

world, particularly the developed world, by better nutrition, good water supplies, adequate refuse and sewage disposal and reasonable shelter. Improvements in these essential needs can be brought about only by improved social conditions engendered by economic prosperity and the cessation of the present war which has had an adverse effect on the development of the country.

Few would argue with the authors that there must be an increasing delivery of health services at rural levels; the problem is to encourage people to work in such areas. They advocate the training of large numbers of village health workers (V.H.W.s) who would be invaluable, *provided they are willing to remain working in these areas on a part-time basis*. Only time will tell whether those already trained will be acceptable. In referring to the Advanced Clinical Nurse (A.C.N.) they state (p.43) that 'the A.C.N. is really a doctor in practically everything but name'. I would take issue with this and say they are highly skilled members of the nursing profession, a nurse practitioner or physician's assistant in modern parlance, but their basic training remains far short of that on which one would base the training of a medical practitioner. Efforts have been made in the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Rhodesia to expose students throughout their career to the needs of community medicine, including a three-week attachment in their final year in a rural area. Of recent years, owing to the war situation, this has had to be curtailed but experience in primary medical health services is given in a rapidly developing urban township where many rural people are arriving daily. It is noted that neither of the two medical authors have spent any time working in the rural areas of Rhodesia, where their experience might have been broadened and thus brought greater professional relevance to the text.

In this reviewer's opinion the basic structure of the health services of Zimbabwe is sound. Their development depends on peace not war and increasing economic prosperity. Many of the ideas suggested by the authors are already incorporated in the programme for the future and others will be readily adopted when the situation, both economic and military, allows. It is pleasing to see, even if from two authors who appear to be London based, that they are aware of the needs of rural as opposed to urban health services. It is to be hoped that they and others will join with those in Zimbabwe to help in providing the expertise to develop many of their proposals in the future.

University of Rhodesia

W. FRASER ROSS

Alternatives to Poverty By R. Riddell. Gwelo, Mambo Press, Rhodesia to Zimbabwe No. 1, 20pp., ZR\$0,30.

This booklet is the first in a series of monographs in which a range of issues likely to confront policy makers on development in a legally independent Zimbabwe are discussed.

The work falls into two main sections. One provides an historical summary of the process of development which has shaped the economy as it now stands, noting a number of current social and economic problem areas. The other looks to the future, attempting to address in broad outline

the task mapped out in the brief for the series: 'How can the new Government of Zimbabwe provide for the basic needs of the poorest sectors of Society?'

The author begins by identifying three general problem areas — poverty, unemployment and inequality. Without engaging in the (academically fascinating) definitional intricacies surrounding the three issues, it is, I think, reasonably fair to say — and Riddell almost implies this — that in the particular context, the first and second problems affect exclusively the Black section of the population, while the third distributional question is at the broad social level mostly noted with the White population as the reference point.

These problems, Riddell believes, 'the present development strategy is totally incapable of solving'.

The 'Present Development Strategy'

In this section, Riddell gives an historical sketch of the development of the economy. A sketch — I do not think anything more. The accuracy of that sketch is, for those familiar with the details, easy enough to assess by means of a ten-minute read through the twelve pages. The usefulness of those pages is that they raise the following major issues:

Capital, capitalism and growth: Riddell notes the generally unquestioned central role of foreign and local capitalistic interests in the growth of the main productive sectors of the economy — manufacturing, commercial agriculture and mining. Here the explicit conclusion is drawn that growth and expansion have not been negligible in terms of output volume, the extension of external linkages and absolute wage employment, and further, that — and Riddell places accent on this — the overall economic structure yielding this growth has demonstrably failed to absorb much of the available labour force. Moreover, the employment that has been generated for the Blacks has been at unacceptably low wage levels (with reference to Poverty Datum Line desiderata). The implicit critique therefore essentially collapses into the 'growth without adequate, sufficiently paying employment' thesis.

On the 'dual economy: Here the conclusion reached is that in historical terms, the Black peasant economy has been, and been made, subserviently, disadvantageously, and debilitatingly functional to the accumulation requirements of capital in the 'modern' sectors — in three ways. First, the Reserve economy supplies labour to the capitalist sectors — and cheaply. There is some ambiguity in Riddell's presentation here as to the relative status, historically and currently, of structural determinants (e.g. at p.8) and deliberate State labour policies (e.g. p.7) in this process of internal migration. Second, the Reserves supply 'an accommodating mechanism' to the modern sector, by subsidizing the incomes of the wage workers, who 'are not paid anything like the full amount necessary to provide for the basic minimum needs of their families'. Third, the existence of Reserves has allowed the State to pursue discriminatory policies in the provision and distribution of infrastructural support and assets (especially land), biasing these in favour of the 'modern' sectors.

The net effect of all this has been that 'the development of the modern sector is . . . built upon the underdevelopment of the reserve economy'. The conclusion amounts to an (again) implicit sectoral dependency thesis, supplementing a pronounced unbalance growth hypothesis: accumulation and growth in the 'modern' sector finds its polar opposite in the involution of the Black rural economy.

Riddell takes the position that, particularly with the advent of a new political dispensation in Zimbabwe, the need for solutions to the problems of Black rural and urban poverty and unemployment, and of inequality in the distribution of assets and income, takes on added urgency. And since these problems are a result of policy biases contained in past strategies interacting with the structural processes summarized above, the solutions 'require . . . a very different alternative from the present approach'.

The Basic Needs Approach to Development

Riddell proposes that what is needed is a re-orientation of development philosophy and policy so that the satisfaction of the basic needs of 'the poorest sectors of the population' occupies a central position. Basic needs are defined as consisting of three elements: adequate private consumption, access to social services, and mass participatory democracy.

Unless adequately balanced with accurate portrayal, coherent thinking and clear expression, brevity in socio-economic discussion, particularly of policy issues, always carries the grave danger on the part of the presenter of misrepresentation of ideas — and of misinterpretation on the part of the recipients. I fear that this could be the result of the way that the Basic Needs Approach has been introduced to the context of Zimbabwe.

In so far as addresses the question of incorporating considerations of poverty, deprivation and distribution into the public policy decision matrix, the Basic Needs Approach says nothing shatteringly novel to the study of social problems. But in so far as it simply focuses on a (hopefully non-ephemeral) shift in emphasis in the thinking of world professional analysts and agencies about the *purposes* (and only secondarily *strategies*) of growth and development, the Basic Needs Approach only gives a new label to an universally important issue: humanity must struggle to alleviate poverty and its consequences.

Riddell's discussion of this shift is, I think, too brief. It also appears rather haphazardly and hurriedly assembled. Summarizing the Basic Needs Approach and juxtaposing that summary with comments on general macro-economic sectoral policy options, urbanization and industrialization, the role of foreign capital, technology and know-how, Research and Development, participatory democracy and self-reliance, the problem of the influence of East - West geopolitics on the evolution of strategic development options, etc., and presenting all this in a 13-page section, results in the likelihood that the meaning and implication of the Basic Needs Approach itself will be lost. Superficiality becomes almost inevitable.

Riddell raises many important and relevant issues in this pamphlet. Those issues are not new to this country and economy. That lack of novelty does not make them any less valid, or urgent. His presentation of these issues leaves much to be desired, for example, detail, rigour and, *for other analysts, theoretical explicitness*. The *over-riding* point, in my view, however, is that the issues are being raised. The country can only benefit from more thorough efforts.

University of Rhodesia

M. KADHANI

Traditional Healers and the Shona Patient By G. Chavunduka. Gwelo, Mambo Press, Zambeziana No. 3, 1976, 139pp., ZR\$5.90.