

INTRODUCTION

One of the most recurrent topics in Tanzania today is the low level of production in many sectors of the economy. It is no longer a secret, for example, that many important public corporations are operating at a loss. The frequent changes in top managerial positions, the dissolution of some corporations and the decentralisation of others, are some of the measures taken to try to rectify the situation. A lot of emphasis has also been placed on political education of workers and leaders of key production sectors. The low level of production has been experienced in both the industrial and agricultural sectors. For the latter, it could be argued that adverse weather conditions have aggravated matters. But even with favourable weather conditions, the situation, in both food and cash crop production, remains gloomy. It is with all these factors in mind that we decided to have as the theme of this issue of UTAFITI, "The Productivity Crisis". We wanted our authors to address themselves to this problem, and to try and analyse the causes of this crisis, and suggest possible solutions. It could very well be that we have been applying the wrong medicine because the disease has not been properly diagnosed.

In "Financial Performance of Public Corporations", H.P.B. Moshi looks at the fate at the District Development Corporations, (DDCs). To those who live in Urban centres, performance of the DDCs has been a cause for embarrassment, especially because at their inception they were generally hailed as a positive step towards controlling essential services and business enterprises for the benefit of the general public. The fact that most of them were unable to survive effectively calls for a serious re-evaluation of the role of public corporations in Tanzania. The facts and figures which Moshi quotes in his paper will definitely leave a lot of questions in readers' minds as to why the Government, as the overseer, allowed the situation to get so much out of hand. If it is true, as Moshi argues, that the basic problem is financial mismanagement, then there is need to re-examine the whole field of training of high-level manpower in the country. Or if, as the article indicates, the problem is one of lack of commitment on the part of workers (of all categories) in public corporations, then there is need to change our strategy of "Politicisation". These and other issues are discussed in the paper.

B. Swai's article "Crisis in Colonial Agriculture" deals with the problems of soil erosion in Tanganyika during the inter-war years, and how these were intricately related to colonial land policy, colonial need

for raw materials, as well as to the introduction of cash economy based on cash crops which led to the destruction of the natural fertility of soils. He analyses the measures which were taken to deal with the situation and concludes that very little was done when it was already too late. The article comes at an opportune time when the problems of soil erosion in Tanzania have again surfaced as a major issue in agricultural production. Maybe the agricultural planners can draw lessons from the colonial period and avoid the mistakes that were made then.

In "Agricultural Productivity and Surplus Production in Tanzania", Finn Kjaerby takes a critical look at the "Implications of Villagisation, Fertilisers and Mixed Farming". Sometimes planners and policy makers take it for granted that certain measures, such as villagisation will always produce positive results. It is only when these results are not forthcoming that everyone starts to panick. In a vast country like Tanzania, with such diverse climatic conditions and soil types it becomes necessary to weigh carefully the merits and demerits of every programme. Kjaerby shows very convincingly that even the use of fertilisers which peasants have been given to understand will multiply their crop yields many times can have very adverse effects on soils and lead to a drastic reduction in production. The paper also discusses the peasants responses to all the measures taken, and points out possible alternatives which could lead to increased production.

D. Bryceson's article, though of a more theoretical nature, is still within the range of our theme. In "Primitive Accumulation and Imperialism in relation to the Reproduction of Third World Peasantries" she discusses the survival of Third World Peasantries in the Imperialist epoch. She consistently draws the distinction between the process of primitive accumulation "which operated to destroy the feudal peasantries during the 15th - 18th Centuries in Europe", with that which is at present operating in conjunction with imperialism on Third World Peasantries. She further argues, by evaluating a number of studies by prominent people such as Marx, Lenin, Kay, etc. that although it is important to understand the processes of primitive accumulation and imperialism as combined historical processes which provide a framework in which concrete analyses can be made, they should not be interpreted as the ultimate causes of specific developmental problems or social contradictions.

The last article in this issue deals with one of those current topics which nobody is able or even willing to ignore. We would first of all like to register our joy at the way things have turned out in Zimbabwe. Not only has

the victory of the Zimbabwe people been a great blow to imperialism everywhere, it has, most importantly, proved to the world that Africans are a serious people and that left alone to make their own free judgements, they always know where their interests lie. We therefore congratulate our valiant comrades in Zimbabwe for taking it upon themselves to restore the honour of Africa. It is in this spirit that we include the contribution from a person who has been very close to the Liberation Struggle. Ibbo Mandaza in "Imperialism, the Frontline States and the Zimbabwe Problem", takes us back to the tangle of the war of Liberation in Zimbabwe and the role that imperialism plays in Southern Africa. Although written before the dramatic events of March 1980, it offers a good analysis of the situation that prevailed before the elections, especially the run-up to the London Constitutional talks. His analysis will help readers to weigh and evaluate imperialism's actions and reactions after March, as it has so much at stake in the whole issue. It is important to remember that the enemies of freedom for the underprivileged will never give in of their own free will and the struggling people must always be on the lookout for them and be prepared to hit back.