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TWO YEARS OF REVOLUTION

IN NICARAGUA

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Maurice Ludmer

1926-1981

It was with a terrible sense of loss that the anti-racist movement learnt of the death of Maurice Ludmer, editor of *Searchlight* magazine and President of Birmingham Trades Council. Maurice died suddenly, of a heart attack, on 14 May. He had suffered a stroke early last year, but all his many friends and colleagues had hoped that he was on the way to full recovery.

It is difficult to over-estimate Maurice Ludmer's importance to the struggle against racism and fascism. He was best known in recent years for his pioneering investigative work into fascist and racist organisations, most of it published in his own magazine, but much also published and broadcast by the numerous television and press journalists who relied on Maurice's incomparable information on all aspects of the extreme right. But Maurice also played a vital political role; he was uniquely capable of bridging the divide between the predominantly white anti-fascist left and the black movements against racism. With Jagmohan Joshi, Maurice was a founder of the first, broadly based anti-racist campaign in Britain (the Coordinating Committee Against Racial Discrimination). In the mid-1970s, he was virtually the only activist with the credibility and capacity to link grassroots black organisations with the emerging mass movement against the National Front.

One of the reasons for the universal respect in which Maurice was held was the quality of his analysis. In 1975, he wrote a justly famous article in *Race & Class*, challenging the notion that the modern British state was already fascist, and proclaiming his faith in the power of the working-class, black and white, to oppose and defeat both the present racism of the state, and the future threat of all-out fascism. He was also always concerned with the international dimension of the struggle; throughout his life he actively supported anti-imperialist movements, and his last major piece of research concerned the exposure of the increasing international links of the Nazi terrorist movement in Europe and America. He was also active within the trade union movement, and his election as President of Birmingham Trades Council gave him particular pride.

As a researcher, as an investigative journalist, as a campaigner and as a theorist, Maurice Ludmer is irreplaceable. His enthusiasm, cheerfulness and constant kindness will be missed by everyone who knew him. The best memorial to him – the only memorial he would have wanted – is a commitment by his many friends and colleagues to carry on his work.

DAVID EDGAR
IRR Council Member

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Nicaragua: two years of revolution

On 19 July 1981 Nicaragua celebrates the second anniversary of the revolution, the overthrow of Anastasio Somoza's dictatorship by the Sandinista Liberation Front (FSLN). Last year, the festivities expressed a great sense of achievement; the mood was one of pride and optimism. At the mass rally, Fidel Castro paid homage to the reconstruction achieved after the devastation of the war, the advances in agriculture, industry, health and welfare services, the organisation of the army and the overwhelming success of the Literacy Campaign. But he also alluded to the dangers inherent in the potential Republican victory in the United States and the threats that Reagan's policies held for Latin America.

The western press was naturally more interested in Nicaragua's choice of guest of honour than in the contents of his speech. But Castro disclaimed intentions of fomenting revolution, 'for the people are like volcanoes; no one sets fire to them, they explode alone. And Central America is a volcanic region.'¹ El Salvador erupted six months later with a guerrilla offensive against the ruling Junta, the armed conflict in Guatemala has escalated and in Honduras, although the level of class struggle is less developed, political forces have begun to polarise.

The US State Department increasingly interprets these events in terms of creeping communism, and Reagan is doubling military and

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and economic aid to the repressive governments of the region. Carter had already begun to put pressure on Nicaragua, but the 'doves' in Congress could still argue for anti-communism in the idiom of human rights rather than through overt repression. To blunt the edge of militancy, 'democratic' governments were to be promoted by US aid, both in Nicaragua which had had its revolution, and in neighbouring states inspired by the Sandinista example. Accordingly, Carter did authorise a \$75 million loan to Nicaragua, but made it conditional on non-interference in other countries' affairs. Reagan has now used this clause to stop the remaining instalment of the aid, claiming that Nicaragua has been channelling arms to the Salvador guerrillas. He has also rescinded a \$10 million loan to buy US surplus wheat, a mean measure designed to disrupt the bread supply and provoke popular discontent. The withholding of spare parts by the US is affecting production in Nicaragua, while a US ban on the import of Nicaraguan beef is now in the balance. Reagan is also using US influence with international financial institutions – for example, the World Bank, the International Development Bank – from whom Nicaragua secures its loans, to reduce the level of aid.

The target for this covert aggression is a tiny country, with only a 2.7 million population. But, as one of Reagan's advisers explained,

Nicaragua is vital to the interests of the western hemisphere, and that government should be removed before its hold on the country becomes solidified ... Deteriorating economic conditions within Nicaragua ... (if foreign aid is withheld) will contribute to the discontent of the population with the government. The bulk of the National Guard escaped from Nicaragua and can be made into a genuine fighting force ...²

Groups of Somoza's ex-National Guard are now training openly in Miami. Supported by a clique of his officials and friends, the campaign is coordinated internationally by the dictator's son. In Honduras, some 4,000 Guard are camped along the border, constantly raiding Nicaragua, stealing cattle, raping women and killing members of the Sandinista army. The Honduran government officially ignores their presence, and holds Nicaragua responsible for deteriorating relations between the countries.

Claims made for mass support for counter-revolution inside Nicaragua are vastly exaggerated. But in November 1980 the Vice-President of the Nicaraguan Council of Private Enterprise, involved in a Miami-based plot to assassinate the FSLN leadership, was shot by Sandinista forces as he was transporting arms. The Sandinistas have always prided themselves on the 'generosity' of their revolution: the abolition of the death penalty, individual trials for each of the 7,000 captured Guard by special tribunals, the excellent human rights record

and freedom of speech. The daily paper *La Prensa*, now opposing the Sandinistas as vociferously as it did Somoza, is freely published, and opposition views are heard on the radio and displayed on billboards. The early action against groups of opposition Trotskyists was taken only because they were inciting overt rebellion, backed by stores of arms. 'There is a difference between counter-revolutionaries and critics', a government leader commented. However, the problem is that as the former consolidate, the latter will have less room to speak, for fear of an alliance between the two.

Action against opposition is grist to the mill of the western press, which has mounted an increasingly hostile campaign against Nicaragua. For example, one of the outstanding events of this year has been the large-scale voluntary recruitment to the Popular Militias, where students, workers, peasants, professionals and market women alongside ministers, learn how to handle arms. This is referred to both by the internal opposition and an unsympathetic press as the 'militarisation' of a 'totalitarian state'. The Sandinistas are, and feel, under siege. Whereas 1980 was called 'Literacy Year', 1981 is 'the Year of Defence and Production'.

This is the context within which the new regime, since the last anniversary, has been attempting to strengthen the economy, raise living standards and promote mass organisations, in the transition to popular democracy.

Imperialism and opposition

Central America is often referred to as 'Uncle Sam's backyard' – its food-patch, its dumping ground, and its vulnerable back entrance. The special significance of Nicaragua, which has both a Pacific and an Atlantic coast, is its geographical position.³ In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the US was interested in potential canal rights; later, control of the country served to protect its own security and gave it a base for aggression in Central America and the Caribbean – against Guatemala in 1954, Cuba's Bay of Pigs in 1961 and the Dominican Republic in 1965. During the 1970s, the concern to dominate Nicaragua has increased in proportion to the political unrest in the region.

One hold over Nicaragua was economic. The US controlled some 70 per cent of foreign investment, at first in timber, rubber and mining, with expansion from the 1960s into agribusiness, manufacturing, banking and services. But, more important, has been, and still is, the US monopoly of markets. When the Sandinistas took over from Somoza, the US was buying much of the cotton, most of the coffee, sugar and seafood and all of Nicaragua's meat. It also supplied the bulk of agricultural and industrial inputs, and Somoza's extravagant

borrowing had mortgaged the country to the United States.

Politically, indirect control by the US replaced direct occupation with the withdrawal in the 1930s of the Marines and their replacement by a local equivalent, the National Guard, headed by Anastasio Somoza, and, after his assassination, by his son.

As crooked as he was cruel, Somoza secured the presidency and then maintained it by repeated electoral fraud; his son dominated Congress through his control of the Liberal Party, and manipulated the state machine for his personal profit. By the end, he and his family controlled 60 per cent of the national economy, and over a quarter of arable land. Somoza's businesses alone were worth \$400-500 million, and included shipping, airlines, transport, fuel, vehicles, fishing, agribusiness and food processing, media, mining, construction, chemicals, textiles, engineering and others, besides racketeering in drugs and prostitution. His company, Plasmafésis, sold blood to the United States – Somoza was literally bleeding the country dry.

Through his banking and finance interests, Somoza consolidated his circle of associates by dispensing access to credit and profitable speculation. His allies came from every sector of the bourgeoisie – the agro-export landowners from the 1940s and 1950s, the manufacturers established in the 1960s. But those outside Somoza's direct circle felt excluded from the big money, and his control of the economy stifled competition and growth. Politically, party opposition stagnated under Somoza's corruption, and the weak and divided national bourgeoisie was unable to take the initiative when resentment turned to revolt. Somoza's misjudged murder of Chamorro, Conservative opposition leader and editor of the anti-Somoza *La Prensa*, finally alienated the middle classes. By this time they were determined to remove Somoza and to modernise the economy in their own interests. But they had no army and no nationalist tradition around which to secure popular support.

The FSLN had both, inheriting the tradition of General César Augusto Sandino who had fought against US occupation in the 1920s. His guerrilla following had come from peasants that the coffee-plantations had dispossessed and from the proletariat they had created, reinforced by workers from US mines and plantations. Sandino's movement had forced the withdrawal of the Marines, but was crushed when Somoza arranged the assassination of Sandino.

His successor, the FSLN, also had a well-organised core of the urban proletariat in its guerrilla units. But it was a minority. The top-heavy agro-export sector had crippled the development of industry, and the industrial working class still forms only 16 per cent of the labour force. In the rural sector, which absorbs over half the total workforce, the proletariat is also a minority, only 8 per cent.⁴ The rest – apart from the small number of landlords – are *campesinos* (peasants). A small

proportion subsists from family farms; a third of the rural workforce lives mainly by seasonal harvesting of cotton, coffee and tobacco, while another third supplements small plots of land by working for others. Much of the peasant sector, therefore, is a semi-proletariat, with roots in subsistence production rather than wage labour.

'It was above all the *campesino* who shed his blood to achieve our glorious victory.'⁵ The young urban semi-proletariat, too, took to the streets with the Sandinistas in the final uprising, driven, like the *campesinos*, by poverty more than political commitment – 90 per cent of the population lived below the poverty-line. The official underestimate for unemployment was 28 per cent, many others were scraping a living from menial chores and petty trading, merging into the marginalised lumpen that hung around small town streets and Managua's slums. It was this potentially anarchic energy that the Sandinistas succeeded in channelling into a fighting force:

We had always taken the masses into account, but more in terms of supporting the guerrillas, so that the guerrillas as such could defeat the National Guard ... But what actually happened was that it was the guerrillas who provided support for the masses so that they could defeat the enemy by means of insurrection.⁶

The final uprising began in May 1979. The US had ditched Somoza, whose excesses no longer served its interests, and trusted in the reformist bourgeoisie to replace him – '*Somocismo* without Somoza'. But the right wing failed to contain the movement. It was the FSLN which led a strange military alliance of militant proletariat, peasants, organised petty-bourgeoisie, unpoliticised lumpen and semi-proletariat, army deserters, middle-class collaborators, frustrated businessmen and landowners, backed by international support that had been outraged by the brutality of the National Guard. By a final quirk of fate the FSLN gained complete political control when temporary President Urcayo, appointed by the US, refused to hand over to a provisional government in which the old National Guard would retain influence. Negotiations were nullified, the leaderless Guard disintegrated and the Sandinistas, with unforeseen success, swept into Managua.

The Sandinista Front

Overnight, from organising a war, the Sandinistas found themselves running a country. They were young – the majority of leaders in their late twenties and early thirties. They were inexperienced – it is common to find a former engineer as a planner, and a sociologist managing a mine. But they brought with them intelligence, a resourcefulness born of imagination and a facility for finding solutions to problems, rather than from methods of government inherited from an inappropriate

past. Through their years in the mountains and in the poor neighbourhoods of towns, they had an intimate knowledge of the country and an understanding of the people through sharing their experience and living their lives.

The FSLN was founded in 1961 by Sylvio Mayorga, Carlos Fonseca and Tomás Borge. Only Borge, despite long periods of jail and torture, has survived as a Sandinista leader today. During the 1960s the FSLN's strategy alternated between periods of political organisation in town and country and guerrilla action. It was this political work, however small scale at first, which ensured that the future of the FSLN was not tied to its initial military setbacks, and slowly created a solid foundation for the struggle.

A leading Sandinista, herself once a guerrilla, describes those early days:

It must have been very hard, because no one encouraged them; they had to encourage each other ... Sometimes they had no money, no paper, no pencils, no political tools of analysis, much less military arms. They had nothing but their faith, a faith that had no theoretical backing, because that was unknown, but had emotional commitment, and roots in a reality more brutal than you can imagine.⁷

Somoza's censorship stifled intellectual developments, and even now there is a dearth of literature. There is a tradition of poetry but not of political theory. Many leaders have studied, some abroad – Paris, New York, Moscow, Havana – and by the light of midnight oil others make up for lost time. But their experience of struggle, their formation in the mountains as well as at university has deeply influenced their approach. 'This is a pragmatic not an intellectual revolution.' FSLN theory develops with its practice, not through imitation. There is no 'Soviet model', and lessons, not blueprints, have been drawn from the Cuban experience; while from Chile has been learnt the importance of retaining control over the armed forces. 'We will achieve nothing by the mechanical application of models elaborated elsewhere. The revolution is Nicaraguan; it is Sandinista.'⁸ Structurally, the FSLN is headed by a nine-man directorate and has avoided the personification of the revolution in one leader. From a politico-military organisation in the war, it is now a civil organisation which is transforming itself, through the establishment of base committees in all state institutions and units of production, into a party.

The writings of Sandino himself are not hallowed as hagiography. An edition edited by Fonseca was required reading for guerrilla leaders, but ideology does not develop around textual debates. Unexpurgated, Sandino's theories are a strange mixture of politics and mysticism, but, arising from the concrete experience of struggle, they

contain the basic elements of FSLN thinking: anti-imperialism, the necessity of armed struggle, destruction of bourgeois armed forces, strategic international alliances, the unity of social, economic and political transformations and the capacity of the exploited classes to achieve their own liberty and participate in the decisions of the state. 'Today in Nicaragua, *Sandinismo* is studied together with marxism as aspects of the relation between the particular and the general.'⁹

Inside the FLSN there is constant political debate, on theory, over strategy and on the connection between the two. The Front has allowed itself time for these discussions by refusing to declare the details of its ideology, defining itself as much by negatives as by what it intends to do. On the question of private property, for example, Sandinistas say that they are not for wholesale nationalisation, nor do they wish to stop any citizen from owning the consumer goods to provide the basic comforts of life. On the means of production, they remain silent.

This irks the opposition, increasing its sense of insecurity. Reviled by the right as 'marxist-leninist' and by sections of the foreign left as 'capitalist henchmen', the Front studiously avoids all labels. This is part of its pragmatism; not only does rhetoric affect Nicaragua's international image in the present cold-war climate, but the fear of 'communism' lies deep in the consciousness of the Central American peasant. Subjected to a daily barrage of crude anti-Cuban propaganda – as Nicaraguans had been under Somoza – folk-myths about communism range from religious persecution to infant cannibalism. Until such time as the economy and the popular organisations are firmly established, the FSLN will avoid the word 'socialist' and stick to 'Sandinista'.

Elections are to be held in 1985, much to the annoyance of the Nicaraguan Democratic Movement (MDN) and some other opposition parties who wanted them sooner, partly to force the FSLN to define its ideology and structure, and partly to use the election platform for publicity. But the Front argues that electioneering would be a distraction from the primary task of economic reconstruction on the basis of national unity.

Economic reconstruction

The country the FLSN inherited was in ruins. 50,000 people had been killed, twice that number wounded.¹⁰ Four out of the seven largest towns had been blown to bits. The cost of economic disruption and direct damage came to \$2 billion; there was \$3.5 million left in the bank. Even cynics have been impressed at the rate of recovery: the surpassing of production targets, the reduction of unemployment to 17 per cent, the speed of establishing a centrally planned, mixed economy. At the end of 1980, growth figures represented a recuperation of 31 per cent.

The main agent of transformation and the basis of the new model of accumulation is the state sector, formed mainly from the appropriated property of Somoza and his associates. Added to this is the degree of nationalisation of foreign capital which the government judges it can absorb at present. Nicaraguan banking has been nationalised, but foreign banks continue within defined limits. The mines are all state-owned, but other multinationals, such as British-American Tobacco, are still in business. The initial nationalisation of Standard Fruit, the US banana company, was all but disastrous – so inexperienced were the new administrators – so now the transfer will take place over a number of years.

As yet, the state produces only 40 per cent of the gross domestic product, a large proportion of which is accounted for by services. Seventy-five per cent of industrial production and 80-85 per cent of the main exports (cotton, coffee and cattle) come from the private sector, which is so necessary a partner in the current economic strategy. Jamie Wheelock, Minister of Agricultural Development and one of the most militant of the National Directorate, represents FSLN thinking when he says:

Where there is revolutionary leadership, we can also make use of the energies of the middle classes, including sectors of the bourgeoisie. Their experience in agriculture, their administrative skills in industry can strengthen the country's unity ... The internal class contradictions are less important than the material gains we receive in the reconstruction of the national economy.¹¹

Part of what is respectfully referred to in the National Plan as 'patriotic private enterprise' continues to produce, though more for straightforward self-interest. But overall, the level of production has not been as high as hoped; investment has been small, and concentrated in current projects rather than capital maintenance and improvement. The criticism this arouses in the pro-Sandinista media feeds a vicious circle of insecurity and non-collaboration in the private sector. This alliance with the bourgeoisie is also expensive, financed by state loans whose value has not yet been recuperated. The provision of acceptable profit margins, albeit lower than before, reduces funds available for the state sector, and providing a climate conducive to private participation means slowing down on politico-economic change. Yet without the private sector, this could not take place at all. The state has neither the technical capacity nor the personnel to take over private enterprise, and has problems dealing with what it already has. The alliance, therefore, remains indispensable at this stage, but is conducted largely on government terms. For example, all international marketing is conducted by the state.

The main beneficiaries of economic planning are intended to be the 'popular sectors', the working class, the semi-proletariat and small producers. Some contemporary political tourists to Nicaragua, who have little knowledge of Latin America, express their shock at the wooden shacks, the children's swollen bellies, the squalor of poverty that still exists. But this is the reality, the inheritance of decades of crude exploitation with which the revolution has to deal. Redistribution of income and provision of essentials are therefore priorities, achieved not by large wage increases, which employers cannot pay nor the domestic market absorb, but by increasing the income of the lowest paid and pegging higher salaries. Rents have been controlled and transport subsidised; state shops sell food below market prices. The rise in real income has thus been less significant than the increases in the social wage, housing, education, health and welfare, which last year took up 30 per cent of state investment.

But since the last anniversary, cuts in international aid, a balance of payments deficit and the burden of the inherited \$1,600 million national debt have shifted the emphasis towards production. Investment, new jobs and wage increases have been confined to the productive sector and less has been spent on services. No new long-term investments have been planned except development of volcanic energy; for petrol burns up over a third of foreign earnings. Even purchase of capital goods has been restricted in favour of patching and welding what is already there. Cuts in the social wage, restriction of imports of 'inessentials' please neither the people nor the bourgeoisie. But 'Austerity and Efficiency', as the 1980 Economic Plan is titled, is a response to external pressure as much as to the constant internal conflict between solvency and growth.

Agrarian reform

The development of agrarian reform is a constant tension between priorities, between economic, social and political objectives. Accounting for nearly all Nicaragua's export earnings, agriculture is the key to the economy, including the reconstruction of the shattered industrial sector. Twenty-five per cent of arable land has fallen to the state; the large one-crop Complexes are sub-divided into farms, administered by the Institute of Agrarian Reform (INRA). This is now part of a new Ministry of Agricultural Development which integrates both public and private production into central planning.

In the large low-lying farm-house where once maids maintained the Miami décor, labourers in muddy work clothes sit on the sofa, one reading a booklet on the 'Role of the Unions in the Revolution', another looking at the cartoon version of the Economic Plan. Their

children cavort outside in the swimming pool; the master bedroom is now a clinic with a residential nurse. This cattle ranch, once owned by Somoza's uncle, is now under state control.¹²

Although the state sector is called 'The Peoples' Property', the transformation of relations of production is a gradual process. The labour force often continues as a state-paid proletariat on the same farm as before, managed by the same agronomists, whose skills are indispensable but whose values and work-styles may not have altered. The solution to this problem is seen to lie in organisation and politicisation. On every farm, both public and private, the Rural Workers' Association (ATC) has been fighting for better wages and conditions, stimulating productivity, organising study sessions, training rural leaders, distributing food and promoting *campesino* culture. Labour disputes are not confined to the private sector; the ATC organises General Assemblies of workers in which ministers and Sandinista leaders, standing among the people, listen as well as talk. This political and administrative education contributes to the democratisation of the labour process; workers elect farm administrators from among themselves, and act as advisers at both the farm and Complex level.

Greater identification with production will also increase output. Relieved of capitalist work discipline by the revolution, the agricultural proletariat began enjoying its rights to improved salaries and greater job security, without appreciating the duties this entailed. The semi-proletarianised workers have roots in the rhythm of peasant life and not in wage labour; after years of exploitation they took a rest. The government has taken a political decision to accept lower productivity levels than are economically viable, and allow workers to bring their friends and relatives to join them, increasing employment but not production.

The export sector still needs hands at harvest time, but they are no longer relegated to the scrap-heap of casual labour for the other months of the year. Some now rent state land, collectively producing basic grains (beans and maize) in Sandinista Agricultural Cooperatives (CAS). Available to help with harvesting, this also links the small farmer to state production. Radio Sandino, the FSLN station, broadcasts the slogan 'Workers and *campesinos* – backbone of the revolution', reflecting not only the perpetuation of the wartime alliance, but the increasing emphasis on integrating the peasant into the revolutionary process. Over half of all bean production and more than a quarter of maize come from the small producer – the figures are 80 per cent and 90 per cent respectively if the middle peasant is also included.¹³ Even in the export sector, the coffee crop comes mainly from the small and middle peasant. The internal demand is rising rapidly and so are prices; production in this sector well exceeded targets in

1980. New foreign markets for basic grains are planned for this year, reducing dependence on traditional export crops and their purchasers.

Marginalised under Somoza, the peasantry feared losing their land or forced collectivisation after the revolution, or hoped for hand-outs of confiscated property. Both nationalisation and parcelling out of land were rejected by INRA, in favour of an approach that goes no faster than this traditionally individualistic sector can accept. *Campesinos* are encouraged to form Credit and Service Cooperatives, of which there are now 1,200, offering the advantages of bulk buying, group technical assistance and marketing facilities. The fixing of rural rents has made more land available, and for the first time there is easy access to credit, with preferential rates for cooperatives. The ultimate goal is the 'true' CAS, where small producers take down their fences to own and produce in common; this is a voluntary move, and there are still only twelve in the country. The large landlords are now competing not only for the labour but also for the political allegiance of their poorer neighbours. However, some 75 per cent of *campesinos* are now organised into Sandinista cooperatives of some kind. Small and medium producers have also recently formed their own Organisation to represent their particular interests, which will soon be included in the government Council of State.

Popular Organisations

At the heart of these attempts to carry out fundamental social transformation at a steady yet unforced pace lie the Mass Organisations, crucial to ensure the development of popular democracy in place of party dictatorship, workers' control instead of state capitalism, to educate people into their duties as well as rights. Years of repression have robbed the people of a chance to organise, and they have little experience. To witness a structured meeting now, compared with the chaos of some community assemblies after the victory, is a tribute to how much has been achieved.

Small and semi-clandestine, the forerunners of today's Mass Organisations were founded in the 1970s to integrate different sections of the population into radical opposition to Somoza. Now, although formally independent and not financed by the FSLN, there is a close two-way communication between it and the popular leaders, and a section for Mass Organisations is built into the structure of the FSLN. But they are not just recruiting grounds for the Sandinistas; their role is wider, to ensure the active presence of every sector of the population in production, political education, defence, welfare, local and national government – in making the revolution. 'First our Mass Organisations must guard and strengthen the political project of the revolution; second, they must be the true instruments of the expression, transmission

and acceptance of the most pressing demands.¹⁴ There is a potential point of tension in this dual role when the immediate demands of the popular sector do not coincide with government strategy. Last year, concerned to provide a climate of security for the private sector, the Junta declared that all lands spontaneously invaded by the *campesinos* must be handed back. The ATC took to the streets in a mass demonstration, and the decision was reversed. The Central Sandinista Labour Union (CST), representing 75 per cent of the urban proletariat, on the other hand, agreed, after much discussion, to support government wages policy and stave off demands. Nonetheless, the CST, which is the largest, but not the only labour federation, is no mere cipher; before the first anniversary it had won over 200 collective agreements. The other five labour federations are linked mainly to political parties which range from outright opposition to support of the FSLN.

‘Guarding and strengthening’ the revolution involves mobilising the energy of the mass of the people at all levels – for example, politicisation and recruiting for the Militia. But at times the Front has had to restrain the over-enthusiasm of its supporters. In March of this year crowds blocked access to an opposition rally of the MDN; when they tried to attack *La Prensa* and right-wing radio stations, they had to be prevented by Sandinista commanders. Also the Local Neighbourhood Committees (CDS), one of whose functions is to gather information on the local population, has been accused of over-vigilance.

The CDS is established on every street block with delegate meetings at district level. Although the largest of the Mass Organisations, its development has been uneven. Some exist in name, or do little more than sweep the streets and organise the occasional children’s party. Others, in areas with a history of militancy, buzz with activity and provide forums where local leaders, especially women, can emerge. The health sub-committees are involved in clinics, the culture and sports secretaries are setting up youth programmes; the propaganda groups are running political study; the weekly meetings organise popular housing projects and community festivals.

In the activities for young people, the CDS collaborate with the Sandinista Youth and the Sandinista Children’s Association. Nicaragua is demographically a young country. It was the youth that built the barricades, that were the heart of the revolution; children, acting as informers, carrying messages, were its eyes and ears. Parents were politicised by their sons and daughters, encouraged by their example and outraged by the atrocities they suffered. ‘It is our children who have taught us to struggle ... At the first demonstrations in January 1978 I was afraid to take part. But when I saw my children ready to go, I went with them.’¹⁵ There is a strong sense of the youth as the future of the revolution, of the need to mature their fervour into political

commitment. The Sandinista Youth organises school and college students, combining sport and cultural activities with production: volunteer harvesting and the 'school-work' programme, where students undertake manual labour during the vacations. 'The youth have broken through the boundaries of the old education, have taken school from behind its walls, and set it free in the farms and factories.'¹⁶

While there is still a leeway for extensive discussion and debate, the Mass Organisations will not be used to stifle opposition, but to collaborate in reconstruction. But how long this leeway will last is questionable. This is crucial for the development of the Organisations themselves; grassroots democracy needs a climate of security in which to find its feet. In a time of national crisis, the organisation and discipline needed to mobilise the population leave less room for the slow growth of confidence, for accumulation of experience, for ideological idiosyncracies. The temptation may then be to impose a political line from the centre, instead of allowing the untidy process of learning from below; to distance the leaders from their popular base, and draw them more closely into the service of the state.

As it is now, the independent influence of the Organisations is considerable: leaders are constantly consulted by the government and the FSLN. They also sit on various Coordinating Planning Commissions with representatives of relevant ministries to advise on policy in different social and economic areas. Most importantly, the Organisations are now the basis for the national Council of State, through which they directly participate in central government.

The National Reconstruction Government

The Council of State was part of the proposed plan for government formulated in Costa Rica before the victory. Its role is to advise the government Junta on legislative reforms, and debate its proposals which cover all areas of domestic and foreign policy. As originally conceived, the Council was composed of thirty-three representatives of political parties, professional groups, trade unions and popular organisations, including five delegates of private enterprise organisations.

The Junta was similarly pluralistic, reflecting the spectrum of anti-Somoza forces. Two social democrats were included: Violetta Chamorro, representing her murdered husband rather than a constituency of her own, and Alfonso Robelo, a wealthy cooking-oil manufacturer and leader of the MDN. The composition of the cabinet was equally respectable, to squash speculation about 'communism' and encourage international support. Although Sandinistas were placed at lower levels, the majority of ministers had been associated with

organisations of national or foreign capital in the past.

But at the First Anniversary celebrations, neither Violetta nor Robelo were still standing with the Junta. She had pleaded 'ill-health' for her withdrawal, but for Robelo the 'last drop', as he put it, had been the expansion of the Council of State to forty-seven by inclusion of more representatives of the popular organisations, thus giving pro-Sandinista members an overall majority. (Two other moderates replaced Violetta and Robelo, but neither had a personal following.)

The quarrel is not over profits (the demand for cooking oil is soaring; Robelo must be doing well) but that the economic importance of the bourgeoisie is not reflected in the state. Private property is still entrenched in Nicaragua, but is no longer a basis for political power. With outright victory, and the unexpected control over the armed forces, the Front has been consolidating its political hegemony both by its own advances, and by the piqued withdrawal of the right. Positions have been polarising; four of the small opposition parties, for example, have formed a Patriotic Front with the FSLN, while two others joined representatives of the MDN, private enterprise organisations and opposition trade unions in walking out of the Council of State earlier this year.

At issue at the moment are two views of 'democracy'. For Robelo, FSLN hegemony is 'totalitarian'; he favours a conservative social democracy. For the Sandinistas, democracy is embodied in 'Popular Power', the slogan shouted at all demonstrations, and means 'The integral participation of the people in political and public affairs, which becomes possible when people achieve the capacity to better their way of life.'¹⁷

Key ministries and state institutions are now controlled by the FSLN, whose hierarchy is also linked into government through overlapping appointments. The head of the new Ministry of Planning, responsible for the direction of all areas of social and economic policy, is a member of the Front Directorate, as is Tomás Borge, who as Minister of the Interior is responsible for the police and state security. The same pattern is repeated at lower levels, but FSLN control is not complete. The number of militants is very small; a revolution does not mean that everyone is now a revolutionary, and the majority of offices are staffed by Somoza's civil servants. The politicisation of the petty bourgeoisie proceeds apace and secretaries sit reading Lenin, but others cling to old routines and attitudes. Radicalised or not, there is also an absolute shortage of middle-level skills. Many technical and professional people left the country, and yet the needs are greater than ever. So senior officials cannot delegate, lower levels cannot take decisions and the constant change of personnel disrupts continuity. Whilst eyes are glazed with exhaustion behind head-of-department desks, much nail-filing and fiddling with paper-clips goes on elsewhere. The

40 per cent increase in bureaucracy with the proliferation of the centralised state is increasing both costs and public irritation at muddles and delays. 'Austerity and Efficiency' includes a decision not to expand the state in 1981, but to rationalise procedures.

The 'welfare revolution'

It was desperation that drove people to confront the National Guard: their malnutrition (affecting 70 per cent of the population), the death of their children (infant mortality at 12 per cent), their miserable living conditions (90 per cent of the rural population with no latrines let alone running water), their illness, their disease – all added up to the lowest life expectancy in Central America.

What they hope for is a better life, and they will judge the revolution by its ability to provide it. The acute shortage of resources, money, trained personnel and theoretical knowledge is now worsened by the limits on the 1981 welfare budget. But in every sector, a start has been made.

Although it does not always take place in practice, the policy of the new Ministry of Social Welfare is to promote popular participation in the programmes, which cover old people, the disabled, delinquents and addicts, both for political reasons and because of shortage of finance and professionals. There is an emphasis on children, especially those orphaned and traumatised during the war, and the new Centres of Child Development, although they still number less than twenty, aim to go beyond mere nursery care for the children of working mothers to create the 'new man and woman' of which the revolution speaks. In the countryside, a new Child Service is beginning to take the children of migrant harvesters out of the cotton fields and into day-care centres. Child labour is still common in Nicaragua, and banning it outright would deprive many families of a main source of income. But through another project, the shoeshiners and newspaper boys and girls can leave the adult street-world to play, to study, to learn what childhood means.

The idea of 'welfare' is one of community well-being, not just programmes for people with problems. In the Production Collectives, a group communally organises the production and marketing of basic necessities – clothes, baskets, shoes. They differ from cooperatives in that profits, after reinvestment, will finance social projects rather than being appropriated individually. Ex-prostitutes are included in some of the many Collectives which have been set up for women with no other sources of income, while others are groups of previously-independent artisans.

Health and housing projects have been slower to get off the ground. These old-established ministries are saddled with large and often

unimaginative bureaucracies. Health is also administered by doctors with as much concern for their professional status as for the socialisation of the services they offer. But at least they stayed – many left with Somoza, and there are only 4.5 doctors and 0.5 of a dentist for every 10,000 people. The contribution of 1,000 Cuban doctors has been of great importance, but is not seen as permanent, and crash training programmes are under way. There is a great scarcity of drugs, even of those products withdrawn from US markets and dumped in Central America. Four of the main hospitals were bombed to pieces; new ones are now being built and a system of Rural Health posts is being set up to bring medical services into the countryside for the first time.

But the 1981 Plan 'tries to develop a new concept of health, where people realise their ability to produce basic health through their own efforts. This doesn't so much depend on institutions, doctors, medicines, nor a large budget, but rather on popular education and communal organisation.' Shining new latrines appear in the countryside, queues form for vaccination at mobile clinics. Key in this effort are Popular Health Brigades where short courses provide a basic training to villagers and urban non-professionals who, in conjunction with the Mass Organisations, carry out health and nutrition education, simple curative services and make referrals. But plans to mount a health campaign, organised along the lines of the Literacy Crusade and mobilising the whole population in the project, have had to be shelved, both because of the lack of resources and through fears for the security of young people in the countryside as counter-revolutionary attacks increase.

Education

The Literacy Crusade has been perhaps the most brilliant achievement of the revolution. Acclaimed internationally by a UNESCO award, in Nicaragua it brought the revolution to the remotest communities, and politicised a generation of young people not by propaganda but by experience.

In March 1980, after a short training – to build up physical stamina and psychological commitment as much as teaching skills – 85,000 school and college students, aged 12 to 18, left for the countryside where they lived with *campesino* families, eating their food, sharing their poverty and teaching them to read and write. In the mornings they participated in productive and domestic work, their ineptitude at country skills helping to break down barriers. In sharing peasant life, in teaching literacy and in the military metaphor in which the campaign was conducted, the *brigadistas* were following Sandinista tradition. The 'Popular Army' was organised into columns, squadrons and brigades; in the towns over 30,000 'Urban Literacy Guerrillas' and

'Workers' Literacy Militias' waged the 'war against ignorance'. And, as in the war, the whole population was involved, through teaching, learning or support. When Managua celebrated the *brigadistas'* return in August, the illiteracy rate had dropped from 52 per cent to 13 per cent.

The grasp of their new skill may have been tenuous for some, but there was more to the campaign than reading and writing. As Paulo Freire, who helped in the planning, put it: 'This is a political project with pedagogic implications, not a pedagogic project with political implications.'¹⁸ This was not only because of the content of the literary and mathematics textbooks – revolutionary history and achievements, production and everyday life – or the method – discussion and self-discovery, but that a new world, a new confidence, was opened to the literate. Special campaigns in English and indigenous languages have been conducted on the Atlantic Coast. Separated geographically, historically, ethnically and by decades of neglect and exploitation, the Atlantic Coast was untouched by both the Guards' repression and the FSLN. Through the Crusade, as much as by other government programmes, the region has been incorporated into the revolution.

Before the *brigadistas* left, they organised their groups into Popular Education Collectives, coordinated by one of the members, to form the basis for the Adult Education programme. Conducted through radio-classes and special publications, the courses are concerned with subjects of interest to adults as parents, producers, consumers and members of popular organisations, and include accounting and basic economics. Although teachers and students act as advisers, there is no hierarchical distinctions between them and the 'Popular Teachers' who run the collectives.

In the Literacy Campaign, the *brigadistas*, and through them, their parents, saw for the first time how the majority of Nicaraguans live: the reasons for the revolution. Urban attitudes of superiority and mistrust towards the peasantry were replaced by friendship and respect. As one peasant woman said to the mother of a *brigadista*: 'I am no longer ignorant any more, you know, I know how to read now. Not perfectly, of course, but I know how. And you know, your son isn't ignorant any more either. Now he knows how we live, what we eat, how we work, and he knows the life of the mountains. Your son, ma'am, has learned to read from our book.'¹⁹

Women and the revolution

Over 60 per cent of the *brigadistas* were young women; the proportion of women among the previously illiterate was higher still. Education has opened new possibilities in productive, political and social life for women workers and peasants; for the schoolgirl, to live in the

countryside, independent from parents and equal with brothers, was a breakthrough. Their role during the war has had the same effect of bringing women into public life. Thirty per cent of FSLN fighters were women. The western Che Guevara fantasy of romantic excitement in the mountains bears no resemblance to the cold, hungry, monotonous, exhausting and fearful reality of guerrilla life. This they shared equally with men. In the cities, the Women's Association occupied churches and protested publicly against repression, while organising clandestine collaboration with the FSLN.

The present Women's Association, AMNLAE, is also 'integrationist', bringing women into the revolution by programmes that concern them – childcare, nutrition – and ensuring that women are represented both as activists and beneficiaries in the Literacy Campaign, Adult Education and Health Brigades. The nature of the economy, with the underdevelopment of industry and mechanisation of the agro-export sector, means there is little employment for the female working class apart from seasonal labour and domestic service. AMNLAE works with Social Welfare in the Collectives, to bring more women into production.

There is not one woman in the Junta or National Directorate, but women are represented in government, the FSLN and the Popular Organisations, both at a local and national level. AMNLAE is in the Council of State, and, either in combat clothes or khaki maternity dresses, women remain in the army. As explained by one of its leaders, AMNLAE's priorities are 'integrated into the national reconstruction plan. It is essential for us firstly to improve the basic conditions for survival of all women, which means improving general social and economic conditions.'²⁰ 'The struggle for the liberation of women isn't finished ... we still have to fight for our own rights, our own aspirations which are, as we see it, the aspirations of the revolution.'²¹

It is understandable that demands of women's movements in advanced industrial capitalism, such as contraception and abortion, do not seem so pressing to AMNLAE. In less developed capitalism, the demand for labour-power is as important as that for the means of production, and is reflected in a strong ideology, shared by women, of the value of childbearing. This is especially so in Nicaragua, with high infant mortality, underpopulation and the massacre of the war. In general, sexuality is not yet sufficiently divorced from reproduction for it to be debated in its own right. Also, in a society without a welfare state, the family is essential to survival, reinforcing the women's role as wife and mother.

But as women in other revolutions have discovered, be it China or Cuba, changes in the relationships of production and women's participation in political and economic life do not automatically destroy the ideology of inequality. *Machismo*, the particularly ego-centric

Latin form of sexism, is alive and well and keeping women in the bedroom and the kitchen. Some women dare to express this: 'Our revolution cannot and must not pass over the profound changes that have to take place in interpersonal relationships and the relationships between men and women.'²² But although issues of the personal as political are debated, no demands are formulated around them. Unless AMNLAE begins to analyse the structures of women's oppression in reproduction, around childbearing and domestic labour and ensures that transformations here are also part of the 'aspirations of the revolution', they may find that even their own project of equal participation will be frustrated. With time, this consciousness will arise of its own accord. But the more the revolution feels itself threatened, the more resistance there will be to questioning the identity of male and female interests, and to permitting any possible conflict between men and women.

The church

One forum where women have been prominent in the revolution is the church. It is difficult for the western left, nurtured in a secular socialism, to appreciate the popular importance of religion and the positive role it can play in radical transformations. The Catholic church has unquestionably been an agent of oppression in Latin American history, legitimising economic exploitation, and subjugating populations with ideological imperialism and material greed. But it also has another tradition, leading to the theology of liberation and the identity of christianity with the cause of the oppressed.

Unlike in Cuba, the Nicaragua church was heavily involved in the struggle for change. Churchmen condemned the abuse of human rights, securing international publicity for atrocities. Priests fought, and lost their lives. At the grassroots, the church had been the only organisation which could continue the tradition of Sandino with cooperatives and popular education. Many FSLN militants came out of church youth organisations in the 1960s, and some of the Mass Associations of today had their origins in christian groups. When the bishops confirmed the right of the people to join the insurrection, and when priests said mass in guerrilla camps, these were revolutionary acts, absolving the people from the sin of 'communism' and sanctioning the taking up of arms. For christianity is the cultural idiom of the people, and therein lies its power.

After the revolution, the anti-Somoza alliance began to crack in the church as it did elsewhere, to the point where it is now possible to talk of two churches: one, the hierarchy, led by the archbishop and most of the bishops, supported by Rome and by national and international reaction whose interests it defends; and second, the people's church –

the priests, men and women in orders, and laypeople of all classes who identify with the revolution. Organising through base committees in rural and urban communities, they promote involvement in popular organisations and campaigns, and carry out their own work of politicisation. The ministers of culture, welfare and foreign relations are priests, as was the head of the Literacy Campaign, now directing the Sandinista Youth. Others are engaged in theological studies of the compatibility of christianity and marxism, their findings feeding back into popular education.

The FSLN fully realises that through its traditional authority and cultural hold, the church can often legitimise the revolution at a popular level more effectively than Sandinista cadres. But this interest is not cynical. Some of the National Directorate are christian; even those who are not respect the people's faith. Tomás Borge holds that there is 'no alliance, but integration between christianity and the revolution'²³ which proclaim identical moral values.

Naturally, there is a dangerous middle ground between revolutionary christians, and those who vitiate the energies of the people with well-meaning religious paternalism. The latter is more in the style of the hierarchy, who fear losing their traditional authority through the identification of christianity with popular power, and who accuse the FSLN of 'materialist atheism' and an instrumental attitude to religion. They have supported the attempt by the Pope to remove priests from ministerial positions, secured large sums of money from US business to finance an 'Evangelical crusade' of traditional religiosity, and joined with the MDN and private enterprise in attacks on the government in the pages of *La Prensa*. Thus the political conflicts that grip Nicaragua are reflected in the church.

After the anniversary

The course of a revolution is determined by a dialectic between what is desired and what is possible, between the dream and the objective reality with which to shape it. The Sandinistas inherited a ruined economy, an empty bank and a dearth of technical experience. But the liberty they won also unleashed a welter of energies, the diverse enthusiasms of hitherto hidden sectors of the population, the chaotic explosion of the masses, the commitment of the young, their own relentless determination and hope. The daily experience of running a revolution is exhaustion and overwork. But at rallies and celebrations the collective joy breaks through.

Revolution is not only a change in political and economic structures, but the transformation of the relationships that compose them. The *existing nature of those relationships* is the starting point, rather than ideal but alien formations. A nationalist revolution, won by popular

insurrection and backed by several sectors of capital and the church, will be very different from that achieved by an organised proletariat in a secular, industrialised capitalism. The Sandinistas have had enough experience of right-wing imperialism to resist ideological ethnocentrism from the left. They have studied other revolutions carefully, and they have learned from them. But while they are located firmly within the marxist tradition, what they create will be their own.

The unorthodox class-alliances of the Sandinista revolution incorporate contradictions: between peasantisation and proletarianisation; between popular revendications and the profits of private enterprise. Their revolution is a gradual process. As one FSLN theorist said: 'The laws of capitalism will continue to function, but in a regulated manner and within certain limits. They will be progressively narrowed, as the new relations of production take hold, and the solid basis of a new economy is created.'²⁴ The FSLN is united on the general conception of popular power; their debates centre on how fast is 'progressively' and how wide is 'narrow'. In Sandinista style, these questions should be worked out with practical experience informing political theory, but this may not be possible. No revolution exists in isolation. The US cannot tolerate Sandinista success in the middle of Central America where other popular movements are struggling to follow suit. Nicaragua's own future is also closely tied to the outcome of these struggles; if they succeed, Nicaragua will have the space and support to consolidate the revolution. If not, the FSLN will be isolated, and its energies distracted by hostile neighbours and international ill-will.

With the vulnerability of the Nicaraguan economy to North America, Reagan does not need the Marines, and the US learnt from Cuba the un wisdom of a premature attack. Its policy is rather to exacerbate internal economic problems – 'to let Nicaragua stew' as one US official put it – and then strike when the anticipated discontent has grown. The threat of outside interference could deform development in Nicaragua through making a priority of defence, and push the tensions between socio-political and economic objectives, between present problems and long-term goals, to the point of contradiction. As the US correctly calculates, too swift a radicalisation of the process of change will prematurely alienate the bourgeoisie. In US logic, it will also serve to justify external aggression, as will the inevitable move towards the Soviet bloc if aid is not forthcoming elsewhere. In the past two years, less than 10 per cent of Nicaragua's trade has been with socialist countries, and aid from socialist countries, including Cuba, has mainly been in terms of personnel. But the loans being negotiated at present show a marked shift in that direction, and Cuba is to help with finance as well as technicians. But this, as Nicaragua puts it, is 'diversifying dependence' rather than abandoning non-alignment. Trade links are being consolidated with Mexico, as is its stance of solidarity, and

negotiations continue with the EEC. The Sandinistas are concerned with their relations with Europe; the International Socialist Committee for the Defence of Nicaragua is an important source of Social Democratic support. Wheat will come from Canada; loans from Libya. And attempts are still made to establish good relations with the US, where anti-interventionist opinion is fast increasing.

Within Nicaragua, the external threat has consolidated support among the popular sectors, even if some are still doubtful if they will be better off. Support for the Militia is massive, and includes many of the middle class. The bourgeoisie is not homogeneous nor is it mainly identified with the counter-revolution. Even Robelo and the opposition private sector, with whom the FSLN is re-establishing dialogue, have attacked the US aid cuts. The state sector is a basis of great potential strength for transformation, which, despite economic pressure, still continues.

These achievements will be celebrated on 19 July. But the theme of the anniversary festivities will be the defence of what has been won in the face of external aggression. The third year of the Nicaraguan revolution will not be easy.

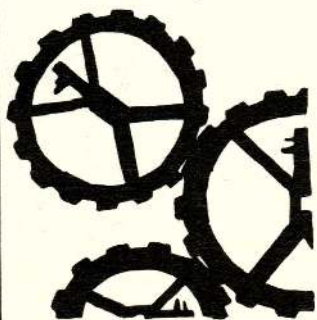
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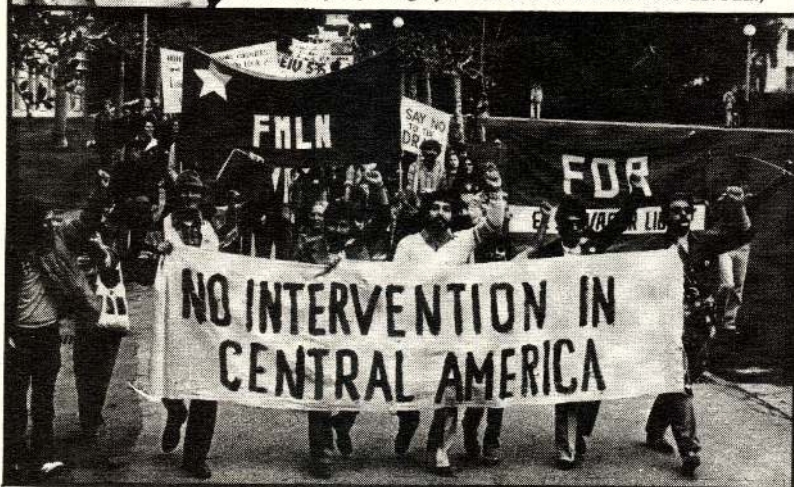
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Psychological research in Africa: genesis and function

It is neither accidental, nor an expression of mere academic interest that the study of the African psyche is, to this day, monopolised by Euro-Americans. Euro-American psychologists have had a definite function and role in the history of (neo)colonial oppression. Their research has long served as a bulwark of rationalisation for oppression. The practice of their trade has involved services to administrators and cartels inimical to African interests. (That blacks are now, in increasing numbers, being trained as psychologists still serves to perpetuate that subordination – for most are trained in Euro-American institutions and in the Euro-American tradition.) Euro-American psychologists have, in short, been the sometimes unwitting and sometimes determined agents in a violent history of oppression.

What, to begin with, has been this history? Ever since Portuguese and Spanish seafarers crossed the Straits of Gibraltar in 1415, western Europe and its diaspora have encroached upon the rest of the world in the bloody search for agricultural products, slaves, mineral resources and overseas markets. By 1900, the industrial powers of Europe had virtually conquered and divided the entire African continent. Thus, to the historically unprecedented holocaust of the slave trade, which had already depopulated the continent in serious proportions, was added a sweeping colonial conquest. Slavery, the confiscation of land and the conscription of African labour became the hallmarks of the colonial scramble.

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The expulsion of Africans from their homelands and in some cases their outright extermination were common colonial practices in procuring land. False pretexts for expelling Africans were easily contrived. For instance, the drunken activities of a few 'natives' were conveniently exaggerated in 1877 as a local riot in Bechuanaland. This 'riot' was then used as grounds for the expulsion of 8,000 Africans and the relocation of 30,000 others to poorer districts. Stringent methods of coercion of African labour were perfected in order to mine gold, copper, diamonds, iron and zinc or to farm for sugar, cotton, cocoa, bananas and rubber. For example, a costly 'hut-tax', which forced Africans to sell their labour in order to pay it, was introduced in Sierra Leone. Similarly, compulsory labour ordinances and quotas of free manpower for mines and military expeditions were widely imposed on African communities under the threat of total annihilation.

In the Congo basin, for instance, over nine million Africans were forced 'to spend their *lives* in the extremely arduous task of gathering and preparing india-rubber in the virgin forests, on behalf of a few wealthy financiers in Brussels, Paris and Antwerp'.¹ In twenty years, the population of the Congo Free State was reduced from twenty million to less than ten million. In South Africa, to meet the increasing manpower demands of the gold, diamond and iron mines, vicious techniques were developed to:

break up the tribal system which gives solidarity and some political and economic strength to native life; set the Kaffir on an individual footing as an economic bargainer, to which he is wholly unaccustomed, take him by taxation or other 'stimulus' from his locality, put him down under circumstances where he has no option but to labour at the mines.²

To this day, the carnage and alienation continue, with only apparent respite, often in a sophisticated neocolonial guise. It is against this history of violence, cultural uprooting and forced labour that the theory, method and application of psychology in Africa should be evaluated.

Why research in Africa?

Besides the wish to gratify a lure for the exotic and a leisurely respite amidst 'natives', there are, of course, more significant reasons for Euro-Americans to pursue research in Africa. In 1960, in his *Becoming More Civilised*,³ Professor Doob cited the following reasons for his work: (1) to learn about the peculiarities of your 'neighbour' leads to mutual tolerance; (2) works like his might ease the entrance of 'the less civilised' into 'civilisation'; (3) knowledge about people of other cultures enhances self-knowledge; and (4) cross-cultural investigations

with 'academic, scientific objectives' will improve the social sciences. Of course, as one could surmise, Professor Doob was by no means alone in viewing the objectives of Euro-American psychological research in these terms. Similar views and motivations have been expressed in other cross-cultural works.⁴

More recently, Reuning and Wortly outlined five 'good reasons' for why they conducted a detailed psychological study of the so-called Bushmen:⁵ (1) studying 'earlier ways of human life' will bring many problems of 'civilisation into proper perspective'; (2) such experimental study will help improve psychological methods; (3) studying 'earlier stages of intellectual endeavour' supposedly like the Bushmen's will lead to clarification of what is intelligence; (4) this kind of study could help resolve the *empiricist-nativist* controversy; and (5) its 'results' may be beneficial to the 'Bushman' themselves.

Thus, the African is expected to serve merely as a convenient guinea pig for enhancing Euro-American 'self-knowledge' and for advancing a 'science' of dubious relevance to African reality. Through psychological theorising and research, the African is made the losing partner (indeed the victim) that historically he has been in the economic and political spheres. Just as his material resources and human labour have been exploited to build sophisticated technologies and institutions, thereby *developing* Euro-America while *underdeveloping* Africa,⁶ the African 'subject' for research becomes a means through which answers are sought for every 'controversial' issue — as exemplified by the debate on nature vs. nurture. And just as those improved technologies and institutions help in their turn to bolster the forces continuing to oppress him, so more and more refined psychological theories and instruments serve only to rationalise and make more effective the African's exploitation. Yet only a few Euro-American psychologists are willing to admit this fact of psychological exploitation. Jahoda is unusually candid:

the invasion by foreign researchers is apt to be viewed as a more or less subtle form of exploitation. In other words, psychology stands accused of gaining advantage from developing countries without providing tangible benefits in return. Those of us who carried out cross-cultural studies in the past, and are honest with themselves, can hardly deny that there is some substance in this charge.⁷

That psychological research in Africa was motivated by the politico-military and economic interest of Euro-America is exemplified by the series of works presented in the July 1971 NATO conference on cultural factors in African mental testing development, application and interpretation. The participants included psychologists like B. Rimland and F.R. Wickert, who presented their works on African psychology. It was at the same NATO conference that Reuning and

Wortly presented their 'Psychological studies of Kalahari Bushmen', which, though ostensibly 'sympathetic' to the Bushmen (invoking, by implication, Rousseau's notion of the 'noble savage'), unequivocally disparage other Africans: 'Unspoilt or "wild" Bushmen are not greedy, do not steal and do not beg, in marked contrast to the behaviour of many other peoples all over the African continent, who often tend to be unashamed in their demands.'⁸

But nowhere have the objectives of Euro-American psychological research in Africa been so succinctly outlined as by Simon Biesheuvel in 1958:⁹ (1) 'to gain an understanding of the behaviour of African peoples'; (2) 'to provide means of testing the general validity of psychological hypotheses concerning the human behaviour'; and (3) 'to determine the extent to which [the African's behaviour] is modifiable'. At first sight, and of course from a Euro-American perspective, these three objectives could sound quite pertinent. But there is indeed more to the objectives of African psychological research than Biesheuvel or most Euro-American psychologists care to admit. This becomes particularly clear if we examine Biesheuvel's career, and social and professional background.

Biesheuvel is not only a contemporary psychologist with a great reputation in Euro-American psychological research in Africa, he is also a white South African — a fact which sadly shapes the purpose and content of his contribution. For 1941-6, he was Officer Commanding, Aptitude Test Section, South African Air Force, with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. He was also the founder and, since 1946, the director of South Africa's National Institute for Personnel Research (NIPR). NIPR was initially attached to South Africa's Department of Defence, the gold mining industry and the iron and steel industry. 'The Institute's first tasks were the provision of selection service for [white] personnel in the armed forces, for [white] administrative trainees in the iron and steel industry, and for Bantu mineworkers in the gold mining industry.'¹⁰ Under the initiative and direction of Biesheuvel, a host of psychological instruments (including the general adaptability battery) were developed to screen black mineworkers, aimed at increasing labour-productivity for white-owned industries. That, in part, is why Biesheuvel's stated objectives of 'understanding' and 'determining the limits of modifiability' of the African take on for us sinister dimensions.

Interestingly, it was in 1970 that Biesheuvel presented his reflections on the state of the world in an address on 'Science, arts, and the nature of man'. He referred to the 'epoch-making' advances in western technology, the destructive character of the Vietnam war, the Arab-Israeli and capitalist-communist conflicts, the Sino-Soviet border dispute, the Biafra rebellion, the conflicts between the generations, the increasing dangers in traffic accidents, the threat of air pollution and

even the indiscriminate use of insecticides! One might be taken in by the breadth, depth and urgency of these reflections until one realises the avoidance of any mention of the destructive effects of the apartheid system, the Sharpeville massacre, the dehumanising Pass Laws, and the millions of Africans ensnared (right under his nose) within a rigid system of 'scientific' racism. But this is wholly in keeping with the type of research programme and destiny that Biesheuvel had framed for Africans twelve years earlier:

African research programmes should ... be preferably directed towards the measurement of limits of modifiability of African behaviour, and towards a definition of the environmental factors that determine those limits ... [Such research] has the more realistic objectives of finding out what can be achieved by measures that are practical now, or will be so in the future. As such, it is socially valuable ...¹¹

These statements raise three central questions: (1) What 'environmental factors' of the African are to be studied, when in fact the pervasive socio-economic forces oppressing him are being deliberately neglected? (2) Does the goal of working out 'measures that are practical now' merely amount to enhancing the instruments with which the African is exploited in the gold and diamond mines? (3) Is Euro-American psychological research at all 'socially valuable' for the African?

The myth of scientific neutrality

If 'objectivity' is the hallmark of scientific method, then Euro-American psychological research in Africa has so far proved to be more a travesty than an expression of scientific endeavour. The very choice, formulation and interpretation of research studies tend to be shot through with personal opinion and racism. Nowhere else has a scientific speciality so uncritically embraced or been obsessed with the preconceptions, ideology and mystifying explanations of the (neo)colonial oppressor. Euro-American psychological research in Africa confirms the historical truth that the scholar's choice, formulation and interpretation of social issues are not, to any fundamental extent, out of tune with the basic motives and rationalisations of the ruling classes. A few illustrations are in order.

As early as the 1700s, a debate was raging among Victorian scientists regarding the educability of the African.¹² When, in 1799, the Briton Charles White corroborated the conclusions of Von Soemmering of Germany that the African was lacking in intelligence, these conclusions were quite influential in the debate just preceding the 1807 Anti-Slavery Trade Act. In spite of arguments to the contrary, White's

conclusions readily struck a responsive chord, for they provided 'scientific' rationalisations for slavery and found such influential adherents as Thomas Jefferson. Later, the works of Samuel Morton, De Gobineau and Paul Broca¹³ – the latter, for instance, claiming that the African's brain weighed 78.5 grams less than that of the European – were equally influential in the crystallisation of British and French colonial policies towards Africa. What is more, given the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* and the prevailing economic interests in regarding Africans as subhuman, it required little originality from President Hunt of the Anthropological Society of London to assert that the black man had 'descended from the ape only a few generations ago'.¹⁴

In the 1920s, Lucien Levy-Bruhl took upon himself the task of integrating earlier works on Africa and of 'enlightening' his readers on the thought processes of the African.¹⁵ Levy-Bruhl propounded a concreteness thesis and the classification of a 'prelogical mentality' to describe the African's mode of thought. It was accordingly surmised that the African, unlike the European, had yet to develop the capacity for logical and abstract thinking. The African was said to rely merely on memory and lacked the capacity for individuation. Mystical causation and a failure to learn from experience were also seen to be his distinguishing characteristics. Assuming that the development of thought processes not only followed along a continuum (i.e., from prelogical to logical) but was also genetically determined, Levy-Bruhl concluded that the African's mode of thought had to belong to an earlier phylogenetic stage.

Levy-Bruhl's views have had an enduring effect on later psychological research in Africa. Despite some clear but indecisive opposition, for decades they exerted a significant influence on Euro-American psychologists. Many psychologists have since held steadfastly to his conclusions about the African.¹⁶ Such views were of course fostered and used during particular stages in the material and social relations of colonialism. It should, therefore, come as no surprise that Dougall, for one, wrote:

The theory [of Levy-Bruhl] is supported by a mass of data and reasoned with great *persuasion*. It is the first coherent and *convincing* attempt to explain the whole difference between the African and western cultures by reference to a fundamental disparity in the psychology of the peoples. As such, it deserves the closest study, not only because it accounts for many facts in African thought and behaviour but also because it would ... have far-reaching consequences in the framing of *practical policies and modes of dealing with the African* [my emphasis].¹⁷

Yet the fact remains that colonialism, true to its reckless character,

had not waited until its academicians derived from theory 'practical policies and modes of dealing with the African'. For its instruments of violence had already ensured the exploitation and forced subjugation of the African. What it needed instead was institutionalised rationalisations to stifle the consciousness as well as the conscience of its own agents, real or potential. When rationalisations were concocted under the guise of 'science', colonialism only found further bases to fortify itself. Now it was not sufficient to attribute the African merely with a 'prelogical mentality'. The African had to be characterised in subhuman terms, as a freak of nature, or at least as an abnormal human being whose infantile proclivities, lack of personal individuation and dependency-needs called for external authority or a 'mother-surrogate all his life'.

Thus Ritchie, in discussing his observations of African child-rearing practices, came to the following conclusions:

The world [of the African] is thus divided into two forces: a benevolent power which would give him everything for nothing (the mother, during his first year), and a malevolent force which would deprive him even of his life itself (again the mother, due to the severe weaning). This high contrast in feelings of acceptance makes him dependent on a mother or mother-surrogate all his life. The individual personality is *never* liberated and brought under conscious rational control and self-realisation is thus unknown.¹⁸

Of course, the socio-political implication, here as elsewhere, is clearly this: who but the European colonialist can serve as a 'mother-surrogate' for the eternally infantile African? Carothers, working as a psychiatrist in Africa for over fifteen years, went even further: 'The native African in his culture is remarkably like the *lobotomised* western European and in some ways like the traditional psychopath in his inability to see individual acts as part of a whole situation, in his frenzied anxiety and in the relative lack of mental ills.'¹⁹

In 1968, Mannoni, in his attempt to analyse the 'colonial situation',²⁰ made the common mistake of seeking its psychological coordinates within an ahistorical and purely subjective perspective.²¹ Mannoni attributed a basic 'dependency-complex' and a need for a nurturant authority to the personality structure of the African. Such a dependency-complex and need for authority, both assumed to pre-date colonialism, found, it was suggested, a happy gratification in colonial dominance. As if to concur with Ritchie's belief in the need for a 'mother-surrogate', Mannoni asserted that 'the Vazaha [i.e. the European] is primarily a substitute for the father image'.²² The Malagasy, of whom he wrote, was seen merely as a child never attaining adulthood. Even the attempt at liberation from colonialism (in particular one abortive rebellion in the late 1940s) was explained by Mannoni as an

ineffectual effort to resolve infantile conflicts.

Mannoni himself, after a long psychoanalysis of his own personality and that of the European in general, had delineated certain neurotic proclivities that propel the white person to the colonial situation. Even then, it was his contention that the African's effort towards national independence was a hoax since, according to him, such independence contradicts the very nature of the African's psychic structure. He warned that the pervasive fear of 'abandonment' precludes the desire for actual independence. In this connection, it is also interesting to note that Biesheuvel once rhetorically asked: 'How often in these days of national independence have we not heard the cry of "freedom" from those doomed to an exchange of masters?'²³

Knapen also characterised the African as having a 'relatively weak consciousness of self; preponderance of fear of others over a sense of guilt; intense feeling of dependence', and so forth.²⁴ Verhaegen and Laroche similarly concluded that 'when one watches the [African] subjects working away at the solution of these simple problems, one is struck by their planless trial and error ... The illiterate African is defeated by a situation that is very simple to those reared in western culture.'²⁵ Haward and Roland compared Nigerian and European subjects from the results of the Goodenough 'draw-a-man' test.²⁶ Their interpretation of the scores included suggestions of a low level of personal individuation among Nigerians, the preponderance of a 'group outlook', an inability to abstract or synthesise, a failure to develop self-image and body-boundary and thus 'the existence of certain psychological mechanisms or frames of thought which he [the African] appears to share with the white mental patient'. Haward and Roland concluded earlier that the African finds pleasure in routine activities and that 'this love of repetition is doubtless but another manifestation of the rigid and concrete attitudes of the native'.²⁷ What is more, they argued that 'his concreteness of mentation does not admit of compromise, only imitation, for it has long been established that the Negro races are natural mimics'. Of course, one of the implications of this alleged concreteness is: 'When introducing him to western work routine, one finds it convenient to adopt an approach suited to a European child of ten.'

Using psychoanalytic concepts in their studies of character formation among West Africans, Parin and Morgenthaler came to:

deduce that in the case of the Africans ... there was no ethos of work that existed as a continuing and effective inner structure. With regard to their working behaviour they did not seem to possess any super-ego, but seemed to operate solely on the pleasure principle, where inner satisfaction and feelings of guilt were not effective. Only such factors as a command from an external authority; imitation of,

and identification with, a prestige-bearer; reward and punishment ... were of some efficacy.²⁸

In an effort to underscore these points, Parin and Morgenthauer cited what, in their view, represented 'case-illustrations'. One of these, for example, concerned the report to them by a white missionary about the behaviour of an African. 'The White Father' had, according to them, implored the African to work on a particular task in a spirit of a favour. Faced with a refusal, however, the missionary immediately substituted the request with a firm command to the African, whereupon the latter is said to have right away resumed the task with the retort: 'You should not have asked me whether I minded it; you should have told me straight-away that I had to do it.'

Another illustration is that of African road builders who explained to their European foreman why on one occasion they had failed to execute the assigned task: 'Neither you nor your deputy were watching us! As long as one of you is there, we will work quite willingly.' Thus, here again, as in so many other instances, the existence of an external authority and attitudes of ruthless control were justified, indeed urged, under the guise of 'scientific' studies. Moreover, Parin and Morgenthauer equate the conscious thought processes of the African with the unconscious processes of 'healthy civilised individuals'.

When, by 1960, many African countries had won their independence, the tone and language of Euro-American psychological research in Africa began to change. But this did not represent a fundamental shift in thrust and function. Euro-American psychological research in Africa took on a sophisticated neocolonial disguise. A case in point is the work of Price-Williams, whose 'ingenuity' in adopting Euro-American research tools to African cultural conditions has been widely acclaimed. As late as 1961, Price-Williams in all seriousness took upon himself the task of testing, among others, the validity of Levy-Bruhl's concreteness thesis and of his attribution of 'prelogical mentality' to the African through studying the conversation of Tiv children in Central Nigeria. After having given Levy-Bruhl's outdated views the benefit of the doubt, Price-Williams rejected them – but only partially and only with respect to the Tiv society. He continued to suspect their potential validity for other Africans since, according to his conclusion, 'it may of course be true that what goes under the heading of "prelogical mentality" may be more evident in other so-called primitive societies'.²⁹

Similarly, it was not too long ago that Grant came to the rare 'discovery' that 'the realm of spatial thinking exists as a distinct dimension in the intellect of Africans'.³⁰ His new 'discovery', arrived at on the basis of elegant statistical techniques, was presented by way of refuting the conclusions of, for example, Verhaegen and Laroche and

Biesheuvel. Grant, again using data from 100 African mineworkers in South Africa, reported that 'conceptual reasoning exists as another dimension of African intellect'.³¹ These findings were also suggested to contradict conclusions of Levy-Bruhl, Haward and Roland, Ibbarola and Carothers. Such refutations and rare 'discoveries' may sound long overdue. But a more fundamental question is: how many isolated research findings, on how many African communities, are to accumulate before outdated myths are completely cracked, and the denigrating tradition undone?

Applied psychology serving imperialism

The ultimate worth of any theorising and research resides, of course, in the degree and nature of its practical application. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that the most intensive psychological research for expropriating African labour is carried out at the NIPR. Another significant research establishment in South Africa is the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). NIPR and HSRC are not the only centres of African research. A number of industries also have their own specialised labour research departments, of which the Human Sciences Laboratory of the Chamber of Mines is one of the most notable.

As already pointed out, the NIPR was initially attached to the South African Department of Defence. About two-thirds of its financial support still comes from the apartheid regime of South Africa and about one-third from certain Anglo-American cartels monopolising the gold, diamond and iron industries of Africa. Since much of the work on Africans at the NIPR remains confidential to the sponsoring institutions, one can only estimate the extent of its activities. Several years ago, it was estimated that it had produced well over 1,125 research reports on African workers.³³ Over a decade ago, Reader summarised some previously unpublished findings at NIPR, with one significant proviso: 'Findings which are highly specific to sponsors have not been included, nor have details of a sponsor's identity or organisation been revealed.'³⁴ But a brief review reveals the impact of such projects.

Noting in 1946 the successes of its Aptitude Testing Section in personnel selection for the South African Air Force, the Transvaal Chamber of Mines quickly contracted with the NIPR to engage in the testing of 'native' labourers in the gold mines. The contract had the aim of increasing efficiency in production and reducing company costs. Soon the NIPR's developed expertise in the selection of African personnel was extended beyond the gold mines into such enterprises as the Anglo-American Corporation Group, the Central Mining Rand Group, the Anglo-Transvaal Consolidated Investment Group and, later, into varieties of industries, including public transportation and building corporations.³⁵

The NIPR has since conducted research into the African psyche and into a wide range of African social organisations. Included in these were studies on intelligence, cognition, perception, neuropsychology, nutrition, effects of routine work, psychomotor learning, ergonomics, absenteeism, labour turn-over, etc. NIPR studies are clearly not like the more academic type of research on cognition, affect and behavioural patterns. On the contrary, the NIPR psychologists, in collaboration with physiologists, have also been conducting experiments on the African's maximum limits for sustained and arduous physical labour. Long ago, Biesheuvel reported that 'some success has been obtained with a test in which a heavy weight is carried up a flight of five steps to a platform and dropped down one of three chutes ... In combination with pulse-rate, this yields a score which gives a reasonable prediction of above or below average performance in shovelling rock.'³⁶ Explaining the NIPR's particular interest, in whether Africans have 'biological advantages' over Europeans for hard labour in a tropical climate, Biesheuvel pointed out that 'an up-to-date climate chamber is available for laboratory experiments'. If these are the kind of experimental engagements the NIPR is willing to admit to the international community, one wonders what indeed do their confidential studies contain? None the less, these open admissions suggest the import of the stated objective of determining 'the extent of modifiability in the African's behaviour'.

Out of the NIPR's intensive research on African mineworkers has also emerged a series of psychological tests, notably the general adaptability battery and its sequel, the classification test battery. Both the GAB and CTB were originally designed for occupational classification and personnel selection of 'Bantu' mineworkers. The GAB, containing tests of a performance type administered by means of silent 16-mm cine-film, has sophisticated screening procedures which classify African workers into, at least, skilled and semi-skilled categories.³⁷ As will be later indicated, such test batteries as the GAB have also found application in the so-called independent African countries like Ghana, Zambia and Kenya, essentially for the same purpose – screening African workers on behalf of Euro-American business cartels.

The GAB was extensively used. But one of its disadvantages is that it takes about two and a half hours to administer. In addition, it requires costly apparatus, to be used in special conditions. Subsequently, a plethora of other test batteries serving the same function have been experimented with. An example of a substitute to the GAB is a form series test. The latter is less expensive to construct, takes only about twenty minutes to administer to small groups, has a satisfactory internal consistency of about 0.8, and a correlation of 0.6 with the GAB.³⁸ A more recent substitute is said to be the wire-bending test which has been applied for apprentice selection on behalf of the Zambia RST

Company.³⁹ Among the arsenal of test batteries developed by the NIPR are the mechanical pegboard, the tweezer-nozzle test, the chopstick test and the leaderless group test. While some of these are tests for finger dexterity, the leaderless group test is used to identify Africans with high 'cooperative' qualities.

Such screening devices are reported to be highly useful in selecting and classifying an African labour force with the desired efficiency and compliance. Indeed, concerning the use of such batteries, Biesheuvel reported that 'training wastage for boss-boys [the racist's term for African foremen] was reduced from 17% for current selection methods to 3%, the estimated wastage for chance selection being 36%'.⁴⁰ Hudson also reported that using such methods reduced the wastage rate by 83 per cent. This is the same Hudson whose 'scientific' studies led him to conclude: 'If the African workers felt themselves to be well-treated and looked after, small wage differences and arduous working conditions did not diminish morale or reduce mine popularity.'⁴¹ In other words, if a paternalistic white master looks after them, blacks are only too glad to slave for him in return. Previously, Biesheuvel had attributed to Africans an almost inherent indolence and thereby justified the continued imposition of a monotonous existence on the African worker:

On the other hand, he [the African] makes up for his lack of speed by his liking for repetitive action, on which he readily imposes a rhythm of his own ... Africans may, therefore, prove far more tolerant to the monotony of machine operative work than Europeans. By transforming such works into mildly satisfying experience they may retain efficiency where the European becomes restless and frustrated.⁴²

Today, as before, a staggering number of Africans are finding themselves forced to alienate their labour. They are then subjected to all sorts of screening devices in order to ensure effective and inexpensive service to Euro-American cartels inimical to African interests. Indeed, psychologists like Bennet take pride in their practice that 'some 4,000 [Zambian] applicants for seventy places on three mines were screened on the basis of available biographical information to approximately 2,000 for testing'.⁴³ Yet true to the fascination with pure technique characteristic of Euro-American psychology, Bennet reveals little interest as to why there is such an excess of unemployed Africans in the first place, what personal distress is entailed for the thousands screened out, or to whose benefit has he so assiduously selected seventy Africans out of 4,000 applicants!

Instruments and techniques devised by the South African NIPR gradually found wider application in West and East Africa. Taylor had long applied these instruments for personnel selection on behalf of the

Ghana Chamber of Mines, the ABA Mine in Ghana, the Shell-BP Development Corporation of Eastern Nigeria and the Sierra Leone Development Corporation.⁴⁴ Vant, Officer-in-Charge of the Aptitude Testing Unit in Kenya, also described how, with the help of a 'mobile psychological testing centre', he tested as many as 10,000 African job-candidates in a single year. Interestingly, Vant then concluded his article with this acknowledgement:

The development of the Unit in Kenya would not have been possible without the generous support and assistance from a number of organisations and individuals. In particular, thanks are due to the Ford Foundation of America, the National Institute for Personnel Research, the Army Operation Research Group, the Shell Group Companies, the East African Tobacco Co. Ltd., Dr S. Biesheuvel, Dr W. Hudson and Mr A.O.H. Roberts.⁴⁵

Since the 1940s, French psychologists have also been conducting research on behalf of French 'entrepreneurs'. Studying problems of labour turn-over and absenteeism among Gabonese workers, Biffot went so far as to suggest the following solution: 'Oblige all non-workers to get jobs so that they will support themselves, and, if necessary, even hold them in camps or jails until they feel like going to work.'⁴⁶ In contrast to research at NIPR, however, many of the works in Francophone Africa have tended to focus on the assessment of educational potential among African children rather than on occupational selection. Exceptions in such trends are represented by the works of Xydias and of Morgaut.⁴⁷

Morgaut and his large team of industrial psychologists have applied elaborate test batteries on no less than 10,000 Africans in eleven 'independent' Francophone African countries.⁴⁸ These tests were, of course, executed on behalf of several large European industries and commercial enterprises which monopolised production, mining, plantation and secondary industries in those African countries. Using such batteries as progressive matrices, picture arrangement and psychomotor coordination test, Morgaut and his staff initially screened out some 85 per cent of African applicants and then further selected only a small fraction on the basis of achievement tests, interest inventories, projective techniques, etc. So successful were these extensive projects that the previous labour turn-over of 33.5 per cent was reduced to only 4.8 per cent among test-selected workers.

In the scramble to control the African psyche, the United States Agency for International Development (AID) and the American Institute for Research (AIR) have also engaged in extensive projects concerned with psychological test development and administration in Africa. In a series of works on behalf of AID/AIR, Shwartz has given a comprehensive outline of the rationale, construction and application

of psychological tests for use in Africa.⁴⁹ This American project was first drafted in 1959 and began in May of the following year. With the express purpose of devising and implementing suitable screening techniques, AID/AIR initially located its project in Nigeria and then gradually extended its activities into both the 'Anglophone' and 'Francophone' countries in the continent.

Within the first thirteen months, some 2,350 Africans were tested. By 1963, twenty-one tests had been developed for use on Africans and some 15,000 Ghanaians, Liberians, Tunisians and Nigerians had been subjected to intensive experimental and standardisation testing. By 1964, the twenty-one tests developed by AID/AIR were officially referred to under the rubric of ID Tests and presented in packages for use in the technical, commercial and scholastic selection and classification of Africans. One notable outgrowth of the AID/AIR project in Africa was the formation and expansion of the Test Development and Research Office (TEDRO) which has since become an integral component of the West African Examination Council. TEDRO had in fact grown into such an institution in West Africa that by 1968 it had administered over a million and a half tests to well over half a million African candidates. Euro-American psychology has since gained an even greater role in African education, labour and mental health. So sophisticated have the approach and techniques become that even greater caution must be exercised against their wholesale transfer into the African context.⁵⁰

In short, a historical review of the literature indicates that African psychological research has thus far been geared to the development of Euro-America and the psycho-economic underdevelopment of Africa. The very objectives of Euro-American psychological research reveal that the African 'subject' for studies is often made the losing partner in an academic enterprise, just as the colonised has historically been forced to be the losing partner in the economic and political spheres. Subsequent psychological findings have also been elaborated into bulwarks of rationalisation that serve to stifle consciousness and conscience over the exploitation of the African. Moreover, Euro-American psychologists have readily offered their services and instruments to business cartels and governments which are inimical to African interests. This generalised complicity cannot be explained merely in terms of the intentional subterfuge and malice of individual psychologists. It is, rather, a question of limited historical perspective, narrow technical fascination, as well as financial dependency on grants from business cartels and governments. Indeed, African psychological research best illustrates some fundamental pitfalls common to most psychological research. Psychology in general, and African psychological research in particular, must therefore be rehabilitated into a science in the service of people. Blacks taking up psychology as a

career must be alert to the historical use of psychology as an instrument of oppression. They must also become cognisant of its potential role in individual and social transformation.

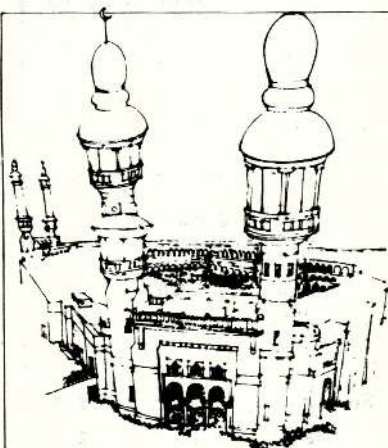
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This article is part of a larger manuscript, entitled 'Imperialism in studies of the psyche'. In conducting this research I found, time and again, that the most pertinent material has been rendered 'confidential' by sponsoring agencies and governments. This conscious effort, particularly on the part of South African psychologists, to hide data from public scrutiny should take on special significance in view of what is summarised in this article.

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No fist is big enough to hide the sky: building Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde

In 1969, Basil Davidson, with the help and support of Amílcar Cabral and the PAIGC of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, published an account of the liberation struggle of the PAIGC which, said the Socialist Register of 1970, 'added a new dimension to the analysis of African revolutionary movements'. Entitled The Liberation of Guiné: aspects of an African revolution, this book contained a moving preface by Cabral himself, was widely read in English and was translated into seven other languages.

Now, in 1981, Davidson brings out a successor volume entitled, after a peasant saying of Guinea-Bissau, No Fist is Big Enough to Hide The Sky (Zed Press, 57 Caledonian Road London, August 1981). This new book, with a foreword by the Secretary General of PAIGC and President of Cape Verde, Aristides Pereira, tells in detail, for the first time, the inside story of the last years and final victory of the PAIGC; it gives the detailed background to the assassination of Cabral in 1973, and recounts the remarkable way in which the PAIGC secured, without firing another shot, the total evacuation of the Portuguese armed forces from Guinea-Bissau and then from Cape Verde. We publish below a slightly shortened version of the chapter on the early years of 'rebuilding and building' Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde.

The model which our party builds is one in which participation at the base is guaranteed in all decisions, and at every level, by a democratic organisation and method ... This organisation and method presupposes the existence, alongside every executive

committee, of an assembly of delegates elected from the level of that committee, an assembly which elects and controls the committee in question.

Aristides Pereira, August 1976

As in Mozambique and Angola, liberated in the same years, the immediate problems were two-fold. They were material and technological poverty, backwardness, widespread physical ruin; and, on the other hand, a more or less profound moral and political confusion in several areas still under colonial control at the end of the war. This heritage of a long foreign domination was a grim one, but was at least foreseen and measured by the leaders in the work of liberation. They knew that they could not avoid any of the problems of this heritage; but they were also sure that there were certain policies they could follow in order to contain and progressively solve those problems.

The two new republics did not have to come into their sovereignty with ideas and methods untested or unknown. They arrived there with the advantages of a rich practice and a consistent theory. The colonial dictatorships were not brought to an end in a vacuum of political thought and action. On all that, the outlook was understandably clear and optimistic. Immediately, however, the unavoidable problems were many and enormous. Four basic policies were brought to bear so as to rebuild, first, whatever could be serviceable, and then to build anew, and from the start, all those things that were lacking. 'We are going to build a new society', proclaimed the earliest PAIGC banners in liberated Bissau, bravely flapping in the August rains of 1974 (as I saw them myself), even while the last Portuguese military patrols were still on duty; and it was not intended, not for a moment, as an idle boast.

The first of these basic policies was to end the war as quickly and cleanly as possible, avoiding revenge and reducing bitterness, so as to absorb into the community of the PAIGC all those groups and persons who had remained till the last under colonial influence. Intimately linked with and continuing this first policy was a second objective. This was to extend to the zones only freed from colonial control in 1974 the structures, attitudes and culture of the wartime liberated zones, where the outlines of a new society had indeed begun to take shape and where the morality of its values had become part of everyday life. Target areas were the whole of the Cape Verde archipelago; and on the mainland, chiefly the capital, Bissau, where about one-seventh of the mainland population was living by the end of the war.

This 'Bissau problem' was especially difficult, for its 80,000-odd people contained, by 1974, a not insignificant proportion of those who had lived for years off the Portuguese military economy, whether by petty trade or petty crime, or by jobs in the Portuguese service,

prostitution or the peddling of drugs. It was the problem posed by all the large colonial cities liberated in these years, whether in Africa or Asia. How to 'reconvert' such a population, give it a decent livelihood, inspire it with a new morality? The defenders of the colonial order have seldom cared to consider this aspect of a departing colonialism.

The PAIGC began to tackle its 'Bissau problem' without delay: first, by an intensive effort of politicisation, which largely, for that bemused and ignorant city population, meant simple explanation and discussion; and secondly, by the installation of urban assemblies and elected citizens' committees through which a trend towards mass participation was launched, and then deepened. It met with remarkably little trouble, a fact explained by the ease and speed with which the mass of the city population could and did assimilate the good sense of PAIGC methods and objectives.

Bissau's 'colonial bourgeoisie', naturally, proved more difficult, and, as later developments were to show in 1979-80, was going to make a big and not always unsuccessful attempt to win control of the new state's bureaucratic apparatus. Its best individuals had long joined the struggle of the PAIGC. But the majority of its several hundred 'members' in Bissau (effectively, there were none elsewhere) included former officials and colonial hangers-on who had not the slightest intention of following Cabral's advice of 1964 and 'committing suicide as a class'. Although strictly speaking they did not form a class, they certainly formed a social grouping. They would find it hard to achieve a concept of life in line with the tasks of liberation; meanwhile, they were simply 'there', waiting for the most part to see which way various cats were going to jump. Otherwise, there were one or two minor plots of counter-revolutionary violence; these were chiefly the work of former African agents of the Portuguese dictatorship or of several of Spínola's former 'commando' mercenaries. They were easily put down.

A third policy, again characteristic of everything striven for since the 1950s, was to extend and strengthen links with all those foreign parties, groupings, governments and international organisations that might be ready to help without posing conditions. Here the PAIGC continued to gain from its determined policy of non-alignment in all matters that lay outside the scope of the Organisation of African Unity. The scale of international response – now from the West as well as from the East – to this call for financial and technical aid testified not only to the seriousness of the PAIGC, but also to the prestige won in many countries by the party of Cabral. Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde had been practically unknown in the world. Now these sister republics of the PAIGC became a focus of worldwide attention. Problems relating to the scale of this aid – as to whether it might not bite into the sovereignty of these republics, and as to what would happen when it fell away and

stopped – were also apparent. We will look at them a little further on.

From an early point, in any case, the PAIGC leadership began again to think ahead. They argued the need for a wide range of social, economic and political action, starting with basic things such as gaining command of currency and credit, moving on from there to constructing the foundations of national plans, and selecting immediate targets for rebuilding and building afresh. All this was generally put together under the label of ‘reconstruction’, a somewhat misleading word in that much which had now to be built had never existed before.

A fourth major policy, likewise promoted after liberation as an extension of what had gone before, was to begin the long-term cultural and structural work of creating an organic unity, a far-reaching but probably federal form of unity, between Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, now that the PAIGC had won an overwhelming success in both countries. This continued to be seen as inseparable from other aspects of the struggle for liberation from the colonial heritage.

* * *

The sterility of the colonial heritage that the PAIGC found in 1974-5 is indeed hard to overstate. In material terms, the situation of the ‘marines’ port’ of Cacine, with its single little hand-cranked crane, could simply be generalised: of installations geared to modern technology and processes of production there were practically none. The solitary exception on the mainland was a brewery and soft drinks factory, finished in 1973, largely for the needs of the Portuguese armed forces (who never had time to benefit from it). Admittedly very up-to-date, with excellent beer-making equipment from several European countries including Czechoslovakia, it depended on the import from abroad of all the materials (except water). The position was little better on the Cape Verde islands; and there, in another dimension, the colonial period had produced not a single hotel.

This dearth of any form of development was mental and cultural as well. There were, for example, no statistics or statisticians, almost no resident or indigenous doctors (outside the liberated areas on the mainland), almost no teachers with anything beyond a basic education themselves and, behind all this, a rate of illiteracy or pre-literacy of about 98 per cent on the mainland and 70 per cent on the islands.

Summing up in 1977, Pereira recalled that colonial rule had left these countries with a more or less complete absence of technicians and middle-level personnel, as well as this very high rate of illiteracy; with a feeble transport network, whether by land or sea, in no way corresponding even to elementary internal needs; with a virtually non-existent energy system; with an almost complete failure to utilise natural resources in order to overcome material backwardness; with a

deficient and inadequate health and educational infrastructure, what little there was being concentrated in a few urban centres; and, not least, with a lackadaisical and often anti-social conception of life in certain strata of the urbanised population.

Of Guinea-Bissau, a UN mission of 1978, in another summary, noted that:

The war had disrupted the economy, which was in any case weak and underdeveloped, and had destroyed or damaged much of the very limited infrastructure. The country faced acute shortages in vital areas, especially in food supplies, trained manpower, equipment and spare parts, budgetary finance and foreign exchange...

Of Cape Verde, another UN mission enlarged upon the tremendous problems which the still-continuing drought, which had begun in the late 1960s, piled on top of colonial stagnation – to the point that the rate of Cape Verdean unemployment at the end of 1976 was estimated at about 60 per cent of the working population.

Among the few statistical data available, there were some for exports and imports; they in themselves are enough to indicate the measure of the post-liberation crisis. In the second half of 1974, for example, the exports of 'Portuguese Guiné', then becoming the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, covered only 7 per cent of the cost of essential imports. For the whole of 1975, it very soon transpired, the exports of Guinea-Bissau could cover only 16 per cent of the cost of imports, and even less in 1976. Only in 1977 could the productive effort of the new regime and its people begin to reduce these appalling deficits, so that national exports between January and September 1977 were finally able to cover 41 per cent of import costs. The position in Cape Verde was still more adverse. There being no reserves of money in the colonial treasury – Lisbon was even to ask, though vainly, that Guinea-Bissau should meet the accumulated deficit run up by the country during the colonial period – only foreign aid could meet this emergency; and foreign aid, as we have noted, did in fact arrive from many sources.

So the going was tough. Much of the southern region of Guinea-Bissau is ideal for growing rice, with abundant supplies of fresh water in climatically normal times, as well as a relatively unexhausted soil; and rice had long been the staple diet of most of the population. These rice-growing areas were those in which the PAIGC had established its earliest and eventually largest liberated zones, and such was their success in growing rice, even under conditions of warfare, that the liberated zones were producing an export surplus by 1973. But this was too small, in 1974, to offer much to the zones still under Portuguese occupation. There, production of all commodities fell steeply through the late 1960s and early 1970s, and in 1974 there was almost no production at all. The shortfall which had to be bought abroad in that year

was almost one-third of the total national need, or some 30,000 tons. If this continued, the country would remain bankrupt.

The PAIGC accordingly sponsored a major productive effort, and rice imports in 1975 were down to 20,000 tons; with the effort continuing, they were down to 11,000 tons in each of the two following years, 1976 and 1977. At the time, it seemed likely that rice imports might be eliminated in 1978-9 and the country would then be self-supporting in its main item of food. Unhappily, the extension of the drought in the Sahel came in to kill that prospect; and in 1978 large rice imports were once again required. Aid monies earmarked for infrastructural and social construction had to be diverted to meet the new emergency. By 1979, the productive situation had begun to improve, but was still unsatisfactory (and was then worsened by grave deficiencies in the distributive situation).

Progress was meanwhile made in other fields. The monopolist stranglehold on export-import trade exercised by the subsidiaries of the Lisbon-based CUP (*Comparha União Fabril*) was rapidly dismantled, and the PAIGC regime, while taking over control of these activities, likewise launched a country-wide system of wholesale and retail commerce, partly by enlarging the wartime system of 'people's shops' (*armazens do povo*) and partly by the encouragement of price-controlled local traders. For the first few years, at least, these seem to have worked well. Post-colonial and anti-colonial administrative departments and state agencies continued to be installed with success. All banking, currency and credit were nationalised. A useful start was made in the collecting and collating of essential information, and statisticians were sent for training. Preliminary studies were undertaken to establish the nature of the country's natural resources, including oil, and some initial enterprises were launched, partly as pilot schemes, partly as cooperatives and partly as long-term investment. Other aspects of long-term planning provided for a gradual decentralisation of urban effort and investment from Bissau, pinpointing such provincial centres as Bolama and Cacheu as points of future growth and development.

Comparable measures were taken by the PAIGC government of the Cape Verdes, but there the ravages of cyclical drought were far more severe and called for much emergency action. In this respect, the break with colonial methods and ideas was exceptionally sharp. The Portuguese had never done anything to alleviate the consequences of cyclical drought, from which the islands had often suffered in the past, except for a little charity now and then. To this latest drought they had reacted in their familiar way. Waking up to its seriousness in 1970, largely thanks to PAIGC agitation on the international scene, they had simply handed out 'relief money', or *apoio* as it was called; and while this could undoubtedly save some lives, it could do nothing to give the islanders any chance of defending themselves better in the future.

Taking power in July 1975, the new PAIGC government reacted very differently. It appealed for financial aid from any country that would give it without conditions, and much, happily, came to hand – not least, no doubt, because the western powers were now relieved to find that PAIGC non-alignment really meant what it said, and that the strategically well-placed Cape Verde archipelago would allow no foreign military bases on its soil.¹ This money the PAIGC used in its own way. Instead of handing it round as ‘relief’, the PAIGC turned the money into a wages fund. We shall see what they did with this fund.

With all this – and we will come back to some of the details – the colonial heritage began to be shaken and shifted. The future could be different.

* * *

Building that future could not be the brief affair of a few years. While tackling the immediate problems after liberation, PAIGC thinkers soon let you know that they were also looking at long perspectives. The armed struggle for national independence and unity had had to be protracted; so would this continued struggle for a new society. Meanwhile, what guidelines to that future did they follow? What was to be the structural and organisational nature of their new society?

People make their own history; and prophecies have never been much use, so far, in describing what they will make. The general aim here was that ‘people should live better in ways they work for and recognise’ – in other words, the aim of everything the PAIGC had fought for since the 1950s. It expressed Cabral’s well-known call for a stern realism: that people were not fighting for the ideas in anyone’s head, but ‘to win material benefits, to live better and in peace, to see their lives go forward, to guarantee the future of their children’.

First and foremost, this meant an end to all those forms of direct exploitation associated with colonial rule, and, beyond that, to all other types of exploitation such as those the ‘neo-colonial’ countries had shown to be all too possible. So the PAIGC was pledged to end ‘the exploitation of man by man in all its forms of subjection of the human person to degrading interests and the profit of individuals, groups or classes’. This was the general formulation it had worked under during Cabral’s leadership, re-stated in the above words by Pereira at the proclamation of the independent state in 1973, and on occasions after that. Thus the PAIGC programme remained within a revolutionary and socialist perspective, defined in terms of a materialist analysis of productive forces and classes. Otherwise, the PAIGC, disliking the use of terms that the masses had not yet learned to understand, and had therefore not yet learned to accept, continued to avoid them. A campaign could certainly have popularised the word ‘socialism’ as a

slogan; but what precisely would this slogan have meant – could it have meant in this phase of development – to village farmers and rural herdsmen?

There is an interesting comparison to be made here, it seems to me, with the early years of preparation for the armed struggle. At that time, the pioneering militants of the PAIGC, striving to win peasant participation, had never used ‘big words’ like ‘colonialism’ and ‘imperialism’. Their leaders might well understand the meaning of those terms as real targets, but it would have been a merely intellectual paternalism to have flourished them, or relied upon them. What the leaders had to do, and what these leaders did do, was to become acutely aware of peasant targets – colonial taxes, administrative impositions, various coercions and the rest – and then to fight against these targets in such a way as to link their meaning, gradually, to wider meanings concerned with system and ideology. So now the ‘big words’ like ‘socialism’ were left to emerge, in due course, from a mass understanding of actions to end this or that well-perceived inequality or injustice.

But meanwhile, to ensure and safeguard this future, the new states took care to abolish all major or external forms of capitalist exploitation. No nationalisation of land (save of some urban land) was necessary or in any way desirable in Guinea-Bissau, where nearly all the land was collectively held and divided. But a handful of large land-owners in the Cape Verdes were expropriated, and steps were prepared gradually to end *parceria*, a form of *mezzadria* (share-cropping is perhaps the nearest English word), that was widely practised there, often in complex forms which were also the fruit of a purely Cape Verdean history. The banks, as we have seen, were all nationalised, and foreign commercial companies disarmed or removed.

All this cleared the ground for action, as it were, on the ‘home front’. Here, the process of building a new society had to be many-sided and gradual. There remained contrasts of social system and local custom – just as the legal organs of the new regime, aiming now at an extension and regularisation of a new system of justice, found itself, at first, having to accept the application of five or six local codes in relation to petty crime and even to homicide. Among the Balante, in certain circumstances, neither theft nor homicide was regarded as a punishable action; among the Fula, by contrast, both always were, at least in theory. There were differences, too, in regard to the usufruct of collectively held land, the rights of women in the possession of the produce, of their work or even of their children, and the question of mutual aid and collective labour – and much else besides. There were fewer such contrasts in the more homogeneous society of the Cape Verdes, and yet here too there were considerable differences of land-holding and tenancy from island to island, as well as contrasts in means of livelihood between, for instance, São Vicente and its close

neighbour, Sant'Antão.

PAIGC militants were quite at home in this maze of local usages, thanks to their intimate experiences with it during the long struggle before liberation. The immediate postwar years accordingly found them in the search for 'common denominators' of interest and understanding appropriate to the new period of liberation, just as they had sought and found such 'common denominators' in the fight against the colonial system. Much of the detailed story of these years is composed of this search and its various successes or setbacks: in terms of suitable types of producer cooperative, of vocational schooling, of organisations for the advancement of the equality of women, of methods of fitting army veterans back into civilian life, and a great deal else. It may probably go without saying that much of this was far from easy, and by no means all of it well done, or without a constant battle against egotism, provincialism or individual folly. Nothing could worse describe these efforts at progress as merely triumphant. A process of toil and constant reassessment would be nearer the truth.

There was also the problem, mentioned above, of the 'colonial bourgeoisie', or 'petty bourgeoisie', or however best one should describe this real but elusive grouping. Unavoidably, they had to be absorbed into the new regime, the new state; just as unavoidably, their presence would be a drag on innovating change. How to limit or even eliminate their negative influence?

Various measures were taken after 1975. One of them, long-term, was to rewrite existing colonial programmes of education and textbooks, giving these an anti-elitist content, broadening and extending their range to the working masses, and, meanwhile, 'hold the line' until a new generation could come forward, a generation that would no longer be the product of a colonial background. This, too, met with difficulties: the new educators were by no means always sure of what they should be doing – they themselves, after all, had also received a largely colonial schooling – and a satisfactory supply of progressive teachers could not be whistled out of thin air. Yet a start was made in those early years, and some of it was very promising.² Another measure was to select good militants for training abroad in urgently needed technical skills, including those of state administration.

The real problem posed by this 'petty bourgeoisie' – just as in Angola and Mozambique at the same time – belonged to the field of class conflict within these societies. Cabral, during the armed struggle, had gone to great lengths in analysing their 'class contradictions', and much of internal PAIGC debate had been devoted to the same end. No serious militant of urban upbringing any longer thought of the peasantry as an 'undifferentiated mass', even if the precise stratifications and opposing sets of interest were often hard to identify and relatively 'un-crystallised'. Thrust into all these existing or potential conflicts of

conception or ambition, just as evident in the towns, the PAIGC was no more neutral now than in the past. On the contrary, militants were called on to take sides with 'the most underprivileged strata, above all with those who work in the countryside', against exploitative groups or persons, against petty-bourgeois elitism and, of course, against such tendencies which could or did flow in from beyond the frontiers.

The latter danger, one may think, would remain one of some importance. Guinea-Bissau lives on a West African mainland largely subject to neo-colonial elitism and its petty-bourgeois values, while Cape Verde must expect strong influences of the same kind from its migrants in America and Europe. In the nature of things, moreover, this class struggle against elitism or its simulacra in the state or society at large was no less a struggle against the same influences within the PAIGC itself, and more especially as the party widened its membership. Much of the everyday drama and dispute on the post-liberation scene – notably of a big internal upset in 1980 and its background – did indeed appear to derive, essentially, from this continuing and at times hotly contested form of class struggle. Let the 'bright lights' of Bissau remain the centre of attraction, let dispensable consumer goods flow in from outside, let 'free enterprise' flourish – all these, and others such, became issues of confrontation.

Given that all these issues, in a large sense, were a 'class question', a third group of initiatives was much discussed in 1976 and introduced in 1977. These aimed at restructuring and strengthening the PAIGC itself. Up to about that time, the leadership had securely relied upon one of its greatest achievements, perhaps the greatest of all outside the purely military sphere: beyond any doubt, it had acquired during the armed struggle a profound legitimacy in the eyes of the peasant masses. It had forged an ideology of liberation whose meaning was known, understood and accepted. It had established a set of values, whether moral or material, for which men and women were willing to fight and if necessary to die. It had identified itself with the masses, and there is no rhetoric in saying that the same was true in reverse, or that every self-respecting person, though of course in varying degree, gave his or her loyalty to the party of Cabral.

But if 'everybody' had belonged to the PAIGC during the armed struggle, the same could not be allowed to remain the situation in the different circumstances of peace and reconstruction. If that should happen, then the necessary class struggle would sooner or later lose its edge, and all sorts of egoists and opportunists could use their talents for ends that were perfectly contrary to the party's declared aims. The danger of unselective membership was obvious.

New party statutes were presented to the Third Congress (November 1977) and were approved after discussion. These set out to embrace 'the best sons and daughters of our land' within a more structured

party. Membership was to be broad, but limited to candidates, whether men or women, who were known to have demonstrated their social and moral value, their work for the party's programme, their capacity for political understanding and their general worthiness to belong. As with the new parties being formed in Angola and Mozambique at the same time, such persons were not to be selected by any private or hidden process, but in the full light of local participation. From now onwards, but increasingly, this was to be a party of acknowledged militants. At the same time, Pereira defined the nature of the regime of the PAIGC as being that of 'a liberation movement in power', indicating thereby that its content and status were conceived as being in no way static, but so composed as to continue the tasks of liberation.

Given this content and status, the task of the PAIGC was neither to substitute itself for the state which it had brought into being, nor to monopolise the processes of democratisation. Its task was to 'push and steer' towards an egalitarian and non-exploitative society. But this task of 'pushing and steering' wasn't conceived, it seems to me, as any simple relationship between 'developed militants' and 'population'. On the contrary, and within the PAIGC itself as well, it was to wage those forms of class struggle – *for* the 'most underprivileged strata', *against* elitism and its abuses – which I have briefly touched on above.

* * *

What, then, was to be the relationship between this PAIGC – on the mainland and in the archipelago – and the two states which it had brought to life? It was another obvious question, given the general world experience of the past fifty years. It was both asked and answered; and the answer of these years since 1974-5 was that the leaders of the PAIGC, having destroyed a colonial dictatorship, had no intention of replacing it with a party dictatorship. In this respect the Third Congress discussions and resolutions were particularly interesting. They tackled a central problem that recurs in any revolutionary process: that is, the problem of making revolutionary leadership compatible with an increasing mass participation, of preventing the ossification of party and state into a bureaucratic authoritarianism, and thus of safeguarding the democratising dynamism of a sane and livable society.

The approach was indicated by Secretary-General Pereira at the same Congress. In the course of his long analysis, he remarked that:

In Guinea-Bissau, as in Cape Verde, the state is born for the realisation of our programme. And it could not have been otherwise. The carrying out of this programme, in practice, calls for a whole series of practical, material, technical and administrative achievements;

and these, by their very nature, a political party cannot effect. A political party acts by persuasion and influence from the basis of confidence won by its political and ideological activities and positions; and it aims, above all, at raising, clarifying and orienting the consciousness of the masses. A political party, accordingly, is not equipped with the means of material, technical and administrative action that national reconstruction and economic independence demand.

So it is the state, led by the party, which has the task of carrying out our economic, social and cultural programmes, and of ensuring defence and security. This subordination of state to party is enshrined in the constitutional texts of our two Republics. Yet this cannot in any way mean a confusion between the two entities, or the substitution of the party for the state. Each has functions that are different. Confusion of the two, or their identification, is prejudicial to the one or the other: such confusion would lead to inefficiency in carrying out the tasks confided to the one or the other; and it would create or enlarge bureaucracy (*o burocratismo*).

Both party and state, in other words, had their functions and purposes as articulated parts of a process of democratisation. A large measure of centralised control was unavoidable at a time when the colonial heritage still hung heavy, when habits of literacy were still rare and when the sheer problems of launching new projects and keeping them underway imposed a constant strain on available experience. But the natural tendency for central control to degenerate into one or other form of bureaucratic dictatorship, into one or other form of state capitalism, was to be consciously and strenuously resisted. If the danger could not be avoided, it would have to be averted. First, by the conscious action of the PAIGC as a community of motivated militants acting under a leadership well aware of the problem. But secondly, and in the long run decisively, by continuing to promote structures of mass participation in which the 'most underprivileged strata' have their dominant place, precisely because they are the subject of PAIGC practice and theory.

How did this work out? We have seen that the regimes of the PAIGC were able to come to power with the fruitful experience of their liberated zones on the mainland, the zones which were the scene of all those years of 'mobilisation' (to use the PAIGC's own term for the promoting of participation) that Cabral and his comrades had first set going early in the 1960s. All this experience, as Cabral used to say, was a large aspect of the 'compensation' obtained by these peoples in return for their sacrifices and suffering in the liberation war. This was the harvest of unity and understanding which they reaped through their wartime assemblies, committees and social service.

Now it was a matter of building on that experience. The process of doing this, perhaps one should emphasise, could be neither easy nor automatic. It continued to exact a most conscious effort. And the effort was in some respects all the harder, on the mainland if not on the islands, because now the natural solidarities of wartime were no longer present, and must be replaced by the more complex solidarities of peacetime. In this crucial matter, representing another facet of the class struggle I have noted above, the sure results – the clear establishment, if you like, of a new social hegemony – would be measurable only in future years. Meanwhile, with mass backing, the leadership set out to reinforce participatory structures wherever they existed, and to install them wherever they did not. These were to be the sinews of a new society, of a new model.

‘The model which our party builds’, Pereira laid down,

is one in which participation at the base is guaranteed in all decisions and at every level by a democratic organisation and method. These presuppose the existence, alongside every executive committee, of an assembly of delegates elected from the level of that committee, an assembly which elects and controls the committee in question.³

The effort became a constant one, if with varying results, and, on the mainland, with problems arising from the constant ‘pull’ of Bissau city on material resources and militant personnel. The evidence for this period is plentiful in success as well as setback; and I found it so myself during travels in 1976 and 1977. Writing from research completed in the latter year, the Swedish sociologist Lars Rudebeck noted that:

The local committee (*comité de base*) is where the people of Guinea-Bissau are brought most directly into daily contact with the organised political structure of their country. This is a popularly elected five-member committee that the PAIGC attempts to establish in all villages and urban neighbourhoods. At least two of the five members have to be women, according to party rules.

At the moment of total liberation, the local committees already existed almost everywhere in the liberated areas. They have since been gradually extended to cover the whole country, including the *bairros* (urban neighbourhoods) of Bissau, where close to 100,000 people live. No official figure on the number of base committees has been published. My own very rough estimate is that there are perhaps about or a little over 1,000 such committees spread all over the country. In the rural areas there may be at an average perhaps 500 inhabitants, including children, per committee, often even less, sometimes considerably more.⁴

In June 1979, the results of the country’s first accurate census of population – of persons actually counted, that is, as distinct from

'natives' who were 'estimated' by colonial officials – gave Guinea-Bissau 777,214 inhabitants.⁵ Accepting Rudebeck's admittedly rough figure of 1,000 committees in 1977, this would give just under 800 persons per committee; but in 1979 there were more committees than in 1977, so that a rough estimate of 500-600 persons per committee might be fairly accurate for that year. Thus the effective democratisation of political and social life was steadily advanced. And although the habits and traditions of male oppression of females remained powerful, women were beginning to count in public life as they had never done before.

All-country elections to regional councils meanwhile carried forward the democratisation of national institutions. These were held in December 1976, after which, as during 1972 in the liberated zone elections, the regional councils elected their deputies to the People's National Assembly. Again as in 1972, all persons over eighteen were eligible to vote by secret ballot for candidates over twenty-one on PAIGC lists. There being no place for alternative political parties at this stage of development, or for a long time ahead, controls over the mediation of power were introduced by way of the selection of candidates, the selection being, of course, made after much local discussion; and, again as in 1972, lists with unpopular or distrusted candidates could and did attract 'no' votes. On this point the voting was instructive.

In the old liberated zones, where self-government through elected committees was no longer unfamiliar, the PAIGC lists carried the day by huge majorities: by 84.5 per cent in Oio, for example, and 93 per cent in Buba. But where the colonial system had retained control and influence till 1974, and above all wherever it had succeeded in winning the support of local chiefs (as, for example, among the Fula minority), the opposition was considerable: reaching 44 per cent in Gabu, and 49.6 per cent in Bafata. In these latter areas the running-in of democratic structures would evidently need more time.

Even so, it was sufficiently clear by 1977 that the extension to the whole country of the institutions of self-government was approaching a mature stage. This could not mean, of course, that the system of mass participation, as sketched above, was immune to error, occasional corruption or misuse of authority. But it did mean that this country had now built, out of the institutional void left by the overthrow of the colonial dictatorship, the basis for democratic decision-making and for democratic checks on that process. The unity of struggle had acquired a national dimension.

In 1978-9 the same process continued to evolve. Non-party structures of local government and participation – *participação popular* – were still seen as PAIGC assemblies and executives, as essentially party structures, by a people for whom all useful initiatives were identified with the PAIGC. But at the same time they acquired an increasingly

democratic nature through the presence of village assemblies of control.

The position on the Cape Verdes was a little different, although the ideas and objectives were not. There the PAIGC had formed no liberated zones during the armed struggle, and therefore no structures of participation. What happened after liberation, accordingly, was that the colonial administrative void was filled not only by the new state organs of the independent regime, but also by newly-formed party committees and groups of sympathisers. As early as the latter part of 1976, according to Pereira at the time, 'more than 1,800 militants and an even greater number of sympathisers are organised in party committees and groups'. In the following years, as one found in travelling around the islands, these party committees extended their scope and size; and by 1980 the PAIGC had already accepted some 3,500 men and women as party members (or rather more than 1 per cent of the population). Yet, once again, it was clearly desirable to extend *participação popular* in regularly organised forms.

Beginning in 1979, the PAIGC moved on to the promotion of local assemblies which elected 'residents committees' (*comissoes de moradores*) at the village or town-quarter level. These purely local assemblies and committees would elect upwards to district and island assemblies. A constitution for the Cape Verde Republic, together with new elections at the end of 1980, would confirm and complete these arrangements with the emergence of a People's National Assembly as the sovereign organ of state power. At this point, the situation in Cape Verde, in respect of electoral organisation, would become essentially the same as in Guinea-Bissau. The aims of all this would encompass what Pereira, speaking in October 1980, called 'a revolutionary democracy'.

The Cape Verde drought continued in 1978-9, although less severely than before. Economic problems remained many, and foreign aid indispensable. There were painful shortages, and many inefficiencies caused chiefly by a lack of properly trained cadres: technicians and other personnel required both by the structures of *participação popular* and by the state administrations. Yet the central solution, that of ensuring the means of democratic participation in all public affairs, *active* participation, was being steadily achieved.

The mood by the end of 1980, it appeared to me, was one of quiet but self-critical confidence. They were into the 'long haul' now, and could measure its requirements. 'Those blocks of flats we've built', commented a PAIGC militant as we looked at some new housing at Praia, the capital town, in 1980, 'are not bad. We had nothing at all like them before. But they're not enough, they're only a start. We need another twenty years to get things as they should be.'

Generally, the immediate needs in both countries had now acquired strong programmatic implications. They included new systems of education, public health, transport, commerce and the rest; and in all these fields there was progress to report, even if much still remained to be done. The key, in any case, would lie in an all-round increase of productivity and in a steady extension of the means of production. Foreign aid had come from many countries; the task was to use it soundly and, meanwhile, prevent this aid from diluting or diverting the policies and principles of the new regimes. Here was another danger that could not be avoided, but, with care, could be averted: the danger, among other things, that certain forms and pressures of foreign aid would push for neo-colonial degradation.

Pereira enlarged on all this in his long analysis of 1977. In this phase of transition to self-reliance and self-generating development they would need, he said, to 'proceed with an extreme prudence so as to ensure that whatever we build is built to advance our independent economic development'. They had 'to make very sure that we do not fall victims to a vicious circle that would direct production to the external market at a rate faster than the expansion of the internal market', and thus, by putting priority on exports, fall back into a quasi-colonial posture.

Self-reliance in these senses was quite impossible as yet, but must still be the constant aim. More exports were urgently needed, and the winning of these was going to call for more investment in the export-oriented sectors. 'But the evolution of our economy', Pereira continued, 'must be activated, above all, by an internal dynamism', arising from the maximisation of 'our own resources', whether human or material, and not from any reliance on a merely mechanical expansion won through spending foreign aid. This aid could not continue indefinitely, least of all on the scale of 1976-9, and here was another reason why it 'must remain complementary to a dynamic dictated by the needs of an independent internal development'.

If economic expansion should be launched on a different plane, and achieved for the benefit of the few at the expense of the many, he went on to emphasise, then 'our economy might grow, but it would not develop'. This rejection of policies of 'growth without development' – in their upshot, the essence of the neo-colonial situation, the familiar *vade mecum* of hosts of foreign experts in Africa since 1960 – was among the principal defences raised against 'diversion and dilution' through the pressure of foreign aid. The policy of a radical non-alignment was another. The acceptance of aid from a very wide range of donors was a third. And, of course, the nature of new investments, of the actual use of the aid money, was a fourth.

It went without saying that there would have to be compromises. Here, again, was another reason for refraining from premature claims on the ideological front. It might be at least conceivable that a half-continent such as the USSR could 'build socialism in a single country', even though Lenin (or any other Bolshevik in Lenin's time) had never thought so; it would be merely absurd to think that Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde could do it. What they could do was to continue on their line of practice and theory, as outlined in my pages here, while promoting and defending their independent development. To that end, but also with these thoughts in mind, they began to take their part in the world as it was. Guinea-Bissau joined the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and Cape Verde applied to join. Guinea-Bissau became a member of the international oil producers' conference, even though its oil was not yet being produced. There were other such moves.

One compromise that could not be avoided was the Cape Verdean agreement to allow South African Airways to continue to enjoy its staging facility at the big airport on the desert island of Sal. Here was another aspect of the colonial heritage; but to have brought it to an end, in line with OAU sanctions against racist South Africa, would have imposed an acute financial hardship at a time when Cape Verde desperately needed every source of income it possessed. In this matter of Sal, in fact, the position was just the same as that of Mozambique in respect of continued South African use of the ports of Maputo, or of the limits on sanctions against apartheid accepted by other states in the Southern African region. The OAU rapidly discovered this. Its Khartoum summit of 1978, with resolution 623, asked for an inquiry into continued South African use of Sal. The commission of inquiry duly reported to the Monrovia summit of 1979 and, with resolution 734, the OAU expressed 'its understanding for and sympathy with' the Cape Verdean position, while at the same time appealing (vainly as it turned out) for member states to produce financial aid on a scale that would make it possible for Cape Verde to ban South African Airways.

One may remark, in passing, that these intractable situations went together with work to discuss, prepare and start a range of economic enterprises aimed at self-generating development. What that meant in Guinea-Bissau was registered in detail in Luiz Cabral's long address on strategy for development, made in May 1979; and it would be out of place in this brief outline to embark on a long description. Cabral had plenty to say that was positive, and quite a bit to say that was not. Much was being well done: in better farming, in the building of storage silos, in the improvement of roads, in the provision of coastal shipping for the creeks and rivers of the country, in the erection of refrigerating plant and the protection of fisheries, and much else, as well as the social and cultural advances that I have touched on earlier. Other

things were being badly done. Too much of the state's money was going in payment to state employees. Certain enterprises were a vast disappointment. Particularly bad was the case of a fishing boat enterprise financed by Algeria. Thanks to poor local work, 'this has got absolutely nowhere. On the contrary, at each meeting of this Assembly' – the People's National Assembly to which Luiz Cabral was speaking as the country's president – 'we have noted that it has taken a small step backwards.' There was a shortage of manufactured oxygen, even though a new factory set up to produce it (with acetylene) 'was ready about a year ago'. Yet the factory was not in operation 'because we have not yet managed to install a supply of water for it'. Bad inter-ministerial liaison was the guilty factor.⁶

In Cape Verde, too, there was no lack of self-critical exposure, but also, quietly, no lack of sound progress. I will mention here only the matter of the anti-drought campaign. The eternal problem in the archipelago has been that the Cape Verde islands are steep and rocky (save for the desert island of Sal), and much of the tumultuous tropical rains, whenever they fall, regularly rush down gullies and bounce away into the sea. Nothing serious was ever done about this during the long colonial period (making a vivid contrast, by the way, with the much better situation produced under Spanish rule in some of the Canary islands). But, establishing a 'wages' fund from aid money, the PAIGC set out to change the ecology of Cape Verde.

In 1977 it began to employ some 30,000 workers, a large proportion of the available but otherwise jobless labour force. By 1980 they had built 7,200 stone barrages, 199 kms of retaining walls in stone and 2,300 kms of retaining walls in earth.⁷ You see these water-retaining works in all the more densely populated islands, though especially in Santiago, Sant'Antão and Fogo. They have four purposes. They prevent a considerable proportion of tropical rains from flowing down hillsides into the sea, and thus enable these rains to sink into the soil to enlarge areas of cultivation, feed springs and form reservoirs. At the same time, the PAIGC launched a major programme of afforestation. By the end of 1979, and thanks now to large-scale voluntary participation as the idea caught on, they had successfully planted some two million trees, mostly drought-resistant varieties of acacia, and were due to plant another one and a half million before the end of 1980. With UN aid, new wells and boreholes were also being sunk. A long-term revolution in ecological improvement was on the way.

Referring back once again to the basic policies noted at the onset, there was also the question of unity between the two countries. Given the prestige and popularity of the PAIGC in both of them, it would have been easy enough to introduce a federation, or its equivalent, by simple proclamation and imposition 'from the top'. Yet this would have violated PAIGC principles, and was never, I think, so much as

considered. Instead, there came the introduction from 1976 onwards of a network of consultative and cooperative committees – technical, cultural, political – through which a process of promoting an eventual union between the two peoples could be realised. These committees work towards joint planning and complementary programmes of development; but unity will become possible, it has been repeatedly emphasised, only when the political consciousness of both peoples is ready to want and make it.

There was never, I think, any organised opposition to eventual unity on a federal plan. Yet each of the two populations had its own identity; and much in either country showed that there was a need for prolonged campaigning work, after decades of colonial divisiveness, before unity could become popular. Stressing that PAIGC policy had not changed since the 1950s, Pereira said in March 1976 that:

Our aim is to unite our two Republics. But there's no question of allowing ourselves to be rushed. We are embarked upon a unique experience: two sovereign countries but the same party in each of them. Yet each has its own character, and we shall choose our road carefully.

We secured the unity that was required to win independence both in Guinea-Bissau and in Cape Verde. Now it is a matter of method and timing to secure what has always been our declared aim, the union of our two countries.⁸

To which Cape Verdean Prime Minister Pedro Pires, questioned on the same subject, added:

What is quite sure is that we shall in any case adopt the most democratic method we can find. There is no question of any attempt to impose union. It must come when the people see the value of it. That has always been our line: not necessarily to choose the easiest or quick route that people are ready to follow, or want to follow even if you persuade them to.

Such attitudes were reflected in statements by Luiz Cabral and other mainland leaders. Meanwhile, both countries continued to be governed by elected militants who knew each other well, and whose experience had long convinced them that unity must be their watchword – provided, always, that this was a unity nourished from the base, and not imposed from the top.

Defending and advancing their principles and programmes, the two countries were now in the forefront of Africa's effort to escape from underdevelopment and all it means. They could be seen as part of a trend now sharply in contrast to the neo-colonial confusions, or even worse, that continued to haunt various countries in every major region. Again, without claiming any exemplary role, the PAIGC continued to

recognise such facts. It looked for friends; it put such influence as it had behind an enlargement of this innovating trend.

Among the disappointments, in this respect, was the emergence of a clear hostility on the part of the Republic of Guinea-Conakry led by President Sekou Toure. The roots of this hostility were not exactly new, as we have seen in Toure's response to the events of 1973; but now it took a new form. Offshore oil was the reason. Back in 1964 the government of Sekou Toure had quietly laid claim to a large segment of the territorial waters of 'Portuguese Guiné'. The Portuguese ignored this claim, and the PAIGC, then fighting the battle for Como island, was in no position to say anything on the subject. There the matter rested, and was largely forgotten. But in 1980 the government of Guinea just as quietly signed an agreement with Texas Oil which conceded to that corporation offshore-oil prospecting rights in the aforesaid territorial waters of what was now the Republic of Guinea-Bissau – territorial waters extended, in 1965, to the 200-mile limit. To this the government of Guinea-Bissau reacted sharply, rejecting both the claim and the Texas Oil licence. At the end of 1980 the outcome had still to be seen ...

* * *

As the 1970s came to an end, a retrospective look at the long years of struggle, first to end colonial rule and then to begin the building of a new and self-regenerative society, showed an impressive continuity of thought and action. If the PAIGC had suffered painful losses along that route, above all the loss of Amilcar Cabral, a solid core of the veteran leadership had come through intact, and had repeatedly enlarged itself with new militants from the grassroots of these peoples. No one who knew West Africa, or indeed any part of the continent, could doubt that a new force was here on the scene, capable of confronting the menace of regression or dependence with a will and wisdom rare to find elsewhere.

There would be upsets and reverses in that difficult confrontation, just as earlier against colonial rule. The PAIGC had all but died of self-inflicted wounds in 1963, and yet was continually strengthened in the outcome. Its militants had lost their unforgettable teacher in 1973, and yet had gone on rapidly to win the war and consolidate their victory. And by the middle months of 1980, it was again clear that another crisis might be on the threshold in Guinea-Bissau where, as signs began to indicate, the necessary struggle against 'petty-bourgeois' ambitions, against new forms of elitism, against an ossification of party and administrative power with all its negative consequences, might be falling short or being thrust aside. Ever watchful for a 'break in the front', outside enemies could also take advantage of that.

When the crisis did in fact explode, on 14 November 1980, this book was already going through the press, and the further outcome remained to be seen. Nino Vieira was at that time First Commissioner (Prime Minister) and Chairman of the National Council of Guinea-Bissau (the country's supreme party organ; there was a similar one in Cape Verde). He led a swift military *coup* which ousted President Luiz Cabral, abolished existing structures of government in favour of a newly formed revolutionary council, and then proclaimed a *movimento readjustador* (translatable, more or less, as 'revision movement').

Welcomed within hours by Sekou Toure's government in neighbouring Guinea, this action appeared at first to be counter-revolutionary. It was, indeed, so welcomed by various opposition circles outside the country. Large accusations against the ousted regime were made, and especially against Luiz Cabral, who was placed under arrest. Among other things, he was accused of installing a personal dictatorship and of preventing democratic discussion, notably a new constitution. Yet it was difficult to see how so powerful and popular a figure as Vieira could not have acted through the National Council, if required, in order to prevent such developments by democratic means. Commenting on these accusations in a Telex to Vieira of 19 November, five days after the coup, Pereira remarked to him that:

What in fact happened is that in place of your using the National Council and its Permanent Committee in order to oppose what you describe as the anti-democratic attitude and positions of Comrade Luiz Cabral, you simply obstructed the functioning of these structures, which the party had placed under your responsibility. The Permanent Committee practically ceased to function, and the National Council met only when there was no other way of settling immediate issues. The truth is that these two party structures died in your hands through not being used.

Why, then, should Vieira have allowed this to happen, and then taken power by military means? Pointing to various 'reservations and more or less explicit fears' aroused by Vieira's action, the Mozambican weekly *Tempo* answered this question with another: Did this coup 'mean not only the overthrow of Luiz Cabral, but also the overthrow of Amílcar Cabral, and hence the overthrow of PAIGC'?⁹

Vieira and his fellow coup-makers proceeded to deny this. Whether in Telex messages to Secretary-General Pereira in Praia, or in speeches duly printed in the Bissau newspaper, *No Pintcha*, they affirmed that they would remain loyal to the teachings and policies of Amílcar Cabral and the PAIGC, including eventual unity with Cape Verde; and that they would not harm Luiz Cabral.¹⁰ In the end, then, would this all turn out to be no more than a traffic pile-up, as it were, an *accident de parcours*?

Doubts and anxieties continued, and it was increasingly seen that this manner of 'revision' was as damaging to the reputation of the liberation movements as it was certainly unconstitutional. No matter what grievances there were – and some were undoubtedly real – it was also seen at the same time that the PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau remained what it had always been, a broad and deeply implanted movement of participation, and was not to be shoved aside. Some of the initial actions and statements of the coup-makers were rapidly denied by them. Meanwhile, the PAIGC in Cape Verde met in extraordinary congress late in January 1981, and, drawing an obvious conclusion for the immediate future, if not longer, formed itself into a new successor party, the PAICV.

And here at this point, while the decade of the 1980s opened on new challenges and opportunities, I have to end this account of the liberation of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde. The overriding successes scored in both countries were beyond all serious question. Yet this is a story, as one sees, that really has no ending. *A luta continua!*

References

- 1 This of course was also the case in Guinea-Bissau.
- 2 See especially Paolo Freire, *Pedagogy in Process: the letters to Guinea-Bissau*, trans. C. St. J. Hunter (London 1978).
- 3 Report of November 1977. The full text is available in English from the Mozambique/Angola/Guiné Information Centre (MAGIC), 34 Percy Street, London WC1P 9FG.
- 4 L. Rudebeck, 'Guinea-Bissau: difficulties and possibilities of socialist orientation' (Uppsala University, January 1978).
- 5 Carried out with UK aid, this accurate census produced a figure which may be compared with the colonial guess of 1950, which had given a total of 517,290.
- 6 Luiz Cabral, *Strategy in Guinea-Bissau* (May 1979), available in English from MAGIC.
- 7 Facts, with many others bearing on new development, in A. Pereira's retrospective survey on 5th anniversary of Cape Verdean Independence, 5 July 1980, Praia. Also, my own impressions gained during a visit of that month.
- 8 Interviewed by B.D. in *West Africa*, 'The PAIGC Republics: unity and non-alignment' (London, 26 April 1976).
- 9 Article by Mendes de Oliveira, *Tempo* (Maputo, 30 November 1980).
- 10 In telexed messages to Pereira dated 16 and 17 November, and publicly in *No Pintcha*, Bissau, No. 753 of 24 November 1980, No. 754 of 29 November, and No. 758 of 23 December.

Race and class in Sudan

Sudan, whose ancient history was linked to that of Egypt, suffered from the Turco-Egyptian conquest of 1821, which brought slave-raiding to the south. A nationalist movement led by the Mahdi in the late nineteenth century freed Sudan from foreign rule, but was defeated in 1899 when the Anglo-Egyptian condominium began. This – effectively British imperialism – continued until independence in 1956. Sudan's territory of nearly one million square miles stretches for more than a thousand miles, from Egypt in the north to Uganda in the south. It has an estimated population of 17 million, about 40 per cent of whom are Arabic-speaking Muslims in the north and centre; the southern region, with a third of the population, follows Christianity, Islam and animist beliefs.

British colonialism administered north and south almost as two countries. Shortly before independence southern troops mutinied, and there was intermittent north-south conflict until 1972, when a peace agreement was signed which allowed the south regional autonomy. General Gaafar Nimeiri, who took power in a military coup in 1969, initially with some Communist support, later broke with the left and now governs through a bureaucratic Sudan Socialist Union which has moved to the right.

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Sudan, the largest country in Africa and a member of the Arab League and of the Organisation of African Unity, is customarily examined in the Afro-Arab context. Discussions characteristically treat Sudan as a bridge or crossroads between the Arab and African worlds. The emphasis has varied in line with the internal tensions between the significantly Arabised north and the more Africa-oriented south. The historical process of integration of the northern and southern peoples was interrupted by a policy which, pursued during several decades of British imperialist domination, deliberately isolated the southern people from the northerners. The policy was further divisive in that it encouraged Christian missionary activity in the south, while forbidding this in the Islamised north. In the late colonial period and during that of early independence the policy of separation was dramatically reversed, although the historical legacy of suspicion brought civil strife, inter-communal bloodshed and hostilities, which at times reached full-scale warfare.

The immediate crisis of relations between the two parts of the country (the south is roughly one-third of the national territory) was resolved in a peace agreement reached in Addis Ababa in February and March, 1972. In nearly a decade since, political attention has generally been focussed on Sudan's international role as an Arab and African country. On internal questions, this approach vastly over-simplifies the realities of the Sudan situation. The wisdom and folly of colonial administration, and of northern and southern leadership groups in the past quarter of a century (in which Sudan has experienced a perennial political and economic crisis), have been endlessly argued over.¹ As more information comes to light, it becomes easier to see that mistakes were made on all sides, and less useful to apportion blame, particularly among the competing political forces in Sudan. A critical issue in Sudan is the problem of race relations, closely linked to the role of identification.

Sudan's diversities are unusually complex, and in the political domain it appears that policies are pursued which reflect an inappropriate choice of the relevant social factors (some comparable problems can be discerned in such countries as Chad and Mauritania). As a result of the changes and reversals of policy to which the Sudanese people have been subjected in this century, one finds a divergent use of Arabic and vernacular languages in the north and of English and vernacular languages in the south. One finds divergences of Islam and animist beliefs and of Christianity and animist beliefs all over the country (with the further divergences of Islamic sects and Christian schisms). One finds divergences between the degree of Arab and African identification, and the complication of large, established settler communities of non-Sudanese African origin. One finds divergences of formal educational provision and standards in the regions, of religious and secular

training. One finds divergences in the freedom claimed by or accorded to women. One finds divergences in the shift of influence from traditional to 'modern' leaders in communities in north and south, in rural and urban areas. One finds, of course, divergences between progressive and reactionary political elements. One finds divergences in the degree of integration with the regional and national economy and the world systems.

It is only when one restricts analysis to the small ruling elite that one can employ the conventional labels of northern Arab Muslims and southern African Christians, a categorisation which ignores the multiple diversity of Sudanese society. Those divergences which have been indicated (and many more could be cited) often overlap, but they are not coterminous. The terms are inexact; indeed, it is faintly absurd to assume that one can correlate ethnic identification, spoken language and professed religion, so that 'Arab' in Sudan can necessarily designate an individual from a family with real or pretended links to an Arab genealogy, speaking Arabic as a principal language and adhering in some measure to the faith of Islam. That confusion of categories is, however, commonplace in Sudan.

If we consider class analysis, we find that many Sudanese are unable to identify their objective class interests and are subjectively concerned with the secondary characteristics of ethnicity and religion. The failure to identify class characteristics which are obscured by other loyalties has allowed the bourgeoisie and the neo-colonialist comprador elements to exploit Sudanese workers and peasants and further to entrench their own power.² Those who wish to justify the divisions between the northern and southern societies can point to periods when a policy of Arabisation *and* Islamisation was pursued, notably under the first military regime of General Ibrahim Abboud from 1958 to 1964.

Analysis of class formation is also difficult in a country as vast as Sudan, which even today has large areas where socio-economic conditions differ enormously from the general conditions that characterise the country as a whole. We can illustrate this by recalling the discussion on tribalism recorded in *Race & Class* by John Saul, and in particular his summary of Archie Mafeje's views:

The term 'tribe' has no scientific meaning when applied not to 'a relatively undifferentiated society, practising a primitive subsistence economy and enjoying local autonomy' but to 'societies that have been effectively penetrated by European colonialism, that have been successfully drawn into a capitalist money economy and a world market'.³

Saul goes on to quote a judgment by Mafeje:

There is a real difference between the man who, on behalf of his

tribe, strives to maintain its traditional integrity and autonomy, and the man who invokes tribal ideology in order to maintain a power position, not in the tribal area, but in the modern capital city, and whose ultimate aim is to undermine and exploit the supposed tribesmen.⁴

In the case of Sudan, European and other penetration has been so uneven and spasmodic that it is possible to identify within Sudan's boundaries the undifferentiated autonomous society as well as the penetrated society that has been underdeveloped and is underdeveloping. Similarly, it is possible to identify both kinds of tribalism.

By the same token, we find the phenomenon, on one side, of the marginalised intellectual and, on the other, of groups, not insignificant in number, who are pursuing a precapitalist mode of production and living (with a whole range of survival skills that are environmentally and often ecologically adapted).⁵ It is common to find that political discussion in Sudan is preferentially conducted by the 'artefacts of colonial history' on the assumption that intellectuals are the most crucial elements in the society. Formal education for elite posts in government and administration becomes one of the most sensitive arenas of political decision. If one questions the preference to be accorded to the intellectual in the narrow sense of the alienated student, one has to discard or discount many of the declarations made about national interests by those who come forward as national spokesmen. When someone speaks for the Sudanese, or for a segment of the Sudanese people, one needs to know in whose particular interest he is speaking (I say 'he' because Sudanese women have a restricted role in public life). Sudanese politics is still bound up with particularisms, and it is questionable whether the society has reached a stage of integration that permits a spokesman to make valid declarations about the Sudanese as a whole.

The problem of locating the representative spokesman was a recurring one in the late colonial and early independence periods. British colonial administrators preferred to heed tribal chiefs in the south, particularly when they were pliant, rather than the more nationalistically minded young men who emerged from the secondary school system instituted in the south in the late 1940s. After independence, when the south rebelled under the aegis of what was known in its later stages as the Southern Sudanese Liberation Movement, there was disagreement between a southern political leadership group, forced into exile, and those men and women with less formal education who carried out the fighting on the ground. Disagreement was also common between fighters who had undergone military training in the national forces before the 1955 mutiny and those who acquired their experience in combating the northern armed forces garrisoned in the south after independence. The southern fighting forces were largely inspired and

financed by the efforts of a mission-trained intelligentsia. The dynamics of the southern movement have been less closely studied than those of other conflicts in Africa, notably those against Portuguese colonialism.⁶ What is clear, however, is that the rebellion did not cohere into a broad liberation movement transcending parochial interests.

The mobilisation of fighting forces in the south did not overcome the inhibitions of tribalism (in both senses mentioned above). Although the masses were deeply affected by the fighting, the intellectuals in the movement did not make the identification regarded as essential in the analyses by Frantz Fanon and Amílcar Cabral.⁷ The result has been not only the pragmatic peace agreement of 1972, but also a legacy of petty squabbling among the elite political leaders in the autonomous southern region government. That conflict is now past, and I do not want here to discuss what might have been the effect of a struggle waged differently and on different social bases. I want rather to relate the history of Sudan to what is happening in the present decade and conjuncture.

* * *

The Sudanese people today face the necessity of overcoming the past, rather than any possibility of building upon it. It is in this context that I have suggested that a critical issue is one of race relations. Clearly, Sudan's social and political attitudes *are* affected by the colonial experience – there are, for instance, men and women alive today who have witnessed the passage of external influences from Belgians, Britons, Greeks, Egyptians and so on – but Sudan is not merely another example of the destructive effect of foreign colonial and capitalist domination. Even as an example of black and white confrontation, Sudan is a particularly complex case with a history of slave trading in which Arabs, Africans and Europeans were variously implicated. But modern Sudan with its *internal* divergences is of particular interest to those concerned with race and inter-communal relations, just as India and Ireland are vital areas of concern. In Sudan we can learn most about relationships at those points where there is close contact and interaction – substantially in the urban context where there is wage employment, schooling and direct commercial exchange. Just as in the colonial world there were places where people almost never saw the agents of foreign power, so in Sudan there are areas where Sudanese of Arab or African culture almost never meet representatives of the other community.

So much of the debate on race relations is conducted on the interaction of black and white groups and peoples that we do not have a ready terminology for what is occurring in a country like Sudan. In the

tradition of Islam, numerous terms have been used to describe the colour and appearance of human beings from the various regions which Islam reached in its early phase of expansion: red and black, for example.⁸ The historical explanations of the change in terms have been treated by many scholars, but what is relevant for our immediate purpose is the identification made by individuals of themselves (what is felt and perceived, and this includes the erroneous and false). Over a long period, the Sudanese people have been strongly influenced by two important world-views, Islam and Christianity. In ancient times, parts of the northern Sudan experienced something like a thousand years of Christianity, but Islam became established in much of the north from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries on. The penetration of Christianity in the south came substantially in the age of imperialism, when in this century the British administration divided the area into spheres of missionary influence at the disposal of Italian and British Catholics and American and Anglican Protestants. Foreign missionaries were expelled from southern Sudan in March 1964 in the closing phase of the Abboud military regime, but by then the churches were already entrenched and to some degree Africanised.

In the modern period, Islam was restricted to the north and Christianity to the south – under the colonial policy mentioned earlier. Within the same policy, the use of the Arabic language was encouraged in the north and the use of English language or vernaculars was encouraged in the south (notably from 1930 to 1946). Hence arose the confusion between language and religion referred to above. How fundamental is the division, except as a reflex of colonial policy?

Sudanese scholars, from north and south, tend to argue that until colonial authorities intervened (and once the slave trade had been abandoned), interaction between northern and southern communities was leading to closer integration. Beshir Mohammed Said describes the British objectives:

The primary necessities for the furtherance of southern policy were all mentioned in a statement of the Civil Secretary in 1930, namely: the return to tribal law and customs; the return to tribal family life; the return to indigenous languages; the encouragement by every means of English as a *lingua franca*; an attack on Arabic patois and names; an attack on Northern customs; an attack on Arabic dress; the removal of Northern and West African Moslems; the transfer of Northern mamurs and sub-mamurs (administrative officers); the encouragement of Greek and Syrian traders; the removal of Northern traders from the Southern provinces.

The unhappy memories of slave trade were deliberately revived and kept alive. In the church, in the bush, in the road, in the government office, practically everywhere, it was the calculated policy of

both the British and the missionaries to remind the Southerners that they were different from the Northerners and that the latter were the sons of the slave trader.⁹

The colonial authorities reversed the main features of their policy of division in the late colonial period, but by this time the differences had become part of the conditioning process for the southern minority allowed access to formal education, mainly a missionary preserve in the south.

Francis Deng, a scholar who has devoted much of his research to his branch of the Dinka people on the border between north and south, writes:

The adoption and assimilation of the concept of the Mahdi in the late 19th century is an obvious example of the dynamic process of cross-cultural influence that must have occurred. Indeed, the Turco-Egyptian and the Mahdist periods in the Sudan left such a profound religious and cultural influence on the more accessible peoples of the South that the implementation of the British policy of separate development initially aimed at de-Arabizing and de-Islamizing the South.¹⁰

When direct colonial influence was removed from Sudan at independence in 1956, some Sudanese sought to overcome the period of isolation by restoring the Arabising influences of the nineteenth century. The colonial practice had left too deep a mark on the southern urban educated groups, and the influence of northern politicians and soldiers was resisted. A former administrator, K.D.D. Henderson, commented on the post-independence strategy:

The solution must have appeared to lie in taking a leaf from the book of the old Government and putting southern policy into reverse, as it were. The influence of the existing intelligentsia would be weakened by cutting away its feeder system, the missionary schools from which it was recruited. Substitute a system of Islamic education uniform with that of the north and within a decade you will have built up a new pro-northern Arabized student body to replace the now discredited leaders of the nineteen-fifties.¹¹

Some fifteen years after Abboud's clumsy tactics failed, the pattern of language and education and, to a varying extent, religion is still the determining factor in the course of inter-communal relations in Sudan.

At national level in the political arena, some extreme positions are still being advanced. Members of the Muslim Brotherhood, for example, advocate an Islamic state based on *sharia* law, as is already the case in some almost totally Muslim countries. But in the mainstream of the Sudanese intelligentsia, particularly in the north, ideas have been changing in the years since national independence. Francis Deng, in his

1973 essay entitled *Dynamics of Identification*, cited the comment of a northern Sudanese, Muddathir Abd Al-Rahim:

Whereas four or five decades ago [northern Sudanese] identified themselves exclusively as Muslims and Arabs, there are now at least some Sudanese who, in this age of nationalism and Pan-Africanism, have come to the reverse position; that of identifying themselves in purely African terms to the exclusion of Arabic and Islamic influences.¹²

More recently, Deng wrote on a similar point:

But the Northernization process in the Sudan and the independence movement of Black Africa, combined with the increasing pride in the African Negroid identity and greater exposure to the complexities of racial identification on the world scene, eventually led to a more balanced view of the Sudanese reality. In the United States, Europe, and, indeed, within Africa, the Northern Sudanese began to see people who were of even lighter skin than himself being referred to as 'Negroes' and 'black'. In the Arab world he found himself rather marginal as an Arab, and sometimes even referred to as 'Slave', causing greater identification with 'African', 'Negroid' or 'black'.¹³

Clearly, the process to which Deng refers can have influenced only a tiny minority who travelled abroad, mainly as students or diplomats, but such a minority is influential among the Sudanese intelligentsia where these questions are largely debated. It is worth mentioning also the influence of some liberal scholars who have played an advisory role during the regime of General Nimeiri, for instance, Professor Mohamed Omer Beshir of the University of Khartoum, who was seconded for some time to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was instrumental in encouraging other northern officials to be more aware of the newly independent sub-Saharan African countries.

* * *

Sudan's history shows many conflicts between northerners and southerners, and despite the ending of armed hostilities friction persists in some contexts on both sides of the divide. Is the division today based on colour, religion, language or other factors? It is at least arguable that the aspect of religion is more divisive than that of colour (and Sudan would scarcely be alone in this regard). Sudanese travelling abroad have found that fine distinctions of colour within Sudan mean little to third parties; Sudanese are more conscious of the differences between those from the north who enslaved and those from the south who were enslaved, than between shades of darker and lighter skin

(and wide variations may be found within a single family). If it is a matter for debate to what degree Islam is entirely free of colour prejudice, it is surely indisputable that religion and custom differentiate between believers and unbelievers. In many countries, not merely Sudan, religious differences may imply class differences. On the historical process in Sudan, Deng writes:

Arab migration and settlement in the south was discouraged by natural barriers, climatic conditions, and the hardship of living conditions. The few Arab adventurers who engaged in slave raids were not interested in Arabizing and Islamizing the Southerner as that would have taken him from the *dar-el-harb* (land of war) and placed him in the category of *dar-el-Islam* (land of Islam), thereby protecting him from slavery.¹⁴

The old colonial distinction between the use of the Arabic and English languages persists as a factor of division, but is of less and less importance as Arabic becomes more widely used in preference to English.

While there are a few policy-makers who want to exploit division, many are trying to minimise the ill effects of the divisions from which the Sudanese people have suffered, and education is the key sector where integration is being attempted. At primary and secondary education level, the new policies mainly affect the content and medium of instruction. At university level, northerners and southerners are brought face to face and they study and live side by side. Sudan's oldest and largest university is the University of Khartoum, whose thousands of students include handfuls of southerners on various courses, but southern students are rather submerged in this established institution. The recently founded University of Juba in the south brings into play power relations between the region and the rest of the country. It is a national institution, but intended to fulfil a regional role as well. It was, however, specifically directed in its enabling Act to 'inculcate the aims of national unity and diversified culture'.¹⁵ Since independence, it has been normal practice for central institutions, whether of government, education or commerce, to co-opt and assimilate a token number of southerners: civilian cabinets, for example, have usually allocated three ministerial portfolios to the south. The University of Juba was to be almost the first national institution where southerners, instead of providing a minority presence, would be participating on at least equal terms (the implications of this are obvious to those who have followed the evolution of black and white relations in western societies).

Establishing a university in the south was part of the process of improving educational facilities after the 1972 peace agreement. Some studies advocated a post-secondary technical institute, but the Sudan Government finally decided that the region should have a full-fledged

university. Its dual function was spelled out early on:

While the University of Juba will be a regional university, in that it will sponsor research aimed primarily at aiding development in the South, it will be primarily a national university, training students from all parts of the Sudan for work in all parts of the Sudan, but with particular reference to the needs of the region.¹⁶

The University, which opened in September 1977 with more than a hundred students and is due to award its first degrees in late 1981, was thus faced with a possibly contradictory task: to meet southern manpower needs and to lessen tension among those from all over the country who would be competing for elite posts and appointments.

The University is a remarkable institution which has contended with great logistical difficulties, and embarked on educational experiment and innovation. It is not to belittle the achievements that I concentrate here exclusively on racial and inter-communal aspects of the University's progress. Throughout the University's short history, the juxtaposition of northern and southern students (and through the Sudanese staff development programme, of northern and southern lecturers) has been a source of tension, has demanded difficult administrative decisions and has exposed the institution to regional and national political pressures. On several occasions, the University has had to close early, or suspend teaching or continue in the face of boycott of classes by a section of students. Almost invariably the contentious issues have polarised students into northern and southern factions, although, as the earlier sketch would suggest, there are important tribal, political and cultural divergences within these categories.

The University is something of a microcosm of Sudan's problems. The students represent a narrower class base than is present in the country as a whole and while the isolated precapitalist communities are unrepresented, the urban mercantile class is over-represented. The majority of students, however, come from modest backgrounds in the villages and small towns of northern and southern provinces – from the families of middle peasants and petty traders. The students reflect and articulate the political concerns and prejudices of their families and tend towards a religious conservatism. In four years the University authorities have accumulated substantial information about the students and their attitudes, although I know of no formal sociological study conducted in this University. With its admission procedures ensuring a crude balance between numbers of students of northern and southern origin, the available evidence is that the frictions arise less from ethnic and racial differences than from clashes of culture and religion. One cannot help remarking that the specific incidents that give rise to clashes often seem trivial to the outsider. The fact that a trivial incident can cause a flare-up suggests deeper underlying

anxieties and fears. The minor disputes in the limited context of the University indicate the kinds of mistrust that must be overcome if integration is to be possible in the broader fields of administration and commerce.

An illustration of the seeming triviality that reflects deeper discords can be taken from the early days of the University. In November 1977 a student trip was organised from Juba to Yei, one of the smaller urban centres. Most of the northern students chose to leave on a bus in the very early hours of the morning so as to arrive in Yei in time for prayers for the Muslim *Eid* festival. Most of the southern students were leaving on a second bus due to depart at about the same time, but this broke down before leaving and some three hours of delay occurred in the departure of the second group. According to a report presented to the University Council: 'Southern students later argued that the northern students had used religion as an excuse to make use of the first bus. This created tension and the two groups began to throw insults at each other, beginning the polarisation which was to harden over the succeeding months.' Before the end of the first year, a dispute over the composition of a proposed student union had divided the students into two factions, almost rigidly on northern and southern lines, and the danger of physical violence led to the closure of the University in June 1978 to allow time for tempers to cool.

The dispute over the formation of a student union (and the relative representation of northern and southern students) dragged on in the University's second year. Unofficial groups were formed to represent the southern students, the Muslim Brotherhood, the Communist Party and Liberals. In the third year a union was formed broadly representative of the student body, now numbering more than four hundred, but the union continued under attack from some students who had failed to achieve sectarian aims in the earlier years. A new crisis erupted in November 1979, ostensibly over the breakfast menu in the students' dining hall, and some thirty or forty northern students wrecked the students' affairs office on campus. This demonstration occurred on the eve of seminar examinations, and when a student union demand for examinations to be postponed was refused, the University closed a fortnight ahead of schedule and the examinations were held at the start of the following semester.

In the fourth year, a new disagreement arose over the University's policy for student admissions. By and large, admission to the University of Juba adhered to the national requirement that candidates have at least five credits in appropriate subjects in the Sudan School Certificate. A mature-entry scheme, albeit with similar requirements, affected only candidates from the region employed in the public sector and seconded to the University by their employers who maintained them. Before the inauguration of the University, its Council discussed

admissions policy and a suggestion by one member of a 60 per cent quota for southern students was rejected after the then Vice-Chancellor opposed fixed percentages and asked for flexibility (the Council was aware that some qualified southern students preferred to study outside the region). Without fixed quotas, the University had admitted southerners to nearly 60 per cent of places.

The first semester of the University's fourth year was in part bedevilled by the running argument over student admissions, when southern students feared that a higher than usual proportion of places would be given to northern students (the University of Juba actively encourages technical and scientifically based courses, and science teaching provision is higher in northern than in southern schools). In the event, the 1980-81 intake showed 98 entrants from the southern region, and 87 from outside the region. Southern students demonstrated for a 75 per cent quota for candidates from the region. The University Council, whose composition is determined by a national statute, normally brings together educationists from north and south broadly in parity (the members tend to represent liberal opinion in the country as a whole). When the Council met in November 1980, technical hitches over air transport between Khartoum and Juba meant that the Council was held without its complement of members from outside the region.

The Council, responding to some extent to local political pressure and acting against the advice of the Vice-Chancellor, passed a resolution on student admissions: 'that ... the annual intake to the University of Juba shall contain not less than 65 per cent of students from the Region, including mature-age entry intake; that this resolution be reviewed periodically.' The resolution was possibly outside the powers of the Council; the quota was below the proportion sought by southern students; the northern students objected to a clear shift away from parity and began a boycott of classes until their objections were answered. Some southern politicians saw the resolution as a step towards changing the University of Juba from a national to a regional institution, with the possible removal of northern Sudanese teaching staff. At the time of writing, months later, the question was still not resolved and the December to March long vacation was being extended to allow time for the national authorities to rule on the dispute.

To attach importance to events within one small institution is not to imply that the university is the most significant locus of activity in a society. The University of Juba is, however, one of the most powerful test beds for Sudan's objective of national unification and integration. In the north and the south there are exclusive and separatist elements who would like to see the integration experiment fail, as indeed there are many who work hard for the overall success of an integration policy. We must return to the question of identification. While

northern and southern alignments are formed, it is open to doubt if such groups formed reflexively have a genuine coherence. In the current year the students elected a 35-member students' council for their union, but this council failed to agree on an executive. The council split inconclusively, but not on north and south lines; instead, the voting produced two factions – one representing northern students and some of the southern members, and another representing a different alignment among the southerners.

Among the student political factions, there is a conservative northern group supporting the Muslim Brotherhood, a small liberal Republican Brotherhood group which attracts some northern and southern sympathy, and so on. When this year the northern students boycotted classes, the boycott was reluctantly joined by a northern Christian. In the student hostels, where accommodation is shared, with, on average, four students to a room, there is a discernible tendency for students to separate as northerners and southerners, or Muslims and Christians. There is a less obvious tendency for some (dark-skinned) western Sudanese to link up with southern counterparts. English is the language of instruction in the University and is spoken, with varying facility, by all students; some southern students who attended secondary schools in the north are fluent in Arabic. But there is a tendency for friendships to follow the division of English or Arabic as a first language. Students comment that the customs of those who were brought up in the Christian or Muslim tradition vary in methods of personal hygiene (in summary, in the use of lavatory paper or the water bottle). Juba town has churches and mosques, but the University campus has neither. An open space is used for Muslim prayers, and the call to prayer is made with a battery-powered loud-hailer – a sensitive matter on this campus. How important are these points of difference? Currently, they are potential sources of friction, but will cease to be in so far as people cease to identify and define themselves by these signs. In a secular society, matters of religious affiliation recede into the background (as has occurred in mainland Britain, but not yet in Northern Ireland). Many of the Sudanese students are bilingual; the standard of spoken Arabic is rising in the south; there are signs that over a couple of generations Sudan will become an Arabic-speaking country, with English in a more specialised and subordinate role.

The wider social future of Sudan will be determined by political decisions that are now under discussion. In both north and south, some policies seem likely to exacerbate the divisive factors of the past. In the south, foreign missionary activity is resurgent under new guises; for example, an American missionary effort, now labelled the Summer Institute of Linguistics, which is devoting vast resources to a programme of vernacular language study. The programme is offered to the regional government as an aid to improving primary education, but

appears dedicated to Bible propagation and runs counter to the broad tendency for a national language to predominate (official estimates make Christianity the religion of a minority even in the south). In the north, there is increasing political pressure to declare Sudan an Islamic state, although such dogmatism is contrary to the spirit in which General Nimeiri took power in May 1969, and would seriously damage southern confidence in the central government.¹⁷

The period of Nimeiri's leadership in Sudan appears to show a steady drift away from any revolutionary Islamic standpoint towards a conservative-authoritarian view, which could fragment a country where the 'Arab' element is a minority.¹⁸ Shortly after the peace agreement, Francis Deng wrote:

Sudanese history, especially the history of Arabization in the North, has shown that given a system in which people enjoy their local autonomy but interact with others, integration results in the normal course of events, which could eventually transform the society. Given freedom of association between the South and the North and given a system of education and public information through the mass media, which realistically builds on the sum-total of Sudan's cultural variety, a genuinely integrated Sudanese culture and identity could be the ultimate outcome.¹⁹

It is difficult to overcome a colonial legacy of division and isolation. Within the artificiality of national boundaries, it is no less easy to create a national consciousness. Sudan's potential for bringing about shifts in class power is still vitiated by racial distinctions that are arguably devoid of fundamental differences.

References

- 1 See, for example, Joseph Oduho and William Deng, *The Problem of Southern Sudan* (London, 1963); Mohamed Omer Beshir, *The Southern Sudan: background to conflict* (London and Khartoum, 1968); and Mohamed Omer Beshir, *The Southern Sudan: from conflict to peace* (London, 1975).
- 2 For further discussion, see Norman O'Neill, 'Imperialism and class struggle in Sudan', *Race & Class* (Vol. XX, no. 1, 1978), which includes a useful analysis of class structures relating mainly to the small industrial and wage sector.
- 3 John S. Saul, 'The dialectic of class and tribe', *Race & Class* (Vol. XX, no. 4, 1979), p.350.
- 4 Archie Mafeje, 'The Ideology of "Tribalism"', *Journal of Modern African Studies* (Vol. 9, no. 2, 1971), quoted in Saul, op. cit., p. 350.
- 5 For the concept of marginalised intellectual and 'artefacts of colonial history' see A. Sivanandan, 'Alien Gods', in Bhikhu Parekh, *Colour, Culture and Consciousness* (London, 1974), p. 104.
- 6 I am indebted to valuable research, as yet unpublished, conducted by John Okec Lueth, formerly an Anyanya officer and now a Sudan Army officer seconded as a student to the University of Juba.
- 7 This argument can be found in numerous sources, but see particularly Amilcar

- Cabral, *Unity and Struggle: speeches and writings* (trans. M. Wolfers, New York, 1979 and London, 1980), p. 152.
- 8 See Bernard Lewis, *Race and Color in Islam* (New York, 1971) and references cited in note 1, p. 2.
 - 9 Beshir Mohammed Said, *The Crossroads of Africa* (London, 1965), p. 20.
 - 10 Francis Mading Deng, *Dinka Cosmology* (London, 1980), p. 3.
 - 11 K.D.D. Henderson, *Sudan Republic* (London, 1965), p. 183, quoted in Deng, op. cit., p. 66.
 - 12 Muddathir Abd Al-Rahim, 'Arabism, Africanism and Self-Identification in the Sudan', in Yusuf Fadl Hassan, *Sudan in Africa* (Khartoum, 1971), p. 237, quoted in Deng, *Dynamics of Identification: a basis for national integration in the Sudan* (Khartoum, 1973), p. 82.
 - 13 Deng, *Dinka Cosmology*, op. cit., p. 9.
 - 14 Deng, *Dynamics of Identification*, op. cit., p. 3.
 - 15 The University of Juba Act, 1975, section 4 (4).
 - 16 El Sammani A. Yacoub, *The University of Juba: background, concepts and plan of action* (Khartoum, 1976), p. 21. In the further paragraphs on the University of Juba I have drawn on unpublished internal University documents.
 - 17 See, for example, Babiker Awadalla's statement to diplomats on 26 May 1969: 'Our Arabism does not exclude our Africanism.' A *Draft of the National Charter*, published in Khartoum in November 1970, referred to 'respect of the sacred messages of religion, foremost among which is Islam which is the faith of the majority of our people'. This was amended in debate in January 1971 to read: 'respect of the sacred messages of religion, Islam which is the faith of the majority of our people, and Christianity, the religion of a great number of our people'. Article 16 of the Sudan Constitution adopted in 1973 recognised Islam, Christianity and traditional beliefs and guaranteed non-discrimination on grounds of faith.
 - 18 See Thomas Hodgkin, 'The revolutionary tradition in Islam', *Race & Class* (Vol. XXI, no. 3, 1980).
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Peggy Duff

1910-1981

Peggy Duff died on April 16. After a life time of struggle in the Labour Party, where she championed causes like CND and the abolition of capital punishment, Peggy in 1965 became general secretary of the International Confederation for Disarmament and Peace. From ICDP she was to help lead the campaign against the war in Vietnam, and later to support innumerable struggles against dictatorships and imperialism in South and South East Asia and the Middle East. We mourn the death of an inveterate anti-imperialist fighter, and pledge to carry on her struggle.

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Notes and documents

Class and race in Atlanta: a note on the murdered and missing children

A local educational radio programme, entitled 'Southland – a programme of the new sounds from the old confederacy', recalls that 1979 was not a very good year for Atlanta's carefully cultivated image as a city that had miraculously sidestepped the ravages of the urban dilemma: crime statistics had exploded, the number of homicides ran 60 per cent above 1978's total. Two murders especially monopolised the local and national media for weeks, and shook the quarter billion dollar a year convention industry to its roots. A visiting conventioneer was killed during a robbery attempt, and a secretary for a prestigious law firm was shot dead by a madman in the heart of downtown. In both cases, the victims were white, their assailants black.

On a hot Saturday afternoon in July 1979, the bodies of two black youngsters – Edward Smith and Alfred Evans – were found just thirty yards apart in a wooded section of a black middle-class neighbourhood. They too had been murdered, but there were no outraged press conferences, no ferocious columnists demanding the national guard (as had been the case with the two previous murders), no shock wave – just a stony silence from the Atlanta establishment. The reason: these kids were from the ghettos of Atlanta's poor and underclass, where murder and victimisation are thought to be daily and routine occurrences. Two more youngsters were found slain that year, but again there was no indication that this would be the beginning of a 22-month wave of fear that Atlanta's mayor Maynard Jackson would call (when the moment was appropriate) 'the most tragic situation in the modern history of our city'.

I could easily devote this space to a chronology of the cases and the kinds of police action (or inaction) that have occurred to date. I could also recap on the numerous theories about the identity of the killer(s) – ranging from one psychic's vision of the killer being a deranged woman with a short menstrual cycle who goes berserk every three and a half weeks and kills young boys without provocation, to Dick Gregory's

conspiracy notion of the government's involvement in using the kids for experimentation.

But that is not what I have chosen to do. Instead, I intend to argue that, basically, the child killings in Atlanta are the result of unsolved racial and, more importantly, class problems in America which have come to the fore in one American city. Such an analysis does not lead inexorably to any racial or ethnic identification of a killer(s). My focus deals more with the victims and the social and economic settings from which they come. Thus, any consideration as to who the killer(s) might be is less relevant to the present analysis.

The ultimate significance of the Atlanta killings lies in the reality that there exists within Atlanta (as in a number of major US cities) a vast underclass and sub-proletariat who have not reaped the benefits of black political and social embourgeoisement, but who instead have been permanently trapped into a lumpen ghetto existence, and, unable to exercise any control over their own communities, become prey to terror, violence and exploitation.

The city of Atlanta has been able to project a national and international image of racial harmony and black progress vis-a-vis its black political leadership. After all, what other American city can boast of having simultaneously a black mayor, a predominantly black city council with a black president, a black school board president, a black public safety commissioner and a black chief of police? Such outward symbols, however, have obscured the harsh reality that two-thirds of Atlanta's black residents have failed to participate in the 'progress' of the last ten years, and that their social and economic position has steadily deteriorated.

During the 1970s, for example, the unemployment rate for Atlanta's 16- to 18-year-old blacks rose by more than half – from 25 per cent to over 40 per cent. The percentage of all black males over 16 who dropped out of the labour force entirely – who neither worked nor sought work and consequently did not even appear in the unemployment statistics – also increased by more than half.¹

What is true for Atlanta also holds for the rest of the country. Carl Gershman, writing in the *New York Times Sunday Magazine*, summed up the situation this way: 'The black underclass of the ghetto has been expanding at precisely the same time as the black middle class has also been expanding and moving ahead ... The structural barriers to employment for the underclass are greater now [under urban black political leadership] than they were 15 years ago.'²

I raise these issues because it is precisely from the families of Atlanta's poor and underclass that the victims of escalating violence and terror have come. Growing class divisions and class conflict have in fact been a precursor to stepped-up violence and systematic victimisation of poor and working-class Atlantans. A glaring example of this is brought out in Mack Jones' thoughtful analysis of 'Black political empower-

ment in Atlanta', in which he points out that the March 1977 strike of low-paid, mostly black, sanitation workers brought to the fore underlying black class antagonisms.³ On the one hand, there was a black mayor supported by a black petty bourgeoisie and the ruling white commercial-business elite. On the other hand were the sanitation workers, asking for a mere 50 cent's per hour pay increase. 'In the midst of this showdown several black organisations and prominent black personalities held a press conference in the Atlanta offices of the Chamber of Commerce, where Dr Martin Luther King, Sr, whose son had been slain while supporting black workers in a similar strike, announced that the assembled group supported the mayor and that he should "fire the hell out of the striking workers"'.⁴

In the intervening years the class divisions and class antagonisms have continued to deepen. As a matter of fact, the lines of the class struggle have been clearly drawn. In one very poignant moment, Camille Bell (mother of one of the victims and an articulate spokesperson for many of the city's dispossessed), was asked by a TV reporter the reason for her continued embattlement and suspicion of city hall. 'After all,' he asked, 'aren't the mayor, city council president and police chieftains all black?' 'It's not a matter of race,' came the cogent reply, 'it's a matter of class.'

Of special significance is the fact that not only were all of the slain youths from Atlanta's poor and underclass, but most were, at the time of their disappearance and eventual death, doing what comes instinctively to those in a disadvantaged, ghetto situation. They were on the streets 'hustling'; or, more appropriately, engaging in various forms of petty commerce — such as selling car deodorants or doing small favours for strangers in return for cash. In other words, they were involved in the kind of survival techniques which a capitalist system inevitably forces on an immiserated population.

Not a single murdered child came from the city's black bourgeoisie. An *Atlanta Constitution* story reports that they all came from overcrowded public housing, where all families receive some type of public assistance. At least seven of the twenty-two (at the time of writing) murdered and missing had run away before and had been in trouble with the law; eleven tried to make a buck by selling goods or doing errands and odd jobs. Jeffrey Mathis, whose remains were identified in mid-February, was the second youngest in a family of five boys and two girls. The 10-year-old boy's father was murdered during a robbery in 1974 at a cemetery burial office where he had worked briefly as a night watchman.⁵

While it may be easy for middle-class persons to dismiss the significance of the limited earnings brought in from, say, selling car deodorants (as one of the boys had been doing at the time of disappearance), Robert Staples points out that 'to many low-income black families the additional income of their teenage children is vital to their

existence. This is particularly true during periods when many adult males have lost their jobs' (or become incarcerated).⁶

It is not difficult to see the relation between a super-exploited, alienated sub-proletariat and their becoming further victims to crime and violence. Their isolated and unprotected location within the society renders them vulnerable to a wide assortment of victimisers.

The youthful males within the underclass are merely part of a redundant labour force, valuable to the system only as a reserve army of cheap labour; consequently, they are viewed as physically expendable. It matters little to the ruling class whether physical elimination of ghetto youth comes from the hands of a sick, demented, racist killer, or whether members of the underclass end up killing themselves. And killing of Atlanta black youngsters, in the words of Gil-Scott Heron, 'ain't no new thing'. Police data indicate that, for the city, an average 10-15 murders per year occur for youngsters aged 6-17 (the age cohort for victims of the recent wave of killings). Thus, minus a couple of interesting details, there is really nothing startling about the 20 or so murders which have occurred over a 22-month period.

As a matter of fact, the usual 10-15 murders per year may be an undercount, since in previous periods there was no public pressure or heightened sense of police vigilance to report and record such killings. On the other hand, had there not been the sense of mass hysteria surrounding the events of the last few months, it is conceivable that the number of murdered children for the 22-month period would have been higher.

Why then such an outpouring of sentiment and public display of concern over 22 murdered and missing children? T. S. Eliot once observed: 'The greatest treason: to do the right deed for the wrong reason.' The answer must be seen within the broader dialectics of the class struggle. It is not unknown during periods of intense class conflict, when the position and credibility of the ruling class is most threatened, for it to co-opt the cause of the masses and appear to make it its own cause – if indeed such a tactic will delay violent confrontations and maintain the status quo. The effect of this tactic is to weaken and dilute a central working-class issue and divide the masses.

This is precisely what has taken place in the Atlanta situation. A local grassroots organisation was formed back in 1979 – spearheaded by Camille Bell. Called the Committee to Stop Children's Murders, it was a truly indigenous and active movement which received widespread support among many of Atlanta's dispossessed. It was not organised with the specific intention of finding some particular sick or psychotic killer; not to find any Ku Klux Klan or Nazi killer. The organisation was simply an embodiment of the years of frustration at being ripped off by unscrupulous merchants, unjust housing authorities *and* child killers.

For over a year the organisation was slighted, if not spurned, by city

hall and law-enforcement officials. It nevertheless gained momentum by increasingly drawing the media's attention to each new murder. Because of its vibrancy and increasing popularity among the mass of ghetto residents, accentuated by frequent confrontations with city hall, the movement was eventually perceived as a threat to the ruling class. And nothing is more alarming to the ruling class than to see poor people organising themselves in order to initiate meaningful revolutionary changes in their own condition. So the Committee to Stop Children's Murders had to be stopped, or at least neutralised.

What the leaders of city hall and their white sponsors in the commercial-business establishment did was simply take the ball away from the committee and run with it. They converted the cause of missing and murdered children into a single issue (after all, who could be for killing little children?) and this was now the city's cause. The mayor called a news conference late last year to announce a \$100,000 reward for information leading to the apprehension of 'Atlanta's child killer'. The white establishment jumped on the bandwagon, the Chamber of Commerce and other white business interests all pitched in to the reward kitty.

The mayor was seen as an embattled black leader of a united city, courageously fighting to save little black children from a sick killer. Shortly thereafter, the whole thing became a national cause celebre. Every Saturday bands of white liberals from near and distant suburbia would partake in what became a ritual — i.e., the weekly search parties. One man moved in from another state with his 'super dog'; he was going to track down the killer in typical Scotland Yard style. Numerous galas, shows, houseparties and concerts were organised to raise funds for police efforts and the families of the missing and murdered children. Why, even Sammy Davis and ol' 'blue eyes' came out and serenaded the city with songs of 'old New York' in what was perhaps the biggest spectacle of all.

The upshot of this series of spectacles was that the issue of Atlanta's murdered and missing children was no longer a focal rallying cry for the city's poor and working class, and as such diluted all efforts at class solidarity. And the city continues to fight tooth and nail to prevent the poor from reclaiming the initiative.

A general unwillingness abounds among the ruling class and the city's black petty bourgeoisie to see any indigenous anti-crime movement established within the ghetto's underclass which might place them in a position to exert unilaterally any type of control over their communities, even if this would mean a reduction in their rates of victimisation. Any such move has been met with varying degrees of suspicion and outright repression by the city.

Thus, it was not surprising when the *Atlanta Constitution* cited one prominent city councilman as expressing fear about the formation of

youth groups in the city – one such group being the Atlanta Youth Against Crime. In one miscalculated, uncoordinated and clumsy move by the Atlanta Public Housing Authority, word got out of an attempt to evict Camille Bell from her apartment while she was away on a speaking engagement. The mayor hurriedly scuttled the move when it appeared as though it would backfire. But this was obviously an attempt to embarrass and discredit one of the more effective organisers and spokespersons for many of Atlanta's poor and dispossessed.

When the Guardian Angels (a group of anti-crime youngsters with solid working-class, 'street-wise' backgrounds) came to town – primarily as an expression of solidarity with similar indigenous Atlanta groups, they were met with a mixture of wariness and hostility by the Atlanta establishment – even though many local community groups had openly endorsed their presence. The reason city officials gave was they did not need any out-of-town 'vigilantes' in 'our city'. At the same time, however, the city has opened its doors to – even invited – a conglomeration of out-of-town witches, psychics, sorcerers and assorted weirdos to help with the case. But then, this latter group is in no way threatening to ruling class interests, and will not upset the basic structural relation between the powerful and the powerless.

Criminal Justice Institute, Atlanta

BERNARD D. HEADLEY

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Repression in Turkey*

As a result of discussions on the developments in Turkey during 1980-81 and especially the serious situation confronting the trade unions in Turkey, the ETUC Secretariat decided to send an unofficial mission to Turkey. The aim of this mission was to: (a) inform about the ETUC stand regarding the Turkish situation; (b) collect information on the situation of the trade unionists in Turkey; and (c) to observe at the trial against DISK (Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions) which started on 22 April 1981 in Istanbul. The mission

*Excerpts from 'Report on mission to Turkey on 18-22 April 1981' by Jon Nalsund, Deputy Secretary General, European Trade Union Congress.

was conducted without prior publicity and without notifying the authorities.

This report is based on personal observations during the four days I was in Istanbul and on conversations I had with a large number of trade unionists, lawyers and a few politicians connected to the Republican Peoples Party. The present Turkish government considers it a very serious offence to give information about the dark side of Turkish society at the moment. The people I met therefore ran the risk of being sentenced to several years imprisonment for having described the situation as they see it to me. This report will therefore not contain information on names or positions held of the persons I met. I believe they represent an important segment of the democratic forces in Turkey and that the information they imparted to me gives valuable insight into the conditions prevalent in Turkey today.

General observations: Istanbul has the appearance of an occupied city. There are soldiers everywhere with automatic rifles, fingers poised on triggers; according to the people I met, the soldiers are authorised to shoot if any trouble erupts. They carry out constant controls on ordinary public buses which are frequently stopped, passengers asked to get out and be searched; people are constantly being asked to produce identification papers, etc. The people I met underline that after the military coup, one can safely walk the streets again and that open terrorism from the last years disappeared. This improvement in personal safety is counter-balanced by a new terror exercised by the authorities against anyone who may criticise the lack of democratic rights in Turkey. Lawyers, politicians and trade unionists I met largely agreed that the military authorities in the Istanbul area must have consciously allowed terrorists to operate in the period before the military coup and that this must have been done to prepare the ground for the coup itself on 12 September 1980. The rapid and effective suppression of open terrorism in the streets was carried out by methods which were available to the military authorities also under the martial law which was effective before the military coup. The government seems to be systematically trying to get control of all organisations and institutions, by forcing the leaders of the organisations to follow the political line of the present government, by changing leaders, or by closing the organisations down and establishing new organisations under the control of the government.

Trade union rights: At enterprise level, no trade union activity can be carried out, no matter what organisation people belong to. The trade union offices in the plants are sealed and attempts to take up individual complaints are not effective. Collective bargaining is outlawed; strikes are forbidden. On the national level, Türk-İs* is allowed to operate

*See B. Berberoglu, 'The crisis in Turkey', *Race & Class* (Vol. XXII, no. 3, 1981).

whilst DISK has been closed down. The limits within which Türk-Is can operate are very narrow indeed.

The situation of DISK: Nearly every official of DISK is either in prison, or in hiding or in exile outside Turkey. More than 300 DISK officials are incarcerated in Istanbul and an unknown number of DISK trade unionists are imprisoned elsewhere in the country. The government has appointed three curators to take care of DISK's properties and incomes. According to reports I received, the buildings belonging to DISK organisations are now being given away by the curators without compensation. An example of this is the large vacation centre owned by the Municipal Workers Union – Genel-Is – on the Aegean Sea, which has been given for ten years to a Turkish Bank of Tourism. Another example is the office building of Genel-Is in Ankara, which probably will be given away without compensation, for use by government institutions. Because of the check-off system in Turkey, employers are still deducting trade union contributions from wages of the workers and sending this on to the DISK curators. This money is being held in escrow in state banks and it is widely assumed that, in the end, will show up in the army institutions. DISK employees have not received any wages since the coup d'état nor have they been licensed and are therefore prevented from getting new jobs and are wholly dependent on aid from friends and relatives. A trial started on 22 April 1981, aiming at a final close down of DISK.

Treatment of DISK prisoners: Most DISK officials, both at national and local level, were either arrested or gave themselves up in the first days after the military coup. According to reports from lawyers and relatives, they were exposed to serious torture during the first ten days. Methods used included electric shock, sexual abuse, mock hangings, prevention from sleeping for periods up to several weeks, beatings, kicking of foot-soles, etc. The prisoners were kept from seeing their relatives or lawyers for the first four months. At that time, their physical condition had deteriorated quite significantly. In early December, almost one month after the legal maximum, they were first put before a judge and then, they had next to no recourse to legal defence. The judge freed most of the prisoners, while sixty-eight were kept on at this first hearing. Because of his liberal attitude, this judge was dismissed by the authorities and a new judge appointed; the liberated prisoners were then re-imprisoned. Charges against the prisoners have not been published and no time schedule is known for the trials against them.

Book reviews

Britain in Agony: the growth of political violence

By RICHARD CLUTTERBUCK (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1980). 368pp. £1.95

The idea that Britain today is a more violent society than ever before is a popular theme in the media, one which is used persistently to back calls for greater police powers and curbs on trade union activities and 'violent' demonstrations. Clutterbuck's book seeks to bring academic credibility to this view.

For a start the reader would be advised to look a little deeper into Clutterbuck's past than the brief biographical note provided here, which describes him as 'a soldier turned expert in political violence turned academic ... Dr. Clutterbuck teaches in the Department of Politics at the University of Exeter'. Major-General Clutterbuck, as he once preferred to be known, is one of Britain's major counter-insurgency theorists with particular experience in the colonial period, for example in Malaya (1956-8). He is also a long-standing Council member of the right-wing Institute for the Study of Conflict.

His book falls into two parts, a survey of political and industrial events in the 1970s and a prescription for how the 'violence' of that decade can be combated in the 1980s. It is tempting to refute the many distortions and innuendoes in his account of the 1970s – on Grunwick, the Shrewsbury pickets, the 1972 miners' strike, Red Lion Square and Lewisham, to name but a few of the areas covered in the first seventeen of the twenty-one chapters. For example, to place the blame for what happened at Lewisham on the Socialist Workers' Party (which he presents as the *only* anti-fascist group) and not on the provocative march by the National Front (whose 'aim was the political one of building up their membership and political support') is bad enough. But to include three references to Southall without any mention of the death of Blair Peach and the proven police violence shows partiality at

its worst. However, it is more productive to dismantle his central thesis, that the 'growth of political violence' in Britain was a new phenomenon of the 1970s, and then to look at his general ideological assumptions.

Clutterbuck, in common with the Tory government, the media and police chiefs, presents Britain as a more violent society than ever before, so violent that drastic remedies are required. The violence Clutterbuck is referring to is that of the working class and dissenters, not the violence of the state, which is presented simply as a necessary response. Only someone with such a bad grasp of British history – perhaps because much of his life was spent in the army in the colonies or preparing for the Third World War – could ignore the violence of the state and the ruling class against the working class over the past two centuries. How can the murder of eleven men and women by the army at Peterloo in 1819 be ignored; or the Tolpuddle Martyrs and the struggles that led to the abolition of the Combination Acts in 1825 (which had denied the right of assembly); or the violence of the Highland Clearances in the late nineteenth century, which completed a 200-year process of taking the common land from the people and giving it to the landed aristocracy; or the bloody suppression of the unemployed in Trafalgar Square in 1886 and 1887; or the miners of Tonypandy in 1910; or the suffragette movement; or 'Bloody Sunday' in Liverpool in 1911 during the dock strike; or the violence of the troops, again in Liverpool, during the police strike of 1919; or the continual police attacks on the National Unemployed Workers' Movement over ten years of 'Hunger Marches'; or the anti-fascist struggles of the early 1930s (which were not 'Fascists' v. 'Communists', as Clutterbuck suggests, unless the whole of the East End of London who came out on to the streets to deny the Blackshirts entry can be so defined)?

These struggles (and there were many many more) did not overthrow British capitalism, but they did establish a 'contract' between capital and labour and liberal democracy as we came to know it in the last sixty years. By acting in defiance of existing laws, the working class won certain 'rights', only reluctantly conceded by the ruling class. The right of assembly and to demonstrate, the right to combine into trade unions, to withdraw one's labour, to act in solidarity with other workers and to vote in elections were all established by 'violent' struggles. This 'contract' was extended after the Second World War with the creation of the welfare state. And, as a further extension of a traditional paternalism, motivated by the need for cheap labour, Britain was, in the 1950s, to become a 'multiracial society'.

Today, each of these elements of liberal democracy is under Tory attack, except, indeed, the concept of an equal, multiracial society, which has already been destroyed.

Clutterbuck espouses the central strategy of the Tory government

and the state. He is not against the right to strike, because to remove this would only lead to 'frustration', but he is in favour of the 'sophisticated and shrewd' use of the law. Pickets, he says, should be limited to six and 'anyone else present is not a picket but a demonstrator', and as such 'should have no claim to the privileges of pickets' (immunity from prosecution). This is precisely the effect of Prior's 'code of practice', issued by ministerial decree, as 'guidelines' to the police and the courts when the Employment Act comes into force in autumn 1981. The right to strike becomes meaningless without the means to carry out effective picketing, so too does the historical expression of solidarity with other workers in struggle if 'secondary' or 'flying' pickets come to be defined as 'demonstrators' – because what is at stake is the fundamental right to assemble and to demonstrate.

The recent government Green Paper follows the demands of the Association of Chief Police Officers and a number of local authorities who are trying to get local Acts through parliament to curb demonstrations (Review of the Public Order Act 1936 and related legislation, April 1980, HMSO). The Tory plans envisage that organisers of demonstrations would be required by law to give advance notice (3-7 days) to the police and agree a route with them. The Green Paper also suggests that powers similar to those in the 1936 Act (which applies only to moving processions) should be extended to static demonstrations or meetings, thus greatly extending police powers of arrest. Such powers, it says, 'could apply to large-scale demonstrations in support of pickets'. Clutterbuck sums up this strategy by quoting Lord Scarman's report on Red Lion Square: 'The overall lesson for demonstrators is clear: cooperate with the police.' Arthur Scargill, at the 1980 TUC Congress, draws a different lesson: 'We would not be meeting here today if our forefathers had not been prepared to defy the law.'

Having re-drawn the boundaries of what is considered 'legitimate' activity within liberal democracy, Clutterbuck, in line with the Tories, seeks to re-define the 'legitimate' participants in the new 'liberal democracy'. He divides activists into those who accept the parliamentary road, and the capitalist system, and those who don't. Those who don't are the 'marxists' in the Labour Party (who should be 'positively identified' and exposed – as 'subversives' no doubt), the Communist Party and the extra-parliamentary groups who believe in revolutionary change and the overthrow of capitalism. A similar divide is applied by Clutterbuck to strikes. 'Industrial' strikes, that have purely economic ends and are non-violent, are acceptable. 'Political' strikes, which seek to overthrow the government (as did the 1973-4 miners' strike) or influence it, are not. This approach seeks to exploit the existing divide within the Labour Party and the trade union movement, to effect the removal of class struggle from the agendas of the organisations of the

working class. As Scargill commented on the 1972 miners' strike: 'The biggest mistake we could make is that of suggesting that a wage battle is not a political battle ... once we begin to divorce wages from politics, then we lose our perspectives ... I will never accept that it is anything else than a class battle.'

In many ways Clutterbuck's book says nothing new to those who have watched the ascendancy of the right-wing in British politics – the takeover by the Tory right through Thatcher's election to the leadership; the role of the National Association for Freedom (and its inevitable demise with the Thatcher election victory); the pre-election work of Sir Keith Joseph at the Centre for Policy Studies; and the Tory Cabinet's espousal of monetarism on the Chilean model (the necessary corollary being the creation of a 'strong' state to discipline dissent).

Nor should it say anything new to anyone who was sensitive to the passing away of the 'multi-racial' society – from the 1962 Immigration Act through to the bi-partisan policies of 'induced repatriation' today. It was the briefest, and the first, tenet of liberal democracy to go – a precursor of what is now being visited on the working class as a whole.

The strategy of this Tory government is clear: British capitalism is to be restructured at any cost. And if working people who lose their livelihoods, or those living in inner city ghettos, protest, react or refuse to consent to their fate, then the strong arm of the state, the police, the law and the courts are geared to match their anger in kind.

State Research

TONY BUNYAN

The Education of the Black Child in Britain: the myth of multiracial education

By MAUREEN STONE (London, Fontana, 1981). 286pp. £1.95

Maureen Stone has been concerned with the relegation of our black children to an inferior status by the British education system for the past decade. Her research into ESN placements was acknowledged by Bernard Coard in *How the West Indian Child is Made Educationally Subnormal in the British School System* (London, 1971).

In the initial pages of *The Education of the Black Child in Britain* Maureen Stone correctly identifies the compensatory nature of 'progressive', 'child-centred' approaches to education. 'The problems and difficulties of contemporary schools are increasingly being seen as reflections of individual and family pathology of working-class people.' Educational problems are then seen as being focussed in the child rather than in the structure of society and the nature of its schools. Unfortunately, no comment is made upon the coercive tactics that are brought into play if 'progressive' methods fail, a crucial

omission in view of black resistance in the classroom to being pathologically labelled. The author argues that compensatory policies, in the form of educational priority areas, have failed to reduce inequality and that the new formula is to change these children's attitudes towards themselves, thus making the 'self-concept of the child' the 'legitimate interest of the teacher'. This concern is not, in fact, new but has been implicit in educational policies since the identification of 'a complex of disabilities' in the report of the Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration, 1968-9, 'The Problems of Coloured School Leavers'. Maureen Stone views these theories as 'apolitical'. 'These theories have not been lifted out of any political, social or economic context – they are as apolitical as the people who originated them.'

It is in this formulation that it is possible to identify the book's major weakness. These theories and policies are not 'apolitical' but, on the contrary, must be understood in the context of social democratic initiatives and practices informed by ideologies of 'equality of opportunity'. Acknowledging that 'the reasons why "immigrants" are here in the first place are economic', Ms Stone does not want to become 'embroiled in economic arguments or debates which are not central to the main issue'. However, it is not possible to isolate the response to black people in Britain from the demands which made their presence necessary.

Historically, the author outlines the failure of the welfare state and the Labour Party to establish a socialist form of education, but offers no explanation of this failure, an explanation which would require an understanding of the central contradictions of social democracy. The Labour Party has tried to equate 'popular interests' with the interests of capitals and to subsume both under the construction of the 'national interest'; the rallying cry of the 'great debate' and the 1977 Green Paper on education. In real terms it is the interest of capitals which has predominated. The 'crisis in education' has been an integral part of the crisis and failure of social democracy itself and the shift to a more authoritarian form of the state. Furthermore, 'national interests' have notoriously excluded or have been mobilised against the interests of the black communities. The concentration upon 'compensatory' aspects of policies means that we are provided with no framework for understanding the coercive strategies to which our black children are subject, both inside and outside the process of schooling.

Whilst I would wish to applaud Maureen Stone for her discrediting of social-psychological tests which aim to 'prove' the low self-esteem of our children and the poverty of our culture, her reliance upon her own forms of testing tells us only what we already know: the irrelevance of the multicultural curriculum to our struggles and the resilience and strength of our black children in resisting oppression. It

does not relate, or allow us to connect educational theories, policies and practices that address our sons and daughters, to other institutionalised racist theories, policies and practices. We are pathologised in ways which are not limited to the sphere of education. We are under attack from increasing state intervention and state control in all aspects of our lives and we need to be making the connections.

Ms Stone concludes that state schools need to return to teaching 'basic skills and knowledge'. How do we *differentiate* between this and Thatcherism? The ways in which basic skills and knowledge are defined are not politically neutral, any more than compensatory policies are neutral. Surely the resurgence of proposals for the testing of black students attests to this? Social democratic and Thatcherite policies agree on the need to relate skills and knowledge to the requirements of industry. This means that both Manpower Services Commission programmes and school curricula are being designed to instil social and work discipline in a period of high unemployment amongst youth, particularly black youth, in an attempt to combat forms of resistance. The 'soft' approaches of the multicultural curricula need to be paralleled to the 'soft' community relations approach to policing, which not only gathers information but also advocates the presence of police personnel in schools and youth clubs to run courses for black youth.

Ms Stone rightly perceives the existence of black, alternative Saturday schooling as the only alternative working-class form of education that exists at present. But this is because we have organised outside of the formal system of 'representative' social democracy and do not attempt to reconcile its contradictions. The success of black alternative schools does not only lie in the teaching of basic skills. 'West Indian schools stress acquisition of skills and knowledge, although this is within a virtually unracial context where West Indian (and black culture generally) is emphasised and given pride of place.'

The significance of this statement is missed in the author's plea for a return to basic skills and knowledge in the state education sector. The context of alternative black schooling is not dictated by the needs of capitals but by the demands of the black community in a racist society. We do not need state schools to teach us our culture, to discipline us for future unemployment and increased policing or to 'skill' us for shit work.

Ms Stone effectively dismisses the efforts of liberal teachers who want 'to do good' to their black pupils, but for these teachers to join the basic skills, core curriculum bandwagon, is not an acceptable alternative. An important question for them to ask now is what is schooling for, socially, politically and economically? After these teachers have examined the way in which they themselves oppress the black students in their classes by using a racist common sense that constructs us as pathological, in our families, our forms of culture and politics and

even in our brains through the identity crises we are supposed to have, then maybe, maybe they will stop being experts about blacks and listen to our demands. But most teachers appear to be involved in the battle of increasing professionalism and defining the boundaries of their expertise around the curriculum. Wider sets of social relations which structure our oppression seem to be beyond their vision ... or are they? Unfortunately *The Education of the Black Child in Britain* does not acknowledge or analyse the results of its own findings – that schooling is political.

Centre for Contemporary
Cultural Studies

HAZEL CARBY

Northern Ireland: between civil rights and civil war

By L. O'DOWD, B. ROLSTON and M. TOMLINSON (London, Conference of Socialist Economists, 1980). 223pp. £3.95

In March 1972, Stormont was abolished as the Northern Ireland Parliament and Westminster took control of internal matters, a move originally regarded as temporary. But the success of the anti-power sharing strike in May 1974 resulted in the continuation and extension of Direct Rule.

What was the nature of this Direct Rule? It is frequently thought that Westminster, being above the sectarian squabbles of N. Ireland, could introduce genuine reforms which would obviate the need for army and RUC repression. And it is certainly true that reforms have been introduced since the late 1960s: universal franchise, proportional representation in certain elections, reform of local government, the outlawing of discrimination, the creation of a centralised housing authority, the setting up of a Police Authority, the appointment of trades union officials to many advisory boards, etc.

But reforms in a society split by sectarianism tend to reflect this very sectarianism in new forms. More radical reforms which strike at the basis of sectarianism run up against prevailing class interest. The mistake made both by the economic left in Ireland and Britain and by the early proponents of community politics under the N. Ireland Community Relations Programme was to assume that sectarian and class divisions were separable. This approach rests on the belief that 'sectarianism is a set of attitudes', open to demise through education and legislation.

The thrust of this book is to argue two points; firstly, that sectarianism and class divisions are woven together in an historical web of *material* circumstances; and second, that the Direct Rule Administration came to realise this fact and increasingly resorted to managing the

politics of sectarianism. The first of these points is developed both in the introductory chapter and in the subsequent one on regional policy, appraised more closely below. The second point is expounded in a set of case studies – on local government, the trade unions, housing, community relations and the repressive apparatus.

The chapter on regional policy is one of the best in the book. Just reading this chapter alone is informative, as it shows the factors behind the stability of sectarianism in the statelet – locational and occupational differences between Protestants and Catholics.

Planning and infrastructure provision in the post-war period favoured the east of the statelet, especially Belfast and its environs which contain 75 per cent of Protestants but only 48 per cent of Catholics. Catholics are concentrated in the west of the inner city, but industrial restructuring in the 1960s and 1970s saw an exodus of manufacturing employment from the Belfast city area, half of it going to the environs of Belfast where Catholics account for only 20 per cent of population. With high unemployment and a low proportion of manufacturing in the south and west of the statelet, a government report (Quigley, 1976) has termed N. Ireland a 'dual economy'.

As far as occupational differences are concerned, Catholics have over time become more stratified with an increase in the proportion of those Catholics who are unskilled, manual workers and an increase also in the proportion of those who are professionals (mainly teachers and welfare workers). Among Protestants, by contrast, the proportion of unskilled has been constant and the proportion of non-manual has increased significantly. Certain occupations such as high level civil service occupations, security forces and engineering/shipbuilding are almost exclusively Protestant.

These structural factors perpetuate sectarian divisions even without conscious discrimination. Unemployment (currently over 15 per cent) is to a certain extent a leveller, and this argument is not really adequately treated in the book. But then, divisions arise over the possible solutions to unemployment, given the differential effect that state assistance has on different areas and occupational groups.

The case studies that form the remaining chapters are interesting in terms of the wealth of information they contain. But it is perhaps too much of an oversimplification to think that they can illuminate sharply the way that sectarianism was reconstituted in N. Ireland under the new reforms. British policy was ambivalent, contradictory and experimental and the political and economic environment in which it operated was constantly shifting over the period of Direct Rule. Some of the case studies, however, present the argument very clearly indeed. The study of housing shows how the post-war period was characterised by tensions between the political needs of local councils and the needs of capital expansion in terms of social reproduction. Under Direct

Rule, there was no way in which housing could become a simple class issue, determined by the needs of capital accumulation. Issues such as squatting, rent strikes, slum clearance and land reallocation, as well as questions of military surveillance, all combined to give a sectarian character to housing provision.

To sum up, the data and case studies make this an informative book, even for those who know the N. Ireland question well. Its tone is exploratory rather than dialectic. Hopefully, it will set a pattern for future research in terms of the approach and method followed.

London

CIARAN DRIVER

Notes on Dialectics: Hegel-Marx-Lenin

By C.L.R. JAMES (London, Allison & Busby, 1980). 231pp. £4.95

I can still remember when I saw the first draft of *Notes on Dialectics*. I was drilling holes in crankshafts at the Buick Division of General Motors in Flint, Michigan. I was part of the Johnson-Forest Tendency, an opposition group in the official Trotskyist organisation that was founded and led by the West Indian marxist, C.L.R. James. The document had no name then (1948) and it became known informally as the 'Nevada Document', because that was where James was staying when he wrote it. It was such a devastating critique of Trotskyism that it had to be circulated surreptitiously – one typing on thin onion skin paper, about six or eight copies, sent around in sections, each section having to be read and returned so that nothing was left lying around.

The impact was unbelievable. Rereading it over thirty years later, it still makes a powerful impression. On the days that a section of the document came in the mail we would sit up late into the night reading and discussing it. Each day we would wait for the mail to see if another section had come. That was pretty remarkable for a book that was difficult then and is difficult now (although it is not as difficult as taking Hegel neat).

What *Notes on Dialectics* attempts is what no marxist has attempted in this century. It presents dialectics, not as an academic exercise and not as a ritual justifying previously taken positions, but as a working tool that is both useful in understanding the world in which we live and necessary for marxists to function in that world. The book consists, on the one hand, of a continuing dialogue with and exposition of Hegel's *Logic* and the relevant writings of Lenin and Marx, and, on the other hand, of an exposition of how the dialectic can be applied to a particular problem, the nature of proletarian organisation. In the course of this presentation James settles accounts with Trotskyism.

James had founded his tendency in the United States in 1941. It was

a time when marxism was in disarray. Stalinism, the Moscow frame-up trials, the Stalin-Hitler Pact, the Second World War and the inability of Trotskyism to supply relevant answers, all contributed to a search for new roads. What distinguished James and his grouping was the determination to go back to marxist fundamentals, to apply the methodology of Marx (and Lenin) to the current stage of capitalism and of the working class. We began with the intensive study of *Capital* alongside the process of working out positions on the questions of the day. *Notes on Dialectics* was a kind of culmination which confirmed the relevance of marxism to the post-Second World War world.

It is rather deceptive. It is written informally, to comrades, with wit and humour. Yet James was attempting what only Lenin had attempted before him. With the socialist movement in a shambles at the beginning of the First World War, Lenin applied the methodology of Marx to find the objective basis for the new reality. He found it in a new stage of capitalism, imperialism, and a new stage of the working class. Over thirty years later, with marxism once again in a shambles, James put forward the theory of state capitalism as the new stage, not simply of the Soviet Union, but of capitalism on a world scale. In *Notes on Dialectics* he attempts to concretise what that means for proletarian organisation.

In a careful study of the dialectical logic of Hegel as applied to the history of the workers' movement, James concludes that the period of the vanguard party is at an end, that it has exhausted its usefulness and has been transformed into its opposite, a reactionary barrier to proletarian revolution. The interpretation of Hegel, the development of the argument, is impossible to summarise here. But consider the following:

It is obvious that the conflict of the proletariat is between itself as object and itself as consciousness, its party. The party has a dialectical development of its own. The solution of the conflict is the fundamental abolition of this division ... The revolutionary party of this epoch will be organised labour itself and the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie. The abolition of capital and the abolition of the distinction between the proletariat as object and proletariat as consciousness will be one and the same process. That is our *new notion* and it is with those eyes that we examine what the proletariat is in actuality ...

The party as we have known it must disappear. It will disappear. It is disappearing. It will disappear as the state will disappear. The whole labouring population becomes the state. *That is the disappearance of the state*. It can have no other meaning. It withers away by *expanding* to such a degree that it is transformed into its opposite. And the party does the same. The state withers away and the party

withers away. But for the proletariat the most important, the primary thing is the withering away of the party. For if the party does not wither away, the state never will [author's emphasis].

These were exciting ideas in 1948. What is even more exciting is that they have stood the test of time. Eight years after these words were written, the abstract outline of a new stage of proletarian organisation was concretised in the workers' councils of the Hungarian Revolution – and then again in France in 1968. It is a remarkable achievement. James' tendency was the only one that was not taken by surprise by these events. It is difficult to think of a figure in the post-Second World War world who has accomplished as much in the development of the theory and practice of marxism.

'I am *not* giving a summary of the *Logic*', says James. 'I am not expanding it as a doctrine. I am using it and showing how to begin to know it and use it.' 'I am not afraid of mistakes.'

It took almost fifteen years before it was possible to arrange an edition of 200 copies from a typescript. About seven years later a mimeographed edition of a few hundred copies appeared in Detroit. And now, finally, it has seen the light in a form that will make it available to all serious students of marxism. Hopefully, it will help to restore the marxian dialectic to its place at the centre of scientific methodology.

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MARTIN GLABERMAN

From the Grassroots: social and political essays toward Afro-American liberation

By MANNING MARABLE (Boston, South End Press, 1980).
250pp. \$5.50

The 1970s heralded a new era of reaction in the United States. The Republicans defused Vietnam as a popular issue without ever resolving the issues the war exposed. Within the black movement, some militant protest leaders became salaried hacks, their allegiances transferred from the black community to the Democratic Party or the federal department they now represented. The movement for freedom and human equality seemed to lose direction and founder in the new social and political sea of repression.

Manning Marable's collection of essays, *From the Grassroots*, addresses the widely felt sense of anguish that accompanied the decline of the activist spirit and the seemingly changed consciousness of the Vietnam era. The book attempts an analysis of the 'Movement's' failures and describes the contemporary political climate from which any new departure must develop.

Marable sees the co-optation of the black middle-class civil rights leadership as a major cause of the demise of the militant phase of the black political struggle in the 1960s. He traces middle-class black complicity to self-interest in some cases, and to the failure genuinely to comprehend American society in others. In Marable's view, the compromises of the leadership group have left black people politically disorganised in an increasingly hostile environment.

Criticism of the class that Marable terms 'the black elite' is expressed in many of the essays. Wardheelers, 'poverty pimps', professional spokesmen for establishment social welfare agencies and federal bureaucrats are treated as the principal foes of the black movement. The author thus makes this group seem more powerful and secure than it really is. Marable fails to recognise the marginality of these brokers, their dependence on Democratic patronage and their frequent lack of constituencies. The Reagan landslide now clearly reveals what happens to 'the black elite' when executive and Congressional power pass to the Republicans.

From the Grassroots displays an acute class consciousness that is still somewhat novel in American political writing. In the 1970s, awareness of class differentiation in the black community served as a refreshing and useful corrective to the sometimes heady racial nationalism of the decade before. In 1981, however, it needs to be stripped of rhetoric. The working class is prominently featured in books by leftist intellectuals, and Marable's essays follow this tradition. Yet, very few insights about black American workers are actually offered. Diverse essays discuss the black middle class, the screenplay version of *Roots*, violence in American society, black education, housing and currently controversial sociological work. The black working class, though frequently alluded to, remains largely abstract and two-dimensional in this treatment.

A crucial discussion in *From the Grassroots* involves the wisdom of an all-black party. In one piece, Marable blames black professional politicians, loyal to the Democratic Party, for delaying the formation of an all-black partisan organisation. In another essay, however, the author suggests that powerful whites could make a locally based black party irrelevant by simply removing decision-making to the state and national level. The reader never discovers Marable's final opinion on this subject. If a non-electoral party is implied, little is revealed about its function and role.

The varied content of this book of essays would lend itself quite well to chronological identification of the pieces. The reader might thereby trace the evolution of Marable's thought more easily. Although the essays are grouped topically, a continuous thematic thread, or evidence that the author's perspective has changed over time, would bind the material into a coherent whole and help reconcile contradictions. As

presently written, the book lacks the centrality of focus that should rightly enhance a collection of essays on Afro-American politics and society.

Centre for Black Studies
Santa Barbara

GAYLE PLUMMER

Jah Music: the evolution of the popular Jamaican song

By SEBASTIAN CLARKE (London, Heinemann Educational Books, 1980). 216pp. £4.95.

This modest but ambitious book begins the long overdue task of documenting and analysing Jamaican popular music and the recent cultural struggles of Afro-Caribbean peoples. Clarke chronicles the development of reggae music here and in the West Indies, sketches possibilities for the future, extracts some guidance and some cautionary tales from the career of The Wailers, looks at the British scene and breaks new ground with a brief but serious discussion of 'dub' music and the rhyming of the reggae DJs or 'Toasters'.

The opening three chapters, primarily historical, are among the strongest in the book. In them, Clarke traces the unique place of music in the struggles of the Caribbean masses. It is a shame that the core social and political perspective in which the later analysis of the music itself must be situated remains insubstantial. Clarke is content with such superficialities as: 'During the Rock steady era social consciousness and political and criminal violence escalated to new heights.' Such throw-away statements are symptoms of a deeper problem in the book as a whole. It does strike a readable balance between the machinations of the reggae industry and the history of the music, but this is at the expense of approaching either the political economy or the music in a truly systematic or rigorous fashion. This sense of slightness increases towards the end as Clarke slides into an anecdotal and journalistic approach.

His interviews with many leading performers and producers recover a great deal of important detail, but he is often better at writing about the artists than their music. Lacking the analytical tools needed to do justice to the tunes he loves, he is unable to chart the cross-pollination of Afro-American and Caribbean styles in a more than cursory manner. Clarke underestimates the extent of discontinuity between British and Jamaican reggae, and does not break the music down into much more than rough historical phases – ska, bluebeat, rock steady, reggae and dub. Hitherto, reggae music has too often been treated in an ahistorical and undifferentiated way and, insufficient though Clarke's approach is, it is still an advance over clumsy attempts to read off the

politics of black youth from their musical preferences. Nonetheless, the author misses several important points as a result: though a 4/4 time is superficially constant, there are vast and important differences between drum styles in reggae. Where is the 'Lovers' Rock' movement which has accorded women singers in Britain a prominent place? And why is there no discussion of Judy Mowatt's justly famous 1979 'Black Woman' recording, which is a landmark in the political development of rasta reggae?

This failure to deal with the varying forms of the music is reproduced elsewhere in the failure to distinguish between the different modes in which it is packaged, distributed, sold, experienced and heard by different social groups. Consequently, Clarke struggles continuously to break with the ephemeral world of commodities hastily imposed on 'Jah music' by the recent mass marketing of it to white youth, which though lost on him has not been lost on his publishers.

The chapter on 'Toasting' omits many classic recordings and, like the chapter on 'dub' which follows, suffers from the absence of systematic periodisation. The Sound System culture merits consideration in its own right, and both chapters would have been better if this material had been organised separately. The author seems disinclined to explore the connections between the recorded DJ and his counterpart in the metropolitan dance hall. Clarke's exposition of 'dub' is the first serious attempt to come to terms with it, yet he remains very cool about its implicit musical revolution and seriously underestimates both its refinement and its complexity, moving too quickly to discuss 'dub' albums rather than take as his starting point the social relations in which the power of the music is revealed. This chapter is full of missed opportunities. Clarke has not grasped that the relation of dubbed to undubbed versions of the same song on different sides of the same single record constructs a critical distance by disrupting what has already been heard, or that a few carefully chosen words or phrases remaining intact in a dub version can create a complex transformation of the most innocent lyric to profound subversive effect.

The sheer technical sophistication involved in producing this music is also strangely absent from Clarke's account of it. This small point is emphasised by a recent recording in which, typically, the word 'Economics' in the phrase 'Economics has got them in desperation/Poverty is causing dangerous political tension' is transformed into the word 'Army' by clever use of an analog delay line. Mastery of advanced sound-processing technology thus allows complex meanings to be wrung from the undubbed version. This process of transformation itself becomes a source of pleasure for the people in whose political culture dub music is a cornerstone. It is a subject that demands far more serious consideration than Clarke allows it.

For all its inadequacies, however, this book is an important and

commendable first step. Its failings reduce what could have been an invaluable book to a useful and nonetheless entertaining one. Sebastian Clarke has underlined the fact that for the black masses culture and politics are one. He has built a bridgehead from which we may continue the struggle against those who dismiss the popular politics of our people with a culturalist caricature.

Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies

PAUL GILROY

Iran: religion, politics and society

By NIKKI R. KEDDIE (London, Frank Cass, 1980). 243pp. Cloth £13.50, paper £6.95

Capitalism and Revolution in Iran

By BIZHAN JAZANI, translated by the Iran Committee (London, Zed Press, 1980). 151pp. Paper £4.50

The availability of Keddie's and Jazani's collected essays is good news for those desiring to learn about the background to Iran's present situation. Although neither book analyses events since 1977 in detail, they are, none the less, relevant to what has been happening. Both studies of Iran's history and socioeconomic organisation conclude that the West's influence has aggravated the plight of the popular classes. They also concur that Iran's class structure and relations of production have already been transformed from feudalism to capitalism.

The similarities do not end there, but there is also an overriding difference between the two books: while Keddie's perspective is that of a populist, Jazani writes from a marxist point of view. In fact, Jazani was an activist who died in prison, and parts of *Capitalism and Revolution in Iran* resemble a manual for revolution. He was a founder of a guerrilla group which evolved into the Organisation of Iranian People's Fedaii Guerrillas (OIPFG) in 1971 and carried out a series of armed attacks on government installations. Appropriately, his essays in the present volume are preceded by a history of OIPFG and followed by a statement of the group's adversary position vis-à-vis the Khomeini regime. Jazani himself does not discuss the religious opposition in detail. Nor does he demonstrate the kind of insight into the complexities of the clergy's social role that Keddie provides, except in the area of their class affiliation. To him, the clergy, despite being a part of the opposition to the Shah, are not an anti-imperialist group, any more than the pro-Moscow Tudeh party. (Today many Iranians of various political persuasions believe that Khomeini came to power with the approval of American authorities seeking to block communist influence in Iran.)

Ironically, as Jazani's book was going to press last summer, OIPFG

split, with the majority faction joining Tudeh in support of Iran's Islamic regime, signalling the success of the US embassy seizure in subordinating the left to the religious leadership for the time being. The minority faction, despite complete agreement with Jazani with regard to the clergy, also parts with him where he distinguishes monarchic dictatorship as the principal anti-popular force in Iran. Pointing to the continued repression of the left and the exploitation of workers and peasants after the Shah's fall, it identifies Iran's dependent capitalist economy as the source of evil and the Shah as merely an operator/promoter of the system. (The last chapter of *Capitalism*, written after Jazani's death and before the OIPFG split, takes a similar stance.)

Keddie, a historian with an impressive record in the study of Islam and Iran, combines original research with historical detail in her treatment of religious institutions. She pays special attention to the Shi'ite leadership's oppositional role and its intermittent alliance with westernised reformer-activists, both of which phenomena she finds unique in time and space. She discusses Iran's Constitutional Revolution of 1905-11 at length and finds many parallels between it and the more recent revolution which abolished monarchy. But whereas Jazani seems to overrate the popularity and accomplishments of the left, Keddie does not acknowledge its role in challenging the dictatorship.

The rural population is given due attention by both authors, whose differing evaluations of the government-sponsored Land Reform Programme are characteristic of a division among critics of the programme in general. Keddie largely values the initial goals of the programme and criticises the government for not attaining them fully, while Jazani condemns the programme as an imperialist design to open up Iran to international capital which succeeded. (The hundreds of Bank-e Saderat branches which mushroomed in the countryside after land reform attest to at least the commercialisation of Iranian agriculture.) Yet both authors conclude that land reform has increased stratification among the peasantry.

While Keddie doubts the revolutionary potential of the peasantry, due to their extreme dispersal and other factors, Jazani predicts a new mood amongst the post-land reform generation in rural areas. This generation

has not felt the devastating and inhibiting domination of the landlord and his farm manager. There is no barrier between them and the world of the urban areas, as there was for their fathers ... In response to the deprivations and economic disadvantages of the rural areas, this generation will have different reactions to that shown by the previous one.

Mary and Eric Hooglund's studies of villagers' participation in the

recent revolution (MERIP *Reports*, May 1980) seem to support Jazani's view – although many villages are indeed so remote that even stories of communities hearing about the revolution several months after the fact may contain some truth.

A propos the rural population, one error in *Capitalism* must be pointed out, although it would be unfair to judge Jazani's contribution by technicalities of the sort. Contrary to Jazani's observation, whether tribal populations are classed with the peasantry or considered as an opposition force in their own right, pastoral nomads are not categorically poor, as long as they remain nomadic. Most nomads do not own land but do have capital, in the form of livestock, and if their household belongings are few and simple, it is due to their mobile way of subsistence. Research during the past two decades has shown nomads to be better fed and healthier than settled peasants, though Iranian nomads have indeed been increasingly marginalised by expanding agriculture and by government controls.

It is tempting to recommend both publications as valuable handbooks on Iran, especially if used in combination. (Special recognition is due to the translators of Jazani's works for a fine job.) But it must also be mentioned that neither book has an index and both books are relatively overpriced.

Sacramento

ROSTAM POURZAL

Decolonisation and Dependency: problems of development of African societies

Edited by AGUIBOU Y. YANSANE (Westport and London, Greenwood Press, 1980). 376pp. £17.75

This is a very welcome collection of papers on the problems of development or underdevelopment, dependency and the general effects of the colonial legacy on African attempts to catch up with the twentieth century (before it runs out!). It draws on the differentiated scholarship of ten contributors from various corners of the social sciences and with considerable differences in orientation and emphasis. In effect, the bundle is intellectually rich, and in many ways philosophically, fruitfully eclectic. In most parts, it is free from jargon and turgidity, and it quite safely raises more questions than it answers.

One of the striking and refreshing features of this collection is that, unlike many contemporary studies of underdevelopment and decolonisation, it discusses to a great degree the cultural implications of dependency. Wesley Johnson ('Cultural dependency in Senegal'), Skinner ('The persistence of psychological and structural dependence after colonialism'), St. Clair Drake ('Prospects for total decolonisa-

tion in West Africa') and Mazrui ('Beyond dependency in the black world: five strategies for decolonisation') reflect on this aspect of the problem. Perhaps the point about the use of this exercise is made by St. Clair Drake's paraphrase of Cabral (*Return to the Source*) that:

neither the leadership of the liberation movement nor the militant and popular masses have a clear awareness of the strong influences of cultural values on the development of the struggle; of the possibilities that culture creates; or the limits that it imposes; and above all the extent to which culture is an inexhaustible source of courage, material and moral support, and the physical and psychic energy.

Onimode, in 'Imperialism and multinational corporations: a case study of Nigeria', affirms the general argument that essentially the problems of underdevelopment in Nigeria, as in most parts of the southern hemisphere, are caused and perpetuated by the domination of their economies by foreign monopoly capitalism, by imperialism. The argument is well-backed with facts and figures. The solution offered is, however, perhaps simplistically contentious. Yansané's 'Political economy of decolonisation and dependency of African states of colonial legacy, 1945-75' is clearly a well-researched but highly summarised paper. It shows how in spite of the 'years of independence', French West Africa remains deeply trapped in a dependent relationship to the metropolitan powers. Abernethy's paper on 'Decolonisation in Southern Africa: variations on a theme' presents a systematic but highly formalised analysis of the factors and forces at play in the decolonisation process in Southern Africa. On the surface, it appears dry and bland in substance, but in fact produces some heady insights into the decolonisation record of Southern Africa and, for that matter, the rest of Africa. Nolutshungu offers a very polemical and articulate paper ('External intervention in South Africa') bristling with passion and righteous indignation. It stands in stark but useful contrast to Abernethy's methodological formalism.

The idea of the non-capitalist road to development pioneered by Soviet social scientists is subjected to studied and sometimes scorching scrutiny by Clive Thomas in 'The "noncapitalist path" as theory and practice of decolonisation and socialist transformation'. Indeed, the implication of Thomas' critique is of such fundamental importance that some will even say that as such it virtually questions the basic validity of the theory, especially in the light of the historical experiences of countries like Ghana (under Nkrumah), Toure's Guinea (until 1978) or Barre's Somalia (until its westward turn). Has the author pulled punches? Tetteh takes the discussion of agrarian populism in Africa one step further ('Peasants and agrarian economic development: populist lessons for Africa'). His equation of Maoist policies and Soviet policies relating land to populism could be a source

of useful debate.

All in all, these papers constitute an interesting, useful and, in parts, undoubtedly important contribution to contemporary attempts by social scientists to lay bare the structure and content of the condition of underdevelopment and dependency in Africa.

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KWESI PRAH

Sociobiology Examined

Edited by ASHLEY MONTAGU (New York and London, Oxford University Press, 1980). 355pp. \$5.95

It is the modern science of sociobiology that has finally buried Marxism; it only remains to be seen how long the liberal era of utopian delusions will last and how quickly our obsession with creating the equal society will fade away.

So wrote Richard Verrall, apologist for neo-fascism, in a recent article in *New Nation*. It underlines the speed with which the far right are espousing sociobiology. With a judicious mixture of half-truths, and appeals to the absolute validity of scientific 'fact', they use sociobiology to buttress their extreme racial hatred. If a tendency to dislike those not like you is wired into the genes, then fascist myths of Aryan superiority are vindicated.

'Sociobiology' is currently high fashion within biology; it consists in the application of Darwinian theory to social behaviour, including the complexities of human behaviour. Critics have attacked sociobiology from a number of viewpoints; they are in agreement, however, in the belief that a theory of behaviour which sees only genetic determinants and ignores the richness of human experience does little for our understanding of the world. In one sense, the sociobiological viewpoint is highly myopic; it assumes that things called 'genes' are such significant determinants of behaviour that our entire system of social organisation, culture and ethics can be reduced to the properties of these things. In another sense, though, such Panglossian notions are proposed as part of sociobiological theory that they can explain anything. And, as Steven Jay Gould points out in his contribution to this book, theories which explain everything are unbeatable theories, and theories which cannot lose are not much use.

Ashley Montagu has collected together a number of contributions which, in one way or another, are critical of sociobiological dogma. As he points out in his introduction, the arguments have so far generated more heat than light, often ending in mud-slinging exercises between two utterly opposed camps. This collection, however, provides detailed and critical examination of sociobiology's assumptions, without introducing the polemic so often attributable to critics. The various

essays bring to their scrutiny of the rapidly growing literature on sociobiology a wide range of viewpoints and experience. For some, the concern is to focus upon the internal contradictions of the theory, while others are more concerned with the ideological and political consequences of hereditarian theories.

One particular political point which is raised by several contributors is that racism can be justified by particular interpretations of the idea of kin selection (central to current evolutionary theory: crudely, it is the concept that natural selection should favour behaviours which benefit close kin). Montagu refers to the problem of racism in his introduction, noting that he was 'not aware that any sociobiologist had taken the trouble to repudiate such misuse of his ideas'. But the problem is not one simply of misuse. Sociobiology, like a host of other theories which purport to 'explain' human behaviour in terms of biological determination, has flourished within a particular political and historical context. It is a pity, then, that while several authors refer to racism as a corollary of sociobiology, relatively few have looked at the significance of sociobiology in relation to other forms of social oppression (it can, for instance, be quoted in support of male domination of women, as the far right have been quick to notice).

In a collection of essays such as this, there are inevitably some disagreements. While many authors do not hesitate to accuse sociobiology of contributing to racism, Barkow suggests in his chapter that it is *invalid* to accuse sociobiology of racism since, in his view, it says nothing about inherent superiority/inferiority. This, however, misses the point. By quoting ideas of kin selection to justify their racism, those on the far right are not simply playing on notions of Aryan supremacy, they are justifying racial *hatred* by appealing to its supposed genetic basis.

There is similar disjunction in the various treatments of 'nature' versus 'culture'. Most authors are keen to point out that they do not reject biology out of hand, but seek to understand human nature and experience in terms of a dialectical relationship between the two. The point is made, rightly, that, despite protests to the contrary, sociobiologists continue to perpetuate the idea of a dichotomy between nature and culture. 'Nature' is thus seen as the immutable base, as an essence, which cannot be changed by any amount of tinkering with the political superstructure. It is unfortunate, then, that contributors to this book sometimes fall into the trap of maintaining the distinction.

Timely and welcome though the collection is, it would have benefited from a longer introduction which could have served to clarify the different perspectives from which the contributors have written, discuss apparent contradictions among the essays and give coherence to the collection as a whole. Some essays, for example, are heavy with biological terminology and deal primarily with the internal contradictions of evolutionary theory; others are more concerned with such

questions as the implications of sociobiology as the new social Darwinism. A guide to all of this would have been useful, for there is much here of value to anyone concerned to refute the doctrines of biological determinism.

That said, however, the book is valuable as an exploration of different approaches to a critique of sociobiology's premises. Perhaps more importantly, it provides insight into the views of 'human nature', not as something fixed immutably by our genes, but as something uniquely flexible. What is welcome is that so many contributors are concerned not simply to reject biological determinism, but equally to reject sociocultural determinism. We are not likely to get far in objecting to crude talk of our biological heritage if in doing so we ignore it.

Open University

LYNDA BIRKE

Shadow over the Promised Land: slavery, race and violence in Melville's America

By CAROLYN L. KARCHER (Baton Rouge and London, Louisiana State University Press, 1980). 327pp. \$8.95

Shadow over the Promised Land is an exhaustive, at times exhausting, unravelling of the attitudes to slavery and race of one of the US's greatest writers. Carolyn Karcher discerns an underlying intention in Melville's work that, for her, reconciles many obvious inconsistencies – inconsistencies that have, since the 1960s, led to much controversy.

There is no doubt that the theme of tyranny is one to which Melville returned again and again, no doubt that he felt vigorously and strongly for the underdog, no doubt that his experiences as a common seaman had given him a consciousness of oppression and exploitation, an insight into how one man vested with power can tyrannise over his fellows; there is no doubt that on a number of occasions he condemned explicitly the slave system and the depredations of imperialism. Equally, there is no doubt that some of his portraits of black characters are crass stereotypes: there are some passages of generalisation (notably the description of the fitness of the Negro to be the white man's body servant in *Benito Cereno*) which simply appal, and for which I cannot accept Ms Karcher's over subtle analyses.

Simplified, her thesis runs that Melville – in order to satisfy the public demands of his white audience, as well as his own urgent need to tell the unpopular truth as he saw it – adopted a covert and allusive way of attempting to subvert his reader's racialism; a way not immediately apparent to the 'mere skimmer of pages'.

From Redburn onward, Melville created fictional parallels between all the situations the Negro faced in America as a slave and second-class citizen and the situations faced by exploited groups of other

racism. He showed whites developing the same traits under these conditions as the Negro was thought to exhibit by nature; and he dramatized the various ways in which people of all races react to exploitation, from adjustment to passive resistance to outright rebellion. More subversively, Melville continually undermined the very concept of race that lay at the basis of racial prejudice...

Thus, according to Ms Karcher's reading, to take one example, the racist stereotype of the pampered slave Guinea, in *Redburn* – an unredeemably offensive portrait – is held to be redefined and in some way undermined by the equally unredeemed portrait of the white sailor Landless, against whom, it is hinted, the portrait of Guinea is set. This is a method which, despite all her championing of Melville's enlightened views, the author is forced to concede is 'so elaborate as to be ineffectual'. She continues, 'It seems unlikely that many contemporary readers would have realised, even subconsciously, that Melville was not reinforcing but subverting their assumptions about racial traits as opposed to environmental conditioning.' And, indeed, it is hard to see the point of an anti-racism so successfully disguised, chameleon-like, as racialism.

Melville's contemporary readers are mostly absent from Karcher's rigorous textual analysis. There is some discussion of the growth of contemporary scientific racism and its relevance to Melville's writing and thinking, some brief discussion of his literary compeers, but of the effect and reception of his work there is very little. The discussion is inward looking – at the end delving into his relations with his own father and family in order to explicate his post Civil War perspective on that conflict as a fratricidal tragedy, a view in which its relevance as a war about slavery has become lost. In this, and in a tendency to put great burdens of analysis on quotations which to me do not carry the weight the author alleges, the book betrays its origins as a PhD thesis. At times, she brings a purely modern sensibility to bear on her reading – passages that make the white liberal reader 'squirm' or feel uneasy today may well not have had that effect either on Melville or his audience in the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

If her case had been made more briefly, more impressionistically, with a much greater understanding of how Melville's work either combated or reinforced his contemporary readers' prejudices, and to what extent he shared emotionally, if he opposed rationally, those prejudices, then the book would have had more value in adding to our understanding of the history of racist, and anti-racist, ideas. As it is, it is a textbook and exemplar for literary students; a source from which future theses may arise. Ms Karcher has some interesting insights into what she describes as 'pressing concerns' of Melville's, but she does them to death.

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