

Ujamaa: World Bank's development model

The 30-volume "Project 1980s" study of the New York Council on Foreign Relations, dedicated to "a new world order based on environmentalism," names two countries as "models of development," in whose likeness the present world ought to be transformed by a process of "controlled disintegration." One country is Maoist China. The other is Tanzania.

There is good reason for this. Tanzania, since its formal independence from Great Britain, was never granted actual independence from the City of London and its World Bank. A program was imposed upon this still-born nation, designed at the World Bank with complementary inputs from Maoist China and Israeli Zionism, that not only prevented economic development, but has systematically undermined its potential to undergo development at any point in the future.

In Tanzania, the World Bank on behalf of the British "colonial office" has virtually institutionalized backwardness. It has degraded a whole population to the threshold condition for genocide—an accomplishment whose final phase may be man-made like earlier phases, or left to "natural disaster." Hence, the Council on Foreign Relations and its British parent institutions point to Tanzania as a "model," which the World Bank is pointedly striving to emulate throughout the Third World.

In Tanzania, the slide into institutionalized backwardness is associated with its own variant of Zionism or Maoism—the term employed is "Ujamaa."

The roots of "Ujamaa" are found in a 1961 report—500 pages long—issued by the World Bank within a few months of Tanganyika-Tanzania's independence. The report proposed a "development path" for the country, one which the new president, Jesuit-trained Julius Nyerere, adopted without visible hesitation. The proposed program drew upon the work of a French agronomist, Rene Dumont, who is not simply an agronomist. Dumont's most recent British intelligence assignment was as an advisor to Iranian Ayatollah Khomeini. His more usual deployments, however, have been in connection with United Nations agencies.

Using the latter auspices, Dumont published a book at the approximate time of Tanzanian nationhood, *False Start in Africa*. It was an elaborate complaint that the leaderships in many emergent African nations had ideas about modernization in agriculture and

industry that must be got out of their heads. Following Dumont's prescription, the World Bank's report on Tanzania proposed to remedy the problem with "agricultural development" which used "appropriate technology," the code-phrase that has since become accepted reference for programs to keep modern technology out of Third World hands.

African kibbutzes

The World Bank specifically proposed "collectivization" of agriculture—not in a Soviet sense, with education, modernization, tractors and the like, but in the Maoist or Israeli sense—massive relocation of rural tribesmen and urban unemployed into "self-help" village communes, *kibbutzes*. This proposal was delivered as a stringent national-austerity condition for any financial aid.

With Nyerere's rubber-stamping of the project, the bank arranged for Zionist kibbutz specialists to be flown in. Ironically, the Zionist method of realizing British "colonial office" goals was not "appropriate technology" for Tanzania. It was the failure of the Zionist method that led to "Ujamaa."

It is one thing for the representatives of Rothschild to take the offspring of cultured European Jewry, steep them in the mystique of the "Land" goddesses, and talk them into adopting the primitive life of a rural kibbutz. The same arguments for "voluntary" relocation do not hold much weight with Tanzanian tribesmen. Moreover, as the Israelis themselves pointed out, the kibbutzim were at least given the means to obtain some modestly efficient farm implements. The World Bank was not offering even that much relocation incentive to Tanzanians, most of whom refused to budge from their "traditional" grounds. By the time of the 1967 Middle East war, only a few rural concentration camps had been successfully established, and the Israelis threw up their hands and departed.

It would not have been diplomatic to send the British army back into East Africa. What was lacking was an ideology, a synthetic belief structure Tanzanians could call their own, one that could induce voluntary relocation. British anthropologists and sociologists had been working on the problem. In 1967, they were ready to try "Ujamaa."

In that year, Julius Nyerere issued the "Arusha

Declaration" on "African socialism" through "self-reliance." The document was reportedly written by Rene Dumont. The anthropologists had carefully profiled existing tribal customs, relations, prerogatives and mythologies, selecting and reorganizing the most superstitious elements into a new spiritual outlook, the cultish "Ujamaa" (familiness) set of beliefs that would make a person want to live in a "Ujamaa" village. An African—or rather Tanzanian—variety of Zionism had come into being, and was proclaimed virtual official religion.

Nyerere-Dumont's "Arusha Declaration" also formally abolished private ownership in industry and land, and forbade any farmer to employ the labor of another—with the result that most entrepreneurs, technicians and administrators fled the country. Near-term "Ujamaa villagization" of the population was proclaimed the fundamental goal of the regime.

To encourage Tanzanians to assimilate the idea of "Ujamaa," the unemployment centers in the cities were shut down, with stranded persons "voluntarily" pointed in the direction of marked out village sites.

Soon after the Arusha Declaration was issued, Julius Nyerere departed on a state visit to China, a Jesuit conferring with Maoists on the points of outlook each shares with the House of Lords. He returned from Peking with 15,000 coolies in his wake, who set to work constructing the Tanzan railway. Until recently it operated about 50 percent of the time, but rainstorms put the line out of commission for one month. It is reported to now be back in operation 50 percent of the time.

Spiritually rich

Concerning the poverty and isolation thus being institutionalized for a majority of Tanzanians, a Syracuse University field worker, part of a Ford Foundation-funded program in "East African Affairs," had this to say: "Tanzania is impoverished only materially. In other realms of human existence, it is rich." He was referring to "Ujamaa," the cultish recast of tribal superstition that did, indeed, help the World Bank manipulate thousands of Tanzanians into "Ujamaa villages" in the next few years, there to remain impoverished materially and culturally.

But thousands more, millions more, resisted. Little could hide the fact that "Ujamaa" meant being sent out of the Tanzanian economy to fend for oneself—inasmuch as the World Bank refused to be forthcoming with sufficient financial support for employment in expanded Tanzanian farming, manufacturing or commerce. The "Ujamaa village" sites were for the most part bare and denuded earth with a stream somewhere in the vicinity (and frequently not!). The technology offered was "appropriate"—a knife and a hoe. What-

ever the ideological ruse, the appeal to most Tanzanians was small.

A gestapo

The slow growth of the Ujamaa movement led in 1971 to the Mwongozo Code. As the Arusha Declaration had placed economic backwardness on a "collective" rather than "individualistic" basis, the Mwongozo code mandated a "collective basis" for political leadership and industrial and agricultural management. The code also established a "people's militia"—as Tanzanians learned quickly, it was a gestapo. Nyerere said at the time, "Before independence we used to promise each other 'Freedom and Work.' Now we should say 'Freedom is Work,'" a paraphrase of the slogan the Nazis displayed at the entrance to concentration camps. The nation's single political party, TANU (Tanganyika African Peoples Union) extended its control to the "Ujamaa villages" in a fascist way, organizing "ten house cells."

The code's full purpose came to fruition one year later, in 1972, with the Decentralization Act. The act institutionalized the "independence" of each Ujamaa village. The inhabitants' elected leaders ("chiefs") could decide themselves what to produce—peas, wheat, whatever—without consideration of national needs or what the next Ujamaa would produce. Symbolically, the administrative capital was moved from the city, Dar es Salam, to the town, Dodoma, in the interior. Legally, the Ujamaa villages became the country's recognized political unit, with the act in effect declaring that anyone not living there was breaking the law! The gestapo was put to work.

Scattered tribesmen were rounded up by force. Villages were burned to the ground, huts, possessions and all. That was a powerful incentive to move. Murder of resisters was another.

Credit for chickens

As decentralization launched villagization in a major way, the Agency for International Development was commissioned to do a study on land use and agricultural diversification in Tanzania. The report recommended production of some coffee for export, by strictly labor-intensive methods, emphasizing that the isolation of the villages and basic technological backwardness must be preserved. "The way to avoid great social cost is to avoid tampering with the social system directly," said the report, "limiting innovation to technical change which will allow the social structure to adapt by itself in only those ways necessary." The villagers should not be given modern fertilizer, but should use the animal dung lying around the villages in heaps. The farmers should be encouraged to use the cooperative credit system, the report added, to invest in

cows and chickens, but nothing mechanical or expensive.

In the same year, 1972, TANU issued a publication, "Politics in Agriculture," which observed that "Our methods of husbandry have not improved, so that increases in output are much less than they should be given the labor effort expended." That was an understatement. The absence of even fertilizer means that the Ujamaa village is one of the few places in the world where the "law of diminishing returns" actually applies. Output could be increased only by increasing the amount of land in cultivation. More intensive cultivation of land already in use led quickly to infertility and erosion.

The program came to relative fruition in the 1973 drought. The implications of the World Bank's program—genocide—were realized. Deprived of even basic technology, the Ujamaa villages could not produce enough to generate a reserve. Decentralized into economically self-contained villages, Tanzania as a nation-state had no reserves. The drought hit, and Tanzania was hit by starvation.

Faced with a food shortage and clear failure of an antitechnology policy, did some tough questions get asked at the World Bank? No. A TANU report on the food shortage bore the marks of World Bank authorship, observing: "Tractors are useful when a farm is large, properly organized and disciplined, and equipped to maintain tractors.... Without these things a tractor can be a disaster, can ruin the peasants and destroy the land." Did they therefore propose to provide these things, so that tractors could be introduced? No. The World Bank proposed "miracle wheat."

Miracle wheat, developed by the Ford Foundation and World Bank's commission for a "Green Revolution," involved providing Third World nations with "souped-up" seeds, high-yield grains more productive than the usual seed grains. The problem was, "miracle wheat" requires extensive irrigation, plenty of fertilizer and so forth, which the World Bank would not finance. The miracle seeds failed in Tanzania. The World Bank explained to Tanzania that this provided a good example of how modern science doesn't work in Africa.

Admittedly, there has been some "industrial development." For instance, in 1974, the Chinese came back to Tanzania to build the "Friendship Textile Mill," employing 1,000 antiquated looms, and 4,700 workmen to operate them. The World Bank did not allow any spending on the infrastructure which would make even this primitive manufacturing unit a start toward something more. The mill runs on electricity, which is not available very often. Power blackouts, and cuts in power are long and frequent.

Roads against the law

In 1977, the absence of infrastructure for manufacturing development was institutionalized by Julius Nyerere's

"Arusha Declaration Ten Years After," emphasizing small, cottage industry and small-scale manufacturing to be managed by tiny "cooperatives" under the Tanzanian Small Industry Development Organization. The products of these cooperative manufacturing projects are of a nature designed to keep the economy backward. For example, one project created a cooperative to produce windmills. Another such manufacturing project is assigned to create cottage cooperatives to fabricate ox-carts, donkey-carts, hand-carts and wheelbarrows. Like tractors, the World Bank explains, trucks or other mechanized vehicles "are inappropriate for the low standard rural roads where they exist." No mention of building roads is made. Ox-carts "facilitate transportation of manure to remote fields; they ease the transport bottleneck which results in delayed harvesting...."

What the World Bank calls development

It has been 18 years since the World Bank's "model" for Third World development got off the ground. Julius Nyerere recently acknowledged that all of his countrymen were not happy, by way of castigating them as follows: "People still think in terms of getting a tractor for their farms—even when they are small—rather than learning how to use oxen-ploughs, or they concentrate on saving for a lorry when their real need is a number of small carts to move seeds and crops from the shamba to the collecting point or village store."

Evidently, despite "Ujamaa," rural-village isolation, material deprivation, and cultural degradation, many Tanzanians do not find anything to be proud of in the fact that it has taken their nation nearly two decades to get from a knife and a hoe to oxen-carts and—here and there—a windmill.

What the World Bank calls "development" can be summarized by a few relevant Tanzanian statistics.

Presently, 90 percent of all Tanzanians are completely illiterate. Only 10 percent of the national budget is allocated to education and health services combined. Only 25 percent of eligible youth have ever seen a school from the inside.

Only 20 percent of all Tanzanians earn more than \$190 per year. Over 40 percent earn under \$50 per year. Industrially, as much as 55 percent of all manufacturing capacity stands idle and rusting. In agriculture, a large proportion of tilled soil is badly eroded, and becoming unusable.

In 1975, infant mortality stood at 15 percent, worse than in 1961. In 1978, infant mortality stood at 16.7 percent. In 1975, average life expectancy was 47 years. In 1978, it was 44 years. Only 25 percent of the population has access to a clean water supply. An so on.

—Vin Berg and
Cynthia Parsons