question ties with international capitalism in the industrial and extractive sectors and this tendency has been magnified since 1961.[2]

Nkrumah's régime is again a textbook study of such involvement, which offers additional explanations of its difficulties. Whereas the 'Lewis strategy' to attract foreign capital had been a relative failure in the 1950s, *after* the declaration of a more militant socialism the pace stepped up—especially in the field of supplier credits, as Rimmer has noted.[3] What was in train was 'merely a transformation and redefinition of [foreign private capital's] mode of linkage with the Ghanaian state',

[1] Berg, op. cit. pp. 556–60.

[2] Walter H. Drew, 'How Socialist *are* African Economies?', in *Africa Report*, May 1963, p. 12; B. Ameillon, *La Guinée, bilan d'une indépendance* (Paris, 1964). The latter lays particular emphasis not only upon the compromised position (*vis-à-vis* foreign capital) of the Guinean régime, but also on the consolidation of a 'bureaucratic class' in power. See especially part III, ch. 2, 'Du Socialisme d'état à l'étatisation de classe'.

[3] Douglas Rimmer, 'The Crisis of the Ghana Economy', in *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, IV, 1, 1966.

a continuance of some form of the 'politics of mediation'.[1] The Volta River Project seems the apogee of such 'peaceful coexistence between sectors': Kaiser obtained a source of cheap power for the transformation of transhipped bauxite into aluminium, with no concomitant necessity of developing local bauxite deposits or of building an integrated aluminium industry.[2] Not that the redefinition of such a neo-colonial relationship is easy: investment codes of varying degrees of stringency have in fact been tried in Guinea, Ghana, Senegal, and especially Mali. But if the international economic environment has been a harsh one for such efforts, it is also true that the will to divert international ties in a socialist direction has not been a sustained one.

This is not surprising: any attempt so to face up to International Capitalism would suggest a growing awareness of the centrality of the pattern of surplus absorption and utilisation to development strategy, and some readiness to correct its 'irrationalities'. Yet the inevitable corollary of a serious commitment to this goal is a parallel attack on the privileges of those very classes constituting the power base upon which most African governments are likely to rely. We therefore come full circle to that dichotomy already observed (see p. 153, above) between what is historically necessary both for development and socialism, and what may appear at present to be historically possible. Any strategy directed towards socialist construction in Africa must therefore face up to the full complexities involved in creating a state power dedicated to the task, and in generating or tapping social forces capable of underpinning such a state.

It is perhaps possible that such a novel power base could be found by combining elements of a fully mobilised peasantry and a transformed urban and rural proletariat, thereby producing a genuine 'workers and peasants' state. Whether the existing political and bureaucratic élites are the men who can realise such a transformation will remain here an open question, though, as noted, the results to date have been anything but reassuring on this score; certainly the quality of the political parties ostensibly working towards such goals has left much to be desired. More strikingly, the character of intra-élite competition in contemporary Africa and, in particular, the rise of the military to a position of special

[1] The former quotation is from Murray, op. cit., the latter from Fitch and Oppenheimer, op. cit. Both echo Fanon's rather more dramatic utterance on the subject: 'The national middle class discovers its heroic mission: that of intermediary. Seen through its eyes, its mission is nothing to do with transforming the nation; it consists, prosaically, of being the transmission line between the nation and a capitalism, rampant though camouflaged, which today puts on the mask of neo-colonialism'. *The Wretched of the Earth*, (London, 1967), p. 122.

[2] Cf. Tony Killick, 'Volta River Project', in W. Birmingham, I. Neustadt, and E. N. Omaboe, *A Study of Contemporary Ghana* (London, 1966).

prominence show the strength of forces driving the situation in a counter-revolutionary direction.[1] As noted in the introduction, it has not been our intention to articulate fully a forward strategy for African socialism. None the less, there are themes here which demand the urgent attention of all those concerned.

## III. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Tanzania is, perhaps, the country in contemporary Africa where socialist aspirations figure most prominently and interestingly in the development equation, and most powerfully affect the kind of policies which are being pursued. To be sure, much remains to be done there; moreover, it is by no means clear that all the relevant dimensions of the problem of socialist development have as yet been considered by the leadership. Another article of this length, in fact, could be written to discuss the implications of the Tanzanian experience to date and its likely trajectory. But perhaps a few brief points can be made here in the light of the preceding discussion.

It remains true that much of the course of recent Tanzanian development has been charted by the evolution of President Nyerere's own thinking, from the rather *simpliste* 'African Socialist' themes of presumptive solidarity and an automatically socialist 'attitude of mind', which are to be found in the paper on *Ujamaa* cited above,[2] to a more subtle assessment of African realities; by and large it has not arisen from any concerted group or mass pressure. But the relatively unchallenged acceptance of certain accompanying party policies and, especially, the attainment of widespread ideological conformity to novel socialist aspirations do testify, in some measure, to the 'relative social autonomy and plasticity' of the African leadership cadre which was suggested above. Whether the emergent labour aristocracy in Tanzania can really transcend the narrow horizons of its opposite numbers in other African countries remains to be seen. But a genuine attempt is being made to elicit a heightened socialist commitment from them (and, among other things, a consequent curb on the 'politics of urban consumptionism'). Of course, the lack of 'revolutionary intellectuals' among the leaders is a striking feature, suggesting a possible future drag upon the policy of genuinely transforming the nature of the 'élite'.[3]

[1] On this subject see Roger Murray, 'Militarism in Africa', in *New Left Review*, XXXVIII, July–August 1966.

[2] Nyerere, op. cit.

[3] For a suggestive discussion of the importance of 'revolutionary intellectuals' see John Cammett, *Antonio Gramsci and the Origins of Italian Communism* (Stanford, 1967), ch. 10.

Yet presumably much will also depend upon parallel efforts, using the democratic mechanisms peculiar to Tanzania's one-party system as well as other institutions, both to rouse the vast mass of the peasant population to express their interests as a social force checking possible abuses of their position by the leaders, and at the same time to raise the level of mass consciousness so that such 'intervention' is of a progressive sort. The fact that, given a relatively unmobilised peasantry, this will be a difficult balance to strike should require no elaborate emphasis. It also appears true that the Tanzanian party, T.A.N.U., which might otherwise seem the ideal instrument for linking revolutionary intellectuals and the mass of the population, remains a relatively weak reed.[1] It is, unfortunately, too early to assess the likelihood of a dramatic change in this dimension of the Tanzanian situation, but the efforts undertaken to realise such a change may be one of the features making Tanzania an important focus of interest in the next few years.

For the fact remains that the President has increasingly displayed a sophisticated awareness of many of the patterns of African change which we have discussed; the importance of the 'rural–urban' dichotomy, the relative lack of socialist direction provided by a mere 'attitude of mind', some of the ambiguities of foreign economic involvement in the domestic economy, and the realities of rural stratification. Regarding the first of these, his actions have been forthright: witness the curbing of student pretensions at the University College, the subsequent civil-service salary cuts, the recent disciplining of the extravagant wage demands of N.U.T.A. (the national trade union), and, most important of all, the Arusha Declaration of February 1967, which has enacted a self-denying ordinance against certain kinds of economic aggrandisement by the élite (especially as regards the ownership of property) and thus called upon them to exemplify their socialist commitment.[2] A real beginning has thus been made. Similarly, 'political education' has become a much more dominant theme, both within the educational system and *vis-à-vis* the general public, suggesting that there is increasingly an ideology and a commitment to be taught and to be understood, and a higher level of socialist consciousness to be worked towards, rather than merely to be *assumed*, as the basic building block of Tanzanian socialism.

A wide range of firms has been nationalised, including banks, insurance, and some processing and manufacturing concerns, with some

[1] On T.A.N.U. in the pre-Arusha Declaration period, see H. Bienen, *Tanzania: party transformation and economic development* (Princeton, 1967), a useful work despite the misleading picture which it presents of the ideological dimensions of the Tanzanian experience.

[2] See *The Arusha Declaration and Tanu's Policy on Socialism and Self-Reliance* (Dar es Salaam, 1967); also *Arusha Declaration: answers to questions* (Dar es Salaam, 1967).

eye to relating their investment and other decisions more directly to the interests of national development. In the rural sphere, the peasants have been given an even more exalted rank in the verbal formulations of the national ideology, often, in the President's speeches, at the very explicit expense of the *amour-propre* of the leaders; as noted, the organisational edge to this emphasis has not been fully defined in practice, though local leaders are also being called upon to exemplify their socialism along the lines articulated in the Arusha Declaration.[1] This is an attempt at all levels to introduce certain 'vanguard' characteristics into what is otherwise most clearly a 'mass' party. More recently the President has also expressed a growing concern with the realities of class formation in the rural areas, particularly with the emergence of what he has himself termed a 'rural proletariat', and has suggested, rather tentatively, his solution of the 'Ujamaa Village', with its emphasis upon a communal, though technologically modernised, mode of agricultural production, to meet this challenge to egalitarianism.[2]

However, the full scope of the relationship between agriculture and industry, between the rural and the urban sectors, has not been clearly established, beyond those important actions referred to above which have been designed to rationalise the process of 'surplus appropriation' by curbing discretionary consumption in the urban areas. An attendant result is that, hinged upon the constantly reiterated slogan of 'Self-Reliance', mere agricultural expansionism, a rather dangerous strategy when world prices are falling, tends to be substituted for agricultural expansion to meet a planned, industrially induced demand, both direct and indirect. In fact it is perhaps fair to say that 'industrial growth' is still a missing link in the chain of socialist strategy in Tanzania; there is a relative silence on the priority to be given to industrialisation, on how capital formation should be divided between the capital-goods sector and the consumer-goods sector or, again, between the sectors servicing the rural areas and those servicing the urban areas, or how agricultural policy should be expected to fit into this pattern. The related question

[1] As one example, such leaders are to be subject to severe restrictions in their hiring of labour, a practice which would involve, in the language of Arusha, 'exploitation'.

[2] Julius K. Nyerere, *Socialism and Rural Development* (Dar es Salaam, 1967). Whether this particular aspiration is premature is, as we have noted, a moot point. The President himself does not fully explore the links between agricultural development and an 'egalitarian' mode of production beyond remarking that 'if this kind of capitalist development takes place widely over the country, we may get a good statistical increase in the national wealth of Tanzania, but the masses of the people will not necessarily be better off. On the contrary, as land becomes more scarce we will find ourselves with a farmers' class and a labourers' class, with the latter being unable to work for themselves or to receive a full return for the contribution they are making to the total output.'

of external trade and financial links with the socialist countries beyond Africa and with the capitalist world will also demand further consideration. Concern for 'surplus utilisation' is as important for socialists as concern for 'surplus appropriation'. Tanzania is making heroic efforts, but it will be easier to assess the direction of her course if and when a presidential paper is issued which concerns itself with policies for industrialisation!

One thing is clear: Tanzania is increasingly carrying on the debate about socialism at a high level of sophistication. This is more than can be said for much socialist discourse and ideology-making elsewhere on the continent, as has been shown. It is also more than can be said for Berg, whose article we cited earlier, and many of his academic colleagues. Berg launches an attack on socialist aspirations in Africa in strong terms: 'For contemporary Africa it is the wrong ideology, in the wrong place, at the wrong time.'[1] He bases this assessment on three main points, all of which are unexceptionable in their place. There is a trained manpower constraint, he argues, and this is seen to make the control of marketing in particular a hazardous exercise. African agriculture he finds uncongenial to mechanisation and therefore to large-scale farming; moreover, there is still a need to draw peasants out of traditional subsistence production into the market, and cash stimuli can best accomplish this in the short run.[2] And finally he cites the permeability of frontiers as a major challenge to controlled marketing. From the above he draws his sweeping conclusion:

> [African Socialists] believe that maximum growth can only come through socialist solutions, and this is almost certainly not true...This is the saddest part of all—that these most admirable men are also those most firmly gripped by the illusion that socialism provides a quick and true path to economic development. Given power they would lead their countries not forward but backward.[3]

Yet Berg arrives at his conclusion without mentioning most of the aspects of economic development in Africa which we have seen to be central to socialist concern. There is no mention of industrialisation except for a brief paean of praise for the 'inflow of private capital'; needless to say, the ambiguities as to the nature of the latter's actual contribution to development are nowhere broached. Neither are the patterns of surplus absorption and of productive investment analysed. And, a related oversight, the nature of class formation (particularly the

[1] Berg, op. cit. p. 571.

[2] For a similar point of view, albeit from a Marxist perspective, see 'The Class Struggle in Africa'.

[3] Berg, op. cit. p. 573.

consolidation of 'labour aristocracies') and the possible role of this process in either blocking or stimulating development are ignored. Yet, at the very least, patterns of industrialisation and surplus utilisation are relevant to the long-term rise of agricultural output he values so highly, in terms of both increased incentives and future demand—created or forgone—and of potential inputs, produced or not produced.

Berg's arguments do pinpoint some limits of the possible for socialists, particularly in the rural sector. But, because they ignore the most important questions about the relationship between development and the aspiration to eliminate class privileges in Africa, they do not come as close to pre-empting the socialists' discussion of what is necessary for development as he had perhaps hoped. Berg's contribution is therefore marginal: academics will have to do better than this if they are to be of any assistance to governments who may aspire to turn growth into development and take seriously the possible relevance of socialism to that goal.