FOOD PROBLEMS IN AFRICA

By

Hugh Byrne

Introduction

Food problems in Africa begin and end with politics. They begin with politics since problems of food production and distribution, the priorities concerning the crops to be grown and the price paid to the producers, all arise within the context of a world socio-economic system which defines goals, limits choices and ties less-developed states into a permanently unequal relationship with the developed capitalist states from which escape is difficult, if not impossible. This context, (viz. a system where benefits are distributed unequally), where a few countries, due to early capitalist accumulation are able to perpetuate their economic dominance through control of pricing systems, access to and control over advanced technology and continued expropriation of economic surplus from the less-developed countries, must be a starting-point for understanding food problems in Africa. The problems are *systemic*. It is only through an understanding of how the system operates and the extent to which food problems are a product of the structure and goals of the system, that real solutions can be put forward.

Food problems in Africa end with politics because, if an African state attempts to opt out of the world capitalist system or to radically alter its position within it, it must do more than produce more food or better food or cheaper food (or other commodities). It must confront those structures of power which perpetuate the system and maintain the continued exploitation of its people.

In this paper I intend to examine food problems in Africa within the context of the choices available within international capitalism and the alternatives to operating inside this framework. In order to do this, I will, first, examine briefly the liberal theories of development and discuss their limitations. Secondly, I will look, in greater depth, at the theory of dependency which questions the possibility of development within the context of international capitalism. The third step will be to question the application of dependency theory to Africa and to analyze two contrasting strategies of development in Africa, those of Kenya and Tanzania, to see the extent to which the theory of dependency is borne out and the extent to which either of these countries provides a strategy for development within the 'underdeveloped' world. I will conclude by examining possible ways in which political practice might be united with political theory to provide solutions to food problems in Africa and the Third World.

Liberal theories of development

Western observers of the political and economic realities of underdeveloped countries, - problems of hunger, malnutrition, poverty, lack of services, lack of an industrial base etc.- have attempted to put forward solutions to these problems. These solutions have normally operated within the framework of capitalism and have articulated the interests of western states rather than the interests of underdeveloped countries. Two main theories of development have been proposed. The first, neo-classical theory, adopts a linear model of development, assuming that because the western capitalist states developed in a certain way, some two centuries ago, that the opportunity exists for Third World states to follow the same path today. This theory holds that development, in itself, is a good thing; that it is the best method of utilizing a country's resources and that a state should examine where it can get the best price for its products and channel its energy and investment in that direction. Ultimately, development of productive sectors will allow the state to become competitive on the world market and "take-off" on the path to autonomous capitalist development. In this way, the whole of society will benefit as the wealth produced will "trickle down" to even the poorest sections of the society. The main emphasis of this theory is on economic growth rather than social welfare, hence production of export crops is judged preferable to production of crops to feed the population. This theory, besides articulating the interests of developed states which require cheap raw materials and markets for manufactured goods, failed to provide the promised economic benefits: rapid capitalist development. For many underdeveloped countries it proved to be a cruel joke which brought relative riches to a few and increased landlessness, poverty, hunger and unemployment to the masses. For this reason, and given the antagonism felt by newly-independent states towards an economic philosophy which rationalized colonialism and justifiesd wholesale expropriation of economic surplus by the developed countries, its place has been largely taken by an alternative theory, within the framework of liberal economics, which attempts to explain and justify the relationship between the developed capitalist world and the underdeveloped world: the developmentalist approach.

The developmentalist approach to the problem of underdevelopment in the Third World can be looked at in two ways: an attempt, perhaps misguided, to pass on the benefits of western science, technology and wealth to the poorer coutries so that they might follow in the footsteps of western nations and become developed and prosperous; or as a more sophisticated method of extracting surplus from the underdeveloped countries while maintaining them in a dependent relationship and integrating them into the socio-economic, political and strategic relations of international capitalism in the post-war era. The difference between these two positions is perhaps based on whether the prime aim was to benefit the West, and incidentally to help less developed countries, or whether the main aim was to aid the poorer countries while hoping for some indirect benefits for themselves in the process. But in the end people's motivations are less important than their actions and the effects of their actions. If results are looked at, the developmentalists brought no more benefits to the poorer countries than did the subscribers to the neo-classical approach.

The developmentalists argue that by acquiring modern technology, newly-developed agricultural inputs to increase production and aid from the West to finance these acquisitions, Third World countries can better feed their populations, improve their living standards and lay the basis for autonomous development. Its emphasis is on the benefits of western technology and how this can revolutionize methods (especially agricultural production) in the Third World.

The problem with this approach is that it views underdeveloped countries as ailing and assumes their illness can be dealt with by a shot of western technology and aid. Unfortunately, the medicine only succeeds in making the patient sicker. Two excellent critiques of this approach, Susan George's *How the Other Half Dies* and the Institute for Food and Development Policy paper "The Aid Debate", point to its fundamental limitations and contradictions.

For George the world food problem is not a problem of insufficient food but a question of distribution. She points to Latin America's distribution of land where 17 percent of landowners control 90 percent of the land.[3] And worldwide, 2.5 percent of landowners control nearly 75 percent of all the land in the world, with .23 percent controlling over half the world's land.[4] Meanwhile, "it is the very people who are living on the land who are not eating enough!"[5] Again, population is not the problem but the international distribution of wealth: "The structure of landholdings has far more to do with erasing hunger than the total amount of the population."[6] The 'green revolution' the western technological solution to world hunger, provides no solution to the problems of world hunger since it demands modern inputs, fertilizer and modern equipment (over the prices of which the underdeveloped countries have no control) and hence ties these states ever more tightly into the western system of dependency and expropriation. Ultimately, the underdeveloped countries' lack of control over food production limits their fields of action: "The three key elements that determine fold production (capital, technology and control of markets) escape governments' powers of decision. This power is concentrated in the hands of the principal multinational agribusiness companies."[7]

For George the solutions to the world problems of hunger and unequal distribution of resources lies in land reform and "self-reliance in the poor nations as the only strategy of escape."[8] Though her analysis points to the structural links between the developed and underdeveloped states which create and perpetuate the relations of dependency, her solutions remain within the premises of international capitalism. Her message to multinational corporations and large landowners seems to be: get your house in order or you will have no one to blame but yourselves if there is a revolution, whereas her analysis points to social revolution as the only solution to breaking the chains of dependency. "Nobody," she says, "wants revolution for its own sake,"[9] but after describing many reasons for revolution beyond 'its own sake' she seems to cling to the belief that there are solutions within the existing order if only those who possess power and wealth can be made to see that it is in all our interests to make the necessary reforms.

The Institute of Food and Development Policy paper "The Aid Debate" also points to the links between aid, development and dependency. They point to the use of food aid as a weapon of U. S. foreign policy, in helping to prop up dictatorial regimes amenable to the interests of foreign capital; that food aid rarely reaches the hungry; that it is often used to buy arms; that the central purpose of aid is to increase the trade and profits of agribusiness and that, most importantly, development aid concentrates on technical solutions to food problems in the Third World and ignores the social roots of poverty. The provision of credit by institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund only increases dependency. "The 'debt trap' pushes countries away from building a basis of self-reliance, the only foundation for a new international economic order."[10] This question of dependency, in its global and systemic context, will be examined next.

The dependency framework

That neither neo-classical theory nor the developmentalist approach provides a solution to the hunger, poverty and lack of development in the poorer countries, comes as no surprise to the theorists who hold that capitalist development, far from being a solution to underdevelopment is, in fact, the main cause of underdevelopment. Some of the central theses of the dependency theorists are; that underdevelopment is not equivalent to lack of development but that underdevelopment is a product of the relationship between the developed capitalist states and their 'satellites'; that the development of the capitalist system generated underdevelopment in the areas on the periphery of that system whose surplus was expropriated by the 'core' countries of the international capitalist system and laid the basis for their development; that it is fruitless to expect the underdeveloped countries of today to repeat the stages of economic growth passed through by modern developed societies, whose classical capitalist development arose out of pre-capitalist and feudal society; and that the solutions to underdevelopment lie not in greater integration into the world capitalist system but in breaking the links with that system.

Andre Gunder Frank, in *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America*, observes three central contradictions which explain the creation and maintenance of underdevelopment in satellite countries which exist in a dialectical relationship with the continued growth and development of the core capitalist countries.

The first contradiction is the expropriation of economic surplus from those countries on the periphery of international capitalism to the core capitalist states. Historically, this expropriation allowed greater capital investment in the center, led to lack of investment in the periphery and gave rise to greater expropriation of economic surplus and the orientation of the economy in the periphery towards the center. But the contradiction of surplus expropriation is not merely a historical phenomenon which helps explain the growth of capitalism in the West; the integration of 'traditional' societies into the world capitalist economy ensures the continuation of the vicious cycle of surplus expropriation and continued structural underdevelopment in the periphery.

The second contradiction is the polarization between the metropolis and its satellites.

> *Economic development and underdevelopment are the opposite faces of the same coin.... Economic development and underdevelopment are not just relative and quantative, in that one represents more economic development than the other....they are relational and qualitative, in that each is structurally different from yet caused by its relationship with the other.... One and the same historical process of the expansion and development of capitalism throughout the world has simultaneously generated and continues to generate both economic development and structural underdevelopment.*[12]

But the metropolis/satellite relationship does not exist only in relation to the core and periphery countries. The domestic economy of the satellite itself becomes impregnated with the same capitalist structure and its internal contradictions. Thus the same structure of exploitation comes to govern the relations between the local metropolis and the peripheries within the country or region. A series of chains of exploitation extends from "its uppermost metropolitan world center, through each of the various national, regional, local and enterprise centers."[13]

The third contradiction Frank sees is that, though the world capitalist system is constantly changing, its structure as a whole has remained the same and generated the same contradictions. He points to the fact that no country which has been firmly tied to the metropolis as a satellite "has achieved the rank of an economically developed country, except by finally abandoning the capitalist system."[14] The alternative of independent development within world capitalism is thus not an option, leaving the paths to development as abandonment of the capitalist system or the overthrow of capitalism as a world economic system.

In analyzing the development of underdevelopment, Frank rejects the thesis that in underdeveloped countries only certain sectors of the economy were permeated by the capitalist mode and relations of production and that 'traditional' areas were largely unaffected by it. The whole 'dual society' thesis, which often leads to the conclusion that autonomous capitalist development is possible under the leadership of a 'national bourgeoisie', is rejected. The conclusion he reaches, from his examination of the development of peripheral capitalism in Brazil and Chile, is that capitalism has penetrated "even the most isolated sectors of the underdeveloped world"[15] and that "the economic, political, social and cultural institutions and relations we now observe there are the product of the capitalist system no less than are the seemingly more modern or capitalist features of the national metropoles of these underdeveloped countries."[16] The form of surplus expropriation from the periphery to the center has changed, expecially with the independence of many Third World states in the last twenty years, but the substance and the structure remains the same. The main agent of surplus expropriation is the transnational corporation which Frank describes as "a multi-industry, mass assembly-line producer of standardized products - and now of new technology as well - and is its own world-wide purchasing agent, salesman, financier and often de facto government in many satellite countries."[17] That surplus expropriation is still a factor which gives rise, at the same time, to development and underdevelopment can be seen from the figures for U.S. investments abroad and profits from overseas in the period 1950 to 1965. Total U.S. investments in the rest of the world in this period were $23.9 billion, repatriated profits were $37 billion. If these figures are broken down, we find that $14.9 billion was invested in developed countries with $11.4 billion coming back in profits. In the underdeveloped world $9 billion was invested with $25.6 billion coming to the U.S. as profits. So, during a fifteen-year period, for every dollar invested in underdeveloped countries almost three dollars came back as profits, while presumably the capital investment continued to pay dividends for years after.[18]

From his work on underdevelopment in Latin America, Frank developed certain hypotheses concerning the structure of underdevelopment. One of the most important of these takes issue with the classical 'development' argument that, given sufficient capital investment in underdeveloped states, these states will be able to 'take off' on the path of autonomous capitalist development. Frank takes the diametrically opposed position that the greater the link with the metropoles the less possibility there is of autonomous development. He points to periods in Latin American history when the satellites experienced their greatest economic development and concludes that these periods occurred when their links to the metropoles were weakest, (viz. during major wars and depressions in the center). When the center recovered from its crisis and the satellites were more fully integrated into the world economy, the autonomous development which had taken place was 'choked off' or channeled into areas beneficial to the center.

Another hypothesis which Frank develops is that the areas of the world which are most underdeveloped today are those which historically had the closest links with the world capitalist system. Areas which had been important sources of capitalist development in the past were condemned to 'degeneration and ultra-underdevelopment' when their purpose as a source of economic surplus had been exhausted.

The analysis of underdevelopment put forward by Samir Amin[19] parallels and complements Frank's analysis. Amin puts forward nine theses regarding the transition to a peripheral capitalist economy. Central to his argument is the thesis that the transition to a peripheral capitalist economy is qualitatively different from the transition to a central capitalist economy, involving as it does, an 'onslaught from without', resulting in a destruction of traditional modes of production and their replacement by externally oriented production. Further investment serves to increase the uneven development of the economy and its external orientation. This external orientation of the economy does no does not result from inadequate demand from within the country but from the 'superior productivity of the center' which forces the periphery state to produce those goods for export which cannot be produced so easily so cheaply in the metropoles. While production may rise quickly, the expropriation of surplus by the metropoles means that growth in production is not turned into real economic growth or autonomous capitalist development.

For Amin, the extraversion of the economy is seen as one of the central features of the continuity of structural dependency in underdeveloped countries. While the emphasis remains on production for the world market as opposed to production for internal needs, continued economic imbalance and uneven development is assured. It is this question of the outward-looking nature of most Third World economies as well as the issue of the continued expropriation of economic surplus that will be examined in relation to Africa.

The application of dependency theory to Africa

Dependency theory, though it originated as a framework which described the development of underdevelopment in Latin America, is not a theory which describes the relations of a particular country to the central capitalist states, but rather a theory of the structural relations between all of the countries on the periphery of international capitalism with the core capitalist countries. If the thesis is accepted that capitalism has permeated all sectors of traditional society then the same analysis of the structural links between the metropoles and the periphery can be applied to Latin America, Asia or Africa. Africa's pre-colonial and colonial history differs fundamentally from that of Latin America but international capitalism has assigned the states on both continents to the same peripheral role within the system and, if they are to escape from their positions of subjugation, their path of escape must be the same.

In the early years of African decolonization in the late 1950's and early 1960's the goal of both leaders and the masses in the independence movements was political independence. The benefits which would result from the withdrawal of the colonial power were apparent: political freedom, control of the country's natural resources and freedom to trade and ally with whomsoever they chose. However, the limits of political independence, while the old economic ties remained, were not so obvious. Many African leaders believed that the way forward to growth and prosperity lay in a removal of the colonial political structures and 'Africanizing' the positions within the political and economic order while maintaining links with the metropolitan power. It took longer to realise that growth, in the sense of increase in the Gross National Product (GNP); might mean an exacerbation of the uneven economic development of the colonial era; colonialism might give way to new forms of external control over the newly-independent state's economy; and political independence could bring with it new forms of socio-economic dependence. The strategies for development appeared to consist of a choice between a capitalist road and a socialist road. The capitalist road assumed largely private ownership of the means of production, investment in areas which would provide most foreign exchange and an external orientation of the economy to provide goods for the world market. The socialist road normally entailed nationalization of the major means of production, import substitution and growth based on mobilization of the populace to produce more for the benefit of society as a whole. A good example of these competing roads to development can be seen in the strategies of Kenya and Tanzania. Kenya developed a strategy of growth based on private enterprise and neo-classical principals of political economy. Tanzania's development strategy was based on socialist principles, an attempt to collectivize agriculture and a takeover of the major means of production within the country. It can be argued that neither has achieved - nor looks likely to achieve in the near future - its original goal. Kenya has not 'taken off' towards autonomous capitalist development to compete favourably with the metropoles on the world market. And both bourgeois and radical observers seem to agree that Tanzania's experiment in collectivizing agriculture and achieving socialism through the agency of the peasantry has not succeeded. I will argue here that, though the goals of the two countries were radically different, their failure to achieve these goals is rooted in the same problem which can be phrased as follows: It is not possible for a country, which lacks a developed economic infrastructure, to either 'take off' to autonomous capitalist development or to create a socialist society while maintaining its structural links with the core countries of the developed capitalist world.

Kenya: The capitalist strategy of development

In his *Underdevelopment in Kenya*,[20] Colin Leys analyses the transition from a colonial economy in Kenya to what he terms a neo-colonial economy, based on an alliance between the metropolitan bourgeoisie and a comprador or auxiliary bourgeoisie within Kenya which originated from the petty bourgeois leadership of the Kenyan independence movement. Leys defines 'neo-colonialism' as "the system of domination of the mass of the people by foreign capital by means other than direct colonial rule."[21] His analysis in schematic form is as follows.

In the early part of the 20th Century, the Mombasa to Lake Victoria railway opened up millions of acres of virtually 'unused' land in Kenya to colonial settlement. From this time on, "Kenya began to play the classical role of a country at the periphery of the capitalist system, exporting primary commodities and importing manufactures."[22] How did this happen? First, land was sold to Europeans for nominal prices, an average of over 2400 acres for each purchaser by 1932. They could not farm this on their own, hence they had to get Africans to work for them. Since the Africans had no reason to do so unless they were paid more than they could earn on their own, this necessitated other methods: the use of force (at first) and later hut and poll taxes. In one generation a large number of Africans, including half the Kikuyu and Luo populations, were turned from peasants into wage labourers. In 1912 African production accounted for 70 percent of exports, by 1928 less than 20 percent.[23] Labour was cheap, almost free, since 75 percent of what was paid in wages was recouped in taxes. Central to the colonial economy was the system of monopolies. There was little competition and, where there was, it was in areas where Europeans were not affected. The Europeans had a monopoly of high-potential land, a monopoly of labour, of services and of the most profitable crops (e.g. coffee).

The ideological underpinning of colonial rule, for Leys, was the myth of the importance of the European mixed farms. The myth was that these farms made a "unique contribution to the economy,[24] whereas the reality was that they never contributed more than half of the non-African farm output. Even then their output was bolstered by production and subsidies and without the African contribution (taxation) their contribution would have been even smaller. But it was not until after independence that the myth was jettisoned. As Leys says, "This myth was to play an important part in easing the transition from a colonial to a neo-colonial economy."[25] How this happened can be explained as follows.

First, the African leadership had been conditioned to believe in the myth and was willing to make critical concessions to the settlers and the British to 'save' the economy. Second, if it were accepted that these farms played a crucial role, that would justify keeping them in one piece after independence and 'Africaniz ing' them to satisfy the aspirations of the African leadership. Third, the colonial system of protection and monopolies, if continued, could prevent the play of market forces which would open the economy to the control of the Asian merchant capitalist class.

The settler economy was not the main feature of the colonial relationship. In fact, Leys says,

> "the settlers were historically an 'epiphenomenon' imposed on the more fundamental relationship between foreign capital, represented by plantation and ranch production and the urban commercial sector, and African peasant producers and workers."[26]

However, central to Leys analysis is the view that

> "the mixed farm served as a shoe-horn, easing African businessman, civil servants and politicians into

an alliance with the more durable and important forms of foreign capital, that remained."[27]

Between 1947 and 1964 Kenya's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) quadrupled bringing new economic interests into existence. By 1958, the settlers owned only 15 to 20 percent of the foreign assets invested in Kenya. By this time the newer commercial and industrial interests were willing, if necessary, to abandon the settlers and to seek an alliance with African leaders. This was the basis of the policy of the New Kenya Group, led by Sir Michael Blundell, which attempted reforms which would allow the development of an African petty bourgeoisie with interests similar to those of foreign capital.

However, the political and social unrest which had led to the declaration of the 'Emergency' could not be quelled by a 'deal' between African leaders and the representatives of foreign capital. Landlessness was not a problem which would go away and the landless 'squatters' had played a leading role in the forest fighting and in the Land Freedom Army. Hence a solution had to be found to buy off the radicalism of the landless masses. This solution was the division of European settler land among landless peasants. This was seen as the *key* to a peaceful transition to independence, while keeping the colonial economic structure intact.

The 'neo-colonial' strategy of the New Kenya Group depended on educated and propertied Africans. In the post-war years a liberalization had occurred allowing Africans to buy goods wholesale and take out loans. The Swynnerton Plan provided for the parcelling and consolidation of land and the granting of freehold tenure to individuals, the idea being to create a landed and a landless class, with the former having a stake in the continuity of the system. By the late 1950's it was clear that independence was inevitable, that the settlers would have to be sacrificed and their farms transferred to Africans, starting with the squatters and unemployed. If this could be done peacefully, the rest of the economic system could be preserved.

Money to finance the settlement schemes was to come from the government of Great Britain but on the condition that the transfer was on a commercial basis. No land was to be given away free and the settlement schemes, once they had served the purpose of allowing a peaceful transition to independence, could be terminated as uneconomical. In a 1963 report, it was acknowledged that the reasons for the resettlement schemes had been to ease unemployment and distress and to buy out the Europeans who wished to leave but that there was no real economic benefit to the schemes.[28] The proof of the pudding in terms of settlement, as a means of buying a peaceful transition to independence, could be terminated as uneconomical. In a 1963 report, it was acknowledged that the reasons for the resettlement schemes had been to ease unemployment and distress and to buy out the Europeans who wished to leave but that there was no real economic benefit to the schemes.[28] The proof of the pudding in terms of settlement, as a means of buying a peaceful transition to independence, can be seen in the fact that the schemes were virtually discontinued after the mid 1960's and that only 40 percent of European mixed-farms were transferred under the schemes, the other 60 percent changing hands to become Africa-owned large farms.[29]

Leys' conclusion on the arrangements made to secure a smooth transition to independence and to a neo-colonial economy, including the settlement schemes and the continuation of the colonial system of protection and monopoly, were:

> "For the new system to be successfully consolidated it had to provide all these ingredients; for the majority of the masses, enough land to provide at least a subsistence and some cash supplus; for the better educated, salaried or wealthier peasant, room to expand and innovate; for the urban salariat and politicians, an opportunity to translate political influence into the owenrship of capital by becoming a large farm owner."[30]

From the time of independence onwards the strategy of Kenya's leadership has been to increase Kenyan control over foreign firms by regulations, taxation and exchange control, to "Africanize' executive positions in foreign firms and to "Africanize' the equity in these companies while maintaining the colonially structured, external orientation of the economy and integrating the Kenyan economy ever more tightly into the international capitalist system.

Africanization of positions within foreign firms seemed to have been successful by 1971, though in many cases, control over investment, pricing and wages remained in foreign hands. Exchange control regulations succeeded in ensuring that foreign firms did not use Kenyan funds in their operations but failed to ensure that only capital coming from abroad was remitted abroad. The way foreign firms avoided the latter controls was by remitting funds abroad in the form of management fees, consultancy fees and royalties, which in 1971, constituted 40 percent of remittances and 67 percent of dividends.[31]

At the time of independence, foreign control of banking, finance, insurance and tourism was almost total. Eight years later, the percentage of foreign control was not significantly less. There was more government participation in foreign companies but the premisses of the system had changed little. How far did this foreign control increase dependency and contribute to underdevelopment? Leys considers this question under four heads: the level of profits, the transfer of surplus abroad, the effects on wages and employment and the political influence of the foreign sector.

The average after-tax profits of six large public companies in the years 1969 through 1972 were 22 percent, a high rate of profit for any investment area. Foreign manufacturing firms' share of pre-tax profits was 73 percent in 1977 but their share of output was only 57 percent. But as Leys points out to look merely at profits can be misleading since transnational companies can take their profits anywhere in the chain of production or distribution where the rate and level of profit is best.[32]

In the years 1964 through 1970 private foreign investment was $40 million while the outflow of capital was $80 million. But with such devices as over-invoicing and transfer pricing the total net export of capital, during this period, according to Leys was more like $80 million.[33]

From 1964 through 1969 total employment in the private sector rose by 2 percent while total output rose 918 percent. The wage bill rose 7.7 percent but most of this increase was in the capital intensive, urban, manufacturing sector, which reinforced existing demand for goods.[34]

The political and social influence of foreign firms was exercised largely through the Federation of Kenya Employers (in 1970 11 out of 28 members were African), and pressure from this organization helped ensure that no 'omnibus' trade union was formed. Anti-strike laws were passed making strikes in essential services illegal and allowing the government to declare strikes in other areas illegal. The number of strikes went down every year from 1964 to 1970, except 1979, and by 1970 were one third of the level of 1964.[35]

By 1970, the problem of relations with foreign firms had become clear: high profits and transfer of profits abroad, a lwo increase in employment, wages falling in relation to profits, tight control of trade unions and increasing use of state power to crack down on any expression of dissent.

Whether or not one agrees with Leys' use of the term 'neo-colonial' to describe the political economy of Kenya, it seems clear that in the ten years after independence Kenya had attained significant growth without distribution, increasing unevenness of development and an ever greater structural link-up with foreign capital.

The political articulation of the alliance between Kenya's leaders and foreign capital was manifested in a number of ways. There was heavy dependence on the state institutions to ensure the transition to an indigenous leadership ruling in alliance with foreign capital. The role of the ruling party (KANU) became less and less significant. Parliament became a 'talking shop' and power was centralized in the President and the ruling clique. Dissent from the official line became illegitimate and the 'radicals' in the KPU (Kenya People's Union), led by Oginga Odinga, which formed a populist, petty bourgeois opposition, arguing for more land for the landless, and for free education, were banned. The settlement schemes, judged to be bad economic policy, were abandoned in favour of selling large farms intact. *The Tripartite Agreement* of 1964 traded a 10 percent increase in jobs for a wage freeze and a ban on strikes. The *Foreign Investments Protection Act* of 1964 assured foreign investors that their assets would not be expropriated and that they could freely remit capital abroad.

In 1965, Kenya's "economic bible," *African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya* (Sessional Paper 10) was published. This work outlined the capitalist road to development that Kenya had embarked upon. The ownership of capital was not excluded so long as it was used in ways 'consonant with the general welfare'. It stated that Kenya needed rapid economic growth which would come through the medium of large-scale foreign investments. Nationalization should be a measure of last resort. Unequal income distribution was permissible but it should not be inequitable. Foreign firms should Africanize their management and their shares should be made available to Africans. And Africans should be established in private enterprise through loans and credit.

The document was in the neo-classical mould of political economy. It assumed that growth in terms of production was the same as development and that given sufficient levels of foreign investment and enterprise by workers, peasants and entrepreneurs, Kenya could 'take off' on the path of autonomous capitalist development. That Sessional Paper 10 articulated the interests and served the purposes of Kenya's ruling group cannot be in doubt. That it ever held out the hope of autonomous capitalist development, given the expropriation of surplus by foreign companies and the continued extraversion of the economy which had been created to satisfy the needs of the metropolis, is much more open to doubt.

Additionally, the question arises of what Kenya's capitalist road to development means in terms of food policy? Essentially, since most of the large-scale farms, ranches and plantations have been taken over intact or maintained in foreign ownership, the fundamental priority continues to be the production of cash crops for the world market. In terms of de Janviry's contradiction between 'food first' and 'comparative advantage' Kenya's leaders have come out clearly on the side of comparative advantage. This export-oriented strategy concentrates on earning foreign exchange from the production of these crops which importing basic foodstuffs, capital and luxury goods. It is a strategy which benefits Kenya's rulers rather than one designed to better the lot of the majority of Kenya's peasant population.

There has been a good deal of contention concerning the political economy of Kenya; much of it involves the question of the degree to which Kenya's leadership is dependent on foreign capital, how autonomous it is and whether it constitutes a comprador/auxiliary bourgeoisie or a national bourgeoisie. For the purpose of this analysis, these questions are not of major importance since the thesis adopted here is that whether the leadership acts as a 'tool' of foreign capital or constitutes a 'national' bourgeoisie, as long as it maintains its links with the capitalist metropoles its possibilities of autonomous development will be severely limited, no matter how independently its leadership may attempt to act. It is this analysis which will be developed in relation to Tanzania's socialist experiment within the framework of international capitalism.

Tanzania: The socialist road to development?

Tanzania's colonial history differs from Kenya's almost as radically as does its post-colonial history. The main issues in Kenya's independence struggle - the political domination by European settlers and landlessness, which led to the declaration of the 'Emergency' in in the 1950's - played very little part in Tanzania's fight for independence. Tanzania was not a settler economy and wholesale expropriation of land did not take place. Tanzania, before independence, was on the 'periphery of the periphery' - a 'sub-satellite' in Shivji's words - with Nairobi acting as a "sub-metropolis for the whole of the East African region."[36] Tanzania's main role within the world capitalist system was as a producer of raw materials for export. In 1964, 46.7 percent of Tanzania's GDP came from export-oriented activities: commercial agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing. Thirty-three percent of its GDP came from the non-monetarized sector (subsistence production).[37] Lacking a significant settler population Tanzania's road to independence was smoother than Kenya's. The leadership of the independence movement came predominantly from the petty bourgeoisie - teachers, civil servants, traders and professionals - which allied with the peasantry which provided the ma the mass base for TANU (Tanganyika African National Union) which in turn led the independence movement.

At the time of independence in 1961, Tanzania developed a socialistic program of development but it was not until the

Arusha Declaration of 1967 that Tanzania's leaders confronted the questions of Tanzaina's future development. Tanzania's socialist strategy of development - based on collectivized agriculture, self-reliance and state ownership of the major means of production - was set out in the Arusha Declaration.

For Julius Nyerere, President of Tanzania and the main ideologist of Tanzania's road to socialism, the purpose of Arusha and the measures which followed, was to create a classless society where exploitation of man by man would not exist. He believed that socialism could be achieved on the basis of 'Uja Ujamaa', which he perceived as the traditional form of organization of African society, where cooperation and mutual responsibility rather than competition was the norm. The aim was to build a democratic socialist society through collective effort. He rejected the notion that Tanzania would have to go through a capitalist stage of development before a socialist society could be created as well as the idea that socialism in Tanzania must come through the struggle of conflicting classes. He saw Tanzania's socialism as being based on self-reliance and saw agriculture as the bases of socialist development, since the peasantry constituted the vast majority of Tanzania's population. The other central feature of Tanzania'sroad to socialism was the necessity for the Tanzanian people to own and control, through its government, the major means of production within the country.

Following the Arusha Declaration the major means of production were nationalized and attempts were made to socialize agriculture, moving from individual peasant production to collective production. In 1977, in the Arusha Declaration Ten Years After,[38] Nyerere acknowledged that Tanzania was not yet socialist or self-reliant and that Tanzania was still 'dependent'. He was not prepared to accept the view that 'Ujamaa' had failed and he could point to genuine improvements in living standards in the ten years since Arusha: the number of children in primary schools had doubled; life expectancy was up by about ten years; the ratio of top salaries to the minimum wage had gone down from 20:1 to 9:1.[39] He acknowledged, however, that all had not gone as planned. There had had to be large imports of grain which Nyerere partly put down to climatic factors which led to a failure of the harvests and partly to the fact that prices paid to peasant producers were too low. There was maladministration and too much bureaucracy in the implementation of 'Ujamaa' and there had been a 50 percent growth in the costs of government between 1967 and 1975. But despite these failings and the over-riding fact that agriculture had not been collectivized, Nyerere could point to the thirteen million people living in villages in 1977 and claim that Tanzania's struggle for socialism continued.

Issa Shivji's analysis of Tanzania's road to socialism in *Class Struggles in Tanzania* differs radically from Nyerere's. Nyerere's analysis denies the existence of conflicting classes in Tanzania and views the Arusha Declaration as an attempt to prevent class divisions from coming into existence; whereas Shivji's is predicated on the objective existence of conflicting classes acting out their own class interests.

Shivji's analysis comes within the framework of dependency theory. He doubts the possibility of African states skipping historical stages and holds that no African state remains outside of the world capitalist system, though the extent of their integration may vary. He also denies the possibility for an African state to attain autonomous development and challenge the core capitalist states of the West. The most it can do is to liquidate the features tying it to a particular metropolitan country and multilateralize its position of subjugation.

For Shivji the independence struggle brought into being an alliance between the petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry. The petty bourgeoisie came to power but in a situation where power and property were separated. Power was in the hands of the African leadership, property in the hands of the largely Asian commercial bourgeoisie. One or the other group had to win out, either through the commercial bourgeoisie attaining state power or through the petty bourgeoisie acquiring control, if not ownership, of the major means of production. The former was never a real possibility, especially given the unpopular role of the Asian community, under colonialism, as the middlemen between foreign capital and Tanzanian workers and peasants. Thus, the Arusha Declaration hearlded the victory of the petty bourgeoisie over the commercial bourgeoisie, with the Tanzanian leadership bringing power and property together under their control, through nationalization of the major means of production.

Shivji doubts, for two reasons, that the Tanzanian leadership's road to socialism ever held out any prospect of success. First, it was in the interest of Tanzania's ruling class to create a socialist society which would necessitate a renunciation of its own power and privileges; second, socialism was not feasible while the structural links to international capitalism were maintained. The figures he cites illustrate the links to international capitalism, and the continued extraversion of Tanzania's economy begs the question of what self-reliance meant in the context of Tanzania's socialist goals. In 1972, Tanzania was more of an export oriented economy than it had been in 1964; exports constituted 82.4 percent of its GDP in the productive sectors in 1972, while they averaged 80 percent from 1964 to 1966, with four main cash crops accounting for almost 50 percent of the exports in 1972.[40] The sources and types of imports did not alter greatly in the post-Arusha period except for a six percent increase in the import of capital goods.[41]

Exports to capitalist countries lessened from 88 percent to 61 percent and exports to Third World countries increased from 10 to 25 percent from 1962 to 1971.[42] Foreign aid increased threefold in the six years post-Arusha over the six years pre-Arusha but 80 percent of the loans were from the countries of the developed capitalist world.[43] Before Arusha the outflow of profits over the inflow of investments was 370 million Tanzanian shillings. After Arusha the form of expropriation changed with management contracts taking the place of direct foreign ownership, and royalties, commissions, patent fees, percentages of fees and profits taking the place of direct surplus expropriation, but the substance ramined the same. Ultimately, the orientation of the economy remained export based and the main partners remained the developed countries of the capitalist world. It is doubtful if socialism within this framework was ever a viable proposition.

Other observers of the Tanzanian scene have put forward explanations of why the experiment in rural socialism failed. Michaela von Freyhold[44] put this failure down to a conflict between the progressive ideology of Tanzania's leadership and its objective class interest. In the end its class interest prevailed over its progressiveness. Certain individuals within the leadership believed in the dream of a society free from class conflict but in practice this class acted out its class interests and strengthened its power and control over the state machine. For von Freyhold there would be little difference between the political economies of Kenya and Tanzania in relation to the dependency of those economies on the international capitalist system. The difference between them lies in the ideology of the leadership but in socio-economic terms their possibilities of autonomous development, short of breaking the links with international capitalism, remain equally limited.

For P.L. Raikes,[45] the basic problem with 'Ujamaa' was that it was a partial solution. If Tanzania remained dependent on the export of cash crops then the relations of dependency, which limit the possibilities of socialist development, would still exist. The move from dependency to socialism and self-reliance depended on a transformation of the economy and control by the masses over the means of production. These did not occur in Tanzania. There the attempt was made at bureaucratically-organized, 'socialism from above' while maintaining the export orientation of the economy. For Raikes, the Tanzanian road to socialism was a utopian one and its limits are revealed in the fact that little socialist content remains in the experiment; collective agriculture has given way to villagization which carries with it no necessary socialist content.

For Ahdu Awiti,[46] the failure of 'Ujamaa' was to be found in the large economic differentiation between rich and poor peasants. The poor peasants in Ismani (the area he examined) were in favour of collectivized agriculture but the rich peasants (32 percent of the richer peasants owned 80 percent of the land while 80 percent of the poorer peasants owned 20 percent, sabotaged the experiment.

For Michael Lofchie,[47] the explanation of the failure of 'Ujamaa' lay in the conservatism of the peasantry which was averse to taking the risks of a move to collective agriculture when there was no guarantee that it would provide them with a better livelihood than their existing mode of production. For Lofchie the 'Ujamaa' programme failed in at least three respects: it failed to gain ideological acceptance from the peasantry; it did not succeed in disseminating socialist practices in agriculture; and it was the failure of the program which led to the agricultural crisis of 1972-1975, where huge amounts of grain had to be imported. 'Villagization without socialism is, in effect, the current policy',[48] he claims, indicating that political solutions to problems of development have been replaced by technical ones.

In my opinion, the explanations of the failure of 'Ujamaa' are useful in understanding the relationship between the leadership and the masses; the possibilities of collective as opposed to individualized agriculture; the mode of organizing socialism in rural areas (mass mobilization versus socialsim from the top); and the conservative or revolutionary nature of the peasantry. However, the question still remains: even if 'Ujamaa' had succeeded (in the sense of being accepted by the peasantry and involving mass mobilization behind the program), what form of socialsim could have been achieved while the main production was cash crops for the export market within a system controlled by the developed countries within the international capitalist system?

In the end, the similarities between the strategies of Kenya and Tanzania are greater than the differences. The similarities are infrastructural, insofar as both are based on the capitalist mode of production and both operate within the laws of the world capitalist market. The differences are super-structural in so far as they involve ideological differences as to the optimum mode of development within societies based on a capitalist mode of production. The fundamental difference between them lies in the form of capitalist development they undertake. Kenya adopted a classical 'laissez faire' capitalist strategy. Tanzania adopted a more socially-conscious, 'welfare-state', capitalist strategy. Their differences, in socio-economic terms, are no greater than the differences between a developed capitalist state which allows full rein to the freeplay of the market forces and another which adopts a more activist, interventionist approach on the part of government, to economic development.

Kenya's leadership concentrated on growth in GNP as an index of development, Tanzania's on greater distribution of wealth and the creation of a more egalitarian society. The former approach assumed development would come from the accumulation of capital by individuals; the latter based its strategy on capital accumulation by the state (which arguably, was the only available vehicle of capital accumulation). As James F. Petras states: 'The transfer from imperial to state ownership (on nationalization) occurs without any radical shift in the social relations of production (including wage/salary differentials managerial prerogatives and/or the hierarchy of authority), market determination or profit calculations. State ownership does not in any fundamental way transform the conditions of exploitation and perhaps a change in the dispostion of the surplus (a greater percentage is reinvested in productive facilities within the nation instead of in the metropolis).'[49] This accurately describes the social relations in Tanzania post-Arusha. The state nationalized the major foreign industries but power and control over them moved to Tanzania's leadership not to the workers within those industries. In agriculture, even if 'Ujamaa' had gone according to plan, the most that could have happened would have been the creation of a socialist form of agriculture masking a capitalist substance. Ultimately Kenya's strategy of development accepted capitalism as the best form of development. This delineated the limits of Kenya's growth. Tanzania's strategy never went beyond the 'form' of socialism to confront the fundamental contradiction of socialism within a single underdeveloped country which maintains its links with international capitalism. Similarly, Tanzania defined the limits of its own development.

Conclusion

It has been argued here that food problems in Africa or elsewhere cannot be looked at in purely technical terms. 'Food problems' have their roots in politics - the way power and resources are distributed nationally and internationally - and the solutions must be found in politics. It is not enough for the question of the distribution of resources to be dealt with within a given society for, as has been stated many times here, the problems for poorer societies arise in an international context of unequal distribution of resources. But this does not mean that the question of distribution of resources within a given society is not important. As Frank, Shivji and others have pointed out, the struggle against oppression within a given society is part of the struggle against the international system of oppression, which is monopoly capitalism. As Frank says in relation to Latin America, 'Though the principal enemy, undoubtedly is imperialism, the immediate enemy is the bourgeoisie in Latin America itself.' Shivji states, linking the struggle against capitalism worldwide to the struggle against a territorial ruling class, 'the struggle against imperialism is at the same time, a class struggle; in fact in two senses: (1) as a part of the world-wide class struggle in so far as the breaking away of every territorial unit from the world capitalist system is a blow to the system and to its defenders, the international bourgeoisie with its allies the local dependent bourgeoisie; (2) as a territorial class struggle in so far as it is aimed at smashing the territorial capitalist system and therefore directed against its defenders, the local dependent bourgeoisies and their ally, the international bourgeoisie.'[57]

But what should be the strategy of an underdeveloped state which wishes to feed its people and develop its productive forces? Kenya's strategy indicates the problems of growth without development or distribution. Tanzania indicates the problem of a socialist strategy of development within the framework of international capitalism. Are there any other ways?

Most of the strategies for development outside the framework of capitalism speak of 'food first', self-reliance, mass mobilization and socialism. The answer, if there is one, lies in these directions. But socialist development (in the sense of creating an economic infrastructure) does not come any easier than capitalist development, both requires an accumulation of capital which has to come from somewhere. It is clear too that many poorer countries do not have the population or the resources for significant industrial development, even if they desired it. For these countries the best strategy of development would appear to be to develop its own resources and aim for self-sufficiency in food and other necessities while creating regional ties to offset the need to rely on the international capitalist market.

The opportunity for socialist development, in the sense that Marx talked of socialism, appears limited in Africa at least in the short-to medium-term due to the level of the productive forces. However, socialistic experiments based on self-reliance and involving mobilization of the people to build a socialistic society (such as happened in Mozambique and Angola) should provide pointers to the possibilities of socialistic development in Third World countries.

Postscript

This paper was written almost a year ago and in the meantime my position has undergone a re-evaluation, as appears not to be uncommon regarding the question of capitalist development and underdevelopment in the Third World. A few brief points here should suffice.

The dependency approach provided a welcome rebuttal, from a Marxist perspective, to the ideologically-bound assumptions of neo-classical economic theory and the deterministic and linear assumptions of the developmental or 'take-off to sustained growth' approach to development in the Third World.

Yet, while the structural disequilibrium created by monopoly capitalism and imperialism in the Third World is real, there are nonetheless significant problems in the dependency approach, at least at its current level of articulation. One problem is stasis, exemplified by its view of the impossibility of development short of breaking away from the international capitalist system which is linked to conceptual weaknesses from the viewpoint of Marxist theory (for an analysis of which see Brenner 52 and Weeks and Dore 53); another is its apparent inability to explain the largely autonomous capitalist development generated in certain Third World countries (for an analysis of Taiwan's economic development see Amsden 54); and its lack of a rigorous analysis of the significance of the internal class forces and class relations within particular Third World states, both on first contact with the developed capitalist states and in the colonial and post-colonial periods (for which see Leys' re-evaluation of his earlier position 55 and Swainson 56). The interesting argument has also been advanced, by Emmanuel 57 that it is not capitalist investment in the Third World which has led to underdevelopment but rather lack of capitalist investment.

The critiques of the dependency approach in recent years point to the necessity for a more thoroughgoing analysis of the relationship between, on the one hand, the imposition of the capitalist mode of production and relations of production on Third World countries and their integration into the world capitalist economy and, on the other, the modes and relations of production encountered by the colonialist and imperialist powers which endured through the colonial period and are still significant today. Ultimately, as indicated in this paper, questions of agricultural development, how and on what basis this occurs and how it relates to industrial development, must be understood in the context of the political and socio-economic relationships between the developed and underdeveloped world. And yet, in understanding this context, it is necessary to particularise these relationships within the framework of the class relations in individual Third World states.

It is up to Marxist political economists and historians to make these connections and develop this synthesis for it is clear that bourgeois political economy has no worthwhile analysis of these relationships to offer.

Footnotes

1. Susan George, *How the Other Half Dies* (Montclair, New Jersey: Allanheld, Osmun, 1977).

2. Institute for Food and Development Policy, "The Aid Debate". (San Francisco, 1979).

3. George, p. 14.

4. Ibid., p. 35.

5. Ibid., p. 14.

6. Ibid., p. 36.

7. Ibid., p. 163.

8. Ibid., p. 78.

9. Ibid., p. 248.

10. "The Aid Debate", p. 29.

11. Andre Gunder Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1967).

12. Ibid., p. 9.

13. Ibid., p. 10.

14. Ibid., p. 11.

15. Andre Gunder Frank, "The Development of Underdevelopment" in *Imperialism and Underdevelopment*. Robert Rhodes (ed.) (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970), p. 6.

16. Ibid., p. 6.

17. Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America*, p. 296.

18. Ibid., pp. 305-306.

19. Samir Amin, *Unequal Development* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976).

20. Colin Leys, *Underdevelopment in Kenya* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975).

21. Ibid., p. 271.

22. Ibid., p. 28.

23. Ibid., p. 31.

24. Ibid., p. 36.

25. Ibid., p. 37.

26. Ibid., p. 39.

27. Ibid., p. 39.

28. Ibid., p. 77.

29. Ibid., p. 90.

30. Ibid., p. 116.

31. Ibid., p. 127.

32. Ibid., p. 136.

33. Ibid., pp. 137-138.

34. Ibid., pp. 138-139.

35. Ibid., p. 142.

36. Issa Shivji, *Class Struggles in Tanzania* (New York, Monthly Review Press, 1976), p. 34.

37. Ibid., pp. 36-37.

38. Julius Nyerere, *The Arusha Declaration Ten Years After* (Dar es Salaam, 1977).

39. Ibid., p. 16.

40. Shivji, *Class Struggles in Tanzania*, p. 152.

41. Ibid., p. 158.

42. Ibid., p. 160.

43. Ibid., pp. 161-2.

44. Michaela von Freyhold, "The Post-Colonial State and Its Tanzanian Version," *Review of African Political Economy* 8 (January-April, 1977): 75-89.

45. P.L. Raikes, "Ujamaa and Rural Socialism," *Review of*

African Political Economy 3 (May-October, 1975): 33-52.

46. Ahdu Awiti, "Economic Differentiation in Ismani, Iringa region," *The African Review* Vol. 3, No. 2. (June 1973): 209-239.

47. Michael Lofchie, "Collective Villagization, Agrarian Crisis and Economic Liberalization in Tanzania," Mimeographed African Studies Center, Los Angeles: (University of California, 1978).

48. Ibid., p. 1.

49. James F. Petras, "State Capitalism and the Third World," *Journal of Contemporary Asia* Vol. 6, No. 4 (1976): 437.

50. Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America*, p. xxiii.

51. Shivji, *Class Struggles in Tanzania*, p. 86.

52. Robert Brenner, "The Origins of Capitalist Development: A Critique of Neo-Smithian Marxism," *New Left Review* 104 (1977): 27-92.

53. John Weeks and Elizabeth Dore, "International Exchange and the Causes of Backwardness," *Latin American Perspectives* Vol. VI, No. 2 (Spring 1979): 62-87.

54. Alice Amsden, "Taiwan's Economic History: A Case of Etatisme and a Challenge to Dependency Theory," *Modern China* Vol. V, No. 3 (July, 1979): 341-380.

55. Colin Leys, "Capital Accumulation, Class Formation and Dependency: the Significance of the Kenyan Case," *Socialist Register 1978* (London: Merlin Press, 1978), pp. 241-266.

56. Nicola Swainson, "The Post-Colonial State in Kenya,". Mimeographed, Centre for African Studies, Nova Scotia: Dalhousie University, March 1978.

57. Arghiri Emmanuel, "Myths of Development versus Myths of Underdevelopment," *New Left Review* 85 (May-June 1974): 61-82.